

## **CROSS BORDER BLESSING: 28 APRIL 2021 - NOTES**

### **Sewing Shields**

We often walk past a farm right on Hadrian's Wall called Sewing Shields. Inevitably the idea of 'sewing' along the border made me think of this farm on the fortified Roman border. Hadrian's Wall created a formidable separation between north and south. It follows the contours of the land between west and south where the land is narrowed by two estuaries: the Tyne to the east and the Solway to the west. When it was built it followed the ridge of a formidable escarpment called the Whin Sill. In so doing it cut many tribal lands into two. It was both defensive and divisive. Even after the Romans left, there was division between the peoples of the north and the south. For centuries, the territory we call The Borders was fought over. In addition, there was constant raiding and fighting between clans and families, especially by the 'Border Reivers'. I believe that, to this day, demonic powers of divisiveness that gained influence in Roman times still have a hold over The Borders.

The name, Sewing Shields, means 'the shepherds' shelters belonging to Sigewine'. At one time a castle stood there to protect the drovers' path from north to south.

Ezekiel 34 (about shepherds and sheep) and 37 (about nations being reunited) refer primarily to the two kingdoms of Judah and Israel and to the restoration of the Jews to their own land. However, I believe that God's heart for Scotland and England is the same: that there should be unity and peace; that the two nations should be 'sewn' together; that the 'drovers' path' between the two should be open and guarded, and that the unity of the sheep, his people, will play a vital part in maintaining the unity of the people of Scotland and England.

While 'Shields' used to mean shepherds' shelters, today it suggests protection and Christians will think of 'the shield of faith'. I believe that God is saying that the faith of praying believers has a key role in his purpose to guard, as Good Shepherd, the unity of people across the Borders.

**Richard Griffiths** [sent before the 28<sup>th</sup>]

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### **Summary of impressions, pictures etc. during prayer times 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> April**

That the prayer times would result in a strong COHESIVE bond, like a strong adhesive backing applied to a tear in materials, such that it cannot be torn apart again – a permanent repair/bonding. That the prayer times would be a blessing to God and to all who live and work there – that the Borders would be a place of peace, prosperity and God's blessing. Thanks for all who have 'gone before' in prayer and reconciliation – we are 'standing on the shoulders of giants'. They have built a solid foundation we can stand on – may our prayers be some of the fruit of those who have gone before – a new season!

Sense of 5 riders (angels?) riding east to west along the boundary each with a large coloured banner – 1 - Red (blood of Jesus), 2 – Gold (God's glory), 3 – Blue (Healing & Holy Spirit), 4 – White (Completion or Victory), 5 – Purple (Royalty). After riding the length of the boundary they return to a hill somewhere in the centre where they stop and watch. They have ridden the land before we do anything. They are like 'guardians', they have a quiet authority and carry the presence of God – because of all the prayers that have gone before. All the bloodshed has been dealt with – the angelic knights are riding out to keep the peace, to watch over the peace and keep trouble out. As the 5 riders come together there is a sense of 'job done' and 'mission accomplished'.

As the blessing prayers are spoken out it is like healing oil being poured over the ground and going down through every level to the deepest depths. As it goes down it dissolves all evil and bloodshed etc. going back through the centuries. Below all these levels the healing oil unlocks the 'words of life' spoken over and into the land by God at the beginning of time – releasing these words to come to the surface and bring life. Picture of a flower (buttercup?) sprouting and opening to the sun – just one, but it is a start. It has always been there, just waiting to be given life – like poppy flower spores that can lie dormant for years until the ground they are in is disturbed and they come to life.

**Alistair & Anne Barton** [Cross Border Blessing planning team]

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In prayer today for you and the cross border blessing - I saw what was like - oil pouring onto the ground onto and into the line between the 2 nations of Scotland and England and it was as if this will bring healing and smoothing the wounds of the past to bring a stronger healing of the unity and healing of the past!!

**Irene Forrest** [member, Parliamentary Prayer Scotland Core team] Sent before afternoon prayer started.

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My strongest compulsion in prayer time was for release of healing. Strangely the image that stayed with me is from the Lord of the Rings when Gandalf searches for the two little Hobbits and says they “will be like the falling of 2 small stones that starts an avalanche in the mountains”: The two Borders uniting releasing something powerful and bringing healing streams through the two nations. Blessings **Mary Higginson (Berwick)**

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Dear Alistair and team, what a deep joy it was to join with you blessing our nations across the border!

I was reminded of the passage of blessings in Deuteronomy and felt all was covered in the well-crafted blessing we all read over our respective nations on behalf of the cross border country.

There is much ‘dry tinder’ around here. We felt that many a dry tinder 'spot' was ready to ignite with the fire of God in the nation we were blessing. There was also a feeling that this was much broader than the border but would encompass our nations, the UK, Europe and beyond [reference to the Jean Darnall vision of little fires joining into one large flame]. There's a shout of Amen to that as we cry, so be it Lord! **Julie Beckett, Carlisle**

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#### **Zoom chat comments at evening meeting 28 April:**

Elaine Venning : Celebrating our unity. Affirming what He has done & releasing blessing.

Kath Agnew: I saw a picture of a tunnel being dug. I was aware of the richness of the soil, the tunnel was criss - crossing (zig zag) across the border hidden from the enemy. The tunnel filled up with water, a symbol of the Holy Spirit flowing back and forth across the border.

Colin & Chrissie Greaves: UNITY Acronym: U is for unconditional, N is for non-judgemental, I is for intentional, T is for Total, and Y is for Yielding

Elaine Venning : Eph 4 v1 - 6

Maurice Howson: Since the worship time I have had a picture in my mind of a wound which has been stitched. A wound can be stitched which is in a sense is what we are doing by events, but it is God who does the healing. We also need to keep the wound clean by forgiving, practicing the principles in the acronym we have been given.

Alex & Sarah: I felt the United Kingdom is something we should affirm. Jesus said that a kingdom divided cannot stand. So let's release a word of unity over our UK.

Elaine Venning: Adding to Kath's picture I can see the roots making their way through the soil to reach the waters of life.

Jennifer: Pictures of a wellington boot - gardening- turnips and a polytunnel

Helen Blake: I can see these roots firmly established around the Rock of Christ

Marelize: I believe Jesus is showing us who He is, in the acronym, and ask us to follow Him towards each other.

Irene: John 17:23,24 May we be as One together in Jesus

Andrew McHutchon: Acts 17:26-27. Appointed times and boundaries, so they would seek Him and find Him.

Elaine Venning : Isaiah 2 v 3 - 4

Julie Beckett: Can we read Ps 33:6-12a [Psalm read by Kevin Reid – unconnected confirmation]

Carolyn: Along with remembering and honouring the many Christians that have gone from Scotland and England for the sake of the gospel we should remember that the Lord has often sent Scots to England and English to Scotland as evangelists and ministers. They have gone on His command to bless and minister. The border is no barrier to the Lord.

Helen Blake: Isaiah 4:4-6 The Branch of the Lord

2 In that day the Branch of the Lord will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land will be the pride and glory of the survivors in Israel. 3 Those who are left in Zion, who remain in Jerusalem, will be called holy, all who are recorded among the living in Jerusalem. 4 The Lord will wash away the filth of the women of Zion; he will cleanse the bloodstains from Jerusalem by a spirit[a] of judgment and a spirit[b] of fire. 5 Then the Lord will create over all of Mount Zion and over those who assemble there a cloud of smoke by day and a glow of flaming fire by night; over everything the glory[c] will be a canopy. 6 It will be a shelter and shade from the heat of the day, and a refuge and hiding place from the storm and rain.

Carolyn: Borders are also thresholds into something new - and exciting. Opportunities.

Elaine Venning: Is 61 v 11 For as the earth brings forth its shoots & as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up so the Lord will cause righteousness & praise to spring forth before all the nations.

Steve Weatherill : In a marriage the focus isn't on the two but the one

Helen Blake: Thank you that you are preparing Your bride for Your return.

Bob and Mary Bain: An honour to be part of the evening

Elaine Venning : Shalom & blessing flowing richly - hope there are more such occasions

Irene : Glory to God and thanksgiving!!.

Heather: Bless you all, great to worship together in unity, thank you

Alex & Sarah: Just had a sense earlier to affirm the wells of salvation in Scotland then down.

Elaine Venning: May they flow freely once again!

Steve Weatherill: God is able to do immeasurably more than all we can ask or imagine.....

Steve Weatherill: Jesus it's Your Kingdom!

Andrew McHutchon: John 5:25, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live."

Nigel Johnston: God Bless these lands - come Lord Jesus. Great to share with you all. Shalom

Joan Gladders: Thank you everyone. it is a privilege to have been a part of today, Praise and glory to our God and King.

Elaine Venning: Sense that where the wounds have been healed and anointed there is Christ in the midst of us showing us the marks of salvation printed on His body and blessing us to receive afresh His spirit to go forth in peace to His glory

Helen Blake: Thank you so much. Jesus already has done so much more than I could have asked or imagined. Thank you again.

Andrew Stephens - Advent Wales: Blessings from Snowdonia

Joan Gladders: Referring to the Ezekiel 37 scripture, a group prayed at the bridge in Horncliffe where we tied two sticks together and floated them off the bridge to tie together the unity of England and Scotland.