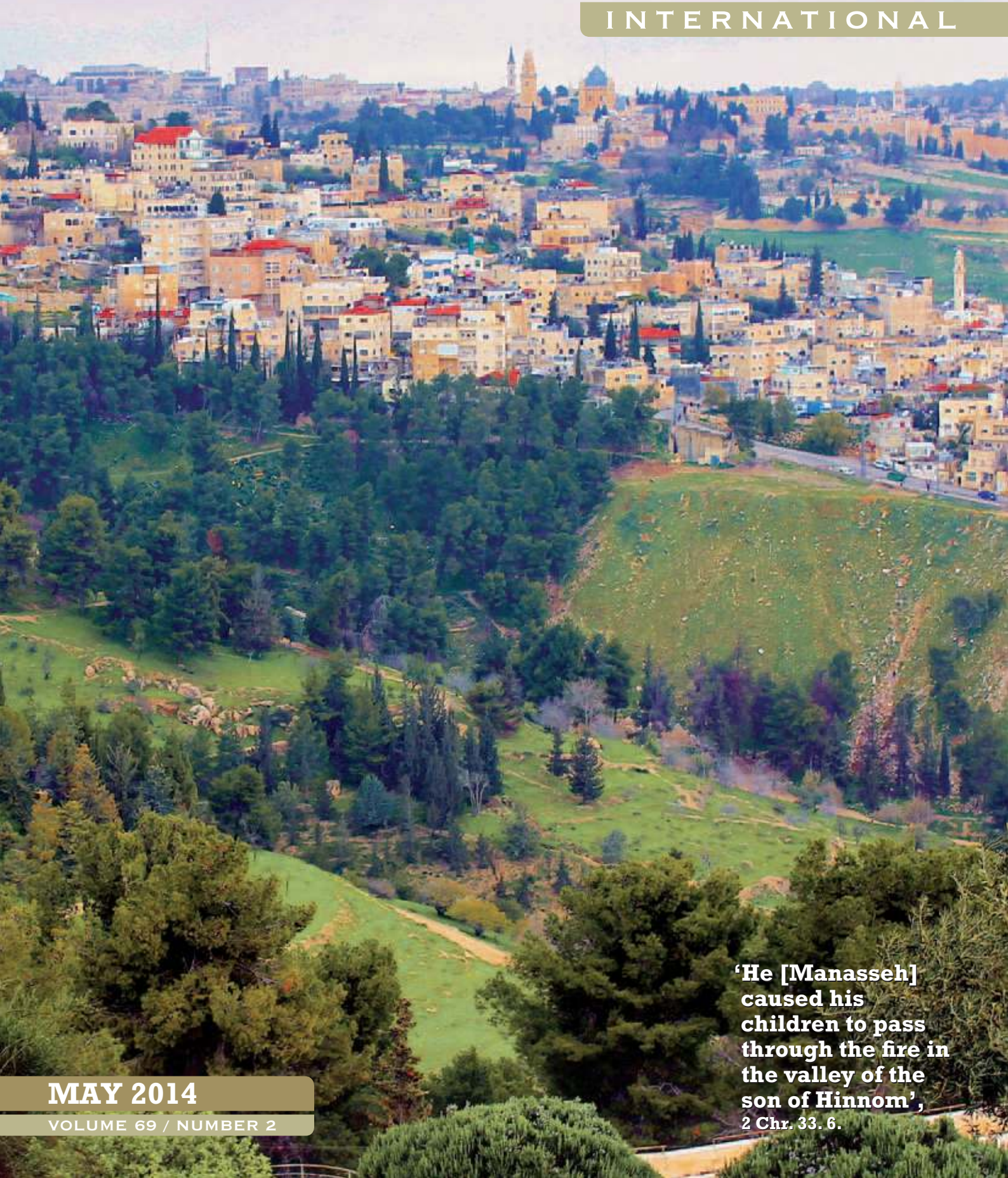


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INTERNATIONAL



**MAY 2014**

VOLUME 69 / NUMBER 2

**'He [Manasseh]  
caused his  
children to pass  
through the fire in  
the valley of the  
son of Hinnom',  
2 Chr. 33. 6.**



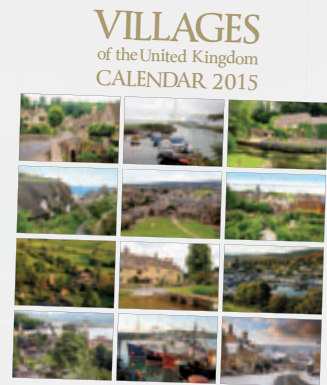


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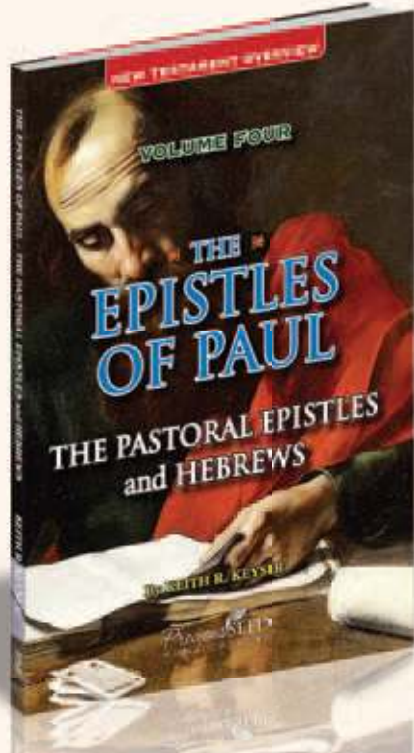
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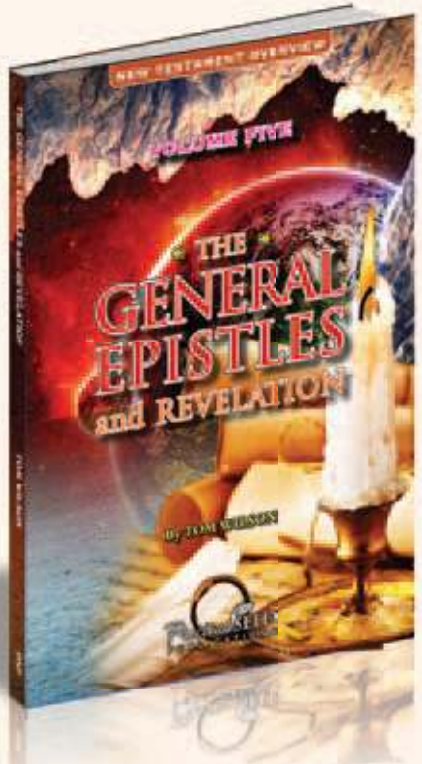


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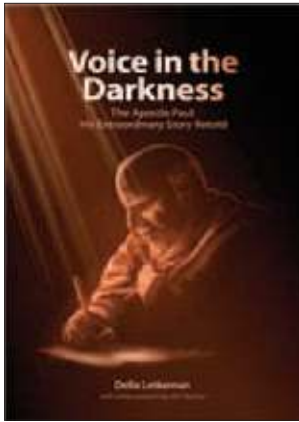
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# Book Reviews

Compiled by JOHN BENNETT

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## **Voice in the Darkness** Della Letkeman

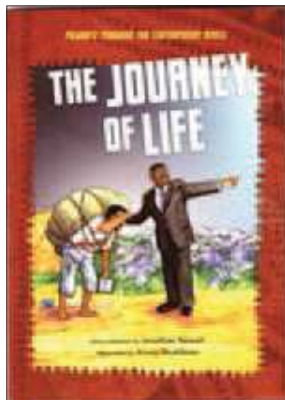
Paperback, 286 pages, published by Everyday Publications Inc. 310 Killaly Street West, Port Colborne, Ontario, L3K 6A6, Canada. ISBN 978-0-88873-723-6.

The contents of this book owe a great deal to Dr. R. E. Harlow who had hoped to write an account of the life of the apostle Paul, but was called home before he could complete that project. Della Letkeman has taken over Dr. Harlow's planned work – not an easy task. She has provided a very readable account of Paul's life, drawing together the material already prepared, and offering, largely in chronological order, a narrative history of the apostle to the Gentiles.

The author's method has been to collate data taken from the New Testament, and from extra-biblical sources, and to bring all this together into a seamless narrative. In order to make that narrative flow, and to enhance its impact on the reader, the writer has used what she describes as 'artistic licence' when recreating some of the scenes, imagining

the dialogue which might lie behind the raw facts. Although this literary device works perfectly well when she is offering additional factual information, it is not so successful when she attempts to reflect the emotional reactions of the main characters. This can sometimes prove a distraction and, on occasions, comes dangerously close to trivialising significant events. In keeping with the tenor of the book, scripture quotations are mainly from the New Living Translation. The book consists of a preface, twenty-two chapters, and an epilogue. Some thirty-six maps, charts, illustrations, and photographs support the narrative, and add to its clarity. The material drawn upon is underpinned by very full references and a bibliography contains suggestions for further reading.

Although no target readership is explicitly defined, and the book is accessible to all age-groups, the style which the author has adopted will ensure that this work will be well received by younger readers. It provides an excellent overview of Paul's life, and ministry, showing how his epistles dovetail into the record of the Acts, and will help the reader to understand how the apostle's work of bringing the gospel to the Gentile nations was carried out in the unsympathetic, and often hostile, world of the first century.



## **The Journey Of Life – Pilgrim's Progress for Contemporary Africa**

Adapted by Jonathan Newell (in English)

Paperback; 158 pages, published by Opal Trust, 1 Glenannan Park, Lockerbie, DG11 2FA, Scotland. ISBN 978-1-907098-04-8.

Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, a wonderful narrative of life as a journey, caught the imagination of the English-speaking world for many years, and no Christian book has probably had a bigger impact after the Bible. Let us hope that this may happen in Africa with this adaptation! Certainly the publication is attractively presented.

The author has adapted the language, the range of vocabulary is restricted and the sentence length is 'short to medium' so that it reads well! The setting is also adapted; the place is southern Africa. Apollyon is not a foul fiend with darts but an evil-looking snake which spits poison; Christian bemoans the sin of allowing his wife to go to the witchdoctor. The time has changed; we are in the modern world. Faithful meets a woman

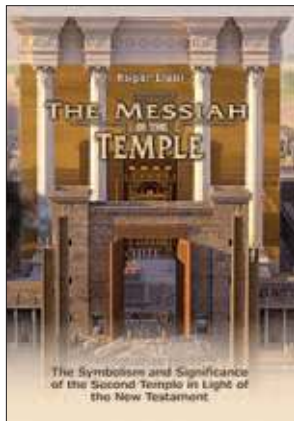
called 'No Morals' who seeks to seduce him, but he resists her not only because he remembers parts of the book of Proverbs, but also because of the danger of HIV/Aids. 'Hold-to-the-World' teaches the 'Prosperity Gospel' – with the blessings of cell-phones, new cars, and clothes. 'Money-Lover' tells a business man to be religious and go to a large church where he will get more customers and have a good chance of marrying a rich, religious wife. Names of characters and places are changed, so 'Pick-Thank' becomes 'Yes, bwana', and 'Vanity Fair' 'Great Market'.

Another change is that longer passages of teaching and conversation have been reduced or omitted, whilst illustrations have been introduced which are very helpful in adding much colour, and a flavour of the setting. Five or six questions under headings with scripture references feature at the end; for example, "'Money Hill" – Why is "Money Hill" so dangerous? Luke 16 vs. 11-14; Acts 5 vs. 1-11; 1 Timothy 6 vs. 9-10; Hebrews 13 v. 5'. Another pertinent question at the end is, 'Why are there so many officials like "Desire for Empty Glory", "Great Wealth", "Sexual Sin", in our countries and governments?'

This last point reminds us that Bunyan's original has timeless features; treasure and pleasure remain strong sources of temptation in our world! Another common feature is the frequent use of realistic dialogue, and, of course, the plot. For readers in the UK, read Bunyan first. However, both books will encourage and uplift any believer.

[Our thanks to Bryan Charles, Appledore, Devon, England, for this review]





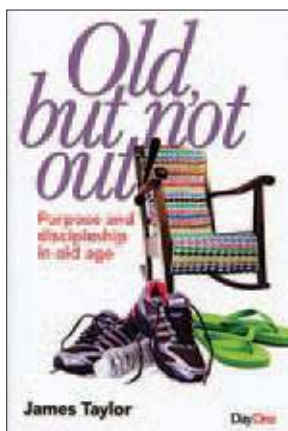
## **The Messiah in the Temple** Roger Liebi

Hardback, 610 pages, published by Christlicher Medien-Vertrieb, Postfach 300 430, 40404 Düsseldorf, Germany.

Price: £27.50. ISBN 978-3-943175-05-9

This full-colour volume, originally published in German, has now been translated into English to reach a wider audience. Its author, Roger Liebi, is a Messianic Jew, and, as such, is ideally placed to bring out the symbolism and significance of the Second Temple in the light of the New Testament. The book is beautifully illustrated, with many photographs, diagrams, and artistic impressions, that guide the reader through the different parts of the Temple as it would have looked when the Lord walked in its precincts. As the writer says in the introduction, 'The intention of this book is to lead the reader into the world of the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, the epoch in which the Old and New Testaments meet and unite together in fulfilment of the divine promise of salvation'.

If you want to get a deeper insight into aspects of the life and ministry of the Lord and the apostles, then this fascinating book will reward the patient and diligent reader. Its thorough research and detailed indexing will enable the student to access material that helps to shed new light on scripture. Others may be drawn by the extensive use of illustrations, which, with the accompanying text, will give insights into favourite passages.



## **Old but not out** James Taylor

Paperback, 108 pages, published by Day One Publications, Rylands Road, Leominster, HR6 0NZ, England.

Price: £6.00. ISBN 978-1-84625-306-5.

The sub-title of this book is 'Purpose and Discipleship in Old Age'. Written by James Taylor, a retired Baptist minister with considerable pastoral, administrative, and academic experience, it does not set out to provide answers to all the problems associated with growing old; the whole thrust of this readable volume is to stimulate us to approach this period of life with positive attitudes, and to take advantage of the opportunities which it offers. Eight of the nine chapters focus on a Bible character, or on a specific passage from scripture, from which the author seeks to draw lessons, and to challenge older people in their life and service for the Lord, to make the most of the opportunities which advancing years bring.

While encouragement abounds, the author does not fail in his duty to remind those of us who have passed our 'three score years and ten' that what we are in old age is the result of what we have been in our earlier years, 'You take into retirement the person your working years have formed. You prepare for old age by taking a positive attitude throughout your life, and by living each stage fully'. Among the opportunities which enrich our later years, the author rightly highlights the need to engage in intercessory prayer. For the Christian there is also the opportunity to go on learning. The constraints of space prevented the author from giving us a list of such lessons. Those of us who have any sense of our own weaknesses would not find it difficult to compile one!

A chapter on Eli brings a salutary reminder that we take into the eventide of life the mistakes of our earlier years. On the other hand Caleb offers us an example to emulate, reminding us that 'there is no discharge in that war'; the Lord of the churches does not want us to squander our later years in self-indulgence. 'So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom'.



## **Show & Tell** Colin D. Jones

[5 volumes covering Adam and Eve, Joseph and his family, Elijah and the false prophets, Palm Sunday, and The lame man healed].

Paperback, 16 pages each, published by Day One Publications, Rylands Road, Leominster, HR6 0NZ, England.

Price: £2.50 each, ISBN 978-1-84625-374-4; 978-1-84625-375-1; 978-1-84625-380-5; 978-1-84625-377-5; 978-1-84625-378-2.

These are the first five in what the publishers promise to be a series of books designed to engage 'young children in family prayers'. Each booklet is designed to

be used by parents and read over five days. At the end of each book there is a suggested reading and a sample prayer for each day of the plan.

As one might expect with books aimed at this age group, they are illustrated in colour using computer generated graphics. The picture occupies one page and the Bible story for the day the other page. In this way there is scope to use the booklet with children who are not confident and independent readers. The writer has also included a short glossary at the beginning of each volume that enables the reader to make 'Big words . . . simple'.

As well as teaching some of the biblical stories to young children, these booklets also seek to emphasize a moral lesson for each day. Based upon these first five, there is much that Christian parents can use to encourage their children to read for themselves, to trust the word of God, and, ultimately, to lead their children to the Lord in salvation. They form an excellent resource.

# Contents

## Book Reviews

Inside Front Cover

**The Eternal State** ..... 2

By RICHARD CATCHPOLE

**Manasseh and Amon** ..... 4

By JOHN SCARSBROOK

**The Challenge of Growing Old** ..... 6

By TOM WATT

**Health and Safety** ..... 8

By STEPHEN BUCKERIDGE

**The Believer as a Priest** ..... 10

By MIKE OAKES

**The Sovereignty of God in Salvation** ..... 12

By IAN JACKSON

**Glory** ..... 14

By CLIFF JONES

**Daniel's Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks** ..... Pull-Out  
– Part Four

By ANDREW WILSON

**YPS** ..... Pull-Out

**Shared Hope** ..... 15

**Mark and Timothy** ..... 16

By SIMON SHERWIN

**Views from the News** ..... 19

By SANDY JACK

**The Priesthood - Part Two** ..... 20

By JOHN HALL

**The Servant Songs of Isaiah – Part Three** ..... 22

By ADAM THROPAY

**Frederick Stanley Arnot: 1858-1914** ..... 24

By JOHN BENNETT

**Reports** ..... 26

By SANDY JACK

**Gospel Literature Ireland** ..... 28

**A Word for Today** ..... 29

By BRIAN CLATWORTHY

**Question Time** ..... Inside Back Cover

By RICHARD COLLINGS

# Editorial

## ‘When thou comest, bring with thee . . . the books, but especially the parchments’, 2 Tim. 4. 13.

It was on one of my occasional visits to a local book depot that I met the founder of the charity that runs it. We stood talking about how many books they are now able to send out all over the world as a result of donations – their desire being to provide Christian literature to book-impooverished countries and, through that literature, to enable believers to be taught and grow in their knowledge of the truth. As we talked, thinking on the role that books had played in the life of the Lord,<sup>1</sup> and the early church,<sup>2</sup> I was reminded of the verse above.

I wonder what importance we attach to the written word, whether in the form of books or magazines. We are tremendously blessed in that we can access so much sound material. But do we value it? Sadly, it might even be the case that we do not pick up our Bibles on a daily basis in order to read from the word of God whilst many people around the world still do not have a Bible in their language.

As the apostle was imprisoned in Rome, what was it that brought pleasure to him? No doubt it was the books and the parchments. We do not know to what the apostle is referring, but books or scrolls would not be printed but handwritten. Providing such material for reading could have taken a number of painstaking hours to write or copy. However, these labours gave the apostle the opportunity to read and to meditate. Even though he was conscious that his life would soon be ended, he did not slacken his efforts to get to know more of the word of God and the God it reveals.

What is it that we count precious? If we were conscious that our life was drawing to its close, either through illness or awaiting martyrdom, in what pursuit would we seek to spend our last days?

It is encouraging to know so many of the Lord's servants who are prepared to spend time writing in order to provide spiritual food for God's people. The work of *Precious Seed International* goes on, in spite of the hours that it takes to edit and prepare each copy. In this issue we see a number of profitable series come to an end – the one on prophetic truth, the short series on the sovereignty of God. Similarly, the series on the life of Elijah, and the series on Philippians by Keith Keyser were concluded in the February magazine – for those who missed any part it is available in book form from our web store. We express our sincere thanks to the authors of them all. We trust that in this magazine there will be material to cheer as well as challenge the Lord's people.

### Endnotes

1 Luke 4. 17-29.

2 See, for example, Acts 8. 29-39; 17. 11.





# THE ETERNAL

By **RICHARD CATCHPOLE** South Norwood, England

It is noticeable how few passages in the Bible give details concerning the eternal state, or, as it is called in scripture, 'the day of God'. The absence of such information is perhaps of some significance, suggesting that such will be the glory of that day, human language is either too impoverished to be able to adequately describe it, or, if it could be described, we would, in our present state, be unable to comprehend it. Broadly speaking, there are just three passages of scripture that develop in any detail truth relative to that day, and in each passage we should notice the very definite emphasis upon 'God'.<sup>1</sup> The first is in 1 Corinthians chapter 15 verses 24 to 28, and at the end of verse 28 we read 'that God may be all in all'. Next 2 Peter chapter 3 verses 10 to 14, the apostle referring to 'the day of God' in verse 12. Finally, Revelation chapter 21 verses 1 to 8, where some six times John mentions 'God'.<sup>2</sup>

## The presentation of the kingdom to the Father, 1 Cor. 15. 28

1 Corinthians chapter 15 is the great chapter on resurrection. We know that at Corinth there were those who denied the fact of resurrection, v. 12, while others questioned the manner of the resurrection, v. 35, hence the teaching of Paul in this chapter. Verses 21 to 28 form something of a parenthesis, covering the whole history of man, from Adam's fall, v. 21, to the eternal state, vv. 24, 28. Paul indicates that if there is no resurrection then God's prophetic programme will come to nought. In describing the order of the resurrections Paul says in verses 23 and 24, 'Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming' embracing, from the period of the rapture through to the Revelation in glory, the resurrection of both Old and New Testament saints, and those martyred for their faith during the tribulation, 'Then cometh the end'. The Greek word for 'then' carries the idea of 'next in a sequence, or after an interval', while the word for 'end' denotes the 'ultimate, absolute end', bringing us to the threshold of eternity. We might ask why the apostle, at this point,

moves on to speak of the absolute end? The answer is that then the final resurrection takes place, when the unregenerate will be raised to stand before the Great White Throne; the order of resurrection will then be complete, Rev. 20. 11-15. But Paul does say, then after an interval cometh the end so now we might ask 'what comes in the interval'? Two things are mentioned in verse 24 indicated by the repetition of the word 'when', 'Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power'. The final end cannot come until the kingdom has been delivered to God, the Father. But that will happen only when, in consequence of His millennial reign and governmental power, all things have been made subject to Christ, in accordance with the purpose of God. This will be the character of the kingdom the Lord will deliver into the hands of the Father and 'when all things shall be subdued under him, then' and now the Greek word denotes 'then at that time, then immediately', expressing Christ's willingness and delight in handing the kingdom to His Father. 'Then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him, that put all things under Him', 1 Cor. 15. 28. this is not a denial of Christ's essential deity, nor of His oneness with the Father, but rather the position that He will voluntarily take in the outworking of the Father's counsel and purpose, with the object 'that God', God and the Godhead, 'may be all in all'.

## The promise of new heavens and a new earth, 2 Pet. 3. 13

Believers are viewed as 'looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God', v. 12, the idea is literally 'looking for and desiring', for we certainly cannot hasten what has been set in the counsel of God, though we should have desires and longings for it. In verse 13 Peter says, 'We according to His promise look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness',

and three things might be considered in light of this verse:

1) Where do we have that promise? Some believe that the day of God is not anticipated in the Old Testament, even though two passages speak of 'new heavens and a new earth', Isa. 65. 17; 66. 22. While in both chapters it must be acknowledged that the millennial kingdom is being primarily described, we should nevertheless appreciate that the millennium culminates with the day of God, hence the references in Isaiah. Likewise, in 2 Peter chapter 3 the apostle brings the two days together, speaking of the 'day of the Lord', v. 10, and of 'the day of God', v. 12, and in connection with both he mentions the dissolution of all things, that event marking the conclusion of the day of the Lord, and the introduction of the day of God.

2) In what sense will the earth and heavens be new? The Greek word denotes not only new in time but also fresh in character, something entirely different from anything previously known. Will God create them totally afresh, or will He re-create them out of the existing material of this present world? While scholars are divided on this point, the language of Hebrews chapter 1 verses 11 and 12, 'They all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed', and Revelation chapter 20 verse 11, 'The earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them', as well as the words of 2 Peter chapter 3 verses 10 to 12, 'The heavens shall pass away with a great noise', and 'the elements shall melt (Gk. 'be loosed') with fervent heat . . . the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved (Gk. 'be loosed')', and 'the elements shall melt (Gk. 'to liquify') with fervent heat', all suggest this is more than a mere renovation of the old, but the introduction of something completely new.

3) What will be the distinctive feature of the new heavens and





# STATE

earth? Peter says 'wherein dwelleth righteousness'. The word 'dwelleth' has the idea of 'settling down in a dwelling, to be at home'. At present, 'grace reigns through righteousness', Rom. 5. 21; in the millennium there will be a reign of righteousness, Isa. 32. 1, but in the eternal state



righteousness will dwell, be perfectly at home, undisturbed in a universe of bliss.

## The primary character of the eternal state, Rev. 21. 1-8

1) 'No more sea', at present the sea is essential for the maintenance of life upon the earth, and for its sanitation. The sea today divides and separates peoples. It was not so in the original creation; then the waters were 'gathered together unto one place', Gen. 1. 9. But the situation that pertains on earth today is, of

course, a product of the flood, but there will be no such divisions or barriers in the eternal state.

2) 'The holy city, new Jerusalem', the dwelling place of the church and the city for which Abraham looked, 'which hath foundations, whose builder (designer) and maker is God', Heb. 11. 10. While in relation to the new earth it is viewed as a city, a centre of administration, it is also called the 'tabernacle of God' marking it out as

His dwelling place. God will dwell with men upon earth, not merely visiting men, nor even ruling over men, but dwelling with them. That has ever been His desire and, as the various ages and dispensations give way to eternity, that desire is realized, God is dwelling with men, and 'God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes'. It does not mean that there will be weeping in eternity, but rather that God will have removed everything that currently causes tears.

3) 'He that overcometh', i.e.,

those born of God, believers, 1 John 5. 4, and a twofold promise is given to them. The first concerns their possessions: 'shall inherit all things'. In Hebrews chapter 1 verse 2 the Lord Jesus is the appointed heir of all things, and here He is pleased to share that inheritance with those who have believed. Then, as to their position, 'I will be his God, and he shall be my son';<sup>3</sup> in his writings John reserves the title of 'son' for the Lord Jesus alone, until this verse, when he uses it in respect of each individual believer in their relationship to God, to convey something of the intimacy of their closeness to, and fellowship with, God.

4) 'The fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable and murderers and whoremongers and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone which is the second death', there will be an eternal separation between the saved and the lost. The Lord Jesus said, 'Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God', John 3. 3. Here warning is given that without the new birth men will be subject to the second death.

May our daily conduct be consistent with our anticipation of the new heavens and earth, and, touched by the plight of those who are lost, may we 'by all means save some', 2 Pet. 3. 11, 14; 1 Cor. 9. 22.

## Endnotes

- 1 There are a few individual verses that likewise concern the eternal state, e.g., Matt. 25. 46; Eph. 3. 21.
- 2 There is disagreement between very able Bible teachers as to whether the whole of chapter 21 through to 22 verse 5 relates to the eternal state, or whether chapter 21 verses 1-8 describe the eternal state and then verse 9 through to chapter 22 verse 5 reverts to a description of the city in the millennium. But whatever view is subscribed to we can say that all agree that throughout it is the same city, and, at the very least, the first eight verses of chapter 21 describe eternal conditions!
- 3 Rev. 21. 7.

**RICHARD CATCHPOLE** is in fellowship with the assembly that meets at Clifton Hall, South Norwood, London. He is a commended full-time worker who ministers the word of God throughout the UK.





If the apostle Paul, by his own admission, was the chief of sinners in the New Testament, then Manasseh could well lay claim to that dubious title in the Old Testament. It is encouraging to note, however, that 'where sin abounded, grace did much more abound', Rom. 5. 20, and both men sought and found repentance. For Manasseh, it was rather too late to reverse his former excesses completely, though it may be that while unable to influence his son Amon for good, perhaps, in his latter few years he was able to encourage his grandson Josiah, though the lad was only six years old when Manasseh died.

It is plain from scripture, and evident in history, that godly parents do not necessarily produce godly children. Manasseh was the son, and, as far as we can gather from scripture, the only son, of Hezekiah, who is often granted the epithet 'good king Hezekiah'. It would seem from the record also that Hephzibah, the mother of Manasseh, whose name means 'my delight is in her', was Hezekiah's only wife. When terminal illness struck Hezekiah, there was no son to take the crown and continue the unbroken line of succession from King David. It would almost seem that the Lord, knowing the evil that would be brought upon the land by Manasseh, was reluctant to allow his birth, in which case another direct descendant of Ahaz, the father of Hezekiah, would continue the line. However, such a contingency was not required as the plea of Hezekiah was heard and fifteen years were added to his life.

There must have been much rejoicing when this son was born, three years after the word of the Lord through the prophet Isaiah had announced to Hezekiah, with uncompromising candour, 'Set thine

# MANASSEH ANI

house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live'; Isaiah, it would seem, was not exactly renowned for his comforting bedside manner! The son was named Manasseh, which means 'forgetting'. In patriarchal days, Joseph had given this name to his firstborn in acknowledgement of the Lord's goodness in allowing him to forget the trials through which he had passed and to put them behind him. Maybe Hezekiah was hoping to forget his illness and the limits put upon his own life, looking forward to the training and development of his son as the future king.

In the event, it was Manasseh who did the forgetting! He forgot the many times that the Lord had shown mercy to the nation when they had turned to Him. He forgot the lessons learned by his father in the destruction of the invading Assyrians; he forgot the warnings against idolatry given by faithful prophets; in fact, he forgot the Lord altogether! What he did not forget were the abominable and sensual rituals involved in the worship of deities revered by the Canaanite nations, who occupied the land when Israel entered it some 750 years previously; Manasseh took the nation right back to the dark days of its history!

Good king though he was, the illness of Hezekiah proved to be a watershed in his life. Following his miraculous recovery, he 'rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up', 2 Chr. 32. 25. Pride led him to reveal his wealth to the Babylonian ambassadors, occasioning another frosty visit from Isaiah foretelling the Babylonian captivity; Hezekiah must have been apprehensive every time he saw Isaiah coming up the palace steps! It was, sadly, only this latter stage of

his father's life that Manasseh saw.

At the tender age of twelve, Manasseh found himself on the throne, with wealth, authority and power to influence for good, or for ill. What he did not know was that he would wear the crown for longer than any before him, or those who succeeded him; what an opportunity to make a lasting impression for good! Alas, Manasseh is remembered for just the opposite reason, Jer. 15. 4.

By  
**JOHN SCARBROOK**  
Killamarsh,  
England

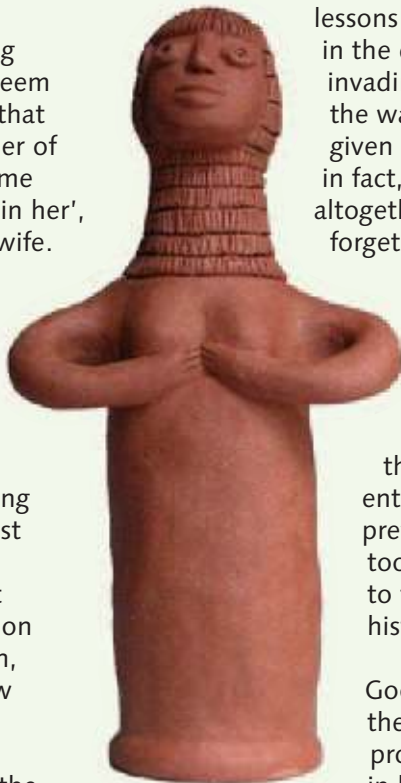
Although the record of Hezekiah's reign gives cause for encouragement,

the warnings of Isaiah reveal an undercurrent of corruption and idolatry, which blighted the nation's rulers and permeated throughout society, Isa. 28. 7-8. With Hezekiah's passing, this malignant growth surfaced and influenced the young king. The record of scripture in both Kings and Chronicles offers no indication that Manasseh made any attempt, or showed the least inclination, to follow the reforms of his father; it would seem that he plunged headlong into a cesspool of iniquity, attempting, if possible, to supersede each vile practice with something even more monstrous!

Idolatry simmered beneath the surface throughout the pre-captivity history of Judah. It would emerge from time to time in various forms and in varying intensity. If, however, we think of idolatry as something consigned to history and heathendom, we do so at our peril! It was reality enough to the godly hymn writer William Cowper to cause him to write with feeling:

The dearest idol I have known,  
Whate'er that idol be  
Help me to tear it from Thy throne,  
And worship only Thee.

Almost from the very dawn of history, man has sought to elevate himself in his defiance of God. Babel was built as a means of challenging God, with its worship of the heavens. Idolatrous priests favoured high places from which to engage in their nefarious practices; such places







# D AMON

gave an impression of superiority and authority, and Manasseh provided them on a massive scale. He built altars, planted groves, and made images in direct rebellion against the word of God, Deut. 16. 21-22. He then turned his attention to the temple. This was the place concerning which the Lord had said to Solomon, 'Now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there forever: and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually', 2 Chr. 7. 16; how it must have offended His eyes and grieved His heart to see Manasseh's idols and altars profaning the sacred precincts. How we need to constantly remind ourselves, in a defiling world, that our bodies are 'the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own', 1 Cor. 6. 19; how careful we should be!

Having made a conscious decision to engage in fellowship with demons and gorge himself at their table, we are not surprised to find Manasseh immersing himself in the occult. The scripture accounts it 'wickedness', yet many in our day consider it harmless, or 'just a bit of fun' to dabble with horoscopes and tarot cards, or worse – things the believer should avoid at all costs. As the crowning obscenity of his reign, Manasseh 'caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom', 2 Chr. 33. 6; a sacrificial offering to Molech, the god of the Ammonites. Abhorrent though it may seem, the gross rituals associated with this pagan deity were a persistent snare to the nation, despite repeated warnings, Lev. 18. 21; Jer. 32. 35.

Tradition holds that Manasseh was responsible for the martyrdom of Isaiah, which may well be so for the prophet's voice is certainly not heard during Manasseh's reign. Other prophets of God, however, did speak out against the king's excesses, warning of dire consequences, 2 Kgs. 21. 10-15. This may have cost them their lives, for the verses which follow tell of the innocent blood which he shed, 'till he had filled Jerusalem from one

end to the other', harrowing details indeed!

2 Chronicles chapter 33 verses 9 and 10 provide a concise, though depressing, summary of Manasseh's obdurate behaviour, he 'made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen, whom the Lord had destroyed before the children of Israel. And the Lord spake to Manasseh, and to his people: but they would not hearken'. There were times when the conduct of certain kings was compared favourably or otherwise with their predecessors. Manasseh exceeded them all in wickedness even by comparison with the Canaanite nations who once occupied the land!

If we had only the record of 2 Kings chapter 21 we would assume that Manasseh lived and died a degenerate reprobate, deserving only the just reward of his deeds. God, however, was not just a detached observer of these excesses, and how glad we are that the Spirit of God has given us the second book of Chronicles. These were the Lord's people, His land, His temple and His glory in jeopardy! So, the mercy of God pursued Manasseh. As so often in their history, the Lord used one of the surrounding nations to discipline His people. On this occasion it was the 'captains of the host of the king of Assyria' who captured and imprisoned Manasseh, little realizing that they were but agents in the hand of a sovereign God, accomplishing His purpose.

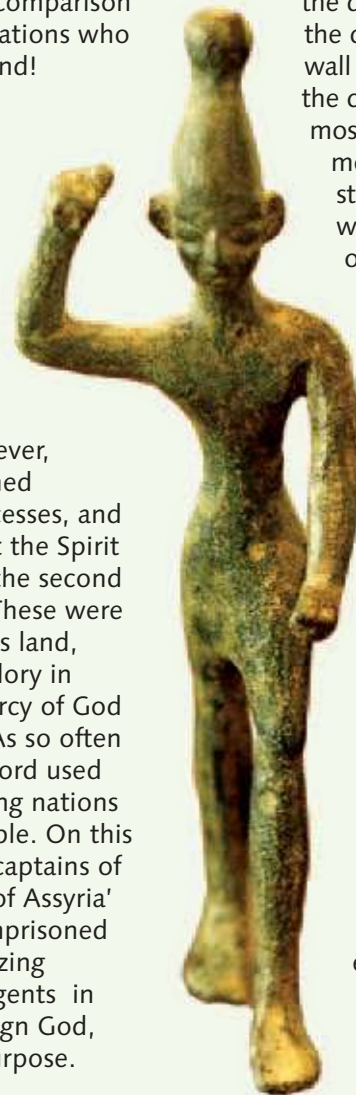
The 'conversion' of Manasseh, for so it was, is told in a few words. His affliction brought him face to face with his sin, the cause of his suffering, and he 'besought the Lord his God'. Pride and arrogance gone, doubtless brought to his knees, he 'humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed unto him'. Then we read those remarkable words, which bring hope to the vilest

sinner, light to the darkened soul and comfort to the despairing heart, 'He was intreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem'.

As he entered the city, before and around him were the altars, the high places, the images and the groves of his former life; yet even as he viewed them 'Manasseh knew that the Lord he was God', 2 Chr. 33. 13. We do not know how much longer Manasseh lived and reigned. What we do know, however, is that his conversion was real; the change was evident. From this point on, and for the rest of his life, he set about trying to undo the damage he had inflicted on the city and the nation. A high wall was built on the side of the city which would provide most protection for the temple mount. The military was strengthened, idols and altars were destroyed and the altar of the Lord repaired in order to offer peace offerings and thank offerings.

Sadly, however, damage had been done, both to his family and to many in the nation. Sometimes, the consequences of sin, though repented of and forgiven, are not easily eradicated.

When Amon came to the throne, on the death of Manasseh, he quickly immersed himself in all the former excesses of his father, having learned nothing from God's mercy to one so steeped in sin. But he would learn to his eternal cost that 'God is not mocked'. Instead of the fifty-five years granted to Manasseh, only two years are allowed to Amon, during which he 'humbled not himself as his father . . . but trespassed more and more'. Even his own servants could not tolerate him and they 'slew him in his own house'; a cautionary warning to all who ignore the lessons to be learned from the lives of others!



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**'Now also when I am old and grey-headed, O God, forsake me not', Ps. 71. 18. 'When I remember these things . . . for I had gone with the multitude . . . to the house of God', 42. 4. 'Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth', 71. 9.**

We frequently read and hear in the news of new laws and advice given by writers and politicians to people of all ages. Youth and children have never been better cared for, yet the biblical concept of family life has been eroded and its purpose has been practically destroyed; in many places it is non-existent. Age and the aged are a source of problems, difficulties, and even embarrassment to many families. The idea of caring for aged parents at home is seen as a burden too far, interfering with life's enjoyment.

Yet, age with all its challenges comes to many of us and the scripture speaks volumes about this time of life, giving help, advice and wisdom to elderly saints. Old age is usually accompanied by physical decline – that is a fact, yet there are exceptions.

Older people cannot do what they once did and cannot always do what they would like to do. Memory fades, some find it difficult to concentrate to read the word, and for others it is difficult to get out to meetings because of tiredness or frailty. Many tend to live in the past and some can be a bit crotchety. Again, age brings loneliness, friends die, circumstances change, families move, assemblies close, and sometimes disagreements bring disruption and loss. What a prospect! This is not what was hoped for, yet in the midst of these difficulties comes a challenge.

These may be the sunset years – the autumn of life – but they can be the golden years. Many of us do not fear the dark spectre of death, for there is a hope, a home, a Father's house. What we do fear is the darkness of a failing spiritual life – a bitter and mean-spirited old age – only a memory of past glories. We may become a person to be avoided because of bitterness or fretfulness. How do we face this prospect of old age and bring about the fruitful golden years?

# THE CHALLENGE

In the Old Testament there are five poetic books: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon. At the end of each book there is a record of men that have things in common. They have experienced life with all its changes, they are all engaged fully within their capacities for God, and they are fulfilling a function which benefits their fellowmen. They are like the woman with the alabaster box who 'did what she could', Mark 14. 8 NIV.

By  
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- The book of Job ends with a man praying.
- Psalms ends with a man praising. Proverbs ends with a man prophesying.
- Ecclesiastes ends with a man preaching.
- The Song of Songs ends with a man pledging.

In Job's case he had no knowledge of the reasons behind his loss of health or family; his friends misunderstood him and said, 'Job must have sinned'. He must have been lonely, and sometimes downcast, but at the end 'he kept praying' and because he prayed his friends were forgiven.

The golden years bring with them time. What we do with this time is our responsibility. We could waste it, fritter it away, or we could set aside each day a time to pray, not casually as a form to feel good but specifically – not clichéd, but to lay hold on God with persistence. Make the lonely hours a sanctuary! Then, old hurts can

be healed, wrongs can be righted, circumstances can be seen from Heaven's stand point. Age brings time to pray.

Age also brings time to praise yet so many of we older saints are full of groans, rather than praise. From Psalm 145 to Psalm 150 the psalmist is full of praise. In Psalm 145 we have the reasons for praise – five times the psalmist mentions God's greatness, vv. 3-7; 'the Lord is gracious', v. 8. Note, too, the regularity of praise, 'every day', v. 2; 'for ever and ever', vv. 1, 2, 21.

Psalm 146 brings us praise for God's activities and work: in creation, government, providence, restoration, continuity. In Psalm 148 we have praise for the stability of the unchanging law and in Psalm 149, praise for the assembly of His saints.







# OF GROWING OLD

Finally, in Psalm 150 there is praise for His person. It is not possible to remember all we should praise Him for, but a time of praise mellows the day and sweetens the life.

Later years also bring time for reflection and thought regarding decisions made. In Proverbs we have a man prophesying – bringing wisdom. Age should bring the wisdom of experience! Titus writes that aged men should be sober – balanced, like the sons of Issachar, who knew 'what Israel ought to do', 1 Chr. 12. 32. In this age of change and difficulty, men and women of wisdom are at a premium. Not all old people are wise. When Samuel was old he made his sons judges over Israel – an unwise decision. When Solomon was old his wives turned away his heart from the Lord. It is possible to ruin a lifetime of service and testimony in old age by bad decisions in families,

bitterness over seeming slights or wrongs, or even regret over past sins, missed opportunities or even jealousy. Wise older believers, out of a lifetime of experience, should warn about morals, about self-seeking satisfaction, and commend the care of the needy, and the bonds of love and unity. They should encourage Bible study and seek to encourage younger believers in every way. It is so easy to be critical but this is a deterrent to spiritual growth. Wise men and women are able to help unobtrusively.

At the end of the fourth poetic book we have a delightful picture of an old man preaching – not so much in public, but speaking to youth, or even his grandchildren, in a way they would remember. He speaks in three couplets and at the centre, in the heady exciting days of youth, Eccles. 12. 1, is a call to remember their creator, because youth will change, years will pass. Earthly ambition and philosophy is transient and physical strength will decay.

In beautiful language he speaks of not being able to walk far, 'the keepers of the house shall tremble', of failing eyesight 'those that look out of the windows be darkened', – of a failing appetite for food and music, 'when . . . the grinders cease because they are few'. But,

because he was wise, he spoke with clarity, and sought acceptable words of knowledge. In wisdom he did not decry youthful exuberance, but used a method that would stick like nails fastened by the 'master of assemblies', v. 11. The real content of his speaking was simple – fear God, keep His word. At the end the totality of life will be brought to light and judgement. The final words of older people will be long remembered, whether they be of praise and encouragement, or grumbling and bitterness.

Lastly, the final choice for older saints with all the problems of age is a man pledging in Solomon's song of love. Whatever we think of this book – the who, the where, the when – it is a love story. It is a man remembering, looking back, reminiscing. He speaks of early days of first love – a reminder to us of when we were first attracted to the Saviour. He sees her under a tree. Equally, all who love Christ have pledged their love for Him under a tree – at Calvary. There, under the apple tree, He gave his love two things to remember him by, 'a seal upon thine heart . . . a seal upon thine arm', S. of S. 8. 6. There is a special privilege for old people to speak of a lifetime experience of walking with God.

The ancient rabbis said the seal upon her heart was a locket filled with myrrh – and all the time he was away the odour of the myrrh would remind her of him. All through the book, in the wilderness days, in all the circumstances of shadowed days, days of communion, and night scenes, the myrrh reminded her of her love when he was far away. For these 'wilderness days' when our Lord is away, He gave us two things to remind us of Him – a loaf and a cup. What greater privilege is given to aged saints than to bring our experience, distilled by time and years, in worship to Him? These moments will be remembered by a generation growing up around us, if only we can grasp them and leave a legacy of prayer, praise, and worship. This is the challenge of old age! Can we grasp it and leave a golden, cherished legacy?



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## Introduction

'You've clearly put effort into making this a welcoming and safe place for children', was a quote I heard from a parent during an outreach activity. The thought that had been put into ensuring those coming were safe was not onerous, but it clearly impacted on their positive view of the assembly.

## Why put thought into Health and Safety?

The Lord expects us to show care towards the lost, and fellow saints. Virtually all accidents are preventable, and harm coming to someone simply due to our lack of forethought, is the antithesis of love. The young and elderly, feature heavily in the outreach activities and makeup of many groups of the Lord's people, and are particularly vulnerable to some risks.

Most people have had the experience of seeing someone hurt or ill, and not knowing what to do. Some basic Health and Safety knowledge can demonstrate our concern for others.

Clearing up after a nasty accident, phoning a parent to say their child has been taken to hospital, or having to attend court are far more unpleasant, costly, and time consuming than a bit of effort put into preventative measures. A member of the assembly being seriously injured, or the building being significantly damaged, could have long term implications for the testimony.

Some of the issues are legal requirements – we comply with legislation where it does not conflict with the scriptures.

## Some objections

'We trust the Lord for safety', Ps. 4. 8. When driving we are ultimately depending on the Lord – however we also take sensible precautions.

'Nobody is employed at the premises'. While that means that some legislation does not apply, some law specifically applies to 'persons in charge of a non-domestic premise' irrespective of its use.

'Driving to the hall is more dangerous than being in the meeting'. That is probably true – and it is important to take a proportionate approach.

'I'm not trained in risk assessments'. But you are likely to be very experienced in doing them! For example, when using

# HEALTH AND SA

By **STEPHEN BUCKERIDGE** Datchet, England

hot liquids at home, we assess how we (and others) could be harmed, and take reasonable actions to reduce it.

'We have managed for long enough without these new rules'. The main statutory requirement has existed for about forty years.

'You can't eliminate risk'. Very true – health and safety considerations are there to help reasonably manage risk.

## Legal background

Legal compliance is not the only reason for thinking about Health and Safety however, there are some specific legal duties to be aware of in English law.

Those responsible for a non-domestic premise, whether used for profit or not, have responsibilities to ensure a reasonable level of safety regarding access, egress, and anything within the property, HEALTH & SAFETY AT WORK ACT 1974. This, along with the increasing trend for the courts to treat volunteers as employees, means carrying out risk assessments and ensuring health and safety arrangements are in place, THE MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH & SAFETY AT WORK REGULATIONS 1999.

Some issues, (for example asbestos and fire safety), carry specific responsibilities for duty holders. If the assembly, or the trust holding the building, is a registered charity, the Charity Commission expects relevant legislation to be complied with.

There is a common law duty to consider anyone whom I should reasonably have in mind by my acts or omissions. Specific requirements do change over time and will also vary by jurisdiction. It is important that building trustees and elders have a method to stay informed of their particular legislative context.

## Other background comments

It is essential to consider whether actions taken to reduce one issue introduce or increase a different problem. So, for example, actions taken to stop children running out of the building, such as locking doors, need to be considered in light of where we need a quick exit route because of fire.

This article does not deal in detail with:

- Fire. There are specific and significant requirements under the REGULATORY REFORM (FIRE SAFETY) ORDER 2005.<sup>1</sup>
- Food Safety.<sup>2</sup>
- Safeguarding, including child protection.<sup>3</sup>

Like many spiritual things, good safety management is about being balanced rather than going to extremes!

There needs to be clear communication about responsibilities between the building trustees and the assembly elders so that all are clear on who is doing what. The principles here also apply to camps, outings, etc.

## Documentation

Documenting a short Health and Safety policy and Risk assessment is a wise thing to do. There are some visitors who may ask to see it, such as a school visit or a childminder attending a toddler group. It makes it much easier to demonstrate a responsible attitude post-accident.

The provisions are less likely to reduce over time (due to people forgetting, moving away, or the activities changing) if they are in a document that can be periodically reviewed. Insurance documents, inspection records, and details of incidents/first-aid treatment also need to be kept and accessible.

## Basic building considerations for trustees

Asbestos needs to be managed in accordance with the CONTROL OF ASBESTOS REGULATIONS 2012.<sup>4</sup>

Gas and electricity installations should be regularly checked by a suitably qualified engineer.

Walking surfaces need to be clear with suitable grip. Changes in level should be obvious and have a handrail.

Activities at height. Access to places from where a fall could take place to be restricted and safeguards such as railings and handrails provided. Where items, roof tiles, snow, etc, could fall off a roof on a passer-by, a gutter fence should be considered.





Sufficient lighting inside and outside of the building.

Low beams and other similar obstructions minimised and marked to make obvious.

Work to the building carried out only by those who are genuinely competent. Any tools on site should be stored safely.

## Doing a risk assessment

Assessments need only to be 'suitable and sufficient for the key risks' – not exhaustive about every imaginable scenario! Writing the answers to these questions will give it some structure.

What are the tasks being undertaken? For each task, or group of tasks if they are similar, what hazards could someone be affected by?

Are there people with specific needs who need more consideration – e.g., children, expectant mothers, the elderly, those with a disability.

For each hazard, how likely is it to occur? If it did occur how serious would it be? (A simple 'Low', 'Medium' and 'High' will be sufficient here – the objective is to make sure priority is given to those where the combination of likelihood and severity is highest).

For each significant risk, what actions are currently being taken to minimize its likelihood and severity?

Is there more that could reasonably be done? 'Reasonableness' takes into account the time, cost and effort relative to the risk – the higher the risk, the more it is reasonable to do something to reduce it. Priority should be given to removing or reducing hazards where that is possible.

Who will do the actions and by when? How often should the assessment be reviewed? (Annually is a good starting point).

## Example

A gas boiler that has not been serviced for many years has a high likelihood of failing and, if it did so, the consequences could be very serious. The simple and relatively cheap actions of organizing an annual service by a suitably qualified engineer and installing a carbon

monoxide alarm would therefore be reasonable steps to take.

### Typical hazards and potential controls.

**Driving risks:** responsible drivers, maintained vehicles, use of seat belts, entry and exit of vehicle supervised. How do pedestrians, especially children, stay safe if there is a car park or road nearby to the hall?

**Burns:** Drink spillages minimized and appropriate cups used; heaters either guarded or not too hot to touch; children kept out of kitchen;

**Slips/trips:** trailing cables minimized and those remaining covered; snow/ice cleared; walkways kept clear of items on floor; spillages cleared promptly;

**Baptistry:** minimum time uncovered, consider a physical barrier (e.g., chairs); **Cuts:** craft activities age-appropriate, knives stored out of sight;

**Electrocution:** circuits and extension leads not overloaded, socket covers used, wires in good condition;

**Chemicals:** the minimum amounts necessary of cleaning fluids and similar stored in a secure cupboard out of sight and reach;

**Lone 'working':** someone being at the hall, or doing a task like leaflet distribution, on their own increases the potential severity if they were to injure themselves, or suffer an illness during that time. Simple precautions such as them having a mobile phone, and someone else being aware of what time they would be expected to return, are sensible.

## First aid

Part of 'reasonable precautions' is thinking about how to respond if someone is injured or becomes seriously ill.

Is there someone present who can do first aid?

Is there suitable first-aid equipment that is periodically checked for completeness/expiry?

Where children are cared for, it is prudent to have requested relevant background information, such as allergies, and have home contact information readily available.

Any injuries or treatment given should be recorded.

Any injury or treatment involving

children should be communicated to their parents.

Having a first aider at meetings is not a statutory requirement. However, a basic first-aid course is easy to do, can be used to meet people from the local area and the skills learnt may enable an act of kindness to be shown one day, Gal. 6. 10.

## What would you do?

A child picks up a hypodermic needle that was left in the toilets by a recent visitor.

- What are the immediate first-aid considerations?
- How would it be safely disposed of?
- What could be done to prevent it happening again?
- One of those in fellowship offers to give children a car ride home.
- How would you decide if they were a suitable driver to do so?
- What basic vehicle checks are carried out by a responsible driver?
- Have other considerations, age-appropriate car seats, belts, etc., been thought through?

## Further information

HSE page for village halls: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/casestudies/villagehall.htm>;

Insurance companies, e.g.: <https://www.ecclesiastical.com/churchmatters/churchguidance/churchhealthandsafety/index.aspx>

Organisations offering Christian related advice, e.g.: <http://www.stewardship.org.uk/resources/briefing-papers>

## Endnotes

- 1 A summary is available at : <http://www.stewardship.org.uk/Fire%20risk%20assessments%20for%20churches%20and%20charities.pdf> and a comprehensive government document at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/14888/fsra-small-medium-assembly.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/14888/fsra-small-medium-assembly.pdf)
- 2 For more information: [http://www.preciousseed.org/article\\_detail.cfm?articleID=21](http://www.preciousseed.org/article_detail.cfm?articleID=21)
- 3 All churches should have Safeguarding arrangements. For more information see: [www.ccpas.co.uk](http://www.ccpas.co.uk)
- 4 For a summary see: <http://www.stewardship.org.uk/Managing%20asbestos%20in%20church%20buildings.pdf>

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In Revelation chapter 1 verse 6 the Saviour is said to have made those whom He loved, and freed from their sins by His own blood, 'priests unto God and his Father'. In the Old Testament the only way to become a priest was by being born into the tribe of Levi. In the New Testament all believers – male and female – are priests when born again from above at conversion. In the Old Testament, the tasks of the priest were principally to help in carrying out animal sacrifices, to teach God's people to observe the words of the law, and to act as an intermediary between men and God. In the New Testament, the tasks are similar – the believer is to offer up spiritual sacrifices, to be holy, and to intercede for others.

### Offerings to God

There are two main roles for the believer as a priest. Firstly, he/she brings an offering to God. In the Old Testament, believers brought animal sacrifices, but the offerings in the New Testament are spiritual sacrifices.<sup>1</sup> The nature of these sacrifices is described in other scriptures, for example:

a) Romans chapter 12 verse 1 – Paul beseeches the brethren to 'present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service'. The sacrifice the believer brings is not the bodies of slain animals, but his/her own living body. Under the old covenant, God accepted the sacrifices of animals, but, following Christ's ultimate sacrifice, these sacrifices are no longer required, Heb. 9. 11-12. A different type of sacrifice is introduced, and that is for believers to offer themselves as living sacrifices. As the burnt offering on the altar was surrendered wholly to God, so the body with all its members should be consecrated to His service, not as slain, but as 'a living sacrifice' with an on-going commitment of our life to God. We should offer, then, our entire person, our whole being, all the powers and faculties of our minds and bodies to the service of God.

b) Hebrews chapter 13 verse 15 – The author writes, 'By him [our Lord

# THE BELIEVER AS A

Jesus Christ] therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name'. Another spiritual sacrifice is that of continual praise to God, the fruit of our lips. Whenever we praise the Lord, we glorify Him, Ps. 50. 23. We have every reason to do so, and that continually, for He loads us daily with blessings, Ps. 68. 19. In times of difficulty and sorrow, this may indeed be a real sacrifice, something that requires a determined effort on our part, when, humanly speaking, we do not 'feel' like praising. It may be that the praise we offer in times of great stress is especially precious to the Lord. Note that this verse teaches that we approach God by Christ, and we bring to God our appreciation of Christ as we give thanks. We should, therefore, as believer-priests, meditate on Him, and prepare precious thoughts of Him to offer to the Father. May God help us to be prepared worshippers, to offer the sacrifice of praise.

c) Hebrews chapter 13 verse 16 – The writer says, 'To do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased'. We are to use our material resources to do good, to share with those who are in need. It is the opposite of accumulating for self. 'Doing good' can cover a multitude of actions: sharing food with the needy; transporting people to and from church, or other places; sharing of wealth; being a helpful neighbour; praying for the sick; passing on books, money, etc. The gifts of believers ascend to God as 'an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God', Phil. 4. 18.

When we took that basket of fruit over to that sick child of God whom everyone had forgotten about, we were acting as a priest, offering a sacrifice to God. It was well pleasing to Him – He took delight in our doing that. 'For with such sacrifices God is well pleased' – He is pleased with the sacrifices of prayer, and of praise,

with the offerings of a broken and a contrite heart, but He is especially pleased when that leads us to doing good to others. God is pleased with this because it shows us to be in a right state of mind, in agreement with His own nature. He does good continually, and so He is pleased with all who display the same spirit.

By

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### Access to God

The second characteristic of the believer as a priest is that he/she has direct access to God. In the Old Testament, access to God was the privilege of the few. However, through Jesus Christ that access to God is the privilege of every Christian.<sup>2</sup> In the Old Testament tabernacle and temple, there were places where only the priests could go, and even the High Priest could only go behind the veil once a year on the Day of Atonement. Following Jesus' death upon the cross, all believers now have direct access to the throne of God, and can proceed with a holy boldness through Jesus Christ our great High Priest,<sup>3</sup> no other person being necessary to intercede for us. What a privilege this is to have direct, immediate access into the presence of God! This means all believers can go before the Lord in worship and prayer, not only for their own needs but also on behalf of other Christians. Any brother leading with a hymn, or prayer of thanksgiving, or worship is acting as a priest representing the whole assembly.

But we can also go to God on behalf of non-Christians. We can build a bridge through prayer for others to come to God. One very practical note is to ask ourselves whether we go before God on behalf of the lost? Do we represent the Lord Jesus Christ to those who do not know Him?

### Holy priests

In the Old Testament any priest who handled holy things before washing was sentenced to death.<sup>4</sup> This is a solemn reminder that we must be spiritually and morally clean before entering any service for the





# PRIEST

Lord.<sup>5</sup> Just as it was vital for the Old Testament priests to maintain their purity to fulfil their priestly duty, so we can never have true communion and fellowship with God unless personal holiness is maintained.

In 1 Peter chapter 2 verse 5 believers are described as 'holy' priests, and this is an essential requirement for all priests – to be 'holy', pure, and morally blameless, set apart for God's use. One might be a child of God, and, therefore, a New Testament priest, but if unconfessed sin is allowed in our lives then there can be no communion with God. A great incentive for us to 'cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit', 2 Cor. 7. 1, is the Lord's return, and the subsequent appearing at the judgement seat of Christ. Those that have that certain living hope of seeing the Lord, purify themselves, 'even as he is pure', 1 John 3. 3. Another encouragement is that God wants to act like a Father to us and treat us as sons and daughters.<sup>6</sup> He is, of course, our Father following the new birth, but He wants us to know fellowship with Him in a more intimate way.

## Royal priests

In 1 Peter chapter 2 verse 9 believers are said to be 'royal' priests, proclaiming the excellencies of God. We are a royal priesthood because of our relationship to Jesus Christ, who is both king and priest. The word 'royal' comes from a Greek word meaning 'king'; the priests of the Old Testament were priests, but they were not 'royal' priests. The New Testament believer is a priest; the church is a kingdom of priests. Priests lead men into the presence of God.

As 'holy' priests, we worship the Lord. As 'royal' priests, we go out into the world to witness, to 'shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light', 1 Pet. 2. 9. The order of these descriptions of the priesthood in 1 Peter

chapter 2 is important to recognize. Before we go proclaiming the gospel and the virtues of God publicly, we should be those who have offered ourselves as 'living sacrifices'. Before we can be 'royal' priests, it is essential that we are 'holy' priests. God is unlikely to use an individual to do His work who has unconfessed sin. However, 'if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness', 1 John 1. 9.

As believers we must not misuse our position as priests. For example, not every brother is gifted by the Spirit of God to speak God's word, or preach the gospel. Believing sisters, though they are priests, should remain silent in the assembly, neither teaching nor usurping authority over the men.<sup>7</sup> But all of us can offer spiritual sacrifices, all of us have direct access to God, all of us should have a determination to be holy, and speak and live lives that are worthy of our Lord Jesus. The believer is indeed a priest.

## Conclusion

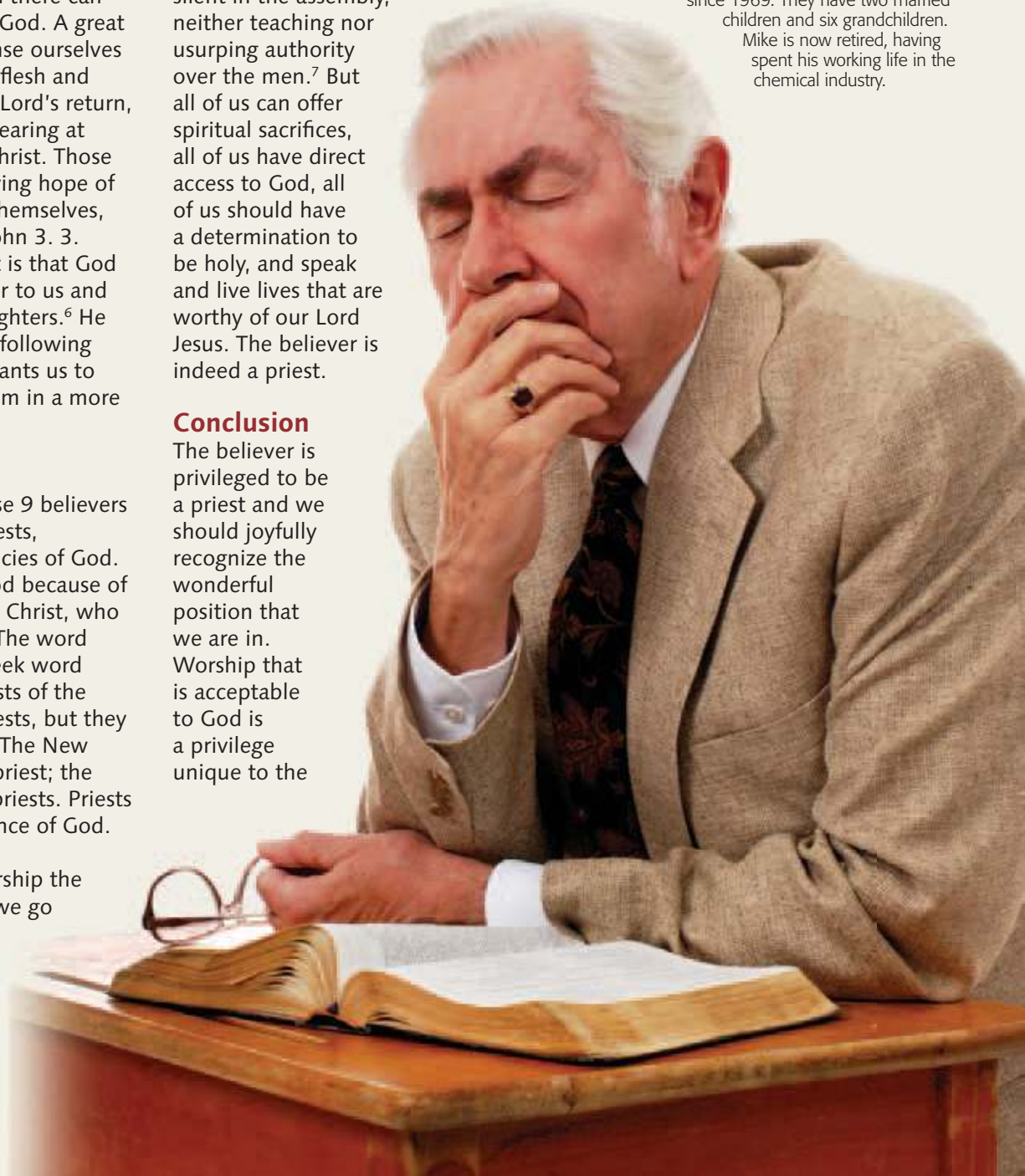
The believer is privileged to be a priest and we should joyfully recognize the wonderful position that we are in. Worship that is acceptable to God is a privilege unique to the

Christian. We might not think there is anything special about us, but let us continually remind ourselves that each one of us is a chosen person, a royal priest, a member of a holy nation, a person that belongs to God. May we join with fellow believers each Lord's day as they gather to honour His name. God will be looking for us!

## Endnotes

- 1 See, for example, 1 Pet. 2. 5.
- 2 Heb. 10. 19-22.
- 3 Heb. 4. 14-16.
- 4 Exod. 30. 20-21.
- 5 Heb. 10. 22.
- 6 2 Cor. 6. 18.
- 7 1 Tim. 2. 12.

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## Salvation originates with God

It is amazing to think that each individual believer's salvation can be traced to 'before the foundation of the world', Eph. 1. 4. This firmly grounds salvation in God, not man, and means that all the glory belongs to Him.<sup>1</sup> He has purposed it, provided it, and caused His people to possess it, so that they might say, 'Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory', Ps. 115. 1.

Reflecting on divine purpose in relation to salvation, we can only come to the same conclusion as Paul, namely that 'God is for us', Rom. 8. 31. His argument starts in verse 28, 'And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose'. God has purposed, and central to it is His Son, to whose image we will one day be conformed. To bring about the fulfilment of that purpose for His own glory, and that of His Son, God has effectually called His people, those who love Him, and works together for their good all the things that are connected to that eternal purpose.

The 'all things' of verses 28 and 32 are identified. They stretch, if we may so speak, from eternity to eternity. In an eternal past, God both foreknew His people and predestinated them. In the present time, He has called and justified them. In the future, they shall know what it is to be glorified. Of course, God has neither past, present, nor future, and so He sees it all as already accomplished. This interface of time and eternity is beyond our ability to comprehend. It defies human logic and reasoning, not because it is illogical or unreasonable, but because we are limited by our space-time perspective.

God's foreknowledge is of persons. It is clearly a mistake to think that this passage suggests that God foreknew His people by looking down the years of time to see whether or not they would believe the message of the gospel. If mere prescience of that nature is what is meant, God would also foreknow

# The Sovereignty in Salvation

all those who would refuse His salvation; but the passage is clear that all who are foreknown are predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. Before time began, God, according to His purpose, foreknew people. And it is according to that foreknowledge, rather than their faith, that His people are elect, 1 Pet. 1. 2.

Those who are foreknown, and no others, are predestinated. 'Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate', Rom. 8. 29. This is not predestination to faith, or to heaven, but to be conformed to the image of His Son. One day His Son's brethren will surround Him, all like Him for His glory's sake, for He will be the firstborn among them.

Thou gav'st us, in eternal love,  
To Him to bring us home to thee,  
Suited to Thine own thought above,  
As sons like Him, with Thee to be.  
JOHN NELSON DARBY

It could only follow that the foreknown and predestinated would be called. Everyone who is saved has been called according to divine purpose. And not only so, but such are justified because they are called. In Romans chapter 4, people are justified because they believe; in chapter 8, they are justified because they are called. This is God acting sovereignly in accordance with purpose. The glorious outcome of all of this for His people is that they will be conformed to the image of His Son, but what lies behind it all is that God is acting for His own glory.

## Salvation cannot be experienced without God's working

The call of faith, Rom. 10. 13, is so simple. It is expressive of

unconditional, unqualified, childlike trust in the Lord. It arises from a believing heart. This, in turn, springs from the fact of hearing of

Christ in the message of the gospel. But people shall not hear unless a preacher is sent. It is God who sends the preacher. Therefore, behind every case of salvation there is a process in which God

has acted first. It is His will that the sound of the gospel be heard throughout the world, heralded by divinely-sent preachers.

But there is more that God does prior to a person believing the gospel and being saved. In 1 Peter chapter 1 verse 2, and 2 Thessalonians chapter 2 verse 13, it is clear that the Spirit of God is at work in the hearts of those who will believe in a way that is never predicated of the lost. Both these passages speak of the sanctification of the Spirit as a pre-conversion work of God. In 1 Peter chapter 1 verse 2, it leads to 'obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ'. This obedience is not a reference to the obedience of the believer to the Lord in the course of his Christian life, with blood sprinkling being available in the case of disobedience, but rather it is the 'obedience of faith'.<sup>2</sup> This is the yielding of the will to God, which is a necessary ingredient in every true conversion. In 2 Thessalonians chapter 2 verse 13, the sanctification of the Spirit leads to the same thing, which is stated to be 'belief of the truth'. In both cases it is stated that the sanctification of the Spirit is linked with, and is because of, the truth of election, of people being chosen. Election is clearly linked with the salvation of individuals in both passages.

That work of the Holy Spirit

By  
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# Y of God

before conversion is necessary because of the condition of man before God. It is often said that many false doctrines develop from a wrong view of the state of unregenerate man. Help is afforded to us in this connection by Ephesians chapter 2. Again, the whole chapter, but especially the first ten verses, approach from the standpoint of divine sovereignty in salvation. The sinner is 'dead in trespasses and sins'. Some say that this means merely that man is separated from God, but this is a weak understanding of what is stated. Man has no principle of life towards God, and it is only as God intervenes in rich mercy that quickening can occur.

in the wilderness, or to bring them into the Promised Land, but in order that they might be His peculiar treasure, a people for Himself. In this church age, it is not any different. Gospel preaching is in danger of becoming increasingly humanistic, as if it is all about man. The gospel is not primarily that man might not be in the lake of fire with all its misery, and found, instead, in the happiness of heaven. It is not merely devised for man's greater happiness. No! God has acted, and acts, for His own glory in it all.

It is for this reason that God has not left the outcome of His purpose

independence of God in will and action. Lawlessness marks man, for that is the essence of sin, 1 John 3. 4. He therefore calls effectually, Rom. 8. 29-30, so that divine purpose will be accomplished. Foreknowledge and election closes the door to no one, neither does it limit the blessing. It secures a people for His glory when otherwise there would have been none.

The outcome of it all is articulated by the apostle, after he has ended a section of the Epistle to the Romans concerned with the sovereignty of God in His bringing men into blessing, 'O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!' 'For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen', Rom. 11. 33, 36.

Left to himself man will always choose that which is disobedient to God, because the flesh is incapable of being subject to God, Rom. 8. 5-8. It is mercy that intervenes in the life of the sinner to bring him to the point of yielding his rebel will to God.

## Salvation is not primarily for man's benefit

It is helpful to remember in considering these matters, and basic to a right understanding of them, that salvation is not primarily for man's benefit but, rather, for God's glory. God delivered Israel from Egypt not simply to relieve them of the affliction of the taskmasters, or to show His power at the Red Sea and

to the will and whim of fallen man. He calls generally, in terms of the proclamation of the message, Rom. 10, so that no one will ever be able to blame God for not being saved. Such is the work of Calvary that provision has been made for all; it could not be otherwise, for the sacrifice was of infinite worth. Man chooses not to believe, loving his

## Endnotes

- 1 Eph. 1. 6, 12, 14.
- 2 See Rom. 1. 5; 16. 26.

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# GLORY

By **CLIFF JONES** Cardiff, Wales

*Whilst any definition is bound to be limited, 'glory' might be defined as majestic splendour, dignity, honour, brilliance, and grandeur.*

## The Glory of God

As God 'is light', the glory of God is associated with light; He is the One in whom 'is no darkness at all'.<sup>1</sup> When shepherds were watching over their flock by night, an angel announced to them the birth of the Saviour and Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the 'glory of the Lord shone round about them'.<sup>2</sup> Understandably, they were afraid!

Through the centuries, God has gradually and progressively revealed Himself. Creation reveals the glory of God, and any meditation on the creatorial work of God will fill us with awe.<sup>3</sup> Further revelation of the glory of God is found in the scriptures where we learn of His character. Verses 7 to 11 of Psalm 19 are concerned with God's revelation of Himself in the written word. The effect on a believer of the revelation of the glory of God, whether in creation or in the scriptures, should be to stimulate praise, worship, and a deeper reverence of God.

## Christ's Glory

The full and final revelation of God and His glory is in, and through, His only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. As 'the image of the invisible God', the Lord Jesus could say, 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father', John 14. 9. While He was on earth, the Lord's intrinsic glory, majesty, and splendour were veiled by His flesh. There came a time, however, when the Lord took Peter, James and John up into a mountain and the Lord 'was transfigured before

them'. His intrinsic glory shone forth, His face shone like the sun, and His 'raiment was white as the light'.<sup>4</sup> The disciples saw their Lord and Saviour as He will appear in glory when, at the beginning of the millennium, He will come, with His saints, to set up His kingdom on earth. Then a new era of peace and righteousness will begin.

From the basis of his experience on the mount of transfiguration, John wrote of the moral and other glories of the Lord.<sup>5</sup> He also wrote, 'We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father'.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, Peter wrote as one of the 'eyewitnesses of his majesty'.<sup>7</sup> The glory, and brightness of uncreated light, and dazzling whiteness seen by the disciples emanated from within the Lord Himself. His glory was not a reflected glory, as was that of Moses. The transfiguration tells us more than we can fully understand of the glories of our Lord and Saviour. It shows us His pre-eminence, for Moses and Elijah fade from sight.

## Do all to the Glory of God

By the grace of God, those of us who are believers will be glorified with the Lord Jesus Christ. We read concerning those who have been justified by faith in Him, that 'whom he justified, them he also glorified'.<sup>8</sup>

What can we do in response to such a prospect of glory, grace and love? One answer is to 'do all to the glory of God', 1 Cor. 10. 31, that is, to reveal the love, grace and holiness of God in all we do and say. If as believers

we were to consider all our actions to ensure that they are to the glory and honour of God, then all we do will be motivated by seeking not our own pre-eminence and glory, but God's glory. We are told that as a man 'thinketh in his heart, so is he',<sup>9</sup> and 'out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh'.<sup>10</sup> What we fill our minds with determines the way we think, and the way we think determines patterns of behaviour and, ultimately, our character.

If all things are to be done to the glory of God, then we need to meditate, to feed on the word of God, and obey its precepts so that, by the grace of God, we become more and more conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>11</sup> The more our minds become like that of the Lord,<sup>12</sup> then the more our words and deeds will be in accordance with the will of God. Oh, that men might see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven!<sup>13</sup>

## Endnotes

- 1 1 John 1. 5.
- 2 Luke 2. 9.
- 3 Ps. 19. 1-6.
- 4 Matt. 17. 2.
- 5 John 2. 11.
- 6 John 1. 14.
- 7 2 Pet. 1. 16.
- 8 Rom. 8. 30.
- 9 Prov. 23. 7.
- 10 Matt. 12. 34.
- 11 Rom. 8. 29.
- 12 Phil. 2. 5.
- 13 Matt. 5. 16.

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## Daniel chapter 9

### The Prophetic Programme, verses 25-26

Daniel's prophecy of the seventy 'sevens' is one of the most amazing prophecies in the Bible. Firstly, because of its clarity, for while some of its predictions ('wars and destruction') are admittedly general, yet others are so startling and specific ('Messiah cut off') that they ultimately allow only one meaning. Secondly, because of its scope: whereas other Bible prophecies foretell single events, this prophecy presents a panoramic outline of world history. Lastly, because of its chronology: the prophecy not only tells of seven great events to come, but it places them in sequential order and attaches time-markers.

In this article we look at the first four great events found in verses 25 and 26.

#### 1. The command to restore Jerusalem

Daniel chapter 9 verse 25 speaks of 'the going forth of the word to restore and build Jerusalem'. The latter part of this verse gives more details, 'the street (or 'open square') shall be built again, and the wall, even in troubled times'. The word 'wall' here literally means 'cutting' and carries a wide variety of connotations dependent upon the context in the Old Testament. Some translators render it 'moat' or 'trench', but the ancient translations into Greek and Latin translated it 'walls', and as the word stands as part of an explanation of what it meant to 'rebuild Jerusalem', it can hardly mean anything else.

Even more significant is the word 'open square'. Some commentators take the two terms 'street' and 'wall' as a summary of the interior and exterior of the city, presenting a picture of complete restoration. However, the words 'open square' do not refer to 'streets and houses' or the interior of the city generally. Rather, they refer to the civic space, usually inside the gates, where markets were set up, justice was administered, announcements made, and assemblies held. It was the 'essential part of the city',<sup>1</sup> comparable to the Roman forum. By rebuilt 'open square' and 'walls', therefore, is meant Jerusalem reconstituted as a civic entity.

When was this command to rebuild Jerusalem given? There are four main possibilities. Firstly,

some commentators take it to refer to Jeremiah's prophecies, chapter 25 or 29, written either in 605 BC or in 597 BC, of a return from exile. However, nothing in Jeremiah's two prophecies mentions the rebuilding of the city, but rather simply a seventy-year exile and then a return.

Secondly, many commentators prefer the decree of Cyrus in 539 BC, quoting Isaiah, 44. 28 and 45. 13, in which, God speaking, says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd and he shall perform all My pleasure, saying to Jerusalem, You shall be built and to the temple, Your foundation shall be laid' and again, 'He shall build My city and let my exiles go free'. While the actual decree of Cyrus, 2 Chr. 36. 23; Ezra 1. 2-4; 6. 3, makes no mention of the rebuilding of the city but only authorizes the rebuilding of the temple, nevertheless the verses in Isaiah cannot be dismissed lightly. Indeed, the returning Jews did start to rebuild their own houses in Jerusalem, Hag. 1. 3; Zech. 1. 16 and 2. 4, so the decree of Cyrus involved some rebuilding of the city, rather than just a lone temple on a hill. It is also true that the enemies of the Jews accused them of rebuilding the city and its walls, Ezra 4. 12, 16 and 21, (see also Ezra 5. 3 and 9, although some translations have 'structure' here and appear to refer to the temple itself). This accusation (which appears true, for if unfounded it would have been easily refuted), suggests that rebuilding of the city was ongoing. Cyrus' decree thus neither authorized nor prohibited the rebuilding of the city, but implied the same.

Thirdly, others suggest the permission given to Ezra to return to Jerusalem, Ezra 7, in 458 BC. However, the decree in Ezra chapter 7 (authorizing Ezra to 'beautify the house' and to teach the law) made no mention of the rebuilding of the city.

Finally, there was the permission given by Artaxerxes to Nehemiah to return and rebuild Jerusalem in 444 BC. Just as in all the other cases, there is no actual edict (either verbal or written) explicitly authorizing the rebuilding of Jerusalem; nor can much be proven from the king's letters, Neh. 2. 7-9, for we are not given their text. Further, if there were some imperial decree to this effect, presumably the enemies of the Jews would not have tried to attack the work with such impunity.

Nevertheless, if we look at the actual wording of Daniel chapter 9 verse 25, it becomes clear that only the work of Nehemiah fulfils the prophecy.

The verse refers, not to an ongoing regeneration project, but to the reconstitution of the city as such by means of walls and the open square. The very fact that Nehemiah's book is included in our Bible means, for those who believe that scripture interprets scripture, that only Nehemiah fulfils the prophecy, for it shows that, firstly, in Nehemiah's day the city still lay largely in ruins and furthermore Jerusalem was reconstituted as a city with walls and 'open square', Neh. 8. 1.

What do the 'seven sevens' refer to? Some commentators argue that the rebuilding of the city interior continued for forty-nine years after Nehemiah, or that the Old Testament canon was completed then. However, Daniel's prophecy neither suggests nor admits these meanings, nor is the timeframe justified by any biblical or historical evidence (Malachi's prophecy is undated). There is no significant event mentioned, either in scripture or history, corresponding to a period of 49 years after Nehemiah's work. Instead, perhaps, the 'seven sevens' refer to the resumption of the Jubilee year (and Sabbath year) cycle, which, for failure to keep the Jews were exiled from their land, 2 Chr. 36. 21; Lev. 26. 34.

Therefore, it would seem best to understand: (a) both the seven sevens and the sixty-two sevens as simply literal chronological time periods in which the reconstituted city would stand until the coming of Messiah; (b) the sense of the last phrase of verse 26 as, 'the open square shall have been rebuilt and the wall'; and (c) apply the 'troubled times' to the entire period. Some argue that the 'troubled times' apply best to Nehemiah chapters 4 to 6. However, there were equally troubled times before, and far more troubled times after Nehemiah (particularly under Antiochus Epiphanes and the Romans). One thing we may say of the seven and sixty-two sevens is that the division renders it difficult to read symbolic meanings into the words, for while this is possible with seven, for sixty-two suggestions are scarce.

## 2. The Coming of Messiah the Prince

'Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks'.

In 'an anointed one, a Prince' we have a clear reference to the Messiah, the One for whose coming Israel waited, and with whose arrival their 'troubled times' would end. The further reference to 'cut off' immediately suggests our Lord Jesus Christ. Of course, acknowledging Jesus as Lord and

Christ is the last thing the natural man will do and various commentators have suggested alternatives.

Some critical scholars have suggested Cyrus as the subject, who is referred to as God's 'anointed', Isa. 45. 1. However, Cyrus was not 'cut off'; he suffered no untimely death. The view of modern critical scholarship is that Onias III is 'Messiah the Prince'. Onias was the Jewish high priest at the time of Antiochus Epiphanes; he was deposed by his brother Jason in 175 BC, who was in turn deposed by Menelaus in 172 BC, who then had Onias killed in 171 BC. These commentators also take 'the prince of the covenant', Dan. 11. 22, to be an identification of Onias as a 'prince'. However, although Onias was 'anointed', as the High Priest, it is hard to consider him a 'Prince', since the Jews were ruled by Egyptian and then Seleucid kings until Maccabean times. Further, the attempt to claim Daniel chapter 11 verse 22 as proof that Onias was a 'prince' is untenable, for the subsequent verses suggest that it is rather Ptolemy VI Philometer, the King of Egypt and nephew of Antiochus, who is being referred to as the 'prince of the covenant', with whom Antiochus feigned friendship and alliance.

Other commentators have suggested Zerubbabel, or Joshua the High Priest as the Messiah because the temple rebuilding began in 536 BC, roughly 49 years after the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 BC. Yet neither of these candidates fulfilled both of the required roles: one was a 'Prince' but not 'anointed', while the other was a priest, and therefore presumably anointed, but not a Prince.

However, it is a 'preposterous interpretation' to suggest 'that any Jew . . . could anticipate "the complete redemption of Israel" apart from the advent of Messiah. It is absolutely certain that the vision points to the coming of Christ, and any other view of it is indeed "a resort of desperation"'.<sup>2</sup>

### Cut off, and have nothing

Following the coming of the Messiah, we read that He is 'cut off', which in the Old Testament signifies excommunication by violent death; words similarly applied to our Lord Jesus Christ, Isa. 53. 8. The words that follow, 'but not for himself', KJV, might appear to signify that Christ died, not for Himself, but as our substitute. While this is true, the Hebrew literally reads, 'Messiah will be cut off, and have nothing'. Some commentators see this as explaining 'cut off', that is, 'he will be no more' or that he will 'have no heir or posterity'. Most, however, argue that it means that when the Messiah died, He had no kingdom, city or people, 'nothing of that which in right belonged to him',



JND.<sup>3</sup> Of course, Christ has His bride the church, but this passage is concerned with Messiah's relationship to the Jewish nation.

### **3. The City and Temple will be destroyed**

'And the people of the Prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary, the end of it will be with a flood', Dan. 9. 26.

The critical view of this prophecy is that the soldiers of Antiochus attacked the city of Jerusalem. DRIVER writes, 'The allusion is to the soldiery of Antiochus Epiphanes, who set Jerusalem on fire, and pulled down many of its houses and fortifications, so that the inhabitants took flight'. However, 'commentators who argue that Antiochus Epiphanes fulfilled this prophecy are at a loss to account for the fact that he destroyed neither the temple nor the city of Jerusalem'.<sup>4</sup>

The words can only refer to the destruction of the Jewish temple and city by the Romans, for this was the only time the post-exilic temple was destroyed. The Jewish people rejected their Messiah and gave Him nothing, and after nearly forty years of opportunity for repentance, God judged them; they lost their city and temple.

#### **The people of the prince who is to come**

EDWARD DENNETT writes, 'The most careful attention must be given to the exact words used in this scripture . . . Remark then, first, that it does not say that a prince shall come and destroy the city and the sanctuary, but that the people of the prince that shall come shall do so'.<sup>5</sup>

Critical commentators tend to take the Prince here to refer to Antiochus, while amillennial commentators refer to Titus the Roman general. The one person it cannot refer to is Messiah the Prince of verses 25 and 26a, for: (a) he has been 'cut off'; and (b) neither His Jewish people nor His Christian people destroyed the city and the sanctuary. MATTHEW HENRY argued that Christ destroyed the city and sanctuary through His agents, the Romans, however these were not 'His people'.

Although this 'Prince to come' is not Christ, the way Daniel titles him 'Prince' suggests an obvious contrast with Messiah the Prince. Daniel's prophecies from chapter 7 onward focus on two main figures: firstly, a coming Messiah, referred to as the Son of Man, 7. 13, the 'Prince of the host', 8. 11, or 'the Prince of Princes', 8. 25, and, secondly, a figure described as 'a Little Horn' arising out of the ten-part Roman Empire, 7. 8, 11, 20-25, who opposes the Prince of Princes. This 'Little Horn' of chapter 7 cannot be Antiochus, as the critical/

rationalist suggests, for although in chapter 8 verses 9-12 and 23-25, the future Antichrist is indeed foreshadowed, in type, by Antiochus Epiphanes, in chapter 7 he is a Roman, and Antiochus arose from the third, Greek, empire, not the fourth, Roman, empire. This second 'prince' of chapter 9 verse 26 must therefore be a Roman.

The title 'the Prince to come' is explained well by MONTGOMERY, who argues that the expression distinguishes this Prince 'from the local anointed-Prince of verse 25 by the epithet 'to come', either as some new one or in the sense of an invader, as the verb often implies, e.g. 1:1, 11:13, etc.'.<sup>6</sup> DENNETT writes, 'In other words "the prince that shall come" applies to the future, and is indeed, as will be seen in the next verse, the imperial head of the revived Roman Empire in the last days. The "people" are identified with him because they are Romans of the same kingdom that is yet to reappear, and of which this prince will be the leader and the chief'.<sup>7</sup> Some will scoff at the idea of a revived Roman Empire; the possibility of Israel returning to its ancient homeland was mocked, too.

#### **His end will be with a flood**

'Flood' here is a metaphor describing sudden destruction, particularly in an overwhelming military defeat. We see this figure of speech in various Bible verses, for example Daniel 11 verse 10, 'overflow', and verse 22, 'flood'.

A literal translation of this phrase reads, 'his (not 'its') end will be with a flood' (see RV, TREGELLES and KEIL and DELITZSCH; the word 'end' has the masculine suffix). Thus, the end referred to is not that of the city of Jerusalem, nor the war of AD 70 (both 'city' and 'war' are feminine in Hebrew). Further, although 'sanctuary' is masculine, the nearest antecedent in the Hebrew is 'the Prince to come'. The Prince's end is in view, standing in contrast with his coming. His end also presents another contrast with Messiah the Prince who was 'cut off' earlier in the verse.

The critical interpretation takes 'the Prince to come' to be Antiochus, but his end was obscure. Although he died while on a military campaign in 164 BC, it was not in a battle – Josephus says he died of a 'distemper'; others say of 'worms and ulcers'. Neither (as the amillennialist asserts) does the description apply to Titus, who died of a fever after dedicating the Colosseum in Rome to victory in the Jewish war.

### **4. Endless wars are to be fought over Jerusalem until the Time of the End**

The last phrase in verse 26 traces the fourth stage

of God's programme, 'Till the end there shall be wars, desolations are determined', see RV, JND, NASB, NIV, ESV. KEIL and DELITZSCH agree with this translation, writing, 'we agree with the majority of interpreters in regarding [milchamah, war] as the predicate of the passage: "and to the end is war;" but we cannot refer [qetz, end] . . . to the end of the prince, or . . . to the end of the city, because [qetz, end] has neither a suffix nor an article . . . [qetz] without any limitation is the end generally, the end of the period in progress, the seventy [sevens] and corresponds to ['unto the end'] in Daniel 7:26, to the end of all things, Daniel 12:13. To the end war shall be = war shall continue during the whole of the last [seven]'

'Until the end' therefore describes the course of history till the Time of the End. From the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 (or from Christ's death) onwards there were to be continual wars fought over the city of Jerusalem. GAEBELEIN writes, 'These words give us the history of the Jewish people, of their land and their city, up to the present time. It is identical with what our Lord said, "and they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled" (Luke 21:24)'.<sup>8</sup>

The many sieges of Jerusalem through history bear this out. The city was taken by the Romans during the Bar Kochba revolt in AD 135 (killing half a million Jews), Muslims in AD 638, Crusaders in AD 1099, Saladin in AD 1187, Tartars in AD 1244, Egyptians in AD 1247, Ottomans in AD 1517, the British in AD 1917, Jordan in AD 1948 and the modern state of Israel in AD 1967. Today, Palestine remains a war-zone.

There could hardly be a more striking proof of fulfilled biblical prophecy. Why Jerusalem should be so war-torn might remain a puzzle to the world's politicians; from a Christian point of view, the answer is surely obvious: the Jews have rejected the Prince of Peace; they will have no peace until they finally say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord', Matt. 23. 39.

## Endnotes

- 1 BROWN, DRIVER, BRIGGS, *Hebrew Lexicon*
- 2 SIR R. ANDERSON, *Daniel in the Critic's Den*, Nisbet, 1909, pgs. 114-5
- 3 J. N. DARBY, *Synopsis of the Books of the Bible*, Stow Hill Bible and Tract Depot, n.d.
- 4 J. G. BALDWIN, *Daniel*, TOTC, IVP, 1978, pg. 190
- 5 E. DENNETT, *Daniel the Prophet and the Times of the Gentiles*, Central Bible Truth Depot, 1967, pg. 150
- 6 J. A. MONTGOMERY, *Daniel*, ICC, T&T Clark, 1927, pg. 383
- 7 DENNETT, pgs. 150-1
- 8 A. C. GAEBELEIN, *Daniel the Prophet*, Pickering and Inglis, n.d., pg. 143

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## Introduction

Shared Hope is a Charitable Trust established by two brethren – Howard Peebles and Ian Burness – around five years ago. Both brethren felt that their long experience and ministry with Echoes of Service particularly fitted them for the task envisaged by the Trust – to engage in educational, social, medical, economic, agricultural, and childcare projects in the developing world. The biggest area of ministry at present is in education, and around 40% of current projects have an educational dimension. Every project seeks to give people a hand-up, rather than a hand-out, and the brethren believe that without education there is no hope for those who are born into poverty.

The Trust, which has four Trustees, and a total of eleven team members, began operating on 1st September 2008. This report is provided by Howard Peebles.

## Basic Ethos

Our motivation in Shared Hope is what Jesus said was the second great commandment – ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself’.

We are seeking to express this timeless challenge in the following ways:

By expressing mercy in seeking to meet the needs of individuals and groups who do not have the resources to meet their own needs and to be a catalyst in that process

By promoting justice in practical ways for the poor

By upholding dignity in empowering the poor to become independent and self sufficient

We are one Trust among many but we feel that we are, in a small way, playing a part in making a difference in the lives of some.

## Operational Focus

As well as directly supporting projects ourselves, Shared Hope works in partnership with two Christian-based charities. We work with Bright Hope World, which started in 1992, and is based in New Zealand. Rob Purdue, who founded this charity, has been involved in leadership in different initiatives over the years. We also partner with Starfish Asia, a Christian charity that has been supporting Christian schools in Pakistan since 2003.

Through the above structure, we are seeking to meet the needs of those in extreme poverty. We are attempting in

all we do to promote independence and sustainability. To this end, we work in partnership with key individuals in their community and leaders of local churches.

## Guiding Principles

The broad principles that drive how we operate can be summarized as follows:

Working with partners.

Keeping overheads to an absolute minimum.

Require clear accountability.

Ensure regular visits to each project either ourselves or through our partners.

Ensure clear communication.

Financial transparency.

In the context of our ministry, we are people focussed rather than project focussed. We partner only with those whom we know, or who are known by others whom we trust. The vast majority of our ministry partners are national believers. We use the word partner because that is how we see our relationship with those who are in charge of the projects which we sponsor. We do not attempt to interfere in the running of the projects, believing that the people on the ground are best placed to make decisions on how things should be run, and our task is to support and encourage them, while requiring accountability on the use of the financial resources we provide.

## Ministry Development

When we launched the initiative in September 2008, our initial target was to be supporting five projects within six months. In fact, things developed far more quickly than we anticipated, and today we have around seventy live projects in seventeen countries.

Apart from the printing of brochures, which we have given or sent to those with an interest in what we are doing, we have not spent any money on promoting this ministry. We have simply told our story as and when an opportunity arose, and we have been taken aback by the generosity of those who have felt led to support the ministry.

It is inevitable that not all projects operate equally well, and while, in the goodness of God, we have had no experience of the misuse of funds, we have, after giving a period of notice, withdrawn a few projects from our portfolio. As stewards of the money given to us, we feel the burden of doing everything we can to use that money wisely. This is a faith-based ministry, but we must be wise in the responsibilities that we take on lest we create problems for our partners by being unable to support them in the terms we promised.

We do expect the number of projects

we support to increase somewhat, but we are constantly aware of the danger of expanding beyond our capacity to cope, both financially and administratively.

While it is impossible to accurately determine the impact that the ministry of the Trust is making, we believe that directly and indirectly, we are probably touching the lives of between eight and ten thousand people.

## Project Illustrations

Detailed below are three examples of projects that we support. While our projects are practical in focus, they are motivated by the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, and our prayer is that they will touch not only the practical but also the spiritual needs of those that we are seeking to help.

### School for the Deaf – Lubumbashi – D. R. Congo

This school in Lubumbashi has been providing education for deaf-mute children, in a Christian environment, since 1983 and there are one hundred and thirty children attending at the present time. In addition to academic studies, the girls learn sewing skills and the boys learn joinery skills.

### Sewing Centre – Rawlpindi – Pakistan

This centre, which trains around thirty ladies in sewing skills during a twelve-month period, empowers Christian ladies who have had no education, by giving them the capacity to earn money to support their family. Abdul Masih oversees this centre. During his thirty years of Christian ministry, he and his team, with the Lord's help, have seen twenty-two assemblies established, eighteen schools, and eight sewing centres, as well as two Bible bookshops, and two Bible book vans are in operation.

### The Haven (Home for vulnerable children) – Ploiesti – Romania

There are presently thirty-five children in this home. The home was established to help children removed from their family by the government, due to challenges such as alcoholism and abuse. The Christian environment of the home is very strong with a special emphasis on Bible memorization. The children are being looked after in a vibrant environment, where apart from attending school, they are taught agricultural, cooking, and general house skills. They attend the local assembly on a Sunday. The goal is to have them return to their families, and this is happening.

For more information visit the web site at:- [www.sharedhope.org.uk](http://www.sharedhope.org.uk)



# MARK AND T

By **SIMON SHERWIN** Methil Hill, Fife, Scotland

There are two characters in our New Testament whose lives and service for the Lord appear to be inextricably linked. We are privileged to be able to view them at different stages of their careers: at the beginning, the middle, and the end (at least as far as their association with the apostle Paul is concerned). These two are John Mark and Timothy. In comparison with one another, they stand on the pages of scripture as the servant who failed and the one who did not. As such they become, as so often in scripture, a picture of the first man and the second man, that is, Adam and Christ. Mark, it may be remembered, was Paul's first young helper, Acts 13. 5, whilst Timothy was his second, 16. 3. However, it is beautiful to see, in the case of Mark in particular, that failure is not final and that there is always room for recovery.

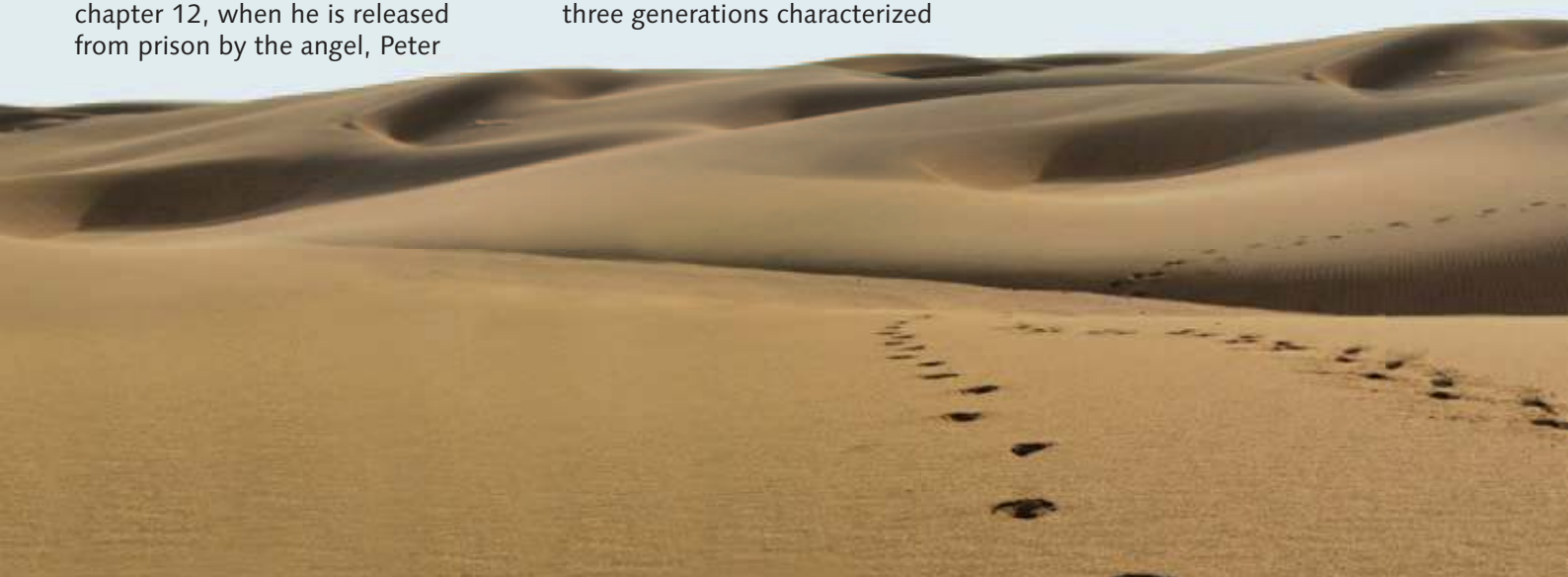
## 1. Their background

Both had godly mothers whose names are known to us. Nothing is known of Mark's father, whilst Timothy's was a Greek and, as far as scripture is concerned, they had no spiritual influence that was worth recording. In contrast, their mothers stand out as patterns to be emulated! They show us what value the Spirit of God would place on the role of mothers in the spiritual education of their children! Such a role is a precious privilege but also a tremendous responsibility. What can we learn from these two mothers and their homes? In Acts chapter 12, when he is released from prison by the angel, Peter

considers what to do next. Having done so, it says that he 'came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying', 12. 12. This tells us several things about Mary's home. First, it was a home that was open to the Lord's people. Not only so, but it was a place where they habitually went, or why would Peter go there rather than somewhere else? There he knew that he could contact the most believers in the shortest possible time to give them personally the news of his release. Secondly, it was a place where there was an atmosphere of prayer. What an impression this must have made on the young John Mark. How important the company of the Lord's people is in the upbringing of young children, not just in the context of the gatherings of the assembly but outside as well. How vital it is that the home is a place where the importance of prayer is clearly seen, where our dependence upon the Lord is evident. Mothers - and fathers too - do you pray with your children?

Beautifully complementary is the home of Eunice, the mother of Timothy. In 2 Timothy chapter 1 verse 5, we read, 'when I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice'. Here we have three generations characterized

by 'unfeigned (lit. un-hypocritical) faith'. What a godly example was shown to the young Timothy by his mother and grandmother! What a challenge to our souls! It is in the home that we are seen for what we really are. Often, possibly, we forget that there are little eyes that are watching, and that can see the inconsistencies and incongruities of our lives. The believers may see one thing in the assembly, but do our children see something different at home? Could it be said of us that our faith is 'unfeigned'? The second influence in Timothy's home was the scriptures. 'From a child thou hast known the holy scriptures', writes Paul, 'which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus', 2 Tim. 3. 15. How vital it is that our children are taught the scriptures. They are the holy scriptures, the sacred writings: there is no book more important that they could get to know. Nor is reading them an end in itself, because the scriptures are able, they are 'of power' to make our children wise unto salvation, whether as children or, later, as the Spirit of God brings to their remembrance things that they have learned in times past. Those of us who come from homes where the scriptures were taught us at an early age can thank God for the foundation that was laid in our own experience. Remember that the mind of a child soaks





# TIMOTHY



up far more than the mind of an adult, the difficulty of retention only increasing with advancing years. Scriptures learned as children never seem to be forgotten. It is the responsibility of parents, and especially mothers, to teach their children the scriptures.

## 2. Their call

Whilst it is always important not to read into scripture what is not there, it is always interesting to see what is said, and what is not. For example, it is instructive to notice what is said (or not) about Mark and Timothy prior to their accompanying Paul on his missionary journeys. As far as Mark is concerned, we read nothing about him until when, in Acts chapter 12 verse 25, Barnabas and Saul 'took with them John, whose surname was Mark'. Similarly, when they set out for Cyprus, it is said, almost in passing, that 'they had also John to their minister', 13. 5. Nothing is said about his character, activity, or reputation prior to this point. In contrast, we read of Timothy that he was 'well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium', 16. 2. It is not surprising then, that we read, 'Him would Paul have to go forth with him', 16. 3. Why did Paul and Barnabas take Mark with them? Was it because he was related (Barnabas' nephew, Col. 4. 10)? Was it the desire to encourage a younger man? Of course, we cannot answer the question definitively – we are not told the reason – but it does

highlight the need for sensitivity and discernment in our dealings with younger believers. That Mark was clearly not ready for such a step, can be seen by the sad words 'and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem', 13. 13, recorded so soon after starting out, and even before there was significant opposition.

Each one of us needs to ensure that the activities in which we are engaged for the Lord are the result of personal conviction and exercise, otherwise we will not stand the tests of time or opposition. How sad to bring disappointment and heartache to others and regret to ourselves! When we look at Timothy, we find a young man who was working for the Lord where he was, and who had (in a relatively short time) already built up a good testimony before other believers in his locality. Indeed, if we have desires to serve the Lord, and are wondering about the possibility of service further afield, the place to start is at home, in our own local area. We should be prepared to do what we can, when we can, and where we can, and that starts at home. Let us never be fooled into thinking that it will be any easier to serve the Lord elsewhere.

The principle of older men taking younger men 'under their wing' should be highlighted. Although we have noted the need for

discernment in doing so, it is clear that Paul, in particular, felt that it would be advantageous to the work to have a younger man with him. There are three reasons that come to mind. First is the vigour and enthusiasm characteristic of the young, the former of which tends to diminish with advancing years. Second, the wisdom and experience of the older brother can be used to channel the younger in the right direction, and to develop service for the Lord. Third, the younger brother can bring comfort and encouragement to the older.

## 3. Their continuation

When we come to Acts chapter 15, we find that Mark's failure has continuing consequences. The memory of him that stuck with Paul, and indeed with us, all these years later, is that 'he departed . . . and went not with them to the work', v. 38. How true it is that a testimony can take years to establish, yet it can be destroyed in an instant, and never recovered in the same way again. In the incident described here, was Paul, or Barnabas right? The answer is, quite simply, that they both were. Paul was right, in that the path that lay ahead of him was, again, one of difficulty, danger, and suffering. If Mark had not been ready for that the last time, how much less would he be now, having to live with his past failure? It would not have been fair, either to himself or to Mark, to subject him to the rigours of such a trip at this stage.

Yet Barnabas, too, was right. He,



the great encourager, the 'son of consolation', realized that if Mark were left with his failure, to wallow in it, he would be of no further use for the Lord. He needed encouraging, he needed restoring, in delightful imitation of the perfect Servant, 'a bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench', Isa. 42. 3. Surely the fact that Barnabas took Mark to Cyprus is also significant, for this was familiar territory – Mark had already been there before with Paul and Barnabas, before his failure. This, too, is a scriptural principle. Abram, when he came back from Egypt, returned to Bethel, the place from where the departure occurred, Gen. 13. 3. In the re-commissioning of Peter, the Lord Jesus, by asking him three times whether he loved Him, took him back to the night when he had denied Him. So Mark was forced to confront his failure and deal with it, but also to remember the days before it had happened, when things were going well, days which could be enjoyed once again.

It would seem fair to say that Mark's recovery may be attributed to the ministry of Barnabas. How we need those like Barnabas amongst us today! It is so encouraging to realize that failure does not have to be final. How lovely to turn to Colossians chapter 4 and to see what Paul has to say about Mark there. Paul is now in prison. The road has not got any easier for him, yet he sends greeting from 'Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas', 4. 10. Mark is not ashamed to identify with Paul in his suffering. Yet this is not all that Paul writes about him. It appears that the Colossians had received some instruction about Mark in the past, but the situation is altogether different now, v. 10. Mark is now described as one of his 'fellow workers unto the kingdom of God', who had been 'a comfort' to Paul, v. 11. How different from Acts chapter 15! The one who had left before the work really started is now a fellow worker. The one who had abandoned Paul when most he needed him is now a comfort. How thankful we are that God is the God of recovery!

Timothy, by way of contrast, is Paul's faithful companion; the one whom Paul could trust implicitly. From the book of the Acts and the different Epistles, a picture can be built up of his movements. Having been taken into the company of Paul's companions in Acts chapter 16 he travels with them throughout Phrygia and Galatia, 16. 6, coming down to Troas, whence they travel into Macedonia. When Paul left Berea for Athens, 17. 14, Silas and Timothy remained there. When they joined him in Athens, Timothy was sent to Thessalonica, 1 Thess. 3. 2. It is not clear what happened next, whether Timothy joined him again in Athens and was sent back to Thessalonica with a letter, or whether Paul moved on to Corinth. In the meantime, Timothy joined him there, Acts 18. 5. Already, however, the picture is emerging of a man whom Paul could trust implicitly and whom Paul could send to different places to continue the work of the Lord. To Thessalonica, for example, Timothy was sent 'to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith', 1 Thess. 3. 2. He could also be trusted to bring back an accurate report of how things were, v. 6. Similarly, he was later sent to Corinth, and Paul writes this commendation: '(he is) faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church', 1 Cor. 4. 17. Note his faithfulness. Later on in the same Epistle, Paul says, 'He worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do', 16. 10. What a commendation! Could the same be said of us?

The consistency of Timothy's testimony can be seen, in that he appears in letters from various periods of Paul's ministry. Perhaps the highest commendation of him comes when he is put forward as an example to the believers of selfless service, a man who put the interests of Christ above his own, in contrast to many, if not the majority, of his contemporaries. In contrast to the sad indictment that 'all seek their own and not the things which are Jesus Christ's', Phil. 2. 21, Paul says of Timothy, 'But ye know the proof

of him', v. 22. Again, could the same be said of us?

We may note, before we leave this section, that if Mark is mentioned in Colossians chapter 4 as being with Paul, Timothy is also there, see Col. 1. 1. The two servants are linked as we come to the end of this phase of their story.

#### 4. Their conclusion

We turn, finally, to the end of Paul's life, as recorded in 2 Timothy chapter 4. There is much in this chapter to sadden as we read of those who have turned away from the apostle, or left him to continue the work of the Lord elsewhere. We cannot fail to be moved by the words 'only Luke is with me', v. 11. We can imagine the loneliness of the great apostle as he stands alone to make his defence before the emperor, albeit with the Lord standing by him. In his extremity, therefore, to whom does he turn? Whose companionship and comfort does he seek? Twice over he appeals to Timothy, 'Do thy diligence to come', vv. 9, 21. The urgency of his desire is seen in the words 'shortly', v. 9, 'before winter', v. 21. Given what we have seen of Timothy's character and faithfulness, it is no real surprise that Paul should desire him with him. However, Timothy is not the only one Paul wants. Verse 11 says, 'Take Mark and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry'. Here we see recovery complete. The one whom Paul 'thought not good' to take with them in Acts chapter 15 is the one whom Paul would have Timothy bring now. The one who 'went not with them to the work' is the one who is 'profitable for the ministry'. It may be supposed that many of us are more like Mark than Timothy, more acquainted with failure than faithfulness, but we may take courage and encouragement from their story. If fellow believers, or even the Lord's servants, are in distress, are we the kind of people whom they would call upon to comfort and support them?

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# Views from the News

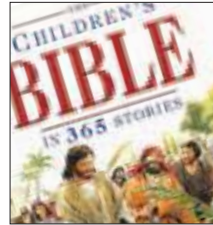
COMPILED BY SANDY JACK

## Rising numbers of children no longer read Bible stories

A study by the Bible Society finds that a large number of children are failing to read or hear Christian stories. They found that exposure to the Bible had declined significantly over a generation. Christian stories such as the Nativity, Adam and Eve, Noah's Ark and the Good Samaritan risk being 'lost to future generations'. Figures suggest that the number of children regularly reading or hearing Bible stories has halved over the last 20 or 30 years. It emerged that 46 per cent of schoolchildren read or hear the Bible at home or in the classroom at least once a year compared with almost nine-in-ten of their parents' generation. The study found that large numbers of children did not even know that many of the most famous Christian stories came from the Bible.

The findings emerged as the society launched the 'Pass It On' campaign designed to encourage parents to share classic Bible stories such as David and Goliath and Jonah and the Whale to their children. It comes just months after Ofsted found that many pupils were leaving school with a 'very limited understanding' of Christianity because of a dip in standards of religious education. James Catford, Bible Society chief executive, said the latest study indicated that 'the Bible's brilliant and engaging stories could be lost to future generations unless people take action'.

It emerged that almost a third of children did not identify the Nativity as a story from the Bible, rising to 41 per cent for Samson and Delilah and 59 per cent for both David and Goliath and Jonah and the Whale. A fifth of children could not identify Noah's Ark or Adam and Eve as Bible stories. Sir Andrew Motion, the former Poet Laureate, said it was difficult for academics to teach crucial literary and historical texts without an understanding of the Bible stories.



<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/10621856/Rising-numbers-of-children-no-longer-read-Bible-stories.html>

## Nigel Farage: Ukip would strip Christian weddings of legal status

Nigel Farage, the UKIP leader, has said that the traditional Christian wedding ceremony should be stripped of its legal status. Mr Farage suggested that couples who want to wed in church should have to undertake two ceremonies, one recognised by the state and one a religious ceremony. He also said he would not abolish same-sex marriage, despite having campaigned forcefully against the bill before it came into law. His call for French-style reforms of the marriage system came after similar proposals by Simon Hughes, the Liberal Democrat justice minister.

In an interview Mr Farage urged gay, lesbian and transgender people to join his party. He said, 'We propose an augmentation of the civil partnership awarding it equal status to marriage and enabling it to be available to all. We would rather the legal and religious endorsements of wedlock are separate'. He also said that UKIP could oppose foreign aid to countries which have poor records on human rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. However, he defended a former UKIP councillor who said the government's decision to legalize gay marriage was to blame for the floods. He said that while his comments were 'certainly eccentric, and to many unpalatable', they were the opinions of an individual councillor not the UKIP party.



<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/ukip/10706379/Nigel-Farage-Ukip-would-strip-Christian-weddings-of-legal-status.html>

## London Mayor to be probed over gay bus ads. ban

London's Mayor, Boris Johnson, will be investigated over whether he banned a Christian charity's gay bus advert for political gain. The Court of Appeal ruling follows new evidence detailing emailing exchanges that suggest Johnson may have acted for an 'improper purpose'.

The Christian Legal Centre, which supported the charity, says its bus advertisement campaign came during a time when 'the Conservative Party was courting the LGBT vote'. Core Issues Trust ran its campaign in response to an advertisement by homosexual lobby group, Stonewall, that stated, 'Some People Are Gay. Get Over It!'

The charity's legal team said that Transport for London (TfL) must have a 'level playing field, take down Stonewall posters and be content neutral'.

Last March, the High Court maintained that the TfL ban on the Christian charity's advertisement was lawful and that the decision was 'solely' Vernon Everitt's, TfL's managing director of marketing and communication. Master of the Rolls Lord Dyson said however, that fresh email evidence 'unequivocally states that the Mayor "instructed" TfL to pull the advertisement' ahead of the 2012 mayoral elections. Last year the High Court saw a string of emails, including one from the Mayor's office asking Everitt if the advertisement was "happening". This was in response to a story that the Guardian published earlier that day, which stated, 'Christian group books anti-gay ads. to appear on buses'.



<http://www.christian.org.uk/news/boris-johnson-to-be-probed-over-gay-bus-ads-ban/>

# Bits & Bobs

Next to the fruit fly, the most popular insect (arthropod) of the creation scientist could very well be the common honey bee. Much has been written and filmed of this insect's incredible ability to make perfectly-formed combs containing hexagonal cells for maximum utilization of space and heat transfer. The bee's ability to convey the location of a food source to fellow workers via a sophisticated 'dance' is legendary.

Twenty-first century research has now revealed that bee vision is more complex than anyone thought. According to science, arthropods have always been complex - and they have always been arthropods. One of the first arthropods found in the fossil record is the amazing trilobite, common in Cambrian and Ordovician sediments. Many of these creatures are so well preserved that a detailed analysis of their eyes has been possible:



The elegant physical design of trilobite eyes employ Fermat's principle, Abbe's sine law, Snell's laws of refraction, and compensates for the optics of birefringent crystals. Thus, trilobites could see an undistorted image under water. Imagine being able to see with undistorted vision in all directions, being able to determine distance in part of that range, while, at the same time, having the optimum sensor for motion detection.

So, from the beginning, arthropod vision has been extremely complicated, a fact not clarified by Darwinism. Indeed, even explaining how the arthropod head supposedly evolved is an 'acrimonious field'. The composition of the arthropod head is one of the bitterest and longest-running problems in animal evolution. Unresolved after more than a century of debate, this sorry tale is (in)famously known as the 'endless dispute'.

The arthropod head never evolved in the first place—it was created!

The brain of the bee is composed of a mere one million neurons (nerve cells), 0.01% of the neurons of a three-pound human brain. Using this tiny bee brain and associated vision, bees have been able to solve complicated colour puzzles and even recognize human faces. They do this by using their 6,300 ommatidia that comprise the eye. Bees have also been created with the ability to distinguish up to 300 separate flashes of light per second, an attribute they use as they rapidly fly over the changing landscape.

The next time a busy bee buzzes by you on its way to a field, remember that it is designed to do and find things that our most sophisticated machines and computers cannot do, using vision and a brain that flies in the face (so to speak) of undirected evolution!

<http://www.icr.org/article/un-bee-lievable-vision/>



Today, all saints are called to be priests unto our God, and, whilst Christ is our Great High Priest, we, as illustrated in the Aaronic system, have a role, and a duty to exercise our priestly office for Him. To gain a deeper and fuller understanding of this responsibility we will look at Leviticus chapter 8 and learn some helpful lessons regarding this important role.

Let us consider the priest's qualifications in this simple way:

- His Call, vv. 1-5;
- His Cleansing, v. 6;
- His Consecration, vv. 10-36;
- His Clothing, vv. 7-9.

### His Call

Consider carefully the background events that have just taken place prior to the man's call to priestly service. The call takes place just after Jehovah has come to an end of giving all His instructions on how the offerings were to be selected, prepared, and offered, together with the preparations for the construction, and handling, of the tabernacle and its contents. Here we learn that as an individual, he had to appreciate the significance of the sacrifices, and understand the sanctity of the house of God.

The moment we are saved we become priests but it is unlikely that at that stage we fully appreciate the dignity of the position into which we have been brought. From that moment on we are described as 'holy priests'. This is the God-ward aspect of our service, addressing God in worship and thanksgiving. The priest of old would wear a linen coat as he approached God. This speaks of his personal purity, and we must approach our heavenly Father in similar mode of purity. The scriptures would also describe the believer as a 'royal priest'. What an honour to bear such a title! To come wearing garments of glory and beauty, and giving praise that is worthy to the King of kings, into whose presence we have entered!

It was imperative that the priest of old knew how he had to approach God, for were he to do so other than in the God-given manner then the judgement of God would fall

# THE PRIESTH

upon him. In similar vein, when we come into the presence of God, we should come with all due dignity and decorum. It is inappropriate to approach God in a casual, flippant, or an irreverent manner. It is delightful to hear younger men speaking to God in worship, exercising their prerogative to function as priests, provided that it comes from a deep God-given, Spirit-led exercise that is Christ exalting.

Not only did his call place him in a privileged position as a priest, but we should notice that it also separated him from the people. His call set him apart; it made him different to the rest of the camp! Separation is not a particularly popular subject these days. Modern thinking suggests that if we are more like the lost then we will be more attractive to them and more successful in our efforts to win them for Christ. The scriptures teach that being a Christian makes us different; we are separated unto Christ. Therefore, we should think differently; we should act differently; we should talk differently; we should dress differently. Why? Because we are different, for God has called us to Himself and our lives should reflect this fact – 'called unto the fellowship of Jesus Christ', 'called to be saints'.

### The Privilege of the Call

Can you imagine what it must have felt like to be singled out for this unique honour and privilege? It could so easily have gone to the priest's head, as he thought of himself to be special in God's eyes. But the call is based on grace; it is God's sovereign will and His choice totally. I am what I am, by the grace of God, as we are reminded by Paul in Ephesians chapter 4. We should 'walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, with all lowliness and meekness'.

Over the years, some have asked the question, why was it that Aaron was called in preference to his brother Moses? The scriptures offer us no explanation on this point. However, Moses was brought up for forty years in Pharaoh's palace, and then had to

flee for his life into the wilderness for the next forty years. Aaron, on the other hand had been brought up in the land of Egypt. He had spent all his early days in Egypt, and knew what it was to share in the sufferings of the people. Perhaps he had worked in the brick kilns and had felt the lash of his taskmaster's whip. Tired, hungry, and sore, he shared the sufferings of the people. Think of our Saviour, the scripture tells us, 'For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities', Heb.

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4. 15. Think of Him in His sojourn on earth; hungry, tired, weary, lonely, disappointed, betrayed, and rejected by His own. He knows and understands the sufferings of His people. He was tempted in all points as we, but, praise God, sin apart.

### The Basis of the Call

Aaron stood on redemption ground. He had been redeemed out of Egypt on the strength of the Passover Lamb, given to us in Exodus chapter 12. He had acknowledged the necessity of the sacrifice and he appreciated the power of the blood. Only a born-again believer can be a priest; they must be saved. But Aaron also stood on sanctified ground. He had the experience of passing through the Red Sea as he left Egypt behind. He knew the rigours of the journey through the wilderness. He knew what it was to be a stranger and a pilgrim. He was a separated man.

We have been separated unto Christ, to bear the reproach of the cross. Before we can be pilgrims, we must be strangers to this world, and live separated and sanctified lives. The priesthood was raised up purely and solely for God's pleasure, 'that he may minister unto me'. This man would find that the whole of his ministry was centred on, and was in connection with, the house of God. One aspect of our priestly exercise is to take the Lord's people into God's presence, solely for His pleasure. The priest was divinely equipped and fitted for this purpose. Without his priestly garments, he was ill prepared,





# OOD (2)

but, clothed by God he could minister in His presence. Our priestly worship is not based on natural ability, or eloquence. It is the time spent alone with God, and His word, that equips us to lead the saints into His presence.

## His Cleansing

Prior to commencing his priestly service, it was essential that he was cleansed with water. Moses was

loved the church, and speaks of His sanctification and cleansing of it 'with the washing of water by the word', Eph. 5. 26.

Sanctification is essential in the life of the child of God. Anyone called into God's service must become immersed in the word of God for his own personal sanctification. Sanctified, set apart for the Master's use just as the priests of old were set apart by Jehovah. In John chapter 13 the Saviour washed the disciples' feet, and, when dealing with Peter's objection, the Lord said, 'He that is

man. The act of consecrating Aaron and his sons is recorded in Leviticus chapter 8. We learn how the priest is equipped and prepared, so that when he comes into God's presence he has something to offer. But not only does he have an offering, he has a super-abundant offering, literally, he comes with 'his hands full'. When we come in worship, we can offer only that which we have gleaned in the quiet place. Time spent alone with God and His word will equip us to come and offer priestly sacrifices in His presence.

God had commanded that three times in a year all the males in Israel were to come before Him in worship. There was a specific injunction in connection with this command: 'None shall appear before me empty'. What a transformation there would be if, when we gathered on a Lord's Day morning, we all came in such a spirit! Priestly hands are consecrated hands; priestly hands are filled hands; priestly hands present Christ in the presence of the Father.

We would do well to note the threefold action of Moses, as Aaron is consecrated:

First, the holy oil anoints the place where Aaron was going to minister. Whilst where we gather is just a building, nonetheless, when we all come together, we do well to remember that collectively we are God's house, and that He is there. Dignity and decorum should be the hallmark of our gatherings.

Second, the man himself was anointed. This reminds us of our Saviour at the Jordan river when the Spirit descended out of heaven as a dove. We hear the Saviour's words, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me'.

Third, we note that the altar was anointed. That was the place of sacrifice. It brings before us the worth and work of Christ at that awesome place called Calvary. Oh the joy of the Spirit-led and Spirit-guided in God's house, taking of the things of Christ and presenting Him to the Father. That is true worship!



instructed by God to 'wash them with water', Lev. 8. 6. The washing was related to the priesthood. This is not washing in connection with salvation. The washing that brings salvation from sin is by the blood of Jesus Christ, not with water. It is not related to water baptism but it would speak of the cleansing effect of the word of God in our lives, 'Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you', John 15. 3. Paul clearly states that Christ

washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit', v. 10. It would remind us of our walk, and our conduct as cleansed priests. As the psalmist said, 'Who shall stand in his holy place', Ps. 24. 3. The reply comes, 'He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart'. Our deeds, integrity, humility, and honesty should all be a reflection of a cleansed man.

## His Consecration

A cleansed man was also a consecrated

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The most well-known and quoted Song of the Servant is the one found in Isaiah chapter 52 verse 13 through to chapter 53 verse 12. The oldest Jewish interpretation of the song, held for many centuries, is that it is Messianic. This is the only view that makes sense when the song is studied in detail, yet it is now most strongly denied by Jewish scholars.<sup>1</sup>

This song is unique to all other Songs of the Servant in that it is the only one containing Israel's responsive confession. In all four songs Israel hates and rejects the Servant of Jehovah; however, in this fourth song, communication between God and Israel is restored through the acknowledgement and acceptance of the Servant by the Jewish people.

This song can be seen as having five stanzas:

#### I. Introduction by Jehovah 52. 13-15;

- A. The Servant's exaltation, v. 13;
- B. The Servant's rejection and suffering, v. 14;
- C. The Servant's ultimate vindication, v. 15.

#### II. Confession by Israel that they rejected the Messiah, 53. 1-3;

- A. They confess that the report was meant for them, but they did not receive it, v. 1;
- B. Jehovah's Servant was not attractive to them, v. 2;
- C. They rejected God's suffering Servant, v. 3.

#### III. Confession by Israel that the Servant's sorrows were really theirs, 53. 4-6;

- A. Their Messiah was personally carrying their griefs and sorrows; not His own, v. 4a;
- B. Instead of appreciating this, they thought that His suffering came from God for some atrocious evil that He committed, v. 4b;
- C. Confession that the Servant's sufferings at Calvary were vicarious; for them and for their sins, vv. 5, 6.

#### IV. The perfect Servant's behaviour and the truth about His death and burial, 53. 7-9;

- A. Israel acknowledges the 'mock trial', and marvels at His behaviour under injustice, v. 7;

# The Servant Songs

By **ADAM THROPAY** Downey, California, USA

## THE SUFFERING SERVANT

- B. God states why His Servant was rejected by Israel and put to death, v. 8;
- C. The Servant is vindicated for His innocence by being given a burial suitable for a sovereign, v. 9.

#### V. Conclusion by the Father concerning the Servant of Jehovah, 53. 10-12;

- A. It was God's purpose to crush His Servant as an offering for sin, v. 10;
- B. Prophecy of the Messiah's resurrection and the many who will be justified through His propitiation, v. 10-11;
- C. The Servant will ultimately be satisfied with the results of His sacrifice, by which He bore the sin of many, v. 12.

#### The Fourth Song and the Gospel

This section of prophecy has been termed 'the Gospel in the Old Testament'. The name Isaiah means 'the salvation of Jehovah'. It is no accident that he was chosen to speak more about God's salvation than any other Old Testament prophet. In this book we are given details of the sufferings of Christ that are not revealed in any other passage of scripture.

The five stanzas in the Song of the Suffering Servant preview the first five books of the New Testament:

- I. Isaiah chapter 52 verses 13-15 present the King of kings before whom other kings stand in awe and silence – The Gospel of Matthew.
- II. Isaiah chapter 53 verses 1-3 tell of the lowly Man – unnoticed, unattractive, and despised – The Gospel of Mark.
- III. Isaiah chapter 53 verses 4-6 reveal the intense sufferings of the Man who was rejected by the people – The Gospel of Luke.
- IV. Isaiah chapter 53 verses 7-9 correspond with the Gospel of John, where the uniqueness of the Son of God is brought out – The Gospel of John.<sup>2</sup>
- V. Isaiah chapter 53 verses 10-12 explain the far-reaching effects the

Servant's death would have on mankind, providing salvation for both Jews and Gentiles – The Acts of the Apostles.<sup>3</sup>

#### The Fourth Song and the Offerings

Each stanza also portrays one of the five Levitical offerings that picture Christ's suffering:

- I. Isaiah chapter 52 verses 13-15 – the Peace Offering, speaking of fellowship and relationship between God and the offerer.<sup>4</sup>
- II. Isaiah chapter 53 verses 1-3 – the Meal Offering, with no blood shed in the sacrifice. It pictures the character and obedience of the perfect Servant – the message of these three verses in the stanza.
- III. Isaiah chapter 53 verses 4-6 – the Sin Offering, offered for the sins of the congregation of Israel. This stanza tells of a greater Lamb, who died to take away the sin of the world.
- IV. Isaiah chapter 53 verses 7-9 – the Burnt Offering, given voluntarily by the offerer's desire. The Servant is pictured here as offering Himself voluntarily.
- V. Isaiah chapter 53 verses 10-12 – the Trespass Offering. The word translated in verse 10 as 'offering for sin' is believed by some Hebrew scholars to be the technical word for 'trespass offering'. This offering reveals the truths of substitution and restitution.<sup>5</sup>

#### The Fourth Song and the Books Of Moses

Each section of this fifteen-verse poem corresponds to one of the five books of the Torah:

- I. Chapter 52 verses 13-15 contain the seed of all that follows, like the book of Genesis. The character described in these verses was dimly pictured by Joseph.
- II. Chapter 53 verses 1-3 tell of the deliverer rejected by His own countrymen, foreshadowed by Moses in Exodus.
- III. Chapter 53 verses 4-6 unfold in





# of Isaiah <sup>[3]</sup>

detail the agony of His sufferings as the sacrifice is slain. This links up with Leviticus and the offerings.

IV. Chapter 53 verses 7-9 report His tribulations and the significance of His silence as He is led like a lamb to the slaughter. This most closely connects with the book of Numbers, telling of the trials and testings of the Israelites.<sup>6</sup>

V. Chapter 53 verses 10-12 sum up the prophecy of the song. Deuteronomy recapitulates Israel's desert experience, with the Promised Land in sight over Jordan.<sup>7</sup>

## Stanza One

Introduction by Jehovah the Father, 52. 13-15.

### Verse 13

*Behold:* This Hebrew word corresponds to the phrase often stated by the Lord Jesus, 'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear'. It is a command to consider closely what follows. There are depths of meaning that a casual reader or hearer will miss.

*my Servant: (ebed)* a public servant as a king, his ministers or officers. It is one who rules under another. God's Servant is rightfully a king, yet He submitted Himself to His subjects. They did not understand that He was doing so out of strength, not weakness, and in submission to His Father.

*shall deal prudently: (sokhal)* 1) to behave wisely, acting skillfully and with intelligence; 2) to prosper. The Lord Jesus would act wisely and intelligently, with resulting prosperity.

*he shall be exalted: (room)* to be high or lifted up, to triumph. This was fulfilled when the Father exalted Him, Phil. 2. 9-11.

*and extolled: (nos)* to lift up. This is fulfilled through the believers, as we lift Him up in worship to the Father. We cannot exalt Him any higher than He is, but we can extol Him by our praises.

*and be very high: (gabahh)* to soar, be lofty, rise or be elevated to a great height. This may look to a future day when all things shall be subdued under His feet, 1 Cor. 15. 24-28; Heb. 2. 5-9.<sup>8</sup>

### Verse 14

*As many were astonished: (shomam)* primarily, to be silent or dumb; hence, to be amazed, astonished, or even frightened. Note the centurion and those that were with him, Matt. 27. 54.

*at thee:* Jehovah addresses the Son, referring to this astonishment of those who witnessed the crucifixion. Note that the past tense is used. When God prophesies a future event, it is the same as already accomplished. God also recounts what no mortal was able to see during the hours of darkness on the cross. He allows us to know His thoughts about what He alone could see.

*his visage: (mareh)* 1) countenance, appearance; 2) vision – the act of seeing.

*was so marred: (shokath)* to destroy, spoil, corrupt.

*more than any man's:* the appearance of Christ, and possibly also His vision, were destroyed more than any man's. The Lord Jesus suffered the eternal blackness of darkness, where nothing can be seen, while on the cross.

*and his form: (toar)* outline, shape, form. It implies 'a beautiful form'. This was God's estimate of His Son's appearance before Calvary. What a contrast to man's viewpoint – 'He hath no form nor comeliness', 53. 2.

### Verse 15

*So shall he sprinkle many nations: Sprinkle: (nozoh)* 1. to leap up, to spring – hence, to leap up in amazement, to startle, to cause to tremble in astonishment. The One who astonished people at His first appearing, v. 14, now astonishes nations by His exaltation at His second coming. They are electrified at the change that has come over Him. This first meaning points our minds to the future when 'every eye shall see Him' coming 'in power and great glory', Rev. 1. 7. 2. to spurt, to scatter, to sprinkle; the word is used of the sprinkling of blood in sacrifice, Lev. 4. 6, 17; the sprinkling of water for purification, Num. 8. 7; the sprinkling of the anointing oil, Lev. 8. 11, 30; and the splattering of Jezebel's blood, 2 Kings 9. 33. The act of sprinkling was always done by the priest. If the meaning here is 'sprinkling', the Lord Jesus is seen as the High Priest who will cleanse many from every nation by His blood.

*Kings shall shut their mouths at him:* They will be awed into silence. It is the involuntary effect of His overall impression as He descends from heaven, followed by His heavenly armies, as 'King of kings and Lord of lords'.

*for that which had not been told them shall they see:* Like the queen of Sheba after seeing all the glory of Solomon, the world rulers will have to admit, 'I believed not the words until . . . mine eyes had seen it; and behold, the half was not told me', 1 Kgs. 10. 6-7.

*And that which they had not heard shall they consider: (hithbonahu)* to understand. The astonished viewers of the stupendous glories of the descending Lord will be made to grasp the full significance of what they see. What they see will make clear to them what could never have been expressed in words, Matt. 24. 29, 30.

### Endnotes

- 1 According to Victor Buksbazu, a converted Jew, the Messianic view was first denied near the end of the 11th Century, when Jewish scholars began to assert that the song spoke of Israel, who suffers innocently for the sins of all nations. This interpretation was the result of a strong reaction against so-called Christians who killed and tortured countless Jews during the Crusades and onward. It was further reactivated by the Nazi holocaust against Jews, which was supported by the Roman Catholics. See Victor Buksbazu, Isaiah's Messiah, The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry Inc, 2002, pp. 8-13.
- 2 Only John tells of both Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea giving the Lord Jesus a rich man's burial. Only in John's Gospel is He called the Lamb of God.
- 3 Acts is the New Testament book that outlines the spread of the gospel, and the blessings it brought to Jews and Gentiles.
- 4 God's portion and the priest's portion of the sacrificed lamb are enjoyed together. In this stanza God expresses His thoughts and feelings of His Servant's sufferings, communicating these to both His Son and believing Israel.
- 5 In this section, the Servant is the substitute that bears others' iniquities, and He restores fellowship between God and man, adding more than the 'fifth part thereto' as required under law, Lev. 6. 4-5.
- 6 This stanza has the only mention of the Lamb in the song. The lamb appears more in Numbers than in the other books.
- 7 This stanza concludes the path of the Suffering Servant and gives a glimpse of His promised reward in the future.
- 8 The cycle of submission in the Godhead: The Father extols the Son, subduing all under His feet; the Holy Spirit extols Him through the believers; the Son puts down all rule, authority, and power, and commits everything back to the Father.

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'I have seen many missionaries under varied circumstances, but such an absolutely forlorn man, existing on from day to day, almost homeless, without any of the modern appliances which make life bearable, I have never seen. He was imbued with one desire, and that was to do God service. Whether it could be best done in that way I will not here question, but he looked neither right nor left, caring nothing for himself if he could get one to believe; at least so he struck me. And I have honoured the recollections of him ever since as being as near his Master as anyone I ever saw'.<sup>1</sup> These words, recorded by Sir Ralph Williams, are an unbiased testimony to the life of a man who devoted himself to the evangelization of Africa. Another said, 'I do not think I exaggerate when I say that, next to Dr Livingstone, Central Africa owes more to Mr Arnot than anyone else'.<sup>2</sup>

Frederick Stanley Arnot was born in Glasgow, Scotland, in September 1858. Having godly parents, he was taught the scriptures from an early age. He was saved in his childhood and from that time had the desire to carry the gospel to Central Africa.<sup>3</sup> When the family moved to Hamilton they became friendly with the family of Dr. Livingstone and the children spent many Saturdays in the

# FREDERICK STANLEY

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Livingstone home. Thus, 'All through his youthful days he had the firm purpose of going to Africa, even in spite of difficulties which friends put in his way'.<sup>4</sup> However, it wasn't until July 1881 that Arnot finally travelled to South Africa, en route to the Upper Zambezi.

After an initial stay in Shoshong, in what was to become the Bechuanaland Protectorate, now Botswana, Arnot travelled on to the Zambezi. He recorded, 'One suit of clothes, one knife, fork and spoon, one plate, cup, some soap, beads, calico, wheat-meal, tea, sugar, coffee, a little powder and lead . . . But above all, after reading Ephesians 5. 25-29, an overpowering sense of the sufficiency of Jesus' love . . . I felt I could go anywhere and do anything that I believed He had called me to do'.<sup>5</sup> Encouraged by the native Christians in the town of Shoshong, he set off with a guide to cross the Kalahari Desert. In whatever village he stopped he sought to present the gospel to the locals.

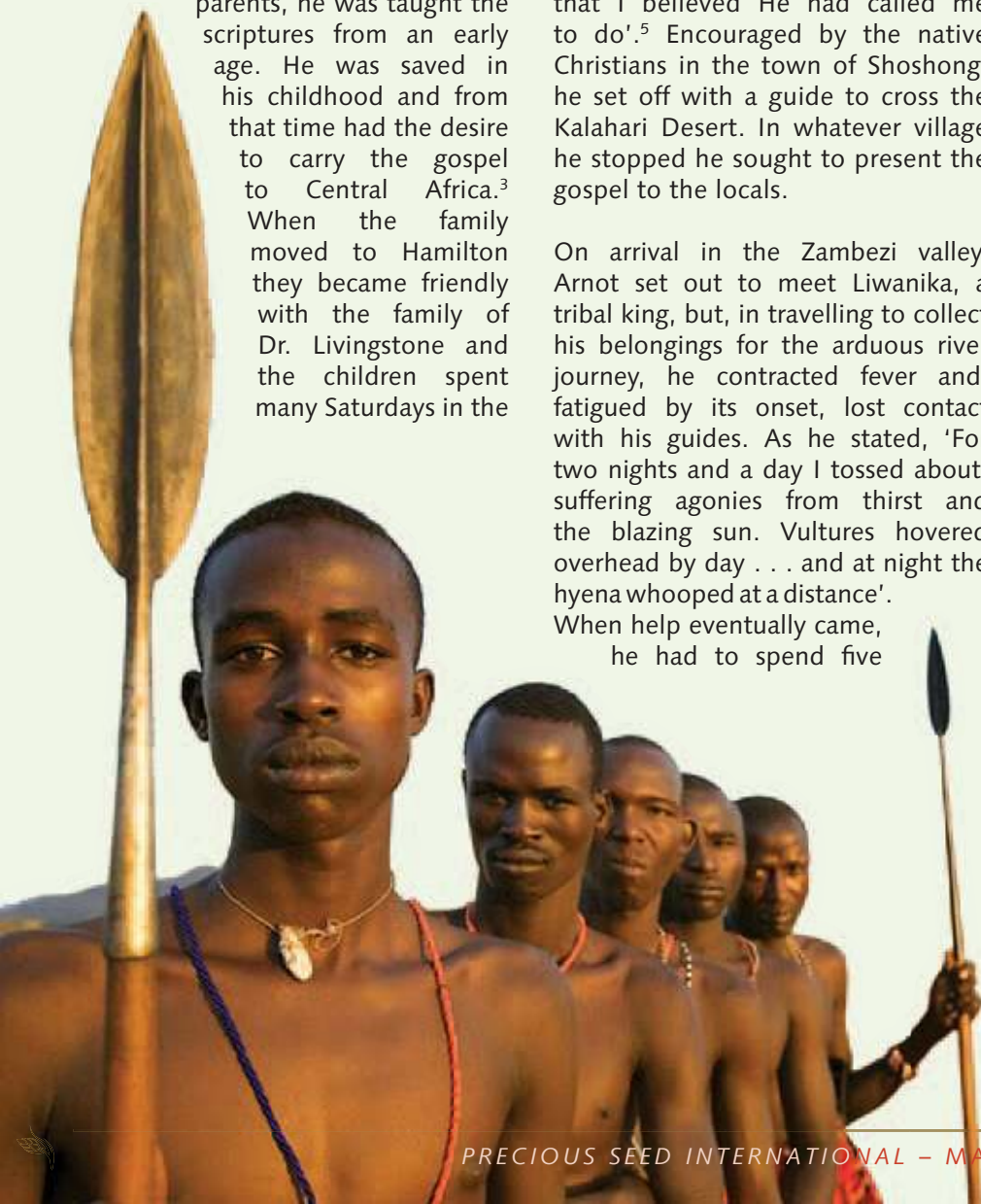
On arrival in the Zambezi valley, Arnot set out to meet Liwanika, a tribal king, but, in travelling to collect his belongings for the arduous river journey, he contracted fever and, fatigued by its onset, lost contact with his guides. As he stated, 'For two nights and a day I tossed about, suffering agonies from thirst and the blazing sun. Vultures hovered overhead by day . . . and at night the hyena whooped at a distance'. When help eventually came, he had to spend five

weeks recuperating but, even then, after trying to journey on, the fever had not left him and he was very weak. Indeed, he was so weak that there was an occasion when his bearers thought he was dead, covered him with a blanket, and went off to find a place to bury him!

The time that Arnot spent with Liwanika was not very productive. There were occasions when he spoke to him about the gospel, using the biblical account of Nebuchadnezzar, but the king was not particularly receptive. However, Arnot records the conversion of Mamwia, an elderly Makololo woman. Even after thirty years in the captivity of the Barotse tribe she remembered the Bible stories she heard as a child and asked the missionary to 'tell her of "Jesus the King of Galilee"'.<sup>6</sup> This he did and as a result he had the joy of seeing her trust the Saviour.

One of the most difficult situations that Arnot had to overcome was the power of the diviners. He found the evil influence of these men to be everywhere. 'The secret of their art', he wrote, 'lies in their constant repetition of every possibility in connection with the disaster they are called upon to explain, until they finally hit upon that which is in the minds of their clients'.<sup>7</sup> This divining was rampant amongst the Barotse, Ovimbundu, and other tribes that he met.

But there were numerous other difficulties that Arnot had to overcome in his travels. He had suffered many bouts of fever, and dysentery, as well as hunger and fatigue, but had pressed on. He had met inhospitable and, at times, antagonistic tribesmen and their chiefs. He had encountered the blights of western civilization visited upon the natives, in the form of slavery and alcohol abuse. He had suffered the prejudice created by infamous stories promulgated by Arab traders from the north. He had been at risk from desert, flood, and wild animals but nothing had proved too great a barrier to overcome. ELLIS







# Y ARNOT: 1858-1914

wrote, 'All this appears commonplace but think of the resolute and patient man who tumbled from one difficulty into another, never complaining, never resting, but always alert to glorify the Saviour and win souls for Him'.<sup>8</sup> However, it was upon his arrival at Garenganze, near where Livingstone died, that Arnot found his work.

Most of the pioneer work at Garanganze was done by Arnot. He negotiated with the chief Msidi to

After two years work in Garenganze, in December 1887 Arnot was joined by two others, C. A. Swan of Sunderland, and W. Faulknor of Canada. In his diary Arnot described their arrival as 'a day . . . of real Gospel triumph! There in the heart of the continent, standing holding each other by the hand, we sang, "Jesus shall reign"'.<sup>10</sup> The labours of these three men enabled a mission station to be established before Arnot returned on furlough to England. Faulknor took charge of the little orphanage and Swan set to work to build up the station. On that basis, after spending two months with his brethren, he set off for home. As he wrote, 'If the foothold now secured was to be maintained, more helpers would be required'.<sup>11</sup>

When Arnot reached England in September 1888 he received a tremendous welcome. As BAKER indicates, 'The Royal Geographical Society honoured him by making him a Fellow. It presented him with a medal for his discoveries in connection with the Zambezi, and awarded him the Cuthbert Peak grant in recognition of his seven years' travel'.<sup>12</sup>

As ELLIS also records, 'His labours and travel . . . were classed with those of Dr Livingstone and other famous travellers and missionaries. He was given a public reception and presented to Princess May . . . and other leaders in public life'.<sup>13</sup> What is interesting is that there is no record of this in Arnot's own book chronicling his travels. Far more important to Arnot was that as a result of his furlough, twelve were willing to join him and sail for Africa, among them Dan Crawford and Fred Lane.

In all, Arnot made five journeys into the interior of Africa, the later expeditions being made when he was

in declining health. It is estimated that he travelled over 30,000 miles, much of it through unexplored and previously unknown land facing perils from Arab raiding parties, hostile villagers, and hippos threatening his frail craft. Though his health had failed him on a number of occasions, Arnot was not easily diverted from his mission.<sup>14</sup> What meant most to this illustrious traveller and missionary was that, over a period of thirty-three years, he helped set up sixteen stations over five different mission fields, manned by over sixty workers. Also, from those early pioneer days and the sowing of the seed of the gospel scores of saved natives were beginning to carry the gospel to their fellows. As ELLIS concludes, 'His life is a proof of what God can do with and for one over whom He has supreme control'.<sup>15</sup>

## Endnotes

- 1 WILLIAMS, SIR RALPH, *How I became a Governor*, John Murray, 1913.
- 2 Comments of ERNEST BAKER, quoted in the Foreword to Arnot's book written by William Bennet.
- 3 'It was only when he had reached the critical age of eleven that he came to know the way of Salvation – came to know it by being saved', Ellis, James J., *Frederick Stanley Arnot*, Pickering and Inglis, pg. 7.
- 4 ARNOT, F. S., *Missionary Travels in Central Africa*, Alfred Holness, 1914, pg. xii.
- 5 *Ibid.*, pg. 5.
- 6 ELLIS, JAMES J., *Frederick Stanley Arnot*, Pickering and Inglis, pg. 25.
- 7 ARNOT, F. S., *Missionary Travels in Central Africa*, Alfred Holness, 1914, pg. 37.
- 8 ELLIS, JAMES J., *Frederick Stanley Arnot*, Pickering and Inglis, pg. 39.
- 9 ARNOT, F. S., *Missionary Travels in Central Africa*, Alfred Holness, 1914, pg. 98.
- 10 *Ibid.*, pg. 102.
- 11 *Ibid.*, pg. 102.
- 12 BAKER, ERNEST, *Arnot, a Knight of Africa*, (abridged), John Ritchie, pg. 43.
- 13 ELLIS, JAMES J., *Frederick Stanley Arnot*, Pickering and Inglis, pg. 55.
- 14 Ultimately, it was the on-going problems with Arnot's spleen that resulted in its rupture. In great agony he had to be carried from the interior of Africa through to the south before surgery could be attempted. Although the operation was successful, Arnot died soon afterwards on the 11th May 1914.
- 15 *Ibid.*, pg. 62.



obtain a plot of land on which to build a dwelling. Later he sought opportunity to present to that chief something of the message of God and salvation. It would seem that the message had little effect upon the chief who was involved in human sacrifice, war mongering amongst his neighbours, and the trading of slaves who were the spoil of so many of Msidi's murderous expeditions. However, as Arnot wrote, 'The more I became occupied heart and hand with "the building up of the broken-hearted, the delivering of the captive, and the preaching of the gospel to the poor," the more scope there seemed to be for such service'.<sup>9</sup>

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# REPORTS REPORTS REPORTS

GOSPEL WORK AND OTHER ACTIVITIES Compiled by SANDY JACK



## ENGLAND

### Surrey

The assembly at Guildford were really encouraged during the February half-term school holiday.

From the Monday to the Wednesday of the holiday, a Bible Club for primary schoolchildren was arranged. The programme, from 9.30 a.m. to 12 noon, was called 'Space Academy', and the Bible stories and daily themes were all based on the early chapters of the book of Daniel. Between forty and fifty children attended each day and were involved in craft activities and games as well as Bible quizzes, memory verses, choruses and the Bible stories. Ray Tate was again responsible for most of the Bible input, while local believers (and a few co-opted from elsewhere) were responsible for the other activities. The daily involvement and help of ten members of the young people's group was also an encouragement. There was a good turn-out of parents for the prize-giving on the Wednesday lunchtime. Please pray that there will be lasting blessing from this work done in the Lord's Name.

The Monday of the following week (February 24th) saw the conclusion of the second of the Christianity Explored courses that the assembly have run in the last six months. On that final evening eight participants were in attendance, seven of whom are post graduate students at Surrey University. One of the young ladies described the group as being representative of the United Nations. There were three ladies and one man from China, one man from Burma, one man from Vietnam and one lady from Korea. The only participant who is not a student is Nigerian. With the two course leaders both being from Guildford it made for a very interesting course. Please pray that the three who are believers will go on well for the Lord and that the other five, who are extremely open to the gospel, will be saved. It is most encouraging to have these eight

adults and others attending the All Age service regularly, where they hear the gospel preached and God's word taught.

### Liverpool

The city centre open-air meetings each Tuesday and Friday and once a month on Saturdays, continue to be an effective way of reaching out with the gospel. Prayer would be appreciated or some recent contacts: Karina, a Russian lady who was very antagonistic; Edward, who initially refused a leaflet and then accepted one after a brief chat - it turned out that he is attending church with the sole purpose of getting his son into a church school; Nick who attends a Baptist church every Sunday with foster children - he put up a polite smokescreen but seemed to be really quite interested.

Regular weekly outreach activities continue at Bethany Gospel Hall. Since September numbers at the Parent & Toddler Group have decreased due to children moving on to nursery. Please pray that if it is the Lord's will for this work to continue, that new parents will be contacted. The Friday After School Club (Children's Meeting) has benefited from the children who once attended Parent & Toddler Group but are now of school age.

The hall is overdue a major refurbishment. At present it has no central heating system or effective insulation. The Lord has made it clear to the assembly that they should undertake this work and while they realize that this will be a major undertaking, they feel it is necessary to preserve the fabric of the building and make it more user friendly. Prayer would be appreciated in this matter.



### Brazil

Jeff and Denise Watson report from Parana; 'We were really lifted up by the decision of Patricia, to follow the Lord by being baptized. This took place on

the second Lord's Day in November. We invited a brother called Severo Miguel who is a friend of Patricia and Reinaldo (her husband), to minister for the occasion. He had been responsible for bringing Reinaldo to the Saviour many years before and now they are united in the Lord and fellowship with us. Our prayers have been answered and another young couple provided to help in our Lord's work. They are both willing to put their hands to the grindstone, Praise be to God for this'.

'Straight after the baptism, we had more good news, Dona Jacira, Tiago's grandmother, said she wanted to be the next to be baptized and she needed just a little time to explain to her family who are strict Catholics. On hearing this, Nani a young girl, asked to join her. Due to Christmas's programme already in motion and time needed for preparation, we decided to plan the baptisms for 5th of January. Dona Tereza, who has serious leg and knee problems, on hearing that we were to baptize the others, asked if she could also be. After chatting with the brethren, it was agreed she was ready for this step. But, how were we to do it? Getting her in and out of the water would be a problem. Jeff decided he would place a plastic chair in the tank for her to sit on; it all worked out a treat. That though was not the end, as Zedir, a brother converted while working in the North of Brazil, and who had returned home last year to Foz, started to come regularly to the meetings and who had been showing signs of growth, also asked if he could be baptized. Unfortunately his brother, who had been praying for years for his salvation, could not make the baptism. What a great joy for the start of a New Year, our prayers and thoughts are that there will be more blessings falling this year, bringing glory and honour to our Saviour's Name'.

'The opportunity of distributing gospel calendars and tracts in the Sunday market took place on the two Lord's Days mornings before Christmas. A very good tract, "A special present", was used along with others. A special time was had on the 22nd of December with the assembly and few children





to show forth the Saviour's love and birth, coming into this world to save us from sin. Marcio, who was brought up hearing the gospel but never put his trust in the Saviour, has moved into Foz and wants his daughter to come to Sunday school. He came with her and also his wife. Please pray for them. One friend continues to attend very regularly coming along to Tuesday prayer meeting and Thursday study nights as well as Sunday evenings'.

'After such a good start to the New Year, we look to our Lord for continued blessing'.

## Romania

Paul and Sue Williams report: 'We were most encouraged by the summer gospel tent work in Romania and in the Republic of Moldova. Since May 2008 over fifty-three thousand children and sixty-seven thousand adults and young people have listened to the great message of salvation and around 500 have professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ'.

'Last summer has been the best and most fruitful for the assembly gospel tent ministry in Romania. The twelve tents have been used in twenty-one counties throughout the country and also for the first time in the Republic of Moldova. The Lord wonderfully blessed in the salvation of over one-hundred-and-sixty people. Over twelve thousand children and sixteen thousand adults have attended these tent meetings, and others have listened to the gospel through the loudspeaker system! Truly, "To God be the glory great things He has done", and continues to do to His praise and eternal glory'.

'In early November, a series of intensive all-day Bible studies and series of ministry meetings commenced and ran on specific dates in December and January. It was a real joy to renew fellowship with brethren from the assemblies of Pietrisu and Bujoru, which are on the Romanian-Bulgarian border. In early January Paul started intensive studies with the assembly in Prundu, and studies in the book of Nehemiah, on a Saturday in Alexandria for assemblies in the county of Teleorman'.

'Paul was also invited for another series of ministry meetings consisting of two

sessions each day, with the assembly in Grañicesti, county of Suceava, 440 kms north of Ploiesti, during November. The believers were most appreciative and encouraged by the teaching'.

'A third series of ministry meetings were also held with the assembly in Galati, Eastern Romania. The elders asked that Paul give teaching on the very important subject of the person and work of the Holy Spirit. There was a great interest in the meetings and the brethren had many questions. God willing, the next series will deal with the important and practical subject of spiritual gifts. Studies on Romans 6-8 have also been requested!'

'At the end of November Paul was invited to speak at a youth conference in Lancrãm. Young believers from the county of Alba listened attentively to teaching on "King Josiah and spiritual revival"'.

'Paul was also able to travel with a brother from Dorohoi assembly recently to the neighbouring country of the Republic of Moldova for all-day Bible studies in Orhei, and give expositional teaching from Nehemiah chapters 1 to 8'.

'We also received permission to have the Romanian Bible Exhibition in a large new shopping mall in the city of Ploiesti. Good numbers of young people came, as well as adults. The exhibition ran for the two weekends before Christmas and during the six days over eight hundred people attended, good contacts were made and there were good conversations. A large amount of gospel literature and calendars were distributed and while the days were long, it was a most profitable time. Support from dedicated believers from the local assembly was appreciated. In mid-January the Art Gallery in the town of Giurgiu was rented to put up the exhibition. It has an excellent central location surrounded by shops and blocks of flats. Over three hundred people attended, from different walks of life, including a priest, a former secret policemen and retired teachers. The local assembly worked very hard and it was a pleasure to enjoy fellowship in divine service with older and young believers. Please pray for this work as the

exhibition is also booked to go into some Christian schools'.

Paul and Sue also provide some specific points for which prayer would be valued for the Lord's work and assembly testimony in Romania:

1. Safety for the Lord's servants on increasingly congested roads.
2. Continued freedom for gospel outreach work.
3. Continued growth of local assemblies through pioneer evangelism.
4. Consolidation and development of the gospel tent work throughout Romania.
5. Spiritual results from the Bible correspondence course work.
6. Translation, checking and printing of literature projects.
7. The development of 'The Romanian Bible Exhibition', and especially access into state schools and public halls.
8. A new generation of evangelists, Bible teachers and workers for the Lord's work.

## Bolivia

Blanquita Haggerty reports: 'After five months in Santa Cruz, I am ready to return to Vancouver. It has been an interesting time observing the progress in the work of the gospel in this part of the country. The believers at Ebenezer Assembly are very active in different activities. The "Awana" work reaches a lot of young people, ranging from children to teenagers. Activities closed in November for the season, but many of the workers decided to continue over the holiday period since many children expressed a desire to continue with their Bible lessons. The conference, with a good time of ministry, gathered believers from the assemblies in the city. They enjoy the opportunity to get together under solid teaching of the word given by some well-known speakers from Argentina. Some brethren help in two or three outlying assemblies. There is also a children's work in an outlying place called Samaria. The large children's meeting is growing fast. In general, the word of God is well received among the people in Samaria and a few believers from Ebenezer have moved to live there, bringing the strong possibility that in the near future meetings for adults will be convened'.



# Gospel Literature Ireland



Gospel Literature Ireland (GLI) is a recently established trust whose objectives as outlined in the Trust Deed, are 'the advancement and promotion of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the truth of the Bible', to be achieved 'through the distribution of free literature . . . in public places within Ireland'. This article by Andrew Shanks outlines the background to the establishment of GLI and current plans for gospel witness.

For many years, several believers, from assemblies across Ireland, visited the annual National Ploughing Championships in various sites across Ireland to hand out gospel literature 'on foot'. We had been praying that the Lord would open a door for us to take our GoodNews4U exhibition unit to the Championships in order to distribute Bible-based gospel material, but for several years the door remained closed. The Championships were first held in 1931 and have grown to be the largest trade exhibition in Ireland. For three days each September, the Championships occupy 700 acres of land, comprise 1,100 Trade Exhibition stands, and attract over 180,000 visitors. People travel from all over Ireland to attend the Championships. As well as agricultural exhibitors, other attractions include a food fair, craft village, motor show, stands relating to education and lifestyle, and many varieties of entertainment and special events.

In 2012 our application was finally accepted, giving us complete freedom to display Scripture texts from our trailer and tent, and to offer gospel material. We faced many logistical difficulties as our application was accepted only a short time before the Championships began. However, the Lord intervened and allowed us to purchase and prepare several items, including cotton shopping bags printed with John 3 v. 16 and pre-filled with gospel items, pens and pencils with a Bible verse printed on them, leaflets, books, CDs, fridge magnets, and various items for children.

That year the event was held in Co. Wexford in the south-east corner of Ireland. Thirty-four helpers joined us to share in this gospel work, and we were pleased that, despite very wet weather, we were able to interact with so many visitors. Around 18,500 people accepted one of the shopping bags, and we held many conversations with people who stopped to chat. Children were keen to get something for free, and we took this opportunity to chat to parents and provide literature.



In 2013 the Lord continued to open doors for us and we obtained permission to take the GoodNews4U trailer back to the Ploughing Championships, this time held in Ratheniskea, Co. Laois. This location was more central with three nearby motorways providing better access, and as a consequence numbers attending the event increased to 220,000, the largest ever! This time we pre-filled the cotton shopping bags with a pen displaying Romans 6 v. 23, a printed gospel leaflet with tear-off response card, and an invitation for Postal Bible School (Ireland). Around 19,500 of these bags were taken by members of the public, as well as many other items, and we have since had several written requests for Bibles and other items we had offered on the response card.

In both these visits to the Ploughing Championships, we met many who were really searching for the truth, living empty lives and looking for hope. It was a privilege to be able to give Bibles to a number of folk; one very religious lady took fifteen Bibles back to County Cork for her friends who had been meeting to study the word whilst all sharing one Bible. Many teenagers visiting the show engaged in serious conversations about God and took CDs and other items.

During our preparations for the 2013 Championships we were increasingly challenged by the massive organisational operation required to plan for this event. We believed that if the Lord was going to continue to provide us with such opportunities, it was our responsibility to be faithful stewards of all He provides. We therefore prayerfully considered formally involving some others in the logistical side of this work. As a result, Gospel Literature Ireland was established. There are currently five Trustees – myself and four other brethren from across Ireland – and we are currently applying to have a stand at the 2014 Championships, which are being held in the same location as 2013. We have ordered a larger supply of shopping bags and hope, God willing, to distribute up to 30,000 this year. We are also looking for other items for use at the Championships. Please join us in prayer for wisdom in the choices made, so that they will be suitable and effective for reaching lost souls with the gospel.

Please pray with us, as we prepare for this outreach, that we may have opportunities to share the gospel with many people from across the island of Ireland. We are aware of other large shows and exhibitions in Ireland, and are praying for guidance as to whether we should expand into some of those. For now, however, our focus is on what the Lord has been pleased to do for us up until now at the Ploughing Championships, and we trust He will do the same or even more than we expect this year, God willing.

*If you would like further information please contact: Gospel Literature Ireland, Hawthorn Drive, Newcastle West, Co Limerick, Ireland. E-mail: [gospelliteratureireland@gmail.com](mailto:gospelliteratureireland@gmail.com).*





# A WORD FOR TODAY

**Dlq** = Set on fire, burn, hotly pursue

**Dām** = blood, bloodshed, bloodguilt, murder

**Dmh** = be like, become like, compare

Some of us may have seen the Moody Institute of Science presentation entitled 'Red River of Blood', which, although now somewhat dated, never ceases to make one realize just how 'awesomely and wonderfully'<sup>1</sup> we are made as human beings. One interesting statistic in that presentation is that there are more references to blood in the Bible than in any other book, other than, possibly, a textbook specifically written on haematology. So, whilst this might present us with a somewhat daunting task as we seek to look at the use of the Hebrew word for blood, *dām*, it also provides us, like the blood-stream, with a continuous flow of rich material to work on!

The word *dām* occurs over 300 times in the Old Testament, and is the basic term for blood found in most Semitic word groups. LEON MORRIS<sup>2</sup> has helpfully categorized the occurrences in the Old Testament as follows:

Death with violence of some kind, e.g., in Genesis chapter 9 verse 6, where God lays down an unbreakable principle of requital by stating that 'whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed' ESV;

Connecting life with blood, e.g., in Leviticus chapter 17 verse 14, where the eating of blood is proscribed by God, 'for the life of every creature is its blood; its blood is its life' ESV;

Eating meat with blood, e.g., in Leviticus chapter 3 verse 17, which also forms part of the proscriptive laws against eating blood; God warns Israel that they could 'eat neither fat nor blood'. This prohibition is also carried on into the later book of Jubilees.

Sacrificial blood, e.g., the institution of the Passover in Exodus chapter 12 verse 13, where the blood of the slain lamb stays the judgement of God from falling on Israel;

General Uses, e.g., figuratively, in 2 Samuel chapter 23 verse 17, where drinking the water that men risked their lives to bring to David would be equivalent to drinking their blood. See below for other figurative uses.

Surprisingly, the category that has the

By **BRIAN CLATWORTHY**  
Newton Abbot, England

highest incident of this Hebrew word is the first category, and not the fourth. But it is the sacrificial aspect that features most in theological terms, because of the links in the New Testament to the death of Christ. For example, Paul has no difficulty in connecting the narrative of Exodus chapter 12 with the sacrifice of Christ in 1 Corinthians chapter 5 verse 7b. It is also evident that the word is used both literally and figuratively in the Old Testament, so, as in all textual studies, the context must be the primary concern in the interpretation. The figurative use is mainly confined to texts found in historical and poetic narrative, but the prophets are also keen users of this form of rhetorical device. If we look at texts such as 1 Kings chapter 2 verse 5, or Psalm 106 verse 38, we see that the word is used almost as a synonym for murder, hence the expression, 'his blood shall be upon himself', Ezek. 18. 13 ESV. Jeremiah expresses his outrage at those who exploit the disadvantaged, even to the extent of taking innocent blood, Jer. 7. 6. This forms part of a lengthier 'sermon' against Israel in which he underpins his argument by referring to parts of Exodus chapter 20, and Deuteronomy chapter 5 that include the prohibition against murder. One other notable point to make is that in general blood is not identified in the Old Testament with family relationships. PAUL TREBILCO states, 'While in English we speak of blood kinship or blood relations, the OT speaks of someone as being of the same bone and flesh (*esem, basar*; Gen 2. 23; Judg. 9. 2 [cp. NIV]). Since *dām* was regularly connected with violence, or spilt blood, it was not a suitable word to designate family relationships (Christ, 8-12)'.<sup>3</sup>

A great deal of argument has persisted over the years as to whether blood shed in sacrifice relates to life that is given up in death, or, conversely, whether it is the life that is presented to God that makes atonement for sin. In other words, 'blood' in this latter context means life that is offered in sacrifice rather than death. In our reading of both Old and New Testament texts, and even taking into account Leviticus chapter 17 verse 11, 'for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life' ESV,<sup>4</sup> it seems quite clear that it is in the death of the sacrificial victim that atonement is made for sin, or, as J. ARMITAGE ROBINSON, commenting on

the expression 'through his blood' in Ephesians chapter 1 verse 7, confirms, 'To the Jewish mind "blood" was not merely – nor even chiefly – the life-current flowing in the veins of the living: it was especially the life poured out in death; and yet more particularly in its religious aspect it was the symbol of death'.<sup>5</sup>

In the Septuagint (LXX) the word *dām* is usually translated by the Greek word *haima*, which is the noun that occurs mostly in the New Testament for blood. It is used in the ordinary sense of the word when it refers to the woman with the flow or 'haemorrhages' NRSV of blood, Mark 5. 25, and of the blood that flowed from the side of Christ, John 19. 34. John uses it in a technical sense of blood relationship, literally 'of bloods', when he distinguishes between natural birth, and spiritual regeneration, John 1. 13. Crucially though, it is the blood of Christ, i.e., His expiation for sin that is the main focal point for the writers of the New Testament. As STEPHEN RENN writes, '*Haima* occurs in the contexts where the "blood of Christ" is the dominant motif'.<sup>6</sup> This can be seen, especially within the various New Testament letters, for example, in Romans chapter 3 verse 25. Hebrews is full of references to the significance of the blood of Christ, which secures for us eternal redemption, Heb. 9. 12, and enables us to gain access into the presence of God at all times, Heb. 10. 19. Therefore, since we have this access by faith, Rom. 5. 2, let us not only enjoy the peace of God, but may we be firmly fixed on the hope that is set before us, because of the value God has placed on the blood of Christ, Heb. 12. 24.

## Further reading/study

### Introductory

MORRIS, LEON, *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross*, pp. 126-128 - Additional note on the meaning of the word 'blood'.

### Advanced

*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Abridged in One Volume, *HAIMA*, pp. 26-27.

### Endnotes

- 1 Ps. 139. 14a (Tanakh Translation).
- 2 *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross*, pp. 112-113.
- 3 *NIDOTTE*, Vol. 1 pg. 964.
- 4 There are many other references that suggest that death is the atoning act, and, in fact, one could legitimately interpret Leviticus chapter 17 verse 11 as referring to the life poured out in death.
- 5 *Commentary on Ephesians* – Exposition of the Greek Text, pg. 29.
- 6 *Expository Dictionary of Bible Words*, pg. 124.

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## QUESTION

**Does the New Testament prescribe how we should sit at the Lord's Supper?**

## ANSWER

Several hymns infer that in meeting to remember the Lord we sit in a circle, or on four sides with the emblems located in the middle. Douglas Russell's hymn begins, 'Gathered, Lord, around thy table'; another starts, 'With Jesus in our midst, We gather round the board'. I doubt if anyone would disagree with the sentiments expressed by the hymn-writers, particularly as we often refer to the Lord's own words, 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them', Matt. 18. 20.

However, the Lord Jesus is not prescribing a particular seating pattern, nor is He specifically referring to the Lord's Supper, for at that point He had not revealed anything to the disciples relative to the breaking of bread. In addition, we do not base our practices on what we find written in hymns, but solely on what is revealed within the word of God.

There could be several laudable reasons why there might be a preference to sit in such a way that the emblems are located in the middle, but we must always differentiate between what is a preference and what is a scriptural principle. In examining the various sections of the New Testament that supply details relating to the procedure and purpose for the Lord's Supper none of them stipulates the manner in which we should sit, and, therefore, each company of God's people should arrange things to suit their needs.

In many places, the only people present at the Lord's Supper are those who are in fellowship, but what happens if there are unbelievers present, or, for whatever reason, there are Christians in the meeting who will not be taking part? Should we insist that these sit somewhere separate from those who will receive the emblems? There are five specific sections in the New Testament that supply directions relative to the Lord's Supper – Matthew chapter 26, Mark chapter 14, Luke chapter 22, Acts chapter 20 and 1 Corinthians chapter 11 – and in

none of these is there any instruction given as to what should be done concerning those who are present but not participating.

It may be wiser, and it certainly would be easier in respect of passing the emblems around, if those who are taking part sit together, but is this something that should be insisted on? In addition to the five passages just mentioned, in 1 Corinthians chapter 14 we read, 'If you bless with the spirit, how will he who occupies the place of the uninformed say "Amen" at your giving of thanks, since he does not understand what you say?' v. 16 NKJV. Does this verse supply the answer to our question, i.e., that there should be a place that is separate from those who are taking part, and that is described in the verse as the 'place of the uninformed'?

I do not believe that this verse is the answer to that question for two reasons. Firstly, Paul is not giving teaching relative to the Lord's Supper in chapter 14; he set out all he wanted to teach regarding that meeting in chapter 11. Secondly, the 'place of the uninformed' is not a physical location, but is a metaphor describing the condition of the person who does not know what is being said if someone speaks in tongues and no one interprets.

Rather than insisting on something that I do not feel can be justified from scripture, what should our attitude be towards anyone present who is not in fellowship, including the children of those who are believers? We ought to be delighted that unbelievers are present. If this is their first time at the meeting, we should not make them feel unwanted but extend to them the common courtesy of a welcome, and explain to them what we are doing and why we do it. In a polite, yet clear, manner we should inform them that, whilst we are delighted to see them, they will not be able to participate in the meeting, and that we would be most happy to answer any questions they may have at the close of the service.

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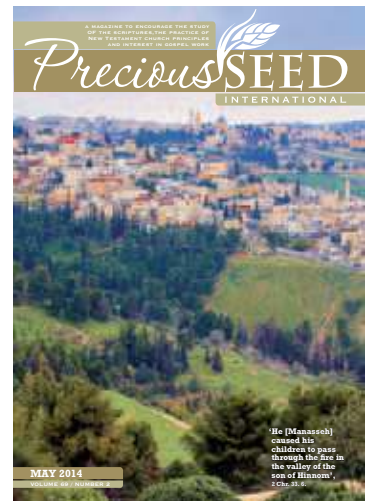
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**THE VALLEY OF HINNOM** The exact location of the eponymous valley of Hinnom or, as it is often referred to in the Old Testament, the valley of the son (or sons) of Hinnom, is highly disputed. The general consensus of opinion is that it is located to the southwest of Jerusalem in an area now known as Wadi-al-Rababi. In the tribal distribution of the land of Canaan, the valley of Hinnom formed part of one of the boundary markers of land allocated to Judah and Benjamin, Josh. 15. 8. The Canaanites were notorious for child sacrifice, 2 Kgs. 3. 27, and this practice was often linked



to the worship of a particular deity, e.g., Molech, Lev. 20. 2-5. This form of sacrifice was proscribed by God, Deut. 12. 31, but it seems that during the period of the kings, this cult practice was evident, even amongst God's people, Jer. 7. 32. As our text highlights, Manasseh's most heinous sin was child sacrifice, which included his own children, cp. Ahaz, 2 Chr. 28. 3. It was the godly Josiah who afterwards defiled the altar in the valley of Hinnom to put an end to child sacrifice, 2 Kgs. 23. 10. So the valley of Hinnom was associated with human sacrifice made through or by fire. Later, the area was used for burning the bodies of criminals and every conceivable form of rubbish hence it became synonymous with the word 'hell' or 'fire of hell' as the Hebrew phrase 'valley of Hinnom' became 'Gehenna' in its Latin translation, e.g., Matt 5. 22. The constant burning of rubbish and the sight of smouldering fires near to Jerusalem must have lent considerable weight to the preaching of our Lord as He warned the scribes and Pharisees of the danger of self-righteousness, and the consequences of making the same errors as previous generations, Matt. 23. 23-33. What a timely reminder then to our own generation that 'hell' is a reality that can, however, be avoided by repentance and faith in Christ.

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