

“I lay down my life, that I might take it again” John 10:17



“I am just going outside and may be some time”

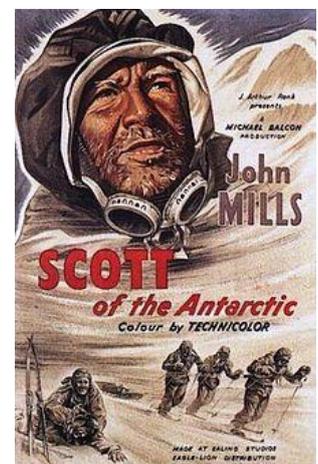
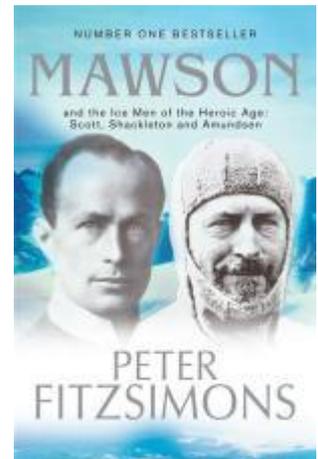
Introduction

This writer’s sister, who knows him well ☺, sent him for a Christmas present the book *Mawson* by Peter Fitzsimons¹. Fitzsimons chronicles the life and work of Australia’s outstanding Antarctic explorer of the early 20th century, Dr Sir Douglas Mawson² 1882-1958, who was an equally distinguished geologist and served on the staff of the University of Adelaide. It was Mawson and his team who were the first to reach the South Magnetic Pole on January 15th 1909.

Ill-Fated 1912 Scott Expedition

Mawson’s considerable Antarctic achievements were to have lasting value in that they were of a specific scientific nature. However, Mawson and his achievements were overshadowed by the ill-fated Scott expedition of 1911-1912. Captain Sir Robert Falcon Scott RN with four companions; Dr Edward ‘Bill’ Wilson, Captain Lawrence Oates of the Inniskilling Dragoons, Lieutenant Henry ‘Birdie’ Bowers of the Royal Indian Marine Service and Petty Officer Edgar ‘Taffy’ Evans RN trekked to the South Geographic Pole and reached it on January 18th 1912. They were disappointed though to find that a Norwegian expedition led by Roald Amundsen had got there over a month earlier, on December 14th 1911 by a hitherto unknown route.

Tragically, Scott and his companions perished on the return journey from the Pole and it was this tragedy that caught the imagination and sympathy of the entire world for decades afterwards. Ealing Studios even made a film of the Scott expedition released in 1948 entitled *Scott of the Antarctic* starring the veteran actor John Mills. This writer remembers being taken to see the film in a school outing in 1955. This was in Sydney, Australia, but almost nothing was said about Dr Sir Douglas Mawson.



It was as if after the immediate adulation had died down that Solomon's observation was then oddly being fulfilled with respect to Dr Sir Douglas Mawson and his lasting achievements against the challenge of the Antarctic that had consumed Captain Scott and his men. ***"There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it: Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man. Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard"*** Ecclesiastes 9:14-16.

The believer may nevertheless be encouraged that God remembers and has regard for ***"a poor wise man,"*** as God said through Isaiah and Biblical lessons emerge even from the tragedy of Captain Scott and his men. ***"For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word"*** Isaiah 66:2.

Challenge of the Antarctic

With that basis, the question arises, why had Captain Scott and his men died? The simple answer is that in spite of meticulous preparation, they ran short of provisions. Such a shortage could prove fatal in the Antarctic and did for Captain Scott and his men who died of slow starvation compounded by the effects of acute frostbite and prolonged exposure to unseasonably severe weather. That is mainly how the Biblical lessons arise but first the challenge of the Antarctic must be understood with respect to polar exploration.

The South Geographic and Magnetic Poles are located on the great polar plateau. Unaware of Amundsen's pioneering route Scott and other early polar explorers got up onto the plateau via the Beardmore Glacier³ that stretches for 125 miles and descends over 7000 feet from the plateau to the Ross Ice Shelf. The round trip for Captain Scott and his men from their base camp to the South Geographic Pole and back would have been almost 1900 miles, often over very hard terrain and as stated in daunting weather.



The Beardmore Glacier 1956

The matter of provisions was therefore critical, as indeed it is for today's believer who is as Paul states among ***"strangers and pilgrims on the earth"*** Hebrews 11:13. Like Captain Scott and his

men for their journey, today's pilgrim can make meticulous advance provision for his earthly journey for example with respect to education, financial investment, healthcare and various forms of insurance. However, without God's provision, the pilgrim's journey, like the Antarctic was for Captain Scott and his men, is too great a challenge as God said to Elijah.

"The journey is too great for thee" – God's Provision of Scripture

"And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee" 1 Kings 19:7.

As 1 Kings 19:7 indicates, the Lord's equivalent provision for today's pilgrim includes scripture, as the Lord Jesus Christ said in Luke 4:4 ***"And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God."*** That word must come from the right source as Paul states with respect to ***"wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness"*** 1 Timothy 6:3. Beware of junk food that is merely ***"the word of men"*** and not ***"in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe"*** 1 Thessalonians 2:13. To appreciate the difference see www.timefortruth.co.uk/why-av-only/why-

the-av-only-7434.php *The 1611 Holy Bible versus Bible Corrupter Edwin Palmer* p 116 and this extract.

Edwin Palmer's attacks on all **194** scriptures that he referred to were based on falsehood, Colossians 3:9, wilful ignorance, 1 Corinthians 14:38 and downright stupidity "**without understanding**" Jeremiah 5:21.

In sum, Edwin Palmer in *The NIV: The Making of a Contemporary Translation* Chapter 14 *Isn't the King James Version Good Enough? (The KJV and the NIV Compared)* took away the "**fine meal...cakes,**" the beefsteak "**tender and good,**" "**butter, and milk**" Genesis 18:6, 7, 8 "**Butter and honey**" Isaiah 7:15 and left only "**the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick**" Number 11:5 "**out of the land of Egypt...the iron furnace**" Jeremiah 11:4.

The answer to Edwin Palmer's question is that *only* the King James Version is good enough because only the King James Version is declared by its genuine adherents to be⁴ *the Law and the Gospel of God as the Rule for the whole life and government of Christian Princes...this Book, the most valuable thing that this world affords. Here is Wisdom* [Revelation 13:18]; *This is the royal Law* [James 2:8]; *These are the lively Oracles of God* [Acts 7:38, Romans 3:2, Hebrews 5:12, 1 Peter 4:11]."

No-one says that about modern Bible versions, not even their most ardent supporters. The King James Version therefore ensures that "**The righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul**" Proverbs 13:25 as Paul exhorts Timothy "**If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained**" 1 Timothy 4:6.

By God's provision of *scripture* today's pilgrim may therefore finish well like Paul. "**I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith**" 2 Timothy 4:7.

"The journey is too great for thee" – God's Provision of Sacrifice

Scott recorded in his diary the self-sacrifice of Captain Lawrence Oates who walked out into a blizzard and perished when the four remaining members of Scott's team were 32 miles from a major supply depot his expedition had set up and which would have saved their lives if they had been able to cover the distance. Petty Officer Edgar Evans had died 300 miles back at the foot of the Beardmore Glacier, as Scott also recorded in his diary.

Oates had been suffering from badly frost-bitten feet that were turning gangrenous. He knew that he was slowing his comrades down and sacrificed himself in the hope that they would then be able to make it to safety. Captain Oates' self-sacrificial act is commemorated in John Charles Dollman's painting entitled *A Very Gallant Gentleman*, see graphic, from the memorial to Oates⁵ erected by the search party that found Scott and his two remaining companions Wilson and Bowers in November 1912, along with Scott's diary.

A summary statement reads Oates' body was never found. Near where he was presumed to have died, the search party erected a [cairn](#) and cross bearing the inscription; "Hereabouts died a very gallant gentleman, Captain L. E. G. Oates, of the Inniskilling Dragoons. In March 1912, returning from the Pole, he walked willingly to his death in a blizzard, to try and save his comrades, beset by hardships."

Captain Scott recorded that Captain Oates' last words were "I am just going outside and may be some time."

It is easy to imagine another very gallant Gentleman stating to "***all the host of heaven***" 1 Kings 22:19, 2 Chronicles 18:18 that "I am just going outside down to earth and may be some time." However, this is "***what the scripture saith***" Romans 11:2.

"I will give...my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world...I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" John 6:51, 10:17-18.

That is God's provision of *sacrifice* with respect to the Lord Jesus Christ and **"the sacrifice of himself"** Hebrews 9:26 ensures that death cannot get a permanent hold on today's pilgrim in the way that physical death slew Captain Scott and his men.

The Lord Jesus Christ promises that, with a challenge to all. **"...I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"** John 11:25-26.

"The journey is too great for thee" – God's Provision of Salvation

God's provision of sacrifice leads to an understanding of God's provision of *salvation* for today's pilgrim, which in turn stems from God's provision of scripture as Paul states to Timothy. **"And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus"** 2 Timothy 3:15.

Ironically, God's provision of salvation for today's pilgrim is illustrated by the discovery of Scott's last camp in November 1912 after the Antarctic winter had subsided so that the search party could set out. The camp lay only 11 miles from the major supply depot that would have saved the lives of Captain Scott and his two last companions, Dr Edward Wilson and Lieutenant Henry Bowers.



The Southern Ocean

With the search team was a Norwegian, Tryggve Gran. Noting the discovery to be a specifically British tragedy, Gran the Norwegian stood back as other team members opened the tent flap to find Scott, Wilson and Bowers entombed inside. Communications were very slow back then and the search team only learned of Amundsen's successful expedition to the Pole from Scott's diary, whereupon Irishman Tom Crean went over to Gran and congratulated him on his nation's success. Tom Crean, however, was himself an interesting character. As Petty Officer Crean RN, he could have been chosen to accompany Scott to the pole instead of Edgar Evans but Scott chose Evans and Tom Crean survived. Crean could then have said with David **"...but truly as the LORD liveth...there is but a step between me and death"** 1 Samuel 20:3.

Given enough time, though, everyone takes that step. God's provision of salvation ensures that the very *next* step destines today's pilgrim to end up in the *right* place, as ironically is also illustrated by Captain Scott and his men. They remain in the Antarctic but the seaward shift of the Ross Ice Shelf destines Scott, Oates, Wilson and Bowers to be conveyed inexorably to the Southern Ocean⁶ by the year 2275, it is estimated. Today's pilgrim too has a sure and certain destiny as Paul explains and which is a great encouragement.

"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" Philippians 3:20-21.

References

¹ www.booktopia.com.au/search.ep?author=Peter%20FitzSimons. These page no.'s refer to specific events or individuals that this study describes; pp xv, 33-45, 130-133, 173-174, 203-205, 370-372, 387-393, 404-411, 425-427, 433-434, 449, 454-456, 465-466, 468-469, 472-481*, 521-528, 635-637*, 661, 672-681 for a *résumé* of Mawson's Antarctic achievements. *Wilson's and Bowers' last letters show that they were saved men.

² en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Douglas_Mawson, adb.anu.edu.au/biography/mawson-sir-douglas-7531

³ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beardmore_Glacier

⁴ www.timefortruth.co.uk/why-av-only/ Royal Law – James 2:8

⁵ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lawrence_Oates

⁶ southernocean.ghgonline.org/