

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Gàrradh Biobaill (1)

Each week the West Highland Free Press publishes the text for Ruairidh's "Letter to Gaelic Learners" on BBC Radio nan Gàidheal (103.5-105 FM). Broadcasts are as follows: 2:55pm on Sunday as part of BBC Radio nan Gàidheal's hour-long learning zone, following the Gaelic Learners' programme 'SpeakGaelic Extra', with a repeat at 10.30 pm on Wednesday. This is Litir 1,365. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 1,061 corresponds to Litir 1,365. The Litir is also available at www.bbc.co.uk/litir and www.learnghaelic.scot/litir. Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learnghaelic.scot.

Tha àite iongantach ann an Eilginn, ann am Moireibh. 'S e leas a th' ann, no gàrradh, agus tha e suidhichte **ri taobh na cathair-eaglais** anns a' bhaile. Gu mì-fhortanach, chaidh a' chathair-eaglais mhòr sin a sgrios o chionn fhada. 'S e tobhta a th' innte an-diugh.

'S e an rud a tha sònraichte mun ghàrradh sin gu bheil e stèidhichte air a' Bhìoball. Tha na lusan a tha fàs ann – no mòran dhiubh – air an ainmeachadh anns a' Bhìoball.

Tha na sgoilearan a th' air rannsachadh a dhèanamh air a' chuspair seo ag innse dhuinn gu bheil còrr is ceud lus – craobhan, preasan, luibhean – air an ainmeachadh anns a' Bhìoball. 'S dòcha nach bu chòir sin a bhith na iongnadh nuair a chuimhnichas sinn àite Gàrradh Èdein anns a' chreideamh. Ann an Genesis Caibideil 2, Rann 15 tha seo: *Agus ghabh an Tighearna Dia an duine, agus chuir e e ann an Gàrradh Èidein, ga shaothrachadh agus ga ghleidheadh.*

'S ann ann an Leabhar Ghenesis, a' chiad leabhar anns a' Bhìoball, a tha a' chiad iomradh air gnèithean sònraichte de chraobhan. Gu h-iongantach, 's e a' chiad tè a nochdas anns an teacsa a' chraobh-chrithinn. Tha sin ann an Genesis 2:37. **Carson a tha sin annasach dhomh?** Uill, dh'èirich beul-aithris am measg nan Gàidheal gur ann bhon chraoibh-chrithinn, no *aspen*, a thàinig am fiodh às an do rinneadh an crann-ceusaidh air an robh Iosa air a cheusadh. 'S e sin as coireach, chanadh na seann daoine, gu bheil duilleagan is gasan beaga na craoibhe an-còmhnaidh air chrith.

Ge-tà, nuair a choimheadas sinn air an dreach Bheurla dhen dearbh earrainn anns a' Bhìoball, chan e '*aspen*' a thathar ag ainmeachadh, ach '*poplar*'. Ged a tha an dà chraoibh sin càirdeach do chèile, chan e an aon rud a th' anna.

Tha a' chraobh-chrithinn, a' ciallachadh *poplar*, a' nochdadh turas eile anns a' Bhìoball. Tha sin a-rithist anns an t-Seann Tiomnadh, ann an Leabhar Hosea, Caibideil 4, Rann 13 nuair a tha an teacsa mu dheidhinn droch chleachdaidhean anns an t-seann aimsir. Seo na tha an teacsa ag ràdh: *Air mullaichean nan sliabh tha iad ag ìobradh, agus air na slèibhtean tha iad a' losgadh tùise; fo chraobhan daraich agus crithinn agus cuilinn a chionn 's gu bheil an sgàile taitneach.*

Tha sin a' ciallachadh ann am Beurla '*On the mountain summits they make sacrifice and upon the hills they burn incense; under oak trees and poplars and holly because the shade is pleasant.*' Ach, anns na dreachan Beurla dhen Bhìoball a th'

agamsa, chan eil gin dhiubh ag ainmeachadh ‘holly’. Tha iad ag ràdh an dàrna cuid ‘elm’ no ‘terebinth’. ’S e an *terebinth* craobh a dh’fhàsas anns an Ear-mheadhanach – ann an àiteachan nas blàithe na Alba.

Chì sibh gun robh duilgheadas aig an fheadhainn a rinn an t-eadar-theangachadh dhen Bhìoball – bhon Eabhra agus Seann Ghreugais – nuair a thàinig iad gu aithneachadh nan craobh agus a’ cur ainmean orra a dh’aithnicheadh na Gàidheil. Agus math dh’fhaodte gu bheil an aon rud fìor ann am Beurla.

Mar sin, ged a dh’fhaodamaid craobh-chuilinn a chur ann an Gàrradh Bìobaill ann an Alba – agus gum fàsadh i gu math – cha chreid mi gum fàsadh *terebinth* ro mhath ann. Anns an ath Litir bheir sinn sùil air lusan eile a’ nochdas air duilleagan a’ Bhiobaill.

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Faclan na Litreach: tobhta: *ruin*; a’ chraobh-chrithinn: *the aspen tree*; an Seann Tiomnadh: *the Old Testament*; Eabhra: *Hebrew*; Seann Ghreugais: *Ancient Greek*.

Abairtean na Litreach: Tha àite iongantach ann an Eilginn, ann am Moireibh: *there is an extraordinary place in Elgin, in Moray*; ’s e leas a th’ ann, no gàrradh: *it’s a garden*; stèidhichte air a’ Bhìoball: *based on the Bible*; gu bheil còrr is ceud lus – craobhan, preasan, luibhean – air an ainmeachadh anns a’ Bhìoball: *that more than a hundred plants – trees, shrubs, herbs – are named in the Bible*; ’s dòcha nach bu chòir sin a bhith na iongnadh nuair a chuimhnicheas sin àite Gàrradh Èdein anns a’ chreideamh: *perhaps that shouldn’t be a surprise when we remember the place of the Garden of Eden in the religion*; ghabh an Tighearna Dia an duine: *the Lord God took the man*; ga shaothrachadh agus ga ghleidheadh: *to work it and take care of it*; a’ chiad iomradh air gnèithean sònraichte de chraobhan: *the first mention of particular species of trees*; am fiodh às an do rinneadh an crann-ceusaidh: *the wood from which the crucifixion cross was made*; air an robh Iosa air a cheusadh: *on which Jesus was crucified*; gu bheil duilleagan is gasan beaga na craoibhe an-còmhnaidh air chrith: *that the leaves and small stems of the tree are always quivering*; ged a tha an dà chraoibh sin càirdeach do chèile: *although those two trees are related to each other*; chan e an aon rud a th’ annta: *they are not the same thing*; tha iad a’ losgadh tùise: *they are burning incense*; a chionn ’s gu bheil an sgàile taitneach: *because the shade [under the foliage] is pleasant*; a dh’aithnicheadh na Gàidheil: *that the Gaels would recognise*; cha chreid mi gum fàsadh X ro mhath ann: *I don’t think that X would grow too well there*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: suidhichte ri taobh na cathair-eaglais: *situated next to the cathedral*. In the compound noun cathair-eaglais, literally ‘throne-church’ (referring to a bishop’s throne), the basic noun is eaglais, with cathair acting as an adjective (unusually, in front of the noun). Ri taobh is a compound preposition which commands the genitive case so eaglais should be in the genitive singular. Traditionally this would have been eaglaise so ri taobh na cathair-eaglaise would also work, but in modern Gaelic the terminal ‘e’ in the genitive singular form of feminine nouns, particularly in a compound noun of this nature, is often left off.

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: Carson a tha sin annasach dhomh?: *why is that strange to me?*

Tha “Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh” air a maoineachadh le MG ALBA