

February

### *From Rev. Rob the Roving Reporter!*

I feel like this is a letter from 'our correspondent' or it's my first outside broadcast. It's been a long, long day. I was supposed to be having a stress free trip abroad for just a few days, catch a shuttle flight to Heathrow then a Virgin flight out. What could be simpler? You reckon?

Two hours before I was due to leave for the airport I checked my email for the last time and discovered that BA had cancelled my flight to Heathrow, but after a phone call I was rebooked on a later flight only to discover that it was actually not going to land in London until after my onward flight had taken off. And so the day continued. In the end I had to get a train to London – which sadly was the slowest train to London and which ran late by 27 minutes, then on to the underground Euston to Kings Cross, Kings Cross to Paddington only to reach Kings Cross to be informed that no services were running between Kings Cross and Paddington. So it was a stampede to street level, all the time with a rucksack and a massive 24Kg suitcase where I caught a taxi which crawled through the London traffic to Paddington. At one point the taxi driver said that he wanted to pull over because my door wasn't shut properly – I said, "I'll hang on to it, just drive!!!" At Paddington I just made the Heathrow Express which was then delayed by 15 minutes, by that time I was like a wet rag both due to panic and exertion. Finally I got to Heathrow.

By the time I actually got on my flight you would think that nothing else could go wrong but I suppose it's no wonder that within minutes of getting a first glass of orange I had managed to knock it into my lap! Still only 12 hours with a wet seat and wet pants, I'd like to think that now I'm here nothing else could go wrong.

In an instant life changes. For the better or for the worse life can suddenly change direction, in the blink of an eye or the ring of the telephone, the opening of a letter, the turning over of an exam paper, the trip to the doctor or the turn of a key.

We think that we have things in their places and that they will never move, we have things planned and ordered. We have insurance for everything from a burst tyre to critical illness, from buildings and contents to root canal surgery. But the truth is that not one of those policies actually works. It doesn't matter how much you pay for your dental plan – you will still get cavities, regardless of the rocketing premium you pay for redundancy cover you can still get made redundant, a well paid tyre insurance (a new one on me but seemingly more and more popular) doesn't prevent a puncture.

Becoming a Christian ..... is just the same. (You weren't expecting that were you?)

Being a Christian doesn't guarantee that you will be free from trouble or difficulty. Our bills still have to be paid, our bodies still fail and our hearts can still struggle. That's clear from anyone you care to read of in the bible to anyone who is a Christian that you might know. Just like everyone else Christians will still face times of real sorrow, sickness and trial. Unexpectedly the rhythm of our lives can be upset and our present can become chaos.

But the difference for Christians is that there is no limit to the number of claims you make, the premium was paid for by someone else (and it was a one off payment), and for everyone who actually signs up for the plan there is a guaranteed payout with 'Prophets' at the end.

*I heard a voice thunder from the Throne: "Look! Look! God has moved into the neighbourhood, making his home with men and women! They're his people, he's their God. He'll wipe every tear from their eyes. Death is gone for good—tears gone, crying gone, pain gone - all the first order of things gone." The Enthroned continued, "Look! I'm making everything new. Write it all down—each word dependable and accurate." The Book of Revelation chapter 21 verse 5.  
(The very last book in the bible)*

Here I sit typing away in my hotel room looking out onto Hong Kong Harbour and the upsets and real stresses of today have gone. To those in Christ the promise is the view of Paradise and of the stresses of life forgotten. Time you took out some proper insurance, don't you think?

*Much Love In Christ Jesus, Rev. Rob Hinton, Vicar of All Saints.*