

John G. Paton: *Trained by a* **Pandemic**

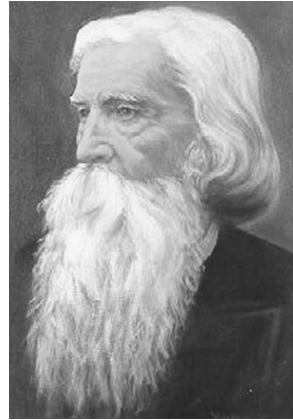
Psalm 91

God's marvelous protection during the midst of a horrible pandemic taught John Paton to trust the Lord's keeping power. John Paton grew up in Scotland where there were five pandemics in the 19th century. Cholera outbreaks occurred while John was a child, and an even more severe one when he was in his twenties. In the midst of this ravaging disease, John was protected by His God as he continued with his Bible studies and his medical studies, even going into infected homes to treat those who were dying.

He went to the mission field a year before the pandemic had ended. One could say that he went from the frying pan into the fire, because his mission field was the New Hebrides Islands of the South Pacific where the unreached peoples were cannibalistic. His autobiography reveals how time after time the Lord delivered him from life-threatening situations. He knew that the God who had kept him safe in the midst of a deadly pandemic could also keep him safe among dangerous savages who desperately needed to know the way of salvation.

John explained to friends why he left Scotland for the mission field: "My mind was finally resolved; that, though I loved my work and my people, yet I felt that I could leave them to the care of Jesus, who would soon provide them a better pastor than I; and that, with regard to my life amongst the Cannibals, as I had only once to die, I was content to leave the time and place and means in the hand of God who had already marvelously preserved me when visiting cholera patients and the fever-stricken poor; on that score I had positively no further concern, having left it all absolutely to the Lord, whom I sought to serve and honor whether in life or by death."

~George Zeller: www.middletonbiblechurch.org



(1824-1907)

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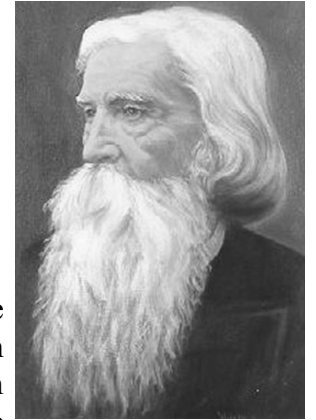
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