

Connecting faith and daily life



# How the mighty have fallen

Gillian Cooper *reflects on* 2 Samuel 1:1. 17-end

**K**ing Saul and his son Jonathan are dead. Their death has long been inevitable, because the Lord has withdrawn his blessing from Saul and placed it on David. It is excruciating to read the long story of the charmed life of David and his rising popularity, set against the sad decline of poor doomed Saul into despair and madness. Now the agony is over. Saul and Jonathan have been killed in battle. David is not king yet, though of course he soon will be. In the next chapter of 2 Samuel we will be plunged once more into tales of power struggles and assassinations before David can finally be crowned. But now we pause, for a lament that has captured the imagination of readers down the ages.

“Tell it not in Gath” lest there should be rejoicing. Let the place where they died stay for ever dry and barren. Let everyone weep. “How the mighty have fallen!” The beloved and lovely have died, and their strength and courage has died with them.

We may wonder about David’s sincerity. He has not openly opposed Saul, but nor has he discouraged his own adulation by the people. David’s motives, however, are not the point. This is a story of God at work. God’s people look back through their history, and they know God wanted David to be their king. Saul is a mere footnote. It is David who is God’s choice, and part of God’s plan of salvation. ☺

Be with us, Lord, in our world full of violence and grief, laughter and joy. Be present as we mourn, and as we rejoice, that we may discern your presence in every aspect of our lives, and know ourselves blessed by your love. Amen.

## The General Synod

### Part 5 – How do I get something debated at General Synod?

by Becky Mynett

Is there something you would like debated at General Synod? If so, your General Synod reps should be able to help. (Things work similarly in Scotland and Wales; wherever you are, ask your diocese to put you in touch.) They can:

1. Help your Deanery Synod bring a Diocesan Motion. These usually start with a Deanery Synod asking for a debate at Diocesan Synod. The diocese then sends

it to join a queue for debate at General Synod (currently about three years).

2. Ask the relevant committee chair to bring it to synod for debate.
3. Bring a Private Members’ Motion. These are debated once they have been signed by a hundred other members (but they have to be tabled and signed again if they haven’t been debated before the next elections).
4. Ask a question.

If you want to know more about General Synod, visit the Church of England website. ☺

“Our salvation is in loving and cherishing his creation, in so living that others may have life.”

Revelation 19:1

## Thomas the traveller

by Caroline Hodgson

Many people know St Thomas, who is commemorated on Wednesday, as Doubting Thomas, and will be familiar with the story in John’s Gospel, of his encounter with the risen Christ. But his connection with India is probably less well known, and stems from the tradition that he extended his mission as far as South India. Indeed, he is recognised as the patron saint of India and the founder of the

Church of the Christians of St Thomas.

The apocryphal Acts of Thomas relates that he visited the court of the Indo-Parthian king Gondopernes, who put him in charge of building a royal palace (he was apparently a carpenter). Thomas is recorded as being imprisoned for spending the money entrusted to him on charity. He was martyred at Madras (now Chennai), where San Thomé Cathedral, his traditional burial place, is located. Thomas is still a popular name in India. ☺