

Tyndale Thought for the Day

13th July 2020



One of my occasional hobbies is working on our combined family tree. I'm fascinated by this host of farm labourers, blacksmiths, shepherds, drapers, builders, tug-boatmen, riveters, miners and train drivers in our past – not to mention their incredible women, whose employment is usually listed in the censuses as “unpaid domestic duties” and who somehow raised vast broods of children on pittances in what must often have been very limited and crowded conditions. You had to be tough to survive in those days, and you were lucky if all your children lived to adulthood. Such were our ancestors, the people who helped make us who we are today.

Looking in the opposite direction, Merry and I recently held our newest grandchild for the first time. At 10 weeks old, she was able to greet us with smiles and big, open eyes, immediately charming us thoroughly. What will her life be like? Might she one day be amused/amazed/shocked to discover how relatively primitive life could be for her grandparents when they were children? Or will that period be looked back on as a privileged, “golden age” because she and her contemporaries live in an environmentally-broken world? Time will tell.

One Biblical family line is that of Isaac and Jacob. Genesis 49:33 records the latter's death, “breathing his last”, and, in another lovely phrase, being “gathered to his people”. Similarly earlier with Isaac the father, except in his case (Gen 35:29) we're told he was also “old and full of days”. If our stories can end something like that, still adding value to the stories of others, we should be content.

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