

# Is there a solution?

The recently unveiled stone column at the Corbet Lough, named 'Spins the Reel, Rings the Wheel' (from the old Irish Ballad – 'The Spinning Wheel'), is a tangible tribute to the important historical link between the Corbet Lough and the once vibrant linen industry, which flourished locally along the river Bann.

The three-metre high Portland Stone column is constructed from seven wheel-shaped mill stones. Oval segments have been removed from each stone and are arranged on top of the column, to form a crown, depicting a flax seed plant. The outer surface of each ring of the column is engraved with the names of the processes of linen production – Rippling, Retting, Scutching, Hackling, Spinning and Bleaching.

In the early 1800's, the cottage production of linen increased to factory scale. Mills sprang up on the banks of the River Bann, to make use of the water to power water wheels and for bleaching. However, a problem that perplexed the 'Barons' of the local linen industry was the shortage of power when water levels were low.

A solution was required!

A solution was devised by the newly formed Banbridge Reservoir Company in 1836 with a plan to manage the water levels in the river. The renowned railway engineer, William Dargan (who had built 'The Cut' in 1834), was commissioned to construct a reservoir at the Corbet. An embankment was constructed, creating a dam of 70 acres to collect and store flood water, with an outlet controlled by flood gates. Another reservoir was built at Lough Island Reavy and together they produced a five-fold increase in the volume of water power on the river and the problem was solved.

When we turn to the Bible - God's word, we discover that mankind has an infinitely greater problem of powerlessness than the one that perplexed the mill owners in 1836.

The Bible calls it **SIN** - the falling short of God's standard. We have no power to reach God's unchanging, holy and righteous standard; indeed we seldom live up to our own standards or keep our own New Year's resolutions. The Bible explains the reason;

*'For there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God'. Romans 3:22-23*

It also tells us that; *'your iniquities (sins) have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you'. Isaiah 59:2*

We are born alienated from God, and we live day by day preoccupied with business and leisure, whilst ignoring the reality of separation from God for all eternity in Hell. This is mankind's greatest problem! – But is there a solution?

Amazingly, God in his infinite love provided the only solution that is able to deal with the problem of our sin and reconcile us to God. God's plan was fully accomplished by His perfect and sinless Son, the Lord Jesus, when He suffered for us, and died for our sins on the cross at Calvary. The Bible tells us that; *'He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed'. Isaiah 53:5*

*'For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly'. Romans 5:6*

We cannot merit God's forgiveness; neither can we earn it by our good deeds and charitable acts nor even by church membership. It is only available as a free gift, by turning from our sins and putting our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He alone has the power to forgive us our sins and to bring us to heaven.

*'Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him'. Hebrews 7:25*

*'For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast'. Ephesians 2:8-9*

Why not repent from your sin today, and accept God's offer of forgiveness?

*'But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name' John 1:12*

