A STRANGE DAY

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Category: Observations

Yesterday was always going to be a tiring day. Months ago, I agreed to do a lecture on the King James Version and Missionary Translations of the Bible at Plymouth University. (If you are interested in the subject, you can listen to a very similar lecture on the same theme here.) However, in the meantime the board of Wycliffe UK changed their meeting dates, so that they were meeting yesterday morning.

So the plan was that I would attend the board meeting and then dash home, put my suit on and head off for the train and on to Plymouth. However, when Sue dropped me off at Reading station, I discovered that there was all sorts of problems with the trains and I ended up seating on the floor by the toilets between Reading and Taunton.

However, the big issue of the day was the sad death of our colleague Mary in a terrorist bombing in Jerusalem. In these situations, my concern is always for the family and close friends who are going through a difficult time. I arranged for news to be circulated to our Wycliffe staff and asked them to be sensitive in what they posted online. I also arranged that I would be the person to field any comments from the media - not expecting that there would be that many.

How wrong could I be?

For virtually the whole of my train journey down to Plymouth, I was enaged in one conversation after another with people from the national newspapers who wanted information on Mary. The staff at Horsleys Green did a great job of sending me background information that I wasn't aware of. However, it is far from easy to read emails on your phone while you are talking toÂ the press - especially when you are sitting on the floor of a very crowded train. In the end, I've been very pleased with the sensitive way in which the press have presented the story and my big concern and prayer is still for Mary's parents.

After all of that, the lecture seemed to go very well and the journey back was more or less uneventful - apart from trying to conduct interviews with two Christian media outlets while my phone repeatedly lost its signal.

Meanwhile; I find myself musing on the fragility of human life and the need to spend every minute wisely.