

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Bàs Chalum Chille (1)

A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, designed for Gaelic learners who already have some knowledge of the language. A short vocabulary and comments on points of grammar and figures of speech are included with the text. If you have comments, Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleam@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 1,031. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 727 corresponds to Litir 1,031.

Rinn an naomh ainmeil, Calum Cille, fàisneachd air a bhàs fhèin ceithir bliadhna mus do chaochail e. Tha mi airson innse dhuibh mu dheidhinn. Chaidh aithris a dhèanamh air le Naomh Adamnan – no Eònan – anns a’ chunntas aige *Vita Sancti Columbae* – Beatha Chalum Chille.

Turas a bha seo, nuair a bha Calum Cille a’ fuireach ann an Eilean Ì, thàinig aoibhneas air. Ge-tà, an dèidh beagan diogan, thàinig bròn air.

Aig an dearbh àm sin, bha dithis fhear nan seasamh aig doras bothan an naoimh. B’ e fear dhiubh Lugne Mocuclair. B’ e am fear eile Sagsannach dom b’ ainm Pìlu. Dh’fhaighnich iad de Chalum Cille gu dè dh’adhbharaich a chuid aoibhneis agus bròin.

Thuirt Calum Cille riutha, ‘Thallaibh ann an sìth agus na faighnichibh dhìom na dh’adhbharaich m’ aoibhneas no mo bhròn.’

Chaidh na fir air an glùinean. Bha iad a’ **sileadh nan deur**. Bha iad airson faighinn a-mach na dh’ionnsaich an naomh a thug air a bhith ri gàirdeachas agus an uair sin ri bròn.

Dh’inns e dhaibh ann an dìomhaireachd na thachair dha. Ach thug e orra gealltainn nach canadh iad càil mu dheidhinn ri duine sam bith eile fhad ’s a bha esan beò. Thug iad a leithid de ghealltanais dha.

‘Air an latha seo fhèin,’ thuirt Calum Cille, ‘tha mi air a bhith ann am Breatainn deich bliadhna fichead. Airson grunn làithean, tha mi air a bith ag iarraidh air an Tighearna gun leig e saor mi bhon àite-chòmhnaidh agam an seo, agus gun gairm e mi gu mo dhùthaich athaireil ann an Nèamh.’

‘S e sin a thug orm a bhith aoibhneach,’ lean Calum Cille. ‘Chunnaic mi ainglean à Nèamh a thàinig airson coinneachadh ri m’ anam. Ach, **fèach!** Tha iad air stad gu h-obann agus tha iad nan seasamh air creag air taobh thall Caolas Ì.’

Agus dè thug air na h-ainglean stad ann am Muile, gun a bhith a’ tighinn ro fhaisg air an naomh? Uill, dh’inns Calum Cille don dithis eile gun robh Dia air a bheachd air a’ ghnòthach atharrachadh. Bha e air a bhith ag èisteachd ri coitheanalan eaglaise. Bha iad a’ dèanamh ùrnaighean airson Calum Cille a chumail beò. Agus ghabh Dia ris na h-ùrnaighean.

Bha Calum Cille deiseil a dhol a Nèamh. ’S e sin a bu chòir gun robh e ri gàirdeachas. Ach thuirt Dia ris gum biodh e beò ceithir bliadhna eile air an Talamh. Agus dh’fhàg sin Calum Cille brònach.

‘Aig deireadh nan ceithir bliadhna seo,’ thuirt Calum Cille, ‘gheibh mi bàs gu h-obann, gun a bhith tinn sa bhodhaig ro-làimh, agus falbhaidh mi le aoibhneas chun an Tighearna, le ainglean naomh nam chois oir thig iad gam iarraidh aig an àm sin.’

Bha Calum Cille beò mar sin airson ceithir bliadhna eile. Ach bha e gu math brònach thar na h-ùine sin. Bha an aois a’ laighe air gu mòr. Faisg air deireadh nan ceithir bliadhna, chaidh e latha a bha seo, ann am mìos a’ Chèitein, airson coinneachadh ri manaich a bha ag obair air taobh an iar Eilean Ì. Dh’inns e dhaibh gun robh e ag iarraidh siubhal bhon t-saoghal seo ach nach robh e airson am fàgail brònach. Agus, an-ath-sheachdain, innsidh mi dhuibh mar a chaochail Calum Cille ann an Ì beagan làithean an dèidh sin.

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Faclan na Litreach: Eònan: *the form of Adamnan often used in Scotland*; Eilean Ì: *Iona*; glùinean: *knees*; ainglean: *angels*; anam: *soul*; coitheanalan: *congregations*; nam chois: *along with me*.

Abairtean na Litreach: Rinn Calum Cille, fàisneachd air a bhàs fhèin ceithir bliadhna mus do chaochail e: *Columba, prophesied his own death four years before he died*; thàinig aoibhneas air: *joy came upon him*; ge-tà, an dèidh beagan diogan, thàinig bròn air: *however, after a few seconds, sadness came upon him*; aig an dearbh àm sin: *at the same time*; bha dithis fhear nan seasamh aig doras bothan an naoimh: *two men were standing at the door of the saint’s hut*; Sagsannach dom b’ ainm Pìlu: *a Saxon called Pìlu*; thallaibh ann an sìth: *go in peace*; na faighnichibh dhìom na dh’adhbharaich m’ aoibhneas no mo bhròn: *don’t ask me what caused my joy or my sadness*; dh’inns e dhaibh ann an dìomhaireachd na thachair dha: *he told them in secret what [had] happened to him*; nach canadh iad càil mu dheidhinn ri X fhad ’s a bha esan beò: *that they wouldn’t say anything about it to X as long as he lived*; thug iad a leithid de ghealltanais dha: *they made such a promise to him*; ann am Breatainn deich bliadhna fichead: *in Britain for thirty years*; tha mi air a bith ag iarraidh air an Tighearna gun leig e saor mi bhon àite-chòmhnaidh agam: *I’ve been asking the Lord to release me from my dwelling*; gun gairm e mi gu mo dhùthaich athaireil ann an Nèamh: *that he call me to my fatherland in Heaven*; tha iad nan seasamh air creag air taobh thall Caolas Ì: *they are standing on a rock on the far side of the Sound of Iona*; dè thug air na h-ainglean stad ann am Muile: *what caused the angels to stop on Mull*; gheibh mi bàs gu h-obann, gun a bhith tinn sa bhodhaig ro-làimh: *I shall die suddenly without any bodily sickness beforehand*; thig iad gam iarraidh: *they shall come to get me*; bha an aois a’ laighe air: *age was affecting him*; mìos a’ Chèitein: *the month of May*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Bha iad a’ sileadh nan deur: *they were crying [letting the tears fall]*. Deur is the genitive plural form of deur ‘tear’. Some people would today use the nominative plural form deòir ie a’ sileadh na(n) deòir. Both are acceptable; the form I used is more traditional.

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: fèach!: *look!* This is an old-fashioned word and therefore suitable for Biblical use, and in discussing ancient religious figures like Calum Cille [the account of his life was written in Latin].

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