Believer's MAGAZINE



We trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.
(1 Timothy 4.10)

JUNE 2022

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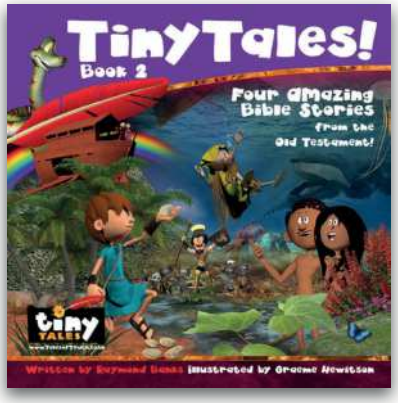
This is the fifth book in this series from the ministry of Albert Leckie, following on from *Romans 1-8*, *The Tabernacle and The Offerings*, *1 John* and *The Upper Room Ministry of the Lord Jesus*. May the Lord be pleased to use it to the blessing of His people, that there might be a deeper understanding of divine purpose and a greater devotion to Him.



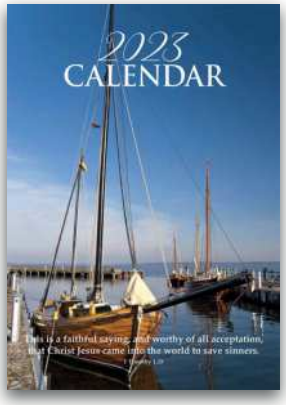
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Since it was first published by Mr John Ritchie in 1891, the monthly *Believer's Magazine* has sought to edify, exhort and encourage Christians in their most holy faith, and stimulate interest and practical involvement in the Lord's work.

Published monthly by John Ritchie Ltd, 40 Beansburn, Kilmarnock KA3 1RL, Scotland.
Editor: Phil Coulson.
Correspondence relating to editorial matters and the Question Box should be sent to the Editor at believersmagazineeditor@gmail.com
All other correspondence should be addressed to John Ritchie Ltd at graphics@johnritchie.co.uk
To subscribe to the digital version of *Believer's Magazine*, visit www.pocketmags.com or download the BM app from iTunes.
All Scripture references in this magazine are from the *King James* (*Authorised*) *Version*, unless otherwise indicated.

Cover picture: The band of the Coldstream Guards marches away from Buckingam Palace after the Changing of the Guard.

FROM THE **EDITOR**

"In the year of this jubile …" (Lev 25.13)



Those of us who are subjects of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II have good reason to lift our hearts to God in thankfulness for her as, this month, she celebrates formally the 70th anniversary of her accession to the throne. Already the longest-reigning female monarch in history, if the Queen is spared to continue for another month she will become second only to Louis XIV (who ruled France for more than 72 years) as the longest-reigning monarch in recorded history. Although hers is a constitutional, rather than an executive, monarchy, Her Majesty's commitment to duty, and the exemplary way in which she has fulfilled her vow before God to serve her subjects, have affected her Commonwealth of nations in a profound way. The extent to which the Queen's personal integrity and acknowledgment that she rules under God have done much to preserve us from the worst excesses of lawlessness will, probably, only be known after she has gone. Many of her recorded comments would suggest that she has a personal faith in the Lord Jesus as her Saviour and, if that be so, she will soon be in the presence of an infinitely greater Sovereign whose reign will know no end.

The Bible was the first book to speak of 'jubile' (the word has, somehow, gained an extra 'e' over time to give us the modern spelling), and it was a remarkable celebration, instituted by God, for the good of His people, Israel. Apart from one instance (in Numbers 36.4), all 22 references to the word are found in two chapters of Leviticus, 25 and 27. A principal thought concerning the "year of jubile" (Lev 25.28) is that of rest. The people had a Sabbath rest every seventh day, and the land was to have a Sabbath rest every seventh year. (It was their failure to give the land its Sabbaths over a period of 490 years that led, directly, to Judah's 70-year Babylonian captivity, during which time the land had those 70 Sabbaths restored (2 Chr 36.17-21).) After seven Sabbath years, the 50th year, the Year of Jubile, was a Sabbath for the Sabbath! Rest, release, restitution and restoration were its aims.

It is somewhat ironic that, at the close of our Queen's long reign, matters of slavery (historic or modern-day), and the possession of land and homes, are amongst the foremost social issues. Those things were never allowed to get out of control under the Law, because the Year of Jubile was, effectively, a 'reset button' that saw the release of slaves and the restoration of land that had been leased. Implicit in the word 'jubile' is the thought of 'release'.

Whilst the jubile year, historically, served a very practical and necessary purpose for God's people, its connection with the Day of Atonement makes it a clear illustration, prophetically, of the future Millennial reign of the Lord Jesus:

> And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, ***in the day of atonement*** shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land (Lev 25.8-9).

The Day of Atonement will have its fulfilment when the nation of Israel, truly repentant as "they … look upon [Him] whom they have pierced" (Zech 12.10), shall "afflict [their] souls" (Lev 23.32) and acknowledge Christ as their Messiah. Sins forgiven, defilement purged, a new heart given, Israel will be fully restored in that day: "it shall be unto you a sabbath of rest" (v 32). Then, the Feast of Tabernacles (vv 33-43) will have its fulfilment and, throughout the 1,000-year reign on Earth of the Lord Jesus, the world will know a true Sabbath of rest.

What our earthly monarch, for all her evident virtues, has been unable to provide, another Monarch, our blessed Lord, will supply in abundance. And, wonder of wonders, we shall share in that glory!

Phil Coulson

MEN OF **FAITH**

in the 19th Century



Captain Allen Gardiner, RN (12)

The Final Voyage (*continued*)

> December 18, 1850. The *Ocean Queen* will probably sail tomorrow morning. Our boats are not too deeply laden, but sadly encumbered, and the leak in the *Pioneer* is not remedied; nothing remains but to lighten her, and get quite to the keel. We know where the leak is, and only require a proper place to unlade in. Nothing can exceed the cheerful endurance and unanimity of the whole party. I feel that the Lord is with us, and cannot doubt that He will own and bless the work which He has permitted us to begin.

Such cheerful communications were calculated to allay the anxiety of friends in England. They knew that the stores which the missionary pioneers had taken with them were sufficient to last until June, and that they had also guns and powder, besides nets for fishing. They knew that Captain Gardiner had written to Captain B J Sulivan, RN, at that time residing at East Falkland, asking for his co-operation, but this unhappily did not reach the islands before he had left them. It was also believed that the mission boats made a retreat to the colony possible in case of necessity. But, as time passed, and no further intelligence was received, application was made to the Admiralty for assistance, which was promptly rendered. Captain Morshead, of HMS *Dido*, received directions to touch at Picton Island on his way to the Pacific, and left England in October 1851.

We must now follow the eventful course of the mission party. The *Ocean Queen* left them on 19th December and, according to the plan stated in the letter which he had just sent to England, Captain Gardiner prepared for a voyage to Button Island. But first it was necessary to disencumber the boats by depositing a part of the stores in some place of security, and to stop the leak of the *Pioneer*. On the very same day they began their search for a secure harbour on the north shores of the Beagle Channel. Captain Gardiner called the one selected 'Blomefield Harbour', as a "testimony of respect to his valued friend, Sir T W Blomefield." All too soon they discovered how imperfectly they were provided for the necessities of their position. The dinghies (which in a brig would have been carried on board) were towed by the *Pioneer*, and broke adrift the first day. The *Speedwell*, meantime, was in a still worse plight, as the spare plank which she was towing got entangled in some kelp and she narrowly escaped grounding, and was saved only by the loss of her anchor and the timber. Two attempts were made to get into Blomefield Harbour; the first time, the *Pioneer* got there; the second time, the *Speedwell* got safe out to sea. On each occasion the successful boat had to return for her consort, not knowing what evils might have befallen her. The third time of leaving Banner Cove, the weather became so stormy, and the wind so contrary, that they were driven for refuge to Lennox Harbour, and beached the boats there on 6th January. The repairs were completed, and the boats floated again on the 18th, but as Lennox Harbour was too exposed for the boats to ride safely at anchor, they proceeded eastward to Spaniard Harbour. Here they

found a beautiful cove for shelter, which they called Earnest Cove, and a river which they named Cook's River, within a fine harbour. But on 1st February as a severe gale blew with violence into the harbour, the *Pioneer* was dashed upon a rock, and her bows were driven in by the jagged root of a large tree which lay prostrate upon the beach. One section of the *Pioneer* was hauled up higher on the beach and, with the help of the tent, converted into a sleeping apartment. It might now have been possible, had the weather been mild, to proceed to Woollya in the *Speedwell*, with seven hands on board, five of whom were men bred to the sea, taking with them part of their provisions; but having in one violent gale lost their landing boats, and the *Pioneer* itself in another, they felt that it would be useless to make any further attempt with their present means. Not being able to go to Button Island, where there was some hope of finding a friendly, English-speaking native, still less could they remain at Banner Cove, where the natives were liable to come in large force, and were hostile to their movements. They determined, therefore, to wait in Spaniard Harbour till the arrival of the relieving vessel, which they had reason to expect from England or from the Falklands. The possibility of a vessel not arriving did not occur apparently to any of the party. The result of their consultation is thus stated by Mr Williams:

> February 2, 1851. How evident that we were not in a position to commence with such slight means so arduous an undertaking! But all this is well; the mission has been thereby begun, whereas, had we waited for more efficient means, it never probably would have been. We are now all agreed that nothing short of a brigantine or schooner of 80 or 100 tons burden can answer our ends, and to procure this ultimately the captain has fully determined to use every effort. Our plan of action now is to 'rough it' through all the circumstances which it shall please God to permit to happen to us until the arrival of a vessel, and then to take with us some Fuegians, and go to the Falkland Islands, there to learn their language; and when we have acquired it, and got the necessary vessel, to come out again, and go amongst them.

It soon became impossible to alter this decision, for within a few days, sickness commenced. Mr Williams was the first who was seized. His disorder began with a severe chill but, early in March, symptoms of scurvy showed themselves, the result of the want of animal food, which was occasioned by the loss of their powder. John Badcock was the next who sickened.

One more voyage only they made to Banner Cove to fetch away some provisions which they had concealed there, and to put up notices to show where they were gone. Then, having taken all the measures needful to ensure their being found in Spaniard Harbour by any vessel searching for them in Banner Cove, they returned to their retreat on Saturday 29th March.

Banner Cove and Spaniard Harbour

The first entry in Captain Gardiner's diary, after the *Ocean Queen* left, was sombre:

> December 23, 1850. During the whole of Saturday we had been at sea, and did not reach our anchorage until one o'clock on Sunday morning the 22nd. At daylight we were woken by the voices of the natives, two of whom were preparing to enter the boat which, to our great concern, we found immovable, the tide having left her aground. As we united in prayer the two natives observed us, and they became more quiet, at length seeming to be, in some degree, awed. Mr Maidment espied the *Speedwell*, standing out. No time was lost in putting her about but, before she could approach, five more men made their appearance, approaching us by the beach. Taking it for granted that their intentions were hostile, and considering the over-bearing conduct of the two who had been with us since daylight, we landed with our guns and walked towards them. When within a few paces, we knelt down upon the beach and committed ourselves to the mercy and protection of our heavenly Father. They stood still, without uttering a word, while we were in prayer, and seemed to be held under some degree of restraint. Finding that they were peaceably inclined, some presents, such as knives and buttons, were distributed among them but, in order to be prepared, as our situation was still favourable for an attack, I walked round to a spot opposite to the *Speedwell*, and directed Erwin to prepare a raft, in order that, as a last resource, we might, if attacked, take refuge on board of her.
>
> On my return, we commenced our usual Sunday service. The natives were still standing close to the boat, and it was again remarked that, as we proceeded, they gradually became quiet, and their whole demeanour was greatly subdued. As soon as we were afloat again, both boats returned to their former anchorage in Banner Cove.

(*To be continued ...*)

THE COLOSSIAN EPISTLE (22)

Andrew de Ville, Dunfermline, Scotland



Chapter 2: The Futility of Ascetism (vv 20-23)

In the closing verses of this chapter, Paul identifies the ineffectiveness of the stringent ascetism advocated by those following Gnostic teaching. Such claimed that this was the way to distance oneself from the lower material world and to gain access to spiritual insight and advanced knowledge. Paul's conclusion is that such man-made programmes and edicts were "not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh" (Col 2.23, RV[1]). We need to be clear on this point; Paul was certainly not advocating, or even permitting, a life of indulgence on the part of the believer, as chapter 3 makes abundantly clear. Indeed, the Lord Himself taught his disciples that "if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Mt 16.24). Rather, Paul is showing that the ascetic practice advocated by the Gnostics as a condition for advancement was ineffective. A key statement to note is that the practices advocated by the gnostic were "after the commandments and doctrines of men" (Col 2.22). This was a humanly-devised approach, not one commanded by God through the revelation of Scripture.

Paul's approach to dealing with this element of Gnostic error can be identified as follows:

- A statement of doctrine: "if ye be dead with Christ ..." (v 20)
- A question: "why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances?" (v 20)
- A conclusion: "which things have indeed ..." (v 23)

In his conclusion, Paul identifies two matters of importance:

- The appearance of the ascetic life: "which things have indeed a shew ..." (v 23)
- The reality of the ascetic life: "not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh" (v 23, RV)

Paul begins with a statement of doctrine, reminding the Colossians of what was true of them in association with Christ: "Wherefore, if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world" (v 20). The word "wherefore" has a similar import to 'therefore', insofar as it prompts us to reflect on what has gone before, notably to verse 12, where, in their baptism, the believers bore witness to the fact they had died with Christ. The "if" is not the if of doubt but, rather, the if of argument. Paul is saying, 'since' you died with Christ then why follow this man-made scheme of denial? A particular aspect of our being "dead with Christ" is presented here; we are to understand that we are "dead with Christ to the rudiments of the world". The word "rudiments" carries the idea of 'elements' or the first things and, in the context, takes the sense of rudimentary religious principles. In Galatians 4 verses 3 and 9, it is used of the "weak and beggarly" elements of Judaism. Far from being advanced, Gnosticism was elementary - it relied on the elementary ideas of human effort and wisdom. The origins of this can be found in Genesis 3: the first thought of Adam and Eve was to provide a covering for themselves, devised and produced by themselves, which proved totally ineffective. When God moved into the garden, they sought to hide themselves among the trees. Adam confessed, "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked" (Gen 3.10), even though he was wearing an apron of fig leaves. The association of the believer with Christ in His death has separated us from these elementary principles.

On this doctrinal foundation, Paul poses a question: "Why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to

ordinances ... after the commandments and doctrines of men?" (Col 2.20, 22). Paul challenges those attracted to the ascetic life to recognise that it was of human construction; its origin was in the teaching of men and carried only man's authority. Paul, in effect, asks, why are you allowing yourselves to be subjected to the authoritative decrees of men? The cornerstone for the believer's advancement is the acknowledgement of what is true of us in association with Christ, in His death and resurrection. We bow to the authority of the Lord and are directed by the revelation of Scripture; the doctrines and commandments of men play no part. Indeed, we will find that these lead us into conflict with Scripture. Recall the challenging question from the Lord to the Pharisees: "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?" (Mt 15.3).

The explanatory parenthesis captures the essence of the ascetic lifestyle: it focused on sensory denial, though, interestingly, Paul does not say, 'look not' or 'hear not'. The word "touch" means to handle, and it is used variously in the New Testament. In John 20.17, the Lord uses the word when addressing Mary, "touch me not", indicating that she was not to cling to Him so as to retain Him here on Earth. In 1 Corinthians 7.1, "it is good for a man not to touch a woman", the word is used of sexual relations. The word "taste" carries the idea of partaking, and also possibly of enjoying, whereas "handle not" refers to even a light or fleeting touch. These terms convey the punctilious efforts of the adherent to deny even the most innocent and needful interaction with the world with the senses as a means of supposedly advancing to a state of spiritual insight and knowledge. Such was, in fact, a delusion. The phrase, "which things are to perish with the using" (Col 2.22), qualifies the preceding list to items that are consumable and can be used up. There is a fundamental flaw in the thinking behind this scheme of self-denial; denying sensory interaction with the material world, which incidentally we cannot avoid, does imply a condition and ability to gain a higher spiritual insight or state. This teaching fails to appreciate the strength of man's fallen nature and man's want of strength to effect any spiritual advancement. Man's problem is with his heart, as the Lord taught: "for out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Mt 15.19). Man needs Christ and the power of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. A man can shut in the body, but he cannot do the same as easily with the thoughts.

In his conclusion, Paul acknowledges how the ascetic life may appear: "which ... have ... a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, neglecting of the body" (Col 2.23). There might be a shew of wisdom in this programme of self-denial, but it was not divine wisdom - it was but an expression of human wisdom. The idea of "will worship" is of voluntarily adopted worship,[2] not that which is imposed by others. The adherents of this system viewed themselves as free from mere formal acts of worship, and had committed themselves to voluntary worship. Sadly, noble as this aim was, it did not lead to them to be "true worshippers" who worshipped the Father "in spirit and in truth" (Jn 4.23). There was no doubt either that, in the eyes of the adherents, they had humbled themselves in denying the material world. This again proved to be illusory, since they had not humbled themselves before God as sinners in need of forgiveness. As already noted, this supposed humility turned out to be a cloak for pride, with speculations "vainly puffed up" (Col 2.18) in their fleshly mind. There was also no doubt that they had gone in for "neglecting of the body" (v 23). They subjected themselves to a regime of unsparing severity and harsh treatment of the body, but was it effective?

Paul has no doubt about the answer. The rendering in the *Revised Version* makes the sense plain: ascetism was "not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh." Paul will show how the sins of the flesh are to be dealt with in the next chapter (Col 3.5-8), but here he shows that the best efforts of doubtless sincere individuals were ineffective. The reason is important to re-state: man's failing starts in the heart, not with the material world. Man's fallen nature leads him to abuse the provision of the material world and to abuse the senses which God has given him, but the issue is internal, not external. The answer is not in self-effort, but in the death and resurrection of Christ. This Paul continues to develop in chapter 3.

In summary, in chapter 2, Paul has provided an answer to the erroneous claims of Gnosticism, while at the same time stressing the union and association of the believer with Christ, our exalted Head. We have no reason to look to another - Christ is all-sufficient for the saint in his desire for spiritual advancement. This is also the doctrinal basis for the very practical teaching we find in the balance of the epistle. In the next article, God willing, we will begin to explore the practical implications of our union and association with Christ in Heaven, and will see that this impacts our goals in living, our characters, and our relationships.

[1] *Revised Version*.

[2] W E Vine, *Expository Dictionary of Bible Words*.

(*To be continued ...*)



THOUGHTS ON THE POST-RESURRECTION APPEARANCES OF THE LORD JESUS (2)

J Alan Davidson, Portadown, N Ireland

"And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun" (Mk 16.2)

The resurrection of the human body was the firm conviction of men of faith throughout the Old Testament. The Scriptures record at least ten instances of resurrection from the dead, but all who were raised returned to its icy grasp. When we focus upon the closing chapters of the four Gospels, we are stirred to worship as we ponder the unique resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was the firstfruits of a triumphant resurrection out from among the dead, to die no more.

Matthew's Gospel Stresses the Majesty

"They went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch" (Mt 27.66). The chief priests and Pharisees could remember what the disciples had forgotten: He said, "after three days I will rise again" (v 63). The religious world, the government and the military were all represented to keep Him dead! However, "the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it" (28.2). This was Heaven's contempt for Earth's authority. All the precautions of evil principalities and powers to guard the sepulchre were defeated by divine majesty, to manifest clear evidence of His resurrection and leave the keepers as dead men (v 4).

Mark's Gospel Emphasises the Reality

The disciples were very unlikely men to forge a false story about His resurrection. The Lord rebuked their unbelief three times. When Mary said that He was alive they "believed not" (Mk 16.11). When the two who journeyed with Him on the road returned to report that He appeared unto them, "neither believed they them" (v 13). He appeared unto the 11 and "upbraided them with their unbelief" (v 14). Mark tells us that these were the men commissioned to preach the Gospel: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (v 16). These astonished men became anointed messengers: "They went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them" (v 20).

Luke's Gospel Sets Forth a Declaration of the Necessity

Luke was inspired to write an independent, orderly account "of those things which are most surely believed among us" (Lk 1.1). It is recorded that He was born a Saviour (2.11). The key verse of Luke's Gospel is the Lord's own words: "the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (19.10). A life-giving Saviour must be a living Saviour: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (24.26). He must needs die. He must rise again. He must reign. "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from [among] the dead the third day" (v 46).

John's Gospel Proves the Dignity

Peter "seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself" (Jn 20.6-7). John "saw, and believed" (v 8). These two witnesses perceived a deliberate exit: passing through the original folds of a large quantity of linen clothes containing the vast amount of spices, and by deliberate design placing the napkin by itself. This was no hurried departure achieved by friend or foe. It was a miracle; the eighth sign of John's Gospel. Our blessed

Lord passed through death, and not a shred of the old order was brought out of the tomb.

"Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth ... he is risen" (Mk 16.6)

That early announcement on the first day of the week mentions the death of Christ as well as His resurrection.

"Come, ye saints, look here and wonder,
See the place where Jesus lay.
He has burst the bands asunder,
He has borne our sins away.
Joyful tidings!
Yes, the Lord is risen today"

(*Thomas Kelly, 1769-1855*)

The grave could not keep the Lord long, and it will not keep us long either. Lazarus had been dead for four days, yet the Lord said to His disciples, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep" (Jn 11.11). "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus [passive participle, 'them that are put to sleep through Jesus', that is, in the good of His death and resurrection, they only sleep]; will God [subject] bring [parallel to "rose again"] with him [Christ]" (1 Thess 4.14). In the good of their association with the death and resurrection of Christ, His people will be brought from the grave.

The grave for the believer is not a loathsome prison, but a perfumed bed: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor 15.55). Death is the last enemy. If we are called to put our feet in the chilly waters, our Head is already in Heaven: "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and ... he was buried, and ... he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (vv 3-4). The death, burial and resurrection of Christ is foundational to all Bible doctrine: "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins" (v 17).

Christ must rise because He personally said so. With divine authority He challenged His accusers: "Destroy this temple [His body], and in three days I will raise it up ... when therefore he was risen from [among] the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scriptures" (Jn 2.19, 22). These words from His own lips gave great power and conviction three years later, as the apostles went forth to preach "the words of this life" (Acts 5.20). The Lord must rise out of the tomb because it was not possible that His holy body could see corruption: "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Ps 16.10). The Saviour was incomparable among men, impeccable before God, and incorruptible in death. It was not possible that the grave could hold Him. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor 15.55). We can say, "thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (v 57). Christ must rise because the Word of God said so: "... declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom 1.4). Resurrection is the basis of our justification, sanctification and glorification. Resurrection, as an act of God, declares His acceptance of the death of Christ on the cross, and the justification of the believer goes with that acceptance. His suffering for our sins, and rising from the dead without spot or stain, means that His righteousness is the character of the believer's righteousness: "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (4.25). We believe that Christ rose from the dead because He said so Himself, the Scriptures say so, and we, by faith as repentant sinners, can publicly confess Jesus as Lord: "The word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (10.8-9).

"He shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days ... " (Acts 1.3)

The firm conviction of faith, the foundation of Bible doctrine, and the Gospel message are supported by the evidence of His post-resurrection appearances. When the Lord arose from the dead, He was seen by one, by two, by seven, by ten, by 11, and then by 500 brethren at once. He was seen separately by Peter, by James (1 Cor 15.7) and by Paul, "as of one born out of due time" (v 8). There were five appearances on the first day, one appearance a week later, at least three appearances at other times, and one on the day of His ascension.

He was seen in the garden, on the road, in the room, in Galilee, at the Sea of Tiberias, on the mountain, and in the sky. Mary recognised Him by His voice; Thomas saw His hands and His side; John recognised His provision, and said "It is the Lord" (Jn 21.7). At the Ascension, the disciples saw Him rising. Later, Stephen saw Him standing, Paul spoke of Him sitting, and John had a vision of Him walking. How thrilling to know, dear believer, that whether we are dead or living, when He comes again we will be the next to see Him: "The dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air" (1 Thess 4.16-17).

(*To be continued ...*)

2 TIMOTHY (30)

Mark Sweetnam, Dublin, Republic of Ireland



2 Timothy 3.1–17: The Awareness of the Man of God

Verses 1–9: The Fierceness of the Times (*cont'd*)

Verse 9: The real point of the historical comparison rings out in this verse. "They shall proceed no further", says Paul. Just as the power of God made fools of the Egyptian magicians and revealed their empty pretension, so too will God stop the false teachers in their tracks and make their folly known to all. There will be no hiding it – Paul's language emphasises the definitive clarity with which their folly will be revealed. Ferocious times will come, wicked men will worm and wheedle and withstand. But we already know how this story ends. Ultimately, truth will triumph.

Paul does not tell us how or when this will happen. However, the reference to Jannes and Jambres may provide some illumination. Their folly became manifest at the point when they had no ability to counterfeit divine miracles, when their claims exceeded their power. In the same way, the ultimate fate of the false teachers is bound up with the powerlessness of the message they preach. Paul and Timothy and countless faithful men had proclaimed a message with innate power, and again and again lives had been transformed as men and women were saved and came to the knowledge of the truth. The false teachers presented their own message as the panacea to the spiritual woes of their victims, but it changed nothing. Sooner or later that would become clear, and all the pretension, falsehood and folly of the false teachers would be revealed. And, time and again, in the last days conditions that have extended from Timothy's lifetime down to the present day, that is precisely what has happened. Error has been constantly present, springing up in various forms, but so often using precisely the tactics that Paul outlines in this chapter. It has made progress, gathering up adherents and reaping adulation for its apostles. But soon enough it runs out of road, and the false teachers have stood exposed as fools and frauds, just as Jannes and Jambres were, so long ago. And, though its progress often seems so glacially slow, and although the forces arrayed against it seem at times irresistible, truth has endured, and those who preach it, though often regarded as fools, have never truly been found so.

Verses 10–13: The Faithfulness of the Apostle

Verse 10: "But thou" – with this, Paul turns decisively from error and its acolytes to deal with the truth and its followers - Paul himself and his faithful son Timothy. The false teachers will reappear briefly in verse 13 of this chapter and in verses 4 and 5 of the following chapter but, for the most part, the keynote of the epistle from this point forward is encouragement rather than warning. In contrast to the vices listed in verses 3 to 5, and their opposition to any sort of ordered relationship between individuals, Paul returns to a theme that has already featured in the epistle – his relationship with Timothy.

Timothy's intimate acquaintance with the details of Paul's life and teaching is summed up in the words "fully known". The *King James Version* rendering here loses some of the force of the underlying word (*parakoloutheō*). Literally, this means 'so to follow one as to be always at his side' and, more metaphorically, "to follow up a thing in mind so as to attain to the knowledge of it" (Thayer). Paul uses it to describe Timothy's intimate and immediate knowledge of the apostle's character and life. Timothy's grasp of these was not a mere academic apprehension. Nor did it arise from remote or casual observation. He knew Paul up close; he had walked with him and been a witness of his teaching, his service and his suffering.

What Paul presents here is the New Testament ideal for teaching. We are consistently encouraged to judge a man's ministry by the life that it produces, and we can only know what that life is like if we are able to get close to those who teach us. Too often, we are apt to behave as though the quality of teaching were in direct proportion to the distance that the servant has travelled to deliver it. Too often, it is the case that "a prophet is not without honour, but in his own country" (Mk 6.4) – and too often we quote that text as though

it offered some sort of justification for our preference for exotic speakers. It does not. Of course, local gift can be helpfully augmented by those who visit, and Barnabas' actions in bringing Paul to Antioch in Acts 11 are a useful demonstration of finding the right teacher to meet a specific need in a particular assembly. But we need to balance this with a deeper appreciation of those whose character allows them authoritatively to teach those who "fully know" their manner of life.

It is striking and significant that, as Paul lists what Timothy knew about his life, he starts with "my doctrine". We might well have expected him to begin with "manner of life". After all, we have often been reminded that Ezra "prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach [it]" (Ezra 7.10), and that Luke describes the subject of his Gospel as "all that Jesus began both to do and teach" (Acts 1.1). And we will have been reminded of these things in order to make the point that doing comes before teaching and that, in the case of the Lord Jesus, the perfection of all that He did gave authority to all that He taught. Paul, however, is making a slightly different point here. That point has less to do with the issue of moral fitness to teach and more to do with the validation of doctrine by the life that it produces. Again and again throughout his epistles – and especially in the Pastorals – Paul stresses the relationship between doctrine and practise. False doctrine is always linked with immoral behaviour: the falseness of the teaching is revealed by the defectiveness of the life that it produces. Good doctrine, by contrast, the sound – or healthy – doctrine of which Paul so often speaks in the Pastorals, produces sound and healthy conduct. "Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Mt 7.16) is a principle that still applies and, by beginning with his doctrine, Paul is emphasising the root from which all that was fruitful in his life originated. Well it is for us if our lives, too, are rooted in the teaching of Scripture, and are marked by fruit that makes it clear that this is so.

It is precisely this link that Paul emphasises, for he moves from doctrine to "manner of life", or conduct. The term takes us to the nitty-gritty of everyday life. Paul is thinking here, not so much of the big picture, but of the details of his daily life. Timothy's knowledge of Paul's life was in high resolution, and Paul knew that – and knew that there was nothing in his everyday existence that was inconsistent with the truth that he taught. All of us, but especially those of us who teach, should feel the challenge of his example, for too often there are too many false notes in our own life that do not harmonise with the truth we teach and profess to believe.

The routine of life matters. Paul's life, however, was not simply an accretion of events. It was marked by "purpose". Paul uses this word in chapter 1 verse 9 of God's purpose, and it conveys not just steadfastness and commitment, but the idea of a plan to be followed. There was nothing aimless about Paul's life; he always moved with the bigger picture clearly in mind. This was the man who pressed "toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus", who longed to "apprehend that for which also [he was] apprehended of Christ Jesus" (Phil 3.12, 14), whose "ambition [was] to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named" (Rom 15.20, ESV[1]). Paul not only knew his purpose himself, but he was able to articulate it, and to communicate it to Timothy. Is it possible that, by contrast, we would struggle to articulate our sense of purpose to ourselves, never mind to express it to someone else? The everyday matters, but there is always the danger that we can become so bogged down in the routine of living that we lose our sense of purpose, to live as though we had no purpose beyond surviving until the weekend. May God give us help to avoid aimless, directionless lives and to live with purpose.

Living a life with purpose is hard. To articulate, even if only to ourselves, a purpose is to raise the possibility that we will fail to achieve it. Faced with the challenge, it is all too easy to just not try. But, though the difficulties are real enough, the answer is not to avoid them but to overcome them. And so, Paul moves next to the only thing that could adequately fortify him – or any of us – for the challenge: his faith in God. Although "faith can also mean loyal or dependable, the context here makes it more likely that Paul is stressing the reality of his reliance upon God – not so much his faithfulness ***to*** God, as his faith ***in*** God. Throughout this epistle, Paul has been urging Timothy to depend on God, and he has modelled that dependence in his own life.

Paul moves from the vertical to the horizontal axis of relationship with the next characteristic he highlights. "Longsuffering", or patience, is repeatedly identified in the New Testament not just as a feature that should mark the believer, but as a characteristic of God Himself. In chapter 4 verse 2, Paul identifies it as an essential element of the ministry of the "man of God". In one way or another, Paul had experienced a fair bit of provocation from those to whom he ministered. But, in response to it, he had demonstrated the same sort of patience that marked the God he served.

[1] *English Standard Version.*

(*To be continued ...*)

FIVE COUPLETS OF TITLES OF CHRIST (3)

David Richards, Kamloops, Canada



The Beginning and the End

Our text is Revelation 22.13: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last". In our first article we looked at the titles "Alpha and Omega". There we learned that Christ is the prime and final revelation of God. Christ has always been the means whereby God reveals Himself to men. Everything that we can learn about God is seen in His Son. In Matthew 11 we read, "no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him" (v 27, NKJV[1]). God is incomprehensible to the natural man. We cannot possibly know the Father if we do not know the Son, and the measure in which we know the Father is determined by the measure in which we know the Son.

Now we are going to look at the titles "the beginning and the end". The key to the significance of these titles is found in Revelation 3.14: "And unto the angel [literally, 'messenger'] of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, ***the beginning of the creation of God***". This verse is most definitely not teaching that God created Christ first, and then Christ created everything else. The word translated "beginning" here, in this context, expresses the idea that Christ is ***the source from which the whole material creation flowed***. In other words, Christ is the Creator of the universe.

This is confirmed in many passages of the New Testament. It is simply stated in John 1.1, 3: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God ... All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." If we have any doubts as to who "the Word" is it is clarified in verse 14: "And the Word was made [became] flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of ***the only begotten of the Father***)". These verses confirm that Christ is eternal, that He is God, co-equal with the Father, that He is the Creator of the material universe, and that He became a man. In Hebrews 1 we read, "But unto the Son he [that is, the Father] saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever ... And Thou, Lord, in the beginning ***hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands***: they shall perish; but thou remainest" (vv 8, 10-11). Paul goes into greater detail in Colossians 1.15–17:

> Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature [all creation]: ***for by him were all things created***, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist [hold together].

First, we must clarify who is referred to in the opening words of verse 15: "who is". Verses 13 and 14 make it clear that Christ is the Person in view in these verses. Notice particularly verse 14: "in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins". In verse 15 there are two titles of Christ: "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature [all creation]". God is invisible to the natural eye. But, as we learned in the article 'Alpha and Omega', God has been revealed in His Son. The Son shares with the Father every divine attribute. As to the second of these titles, "the firstborn of every creature", or, as it more correctly reads, "all creation" (NASB[2]), it emphasises both the true humanity and the deity of Christ. If Christ

was not man, He could not be "the firstborn of all creation". In order to become the Saviour of the world He entered into manhood, thus becoming part of creation. But, on the other hand, the reason given for such a title is that "by him were all things created" (v 16). This fact proves that Christ is God, since Genesis 1.1 states, "In the beginning ***God*** created the heaven and the earth". In Colossians 1.16, in the *Authorised Version*, the English word "by" appears twice. However, in the original Greek text, these represent two different Greek words. In the phrase "for ***by*** him were all things created", the word translated "by" literally means 'in'. So, the text should read, 'for ***in*** him were all things created'. The idea expressed by this statement is that the universe was conceived in the mind of Christ. Thus, He is the *Architect of Creation*.

According to Genesis 1.1, there are two spheres in the universe. The NKJV text reads, "In the beginning God created ***the heavens and the earth***." It is important to see that the word used for "God" in this verse is *Elohim*, which is actually the plural form of *Eloah*. In the Hebrew language, a noun can be in the singular, dual or plural form. If it is dual, it expresses two objects. But, if it is plural, it expresses three or more objects. So, "God" in this text is plural, but the verb following it is singular. *Elohim* occurs about 2,500 times in the Old Testament, generally referring to God. What it is emphasising is that God is a Trinity. Thus, right at the beginning of the Bible we see the Trinity in action in creation. Colossians 1 indicates that all things were created by Christ, "***both*** in the heavens and on earth" (v 16, NASB). Thus, every created thing in the universe was designed by Christ. The next statement is "visible and invisible". Whatever the nature of their existence, visible or invisible, Christ was the Architect.

This is followed by, "whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers". These terms are used in the New Testament to describe various ranks of authorities, both earthly and heavenly, but especially heavenly beings (Eph 3.10). So, they include angelic beings. Now notice the final clause of verse 16: "all things were created ***by*** him, and ***for*** him". In this phrase, the Greek word is correctly translated "by". So, now we discover that Christ is not only the Architect, but He is also the ***Creator***, or ***Constructor***, of the universe. While Genesis 1.1 informs us that "in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth", now we are told that "all things were created by him [Christ]" (Col 1.16). We are also informed that all things were created "for him".

Before elaborating on this we will look at the final two statements in verse 17: "He is before all things, and by him all things consist." With reference to the Lord Jesus, John the Baptist stated, "He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for ***he was before me***." (Jn 1.15). As to His physical birth, the Lord Jesus was born some months after John, yet John states that "he was before me." In John 8.58, the Lord Himself stated, "Before Abraham was, ***I am***." Now Paul tells us that "he is before all things". He was with the Father before the universe or any created beings existed. Not only so, but "by him all things consist." In the NASB, this text reads, "in Him all things hold together." In Job 34 we read, "If he only thought of himself, and gathered unto him his spirit and his breath, all flesh would expire together, and man would return to the dust" (vv 14-15, JND[3]).

The Son of God is in complete control of every object in the universe, and without His care the universe would disintegrate. When we consider the vastness of the universe, the fact that there are more stars in space than there are grains of sand on earth, Christ not only created it all, but He maintains it all. He is the ***Maintenance Engineer*** of all things, seen and unseen.

Now we will elaborate on the fact that "all things were created ... for him". This confirms the second title in our verse in Revelation 22.13. Christ is not only "the beginning", that is, the Source or Creator from whom all creation has flowed; He is also the ***Goal*** of all creation. Psalm 19.1 tells us that "the heavens declare the glory of God". Everything was created for His pleasure, and to display His glory. In summary, He is the ***Architect***, the ***Builder***, the ***Proprietor*** and the ***Maintenance Engineer*** of all things, and the whole of creation sings His praise!

[1] *New King James Version.*

[2] *New American Standard Bible.*

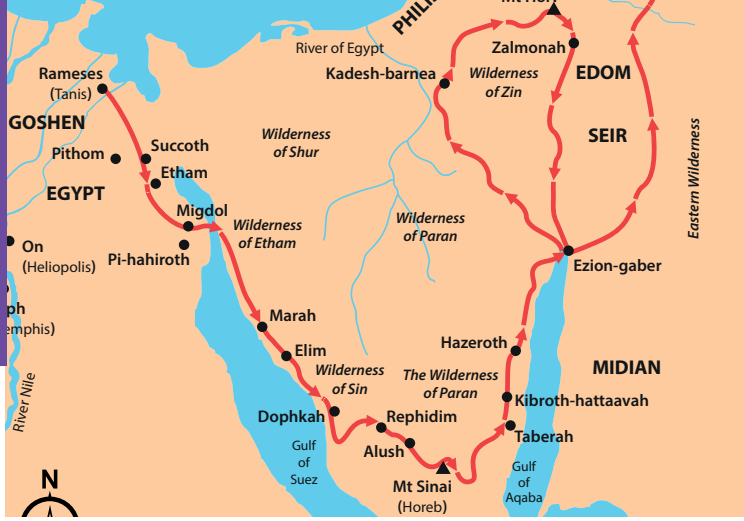
[3] J N Darby, *The Holy Scriptures - A New Translation from the Original Languages.*

(*To be continued ...*)

Editor's Apology: *This article was written as the second in the series, and should have appeared in last month's issue. The article in the May issue refers in its first paragraph to this month's article but, apart from that reference, there should be no confusion caused by the incorrect order of presentation. My sincere apologies to author and reader alike.*

FROM **EGYPT** TO **CANAAN** (17)

John Salisbury, Northampton, England



Wandering in the Wilderness - Numbers 15-19

Arrival at Kadesh marked the end of Israel's journey with God, as it brought them to the border of the Promised Land. Unbelief had turned what should have been a scene of triumph and celebration into a time of mourning and judgment. As a result of their unbelief, the people were condemned to spend a further 38 years wandering in the wilderness, while an unbelieving generation perished (Deut 2.14). They remained at Kadesh "many days" (1.46) before wandering around in the wilderness, and the following events are the only ones recorded to have taken place during that 38-year period.

Instructions for the Future (15.1-31)

Our God is sovereign, and His purposes cannot be thwarted by the failures of His people. Immediately following His condemnation of the people, the Lord reminded Moses of this, saying, "When ye be come into the land ..." (Num 15.2), and gave Moses further instructions as to the precise details of freewill offerings. The Lord repeated the expression again (v 18), and differentiated between accidental sins, for which there was atonement, and deliberate sins, which brought the sentence of death.

Instructions for the Present (15.32-41)

Soon after these instructions were given, a man was found guilty of breaking the Law on the Sabbath. The Lord confirmed that the Law demanded the death of the deliberate sinner, and so he was stoned to death. Following this sad event, the Lord called for the people to weave a blue thread into the fringes on the border of their garments, so that they might "remember, and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God" (v 40).

Korah's Rebellion (ch 16)

Korah was not just a Levite, he was a Kohathite, whose family members were given the great privilege of bearing the sacred vessels of the sanctuary on their shoulders as the nation journeyed through the wilderness. But he was envious of Aaron and his sons, whom the Lord had set apart to serve Him as priests in the sanctuary. The Levite wanted to be a priest!

Dathan, Abiram and On, of the tribe of Reuben, were, on the other hand, envious of Moses as leader, and joined forces with Kohath in gathering 250 famous princes who were sympathetic to their cause. They approached Moses and Aaron at the Tabernacle with the complaint, "Ye take too much upon you" (16.3). What right did Moses and Aaron have to make themselves leaders? Were they not all equals? Moses, as was his custom, fell on his face before the Lord before responding to their charge. He rebuked them for their envy, and commanded that they return the next day burning incense in censers in order that the Lord might vindicate His chosen servants. As they assembled, "the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment" (vv 19-21). Aaron and Moses fell on their faces before the Lord, pleading with Him not to destroy the nation for this one man's sin. Then Moses instructed the people to separate from the tents of Korah, Nathan and Abiram, as the Lord was going to destroy them in a way never seen before. Immediately, the earth opened up around the perpetrators, and they and their families "went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them" (v 33). Thus, the Lord publicly vindicated Moses as His chosen leader. Then, fire from the Lord devoured the 250 princes, leaving nothing but ashes and their censers. Aaron's son, Eleazar, was instructed to gather up these censers and fashion them into a covering for the brasen altar, as a warning that only the sons of Aaron should burn incense.

Incredibly, the people gathered again the next day, charging Moses and Aaron with murdering the rebels. At this, the glory of the Lord appeared, and Moses and Aaron fell before the Lord speechless. The Lord was already sending a deadly plague among the people, so Aaron went into the Tabernacle, emerged with his censer burning incense, and ran among the people to make atonement for them. The plague stayed, but already 14,700 murmurers had perished. In this judgment the Lord publicly vindicated Aaron as His chosen

priest. Interestingly, we read later that "the children of Korah died not" (26.11), and the 11 Psalms entitled "for the sons of Korah" would indicate that Korah's family were not confederate in his rebellion.

Aaron's Vindication (*ch 17*)

As the Lord impressed upon His rebellious people that He had uniquely separated Aaron and his sons for priesthood, Moses instructed the head of each tribe to write their name on a rod and present it at the door of the Tabernacle. The 12 named rods were then taken, together with the rod of the Levites, on which Aaron's name was written, and placed overnight in the Holy Place before the Lord. The Lord had said that He would silence the murmuring of the people by causing to blossom the rod of the man whom He had chosen. The next morning, Moses brought out the 13 rods so that all might see that Aaron's rod had budded, blossomed and borne fruit. Clearly, Aaron was God's chosen priest. This miraculous event produced a fear of God in the hearts of the people, and they were now afraid to approach the Tabernacle as they had done in the previous few days. Aaron's rod was placed as a memorial inside the Ark of the Covenant, where the unbroken tables of Law and the golden pot of manna already resided (Heb 9.4).

Levites' Responsibilities (*ch 18*)

Having publicly vindicated him as His chosen high priest, the Lord now addressed Aaron directly regarding the privileges and responsibilities of both priests and Levites. Levites were to minister to the priests and generally maintain the Tabernacle, but the brasen altar in the outer court and the vessels in the Holy Place were the sole responsibility of the priests. Levites were never to engage in priestly service, and they would never have an inheritance in the Land. The Lord was their inheritance, and they would be provided for by their service in the Tabernacle and, later, in the Temple.

Cleansing from Defilement (*ch 19*)

The Offering of a Red Heifer (*vv 1-10*)

This unique offering was to be for "purification for sin" (v 9). A red heifer, or a young, brown cow, without any defects and not having been put to work, must be selected and presented to Eleazar, Aaron's son. He, in turn, must lead it outside the camp where another man would slay it. Eleazar was to take the blood and sprinkle it before the Tabernacle seven times. Then the complete animal was to be burned and, as it burned, Eleazar was to throw cedar wood, a branch of hyssop and some scarlet (probably dyed wool) into the flames. Both Eleazar and the man who carried out the sacrifice must then wash themselves and their clothes before returning into the camp, and were to be regarded as unclean until evening. Once the animal was completely burned, another clean man was to gather all the ashes and store them in a clean place outside the camp for future use. This man must then wash himself and his clothes before returning into the camp, and he was to be regarded as unclean until evening.

The Ceremonial Cleansing (*vv 11-19*)

Any person or object coming into contact with, or anything associated with, a dead body was pronounced unclean for seven days and, on the third day, they must avail themselves of cleansing provided by some of the ashes of the red heifer mixed with running water. A clean man would take some of the heifer's stored ashes and mix in water taken from a spring. He would then take a bunch of hyssop and sprinkle the mixture on the person and any objects that had been defiled. If a person died in a tent, all the occupants and uncovered objects in the tent would need this treatment. This would be repeated on the seventh day, and the unclean persons or objects would be pronounced clean in the evening, as would the person who carried out the cleansing. There would have been constant need for this cleansing process through the 38 years of wilderness wandering, as at least a million people died, and they would be burying possibly 500 bodies every week.

Time to Meditate

Israel's failure to step out in faith and possess the land of their inheritance meant they were no longer journeying with God, but wandering in the wilderness. Unbelief is a powerful force. It hindered the Saviour's public ministry in that, when He returned to His home-town of Nazareth, "he could there do no mighty work ... and he marvelled because of their unbelief" (Mk 6.6). It is possible for us, as believers, to live a life of unbelief in which God is scaled down in our thoughts, and we have no expectations of proving His power in our everyday lives. As we hear the Lord's challenge to the remnant of Israel echoing down the centuries, "Prove me now" (Mal 3.10), may we respond, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief!" (Mk 9.24). Unlike Israel, we have no need of ceremonial cleansing for daily defilement, but rejoice that "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 Jn 1.7). And we have this provision, that "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (v 9). Hallelujah, what a Saviour!

(*To be continued ...*)

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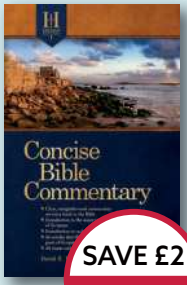


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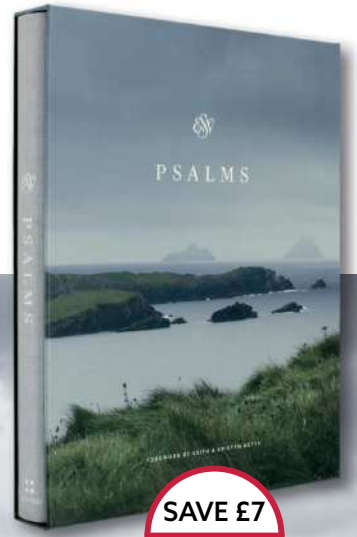
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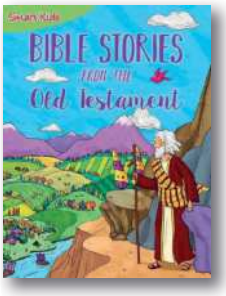
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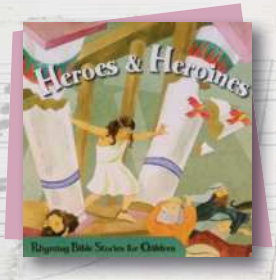


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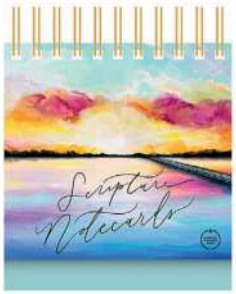
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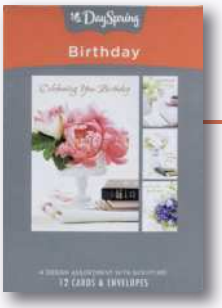




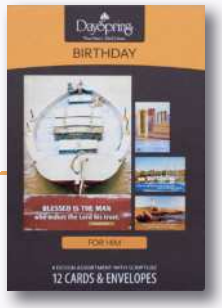


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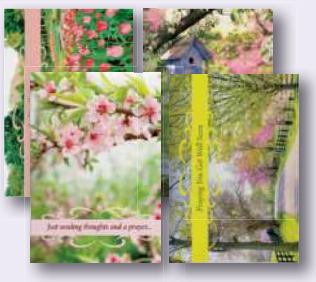




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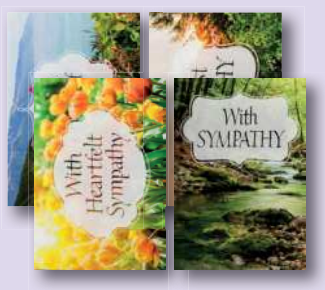


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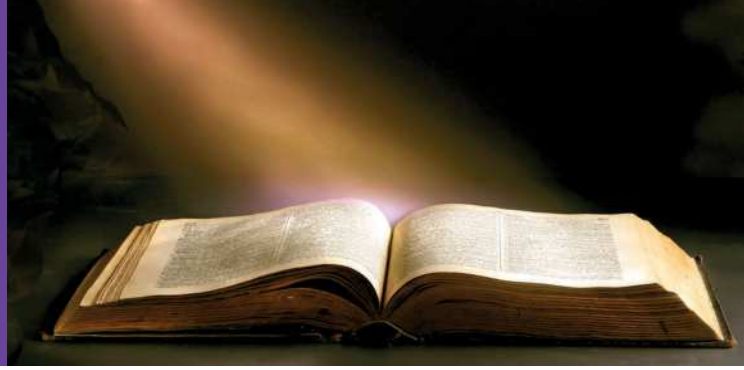


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QUESTION **BOX**



Please explain the meaning of "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus ..." (2 Cor 4.10).

Our Lord was never a dying man. He did not live in a mortal body. The principle of life that was in Him was not diminished by the suffering He endured at Calvary. When He dismissed His spirit He did so voluntarily, with authority and power. He said, of His life, "I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (Jn 10.18). The expression "the dying of the Lord Jesus" may, therefore, be properly rendered 'the putting to death of the Lord Jesus'.

The apostle speaks of our having the treasure, "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God", in earthen vessels (2 Cor 4.6-7). This expression most naturally makes us think of our bodies, especially as Paul makes multiple references to them in this chapter and the next. God has chosen to use weak vessels in His service, so that "the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" (v 7). Of course, the complete person operates through the body so, when our bodies are presented to God, our whole being is involved (Rom 12.1-2).

In his service, Paul suffered in body and spirit. He speaks in this chapter of being troubled, perplexed and persecuted. His persecutions were many and, undoubtedly, he refers to the physical effects of these as he speaks of what he carries about in his body. Christ suffered in His body as a result of man's hatred, and Paul similarly suffered as he was daily exposed to death in His service.

However, the manifestation of the life of Jesus arises from something more than persecution, and Paul has, no doubt, a spiritual dimension in mind. This involved keeping his body in the place of death, in a practical way, in respect of all that the flesh craved of comfort and pleasure. He applied the moral and spiritual power of the cross to the actions of the natural life, that would obscure the manifestation of the risen life of Jesus. Before his conversion, Saul of Tarsus showed amazing fleshly energy and self-will, but all was now changed. The application of the putting to death of the Lord Jesus effectively put his Saul character in the place of death, with the result that the risen life of Jesus was manifested in him.

Ian Jackson

Please explain the meaning of "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus ..." (2 Cor 4.10).

The word "dying" is not the usual word used for 'death' in the New Testament. According to Vine, and others, it means "putting to death", here encompassing the sufferings that the Lord Jesus underwent, culminating in His death. Paul has just been describing his own sufferings: "troubled on every side ... perplexed ... persecuted ... cast down" (vv 8-9). In verse 11, he says he is "alway delivered unto death". He is acutely aware that the constant opposition he encounters in his service could, at any moment, come to a head, in his martyrdom. In facing ill-treatment by his opponents, who actively seek his death, he resembles the Lord Jesus, and his willingness to endure this reflects the mind of his Lord.

In verse 11 (which parallels and explains verse 10), Paul says that this being "delivered unto death" is "for Jesus' sake". Hence, he may not only be alluding to the Lord's own "dying", but also describing his own experience as "the dying of the Lord Jesus", in the sense that what he is going through is for the cause of the Lord Jesus. A similar case would be his statement, "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" (Gal 6.17): while Paul may well be implying that his "marks" are reminiscent of the wounds that the Lord received in His body, the main teaching is that they are "of the Lord Jesus" in that they are borne for His sake, and they identify Paul as His bondservant.

The four expressions of Paul's sufferings in 2 Corinthians 4.8-9 have four contrasting counterparts: "yet not distressed ... but not in despair ... but not forsaken ... but not destroyed". Notwithstanding the unrelenting pressure, he can keep going, because of the One who died, rose again, and lives in him. Therefore, he declares that the very afflictions he is undergoing in his body make "manifest" Christ's resurrection life (vv 10-11). This testimony to His death and resurrection results in blessing to those to whom Paul preaches: "So then death worketh in us, but life in you" (v 12). Through Paul's sufferings, the Corinthians have received, and are enjoying, eternal life. So, he tells them, it is all "for your sakes", and thus "to the glory of God" (v 15).

David McAllister

THE GLORIOUS MANHOOD OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST (10)

Ian Gibson, Winnipeg, Canada



The Sympathy of His Manhood

Hebrews 2 verses 17-18 bring to us a further fundamental reason for the incarnation of the Lord Jesus, connected with His present ministry of intercession as the risen Man in Heaven - how as our Great High Priest He represents us before God. As the ***Succourer of His own***, we appreciate the efficacy of His priesthood, as a "merciful and faithful high priest" (v 17), who "is able to succour them that are tempted" (v 18).

The main theme of the Hebrew epistle, the present high priestly ministry of Christ, commences at Hebrews 2.17. Omitting the parenthetical warning passages (3.7 - 4.11; 6.1-6), it becomes almost an unbroken section on the great high priestly ministry of Christ right through to 8.1. We have the glory of His representation as the risen and exalted Son of man, and all the sympathy of His manhood; He is ***a greater than Aaron*** in His unfailing priesthood, a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

The priesthood of Christ is introduced in chapter 2, with an emphasis on His suitability for priesthood, consequent to His incarnation, and the reality of His humanity. "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren", it was needful for Him as a personal responsibility, in order "that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest". He had to become a man to die, but He also had to become a man to be a priest, and He has carried His manhood, in all its perfection and sympathy, all the way back to the throne of God in Heaven.

We have traced previous steps of His incarnation in verses 9 and 14, but this third reference in verse 17 is a further step again. He could have become for a little time lower than the angels (v 9), and He could have taken part in flesh and blood (v 14), but still have remained unlike the rest of humanity in some particular way. But verse 17 is emphasising the practical reality of Christ's incarnation and manhood, that "in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren".

In His incarnation, He went so far as to be like the rest of humanity "in all things", albeit remaining sinless and pure. He became a real man, a tripartite being with a body, soul and spirit. He was born into this world as the infant babe of Bethlehem, so He touched humanity at its weakest and most vulnerable point. He experienced the necessary stages of human growth, from the child of Nazareth, becoming a youth, and then an adult man, and in every circumstance He behaved appropriate to each phase of His development. He knew what it was to be wearied, hungry, thirsty, poor, despised and rejected, and to mourn and weep. In all these ways, He was "made like unto his brethren".

This was necessary, it was incumbent upon Him, "it behoved him", to experience all these things, in view specifically of His present heavenly ministry, so "that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest". He is a "merciful ... high priest" manward, and specifically saintward, because His ongoing intercessory priestly ministry is exclusively towards His own, the sons of God by faith, His brethren, the children given to Him, those who by faith are the spiritual seed of Abraham. That merciful ministry means that, as long as we are still here in this world, He will intercede for us, meet the needs that arise in our lives, care for us, sustain us, and be merciful to us all the way until we are home in Heaven with Him. He also is a "faithful high priest" Godward, "in things relating to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people" (v 17, JND[1]). Sins required to be

expunged by Christ's sin-atoning death at Calvary.

The Aaronic priesthood of the old economy was marked by a two-fold failure: it was lacking in sympathy toward men, and those priests of the old order lacked faithfulness to God. But there is no such failure in Christ's priesthood after the order of Melchisedec. He is ***a greater than Aaron***, with both a manward and a Godward aspect to His ministry. The first mention of priesthood in the Bible takes us back to Melchisedec in Genesis 14.18, "the priest of the most high God". In his priestly, mediatorial ministry, Melchisedec blessed Abram in the Name of the most high God, and he then blessed the most high God. Melchisedec had a ministry that was both manward and Godward, and so, too, has the Lord Jesus as our "merciful and faithful high priest".

There were two distinct altars in the Tabernacle, where Israel's high priest functioned: the brasen altar which was linked with the blood of sacrifice, and the golden altar which was linked with incense. As our "faithful high priest", we see Him linked with the brasen altar; His sacrifice and precious shed blood meets our past need with respect to our sins. As our "merciful" and compassionate High Priest, we see Him linked with the golden altar, as He intercedes for us, meeting our present need with respect to our weaknesses.

If verse 17 has emphasised Christ's priesthood "in things pertaining to God", verse 18 emphasises His priesthood in things pertaining to His own: He is "able to help those that are being tempted" (v 18, JND). In His death, He met all our need as guilty sinners in relation to the demands of God's throne for all eternity, and thus He met the need of our souls (v 17). In verse 18, He Himself sits upon that throne, and "he is able" to meet the need of our hearts, in all the daily sufferings and trials of our wilderness pathway.

He knows Himself what it is to "hath suffered being tempted", being tested in every possible way as a man. In the temptations of the devil in the wilderness, He was tempted as to His body physically, as to His soul morally, and as to His spirit spiritually. He was "tempted in all things in like manner, sin apart" (Heb 4.15, JND). Because of His holy and impeccable nature, He could never succumb to any temptation, but there was real suffering for the sinless Son of God every day He lived here in a world of sin.

But, having passed through every stage of human experience, and every form of temptation that could come upon man, sin apart, and having known the full assault of the evil one, He has now gone back to Heaven. The sufferings He experienced as a man down here were purposeful, perfectly qualifying Him for this compassionate high priestly ministry.

The idea of "to succour" is that, on hearing our cry, He will run to our aid, to be the Helper and ***Succourer of His own***. He is the One who is compassionate to us in real time, by advancing to us all the support we require in the times of testing and trial. We are nowhere promised to be removed or shielded from such testing but, in the moments of trial, when the pressure is on, how good for us to know that there is a sympathetic Man on the throne of Heaven who is for us, able to draw near to us, and to advance to us all the succour, support and mercy we need. He knows and can sympathise with all that the devil can ever bring to bear upon any individual saint of God, because He Himself has been tested "in all points" (4.15) when He was here as a man on Earth.

HE IS THE ONE WHO IS COMPASSIONATE TO US IN REAL TIME, BY ADVANCING TO US ALL THE SUPPORT WE REQUIRE IN THE TIMES OF TESTING AND TRIAL.

Such is our merciful, compassionate and sympathetic Great High Priest who, on hearing our feeble cries, will hasten to our aid to help when we are being tempted. We never read of the Saviour running in the Gospel records of His life, but it is contained within the thought of this word "succour". There is never a day when our blessed Saviour does not care about us and, through all the experiences of His humanity that He has taken with Him to Glory, He knows what we are experiencing in this world. All His suffering on the pathway down here, His rejection and sorrows, His agonies of Gethsemane, Gabbatha, and even aspects of Golgotha, are all relevant to His office as our Great High Priest, such that He feels and shares with us every pang in our hearts, every burden on our minds, and every pain in our bodies. How thankful we are for the sympathy of His glorious manhood.

[1] J N Darby, *The Holy Scriptures – A New Translation from the Original Languages*.

(*Concluded*)

BELIEVER'S **BOOKSHELF**



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Higher Ground: Ascending Ephesians, verse by verse by Clark Logan, 2020; published by, and available from, John Ritchie Ltd; 232 pages. Price £8.99 (9781912522910).

Homing in on how Paul's letter to the Ephesians refers often to "heavenly places", and to Heaven's view of things, *Higher Ground* is said to be "like mountain climbing in the Himalayas" to get a panoramic view of God's great purposes of grace and glory. We cannot get there all at once, nor without effort, but we can do so in small manageable steps, helped by this verse-by-verse exposition of the six chapters of Ephesians.

At the beginning of the book, a helpful analysis of the epistle is laid out in the following chapter headings: chapter 1, Blessedness in Christ; chapter 2, Nearness in Christ; chapter 3, Richness in Christ; chapter 4, Walk Straighter; chapter 5, Shine Brighter; chapter 6, Stand Firmer. Summing it up near the end, at Ephesians 6.10, we read that God's purposes described through these chapters are "to bless us in Christ, to unify the Church, to enable through the Spirit, to sanctify through the truth, and to strengthen for the battle."



Each verse of each chapter is treated separately, and the comments can easily be read in a few minutes. They are a balanced mix of doctrine and application, written in the author's clear style, often with a brief anecdote to make a good point. Each ends with a short 'one-liner' to think about. For example, at Ephesians 2.10 we read, "Be like an expensive Swiss watch, full of good works"; at 4.2, "There can never be too much love among Christians"; at 5.4, "Leave the complaining to others; let us travel home praising".

The book could be used as a daily reading programme through Ephesians. As such, it would take about five months to complete the scheduled 'climb'. However, the format is not the usual page-a-day for this, because slightly more than a single page is used for each verse and its comments. To fit these into a single page would have necessitated a smaller typeface throughout, spoiling the look of the pages which are spaced out clearly and neatly.

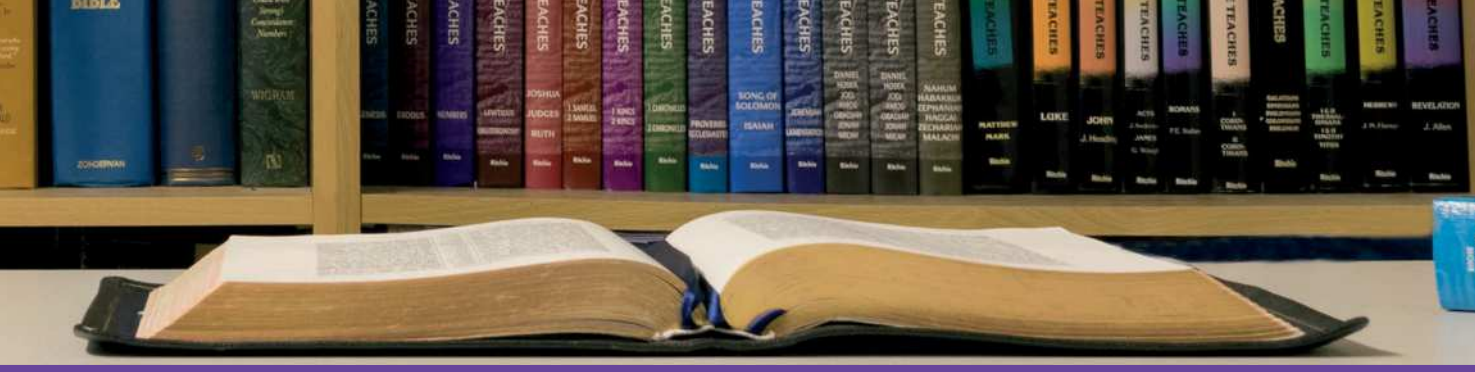
This new work by Clark Logan is a positive encouragement to study Ephesians, perhaps again. It can spur us on, as we pray and sing "Lord, plant my feet on higher ground". What we may not be able to do physically we can keep on doing spiritually, until we arrive there actually, at the very summit, in Heaven itself.

The book is published "In memory of Jim and Irene Legge", Clark's senior colleagues. Irene was killed in a car accident in Botswana at the end of 2018, and Jim died 16 months later in Scotland due to COVID-19 infection.

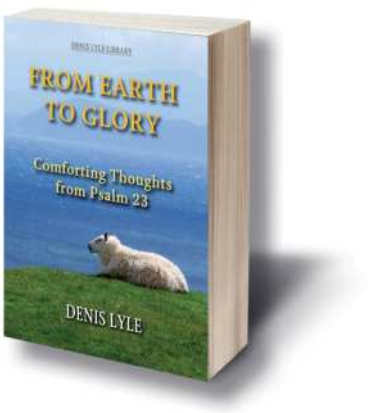
Bert Cargill

From Earth to Glory: Comforting Thoughts from Psalm 23 by Denis Lyle, 2017; published by Christian Year Publications, and available from John Ritchie Ltd; Price £8.99 (9781872734484).

It is amazing how much spiritual data can be packed into a mere six verses. This slim, 84-page paperback provides exactly what its subtitle leads us to expect: comforting meditations from Psalm 23. The six verses of David's brief poem are allocated a chapter each with a suitable summary heading: The Sufficiency of the Lord;



titles written by that book's author. Each review is a stand-alone assessment of the particular book illustrated.



Success over Stress; The Ministry of Restoration; Victory in the Valley; How Good is the God we Adore; It is Good Now, but it is Better up Ahead. These titles highlight the down-to-earth practical nature of the exposition.

The writer has drawn extensively on some of the many books published over the years about David's most famous Psalm, and he lists them in his Preface. Because this material was originally preached in 2014 at Lurgan Baptist Church, the book is easy to read, written in the conversational, anecdotal style associated with a sermon transcript. Denis Lyle views the Psalm as a survey of the believer's pathway through this hostile world, with all its up and downs, towards "the house of the Lord". Psalm 23, he tells us, "consists of 118 words, yet 116 are devoted to explaining the first two, 'the Lord'" (p 16). Furthermore, "the Lord" is not a title or description, but the personal name of Israel's God. In that sense, the Psalm is an exploration of the character of God.

Every reader will find something here to challenge and cheer. Indeed, this encounter with just one inspired poem should send us all scurrying back to the book of Psalms as a whole to squeeze the sweetness out of the other 149!

David Newell

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WITH CHRIST

In view of the number of obituary notices the publishers are requested to insert, we ask those who submit them to keep them as succinct as possible. All obituaries will be edited with the utmost care and respect.

Mr Jim Crumlish, aged 85, was called Home on 8th April. In March 1953, aged 17, he trusted Christ for salvation and, having lived for Christ, he died in Christ. Jim was a man who gave devoted service to the Lord in the assembly in Greenock. He was engaged in a wide sphere of service, and it was only in the last few years that his failing health made it impossible for him to gather with us. Jim worked with all ages, from the young to the old, helping out in Children's Meetings through to meetings for the elderly in the local homes. He was a very humble man with an unassuming spirit, very human, approachable, and down-to-earth. Jim was very much a family man, and he always said that he saw himself as being privileged to have such a good, loving family. He bore deteriorating health without complaint until it pleased the Lord to call him Home.

Mr Samuel Dodds, aged 85, was called Home on 20th April. He had the privilege of being born into a Christian home, and was saved in 1961 while attending a very fruitful series of Gospel Meetings in a portable hall in Ballinaskeagh, Banbridge, conducted by the late evangelist Mr Jim Martin. Anxious to be saved, and thinking of the words of the hymn, "Payment God will not twice demand, first at my bleeding Surety's hand ...", he took in the truth that the Lord Jesus had taken his place and paid his debt of sin. Consequently, he was baptised and received into fellowship in the Granshaw assembly. He married Miss Anne Winter from the Banbridge assembly in 1967, and they enjoyed 55 very happy years together. He struggled physically during his life, having had polio at the age of 14. Anne affectionately cared for him at home, assisted by their son David, until his homecall. A large number of neighbours and friends attended his funeral service which was shared by Mr John Rogers and Mr Alan Davidson, and where words of comfort and a clear, sound Gospel message were given. Prayer is appreciated for Anne, David, his sister Miss Marion Dodds, and his brother William John in their loss.

Mrs Betty Hicks, aged 85, was called Home on 29th January. Betty was the elder of two daughters of the late William and Elizabeth Clarke from the village of Lack, who were in fellowship in the Glassmullagh assembly. In the autumn of 1958, the late J G Hutchinson commenced a series of Gospel Meetings in Ballinamallard. Betty was troubled about her soul and, at the end of October, she put her trust in the Lord to be her Saviour. On 5th April 1961, Betty and William Hicks got married in the Gospel Hall in Omagh. Setting up home, they moved to Ballinamallard, and God blessed their marriage with two boys, Alyn and Neville. Betty and William desired to obey the Lord in baptism, and gathered with the Christians at Ballinamallard Gospel Hall in the mid-1960s. They continued faithfully down through the years, enjoying happy fellowship with the saints, and William became an elder there in later years. On 5th March 2001, William went to be with the Lord after a short illness. Betty's own health started to deteriorate in 2010, and she was unable to attend the meetings, but she maintained a good interest in the assembly activities. Betty was a quiet, unassuming sister, who had a good testimony in the village. Her funeral service was very well attended, and took place on 31st January in Ballycassidy Funeral Home, conducted by R Pickering and H Dowds. Please remember in prayer Betty's sons Alyn and Neville, and her sister Dorothy.

Mrs Margaret Coulter Kirk was born on 26th October 1941 and called Home on 26th March 2022. She was saved as a young girl in her teens, and came into the assembly at Glengormley, County Antrim in 1996. Margaret enjoyed happy fellowship with the believers there for many years, and was much loved and appreciated. Sadly, ill health prevented her from attending latterly. She was a Christian lady possessed of a thoughtful and cheerful disposition, even while suffering much pain. She and her husband Leonard were always glad to see any of the Christians who visited, and a cup of tea was always produced even when it was a struggle for her to get to the kitchen. There was no such a thing as a refusal! Margaret was taken Home very suddenly, and has gone to her reward. She will be greatly missed. The funeral service in the home was private. Andrew Kenny spoke from the Scriptures, and Robert Shaw (Margaret's brother) gave a tribute from the family. The service at the graveside was taken by Wesley Moore. There was a good number in attendance, and the weather was very favourable. Our sister is survived by her husband Leonard, her daughters Laura and Joy, her son Leonard (junior), and their respective families. Prayer would be

appreciated that God will comfort, and that Margaret's homecall will result in many of the family being reached.

Mrs Queenie McKinley, aged 92, from the assembly at Dungannon, was called Home to be with the Lord on 5th April. Born into a large family called Foster, in the Keady area, she attended Sunday School at Drumnacanver. As a teenager, brought by her parents to Gospel Meetings, she discovered her need as a sinner, and trusted the Saviour who died for her sins on the cross. She often repeated the words of her Lord, "It is finished". In 1959, she married Mr George McKinley and moved to the Dungannon assembly, where she remained a faithful member until her homecall. She became the mother of four boys, and a faithful helpmeet to her husband, firstly in his business, and then from 1982 when George became a full-time evangelist. Queenie loved the Gospel, the assembly, and the Lord's people. Even during 'lock-down' she always wanted to know, "Why are there no Gospel Meetings?" Her advanced years meant that she became unable to attend assembly meetings, although she latterly attended the Lord's Day afternoon 'Drive-In' Gospel Meetings. She enjoyed visitors, and phone calls from the believers, and was known to join in the singing of hymns over the phone, her favourite being, "Oh happy day, that fixed my choice". By her own request, at her homecall, three of her sons, Andrew, Philip and Timothy, had a little family service in her home to share the Gospel with her neighbours. Three long-standing friends of the family, Alan Davidson, Sammy Maze and Brian Glendinning, spoke to a very large gathering at her graveside. Please remember her youngest son, Stephen, in New York, who is as yet unsaved.

Mrs Ruth Wylie, aged 55, was called into the presence of the Lord on Wednesday 20th April. Ruth was saved on 28th February 1979 as a young girl of 12, when attending Gospel Meetings in the Gospel Hall, Banbridge, conducted by the late brethren John Hawthorne and Jim Martin. Our sister was in fellowship in the Banbridge assembly, and also took an interest in the children's work and other meetings taking place over the years at Drumnahare (Loughbrickland). Sadly, Ruth was diagnosed with cancer, an illness which was patiently borne. Despite surgery and treatment, the Lord relieved her of her suffering and took her Home. At her request, the funeral service in the home was shared by John Rogers and John Gordon, and at the graveside by Wesley Martin. Words of comfort, together with a clear presentation of the Gospel, were heard by the large number who attended the funeral. Remember in your prayers, at this time of great loss, Ruth's husband Edwin, their two sons Edwin Jr and Philip, her aged parents Mr and Mrs Sidney Trimble, together with the close family circle, some of whom are still not saved. "With Christ; which is far better" (Phil 1.23).

ASSEMBLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please note: All material relating to forthcoming meetings, holiday homes and personalia for the August 2022 issue of *Believer's Magazine* must be submitted by 4th July 2022. Please send to graphics@johnritchie.co.uk

SCOTLAND

MAY 22 - JUNE 2

Chapelton: Gospel Meetings to be held in a portable hall located behind the village Primary School. Lord's Day to Thursday each week at 7.30pm. C Mackie, G Paterson. Prayer would be appreciated.

JUNE 25-26

Mayfield: Gospel Hall. Bible Study Weekend. Subject: 'Studies in Philippians'. J Holifield. (See box advert.)

AUGUST 27

Inverurie: Gospel Hall. Annual Conference to be held in the Town Hall at 3.00pm and 6.00pm. D Mowat, G Edwards.

OCTOBER 22

Aberdeen: Riverside Christian Assembly Hall, 20 Twin Spires, Mugiemoss Road, Aberdeen AB21 9BG. Ministry at 7.30pm. S Arbuthnot.

NOVEMBER 25-27

Aberdeen: Riverside Christian Assembly Hall, 20 Twin Spires, Mugiemoss Road, Aberdeen AB21 9BG. Bible Teaching Weekend. D Rudge.
Friday 25th at 7.30pm.
Saturday 26th at 10.00am, 11.15am and 7.30pm.
Lord's Day 27th at 4.00pm.

ENGLAND

JUNE 11
Skelmanthorpe: Saville Road Hall. Evening Conference at 6.15pm. P Raggett, J Scarsbrook. Also available on Zoom. Meeting ID: 861 0345 3886 Passcode: 115028

JUNE 18
Burton on Trent: Winshill Gospel Hall at 7.00pm. K Oh. (*Please note the change of meeting time.*)

JUNE 25
Coventry: Gospel Hall, Upper Hill Street at 7.30pm. F Lonney.
Northampton: Spencer Bridge Road Gospel Hall at 7.30pm. 'Christ as Prophet, Priest and King'. J Black. Mr Black continues in ministry on Monday 27th at 7.30pm.

JULY 10 - AUGUST 7
Bicester: Drive-In Gospel Meetings are expected to commence at the Middle Wretchwick Farm. Meetings will be nightly from 8.00pm - 9.00pm (except Wednesdays). Speaker: Eugene Higgins, who will be joined by Joel Lacey (2 weeks) and James Cartwright (2 weeks). All are welcome.
For more details, please check the new assembly website: www.hebrongospelhallbicester.org

JULY 23
Northampton: Spencer Bridge Road Gospel Hall at 7.30pm. M Lacey.

AUGUST 26-28
Northampton: Spencer Bridge Road Gospel Hall. Bible Study Weekend. N McMeekin.

SEPTEMBER 17
Coventry: Gospel Hall, Upper Hill Street at 7.30pm. G Wright.

SEPTEMBER 24-28
Northampton: Spencer Bridge Road Gospel Hall. Conference on Saturday 24th at 3.15pm and 6.15pm. C Munro, P Kaye. Mr Munro continues in ministry from Monday 26th to Wednesday 28th at 7.30pm.

OCTOBER 1
Coventry: Gospel Hall, Upper Hill Street. Annual Conference at 3.00pm and 6.15pm. P Kaye, J Riddle.

OCTOBER 22
Coventry: Gospel Hall, Upper Hill Street at 7.30pm. A Henry.
Northampton: Spencer Bridge Road Gospel Hall at 7.30pm. T Miller.

NOVEMBER 26
Coventry: Gospel Hall, Upper Hill Street at 7.30pm. T West.

WALES

JULY 2
Deri: Young People's Study Day. 'Priesthood'. R Collings. Booking required due to capacity limit. Contact Jeremy on jmholifield65@gmail.com Camping available to stay for the weekend.

NORTHERN IRELAND

JUNE 3
Larne: Kilwaughter Village Hall, Shanes Hill Road. Monthly Friday night Gospel Meeting at 8.00pm (first Friday of each month). J Meekin, D Gilliland. All welcome. Ample room and large car park.

JUNE 5
Newtownstewart: Gospel Tent Meetings in field adjacent to the Livestock Market Yard. Lord's Day at 3.00pm. Monday to Friday at 8.00pm. D Gilliland, J Rogers.

JUNE 18-19
Ballymoney: Teaching Weekend. Venue: Ballymoney Town Hall. Subject: 'Three Studies in the Gospel according to John'. D Gilliland.
Session 1, Saturday 18th from 5.30pm – 6.30pm. 'The Supremacy of the Word: The Revelation of Eternal Life'.
Interval for refreshments from 6.30pm - 7.10pm.
Session 2 from 7.10pm – 8.10pm. 'The Symbolism of Water: The Resources of Abundant Life'.
Session 3, Lord's Day 19th from 8.00pm – 9.00pm. 'The Significance of Women: The Relationships of New Life'.

JULY 2
Bleary: Gospel Hall. Annual Conference of Believers commencing at 12 noon. Bible Reading (2 Timothy 3) from 12.30pm - 2.00pm. M Sweetnam. Interval for refreshments from 2.00pm - 2.45pm. Ministry from 2.45pm - 4.00pm. All believers warmly invited.

JULY 11-22

Bushmills: Gospel Hall. Bible Readings at Coleraine Grammar School, Castlerock Road, Coleraine BT51 3LA at 8.00pm, subject to COVID-19 regulations. Studies in the Book of Ruth. D Gilliland. (See box advert.)
Open-Air Gospel Meetings are also being arranged in Portrush at 11.00am.
Portrush: Gospel Hall. Children's Meetings at 11.00am. R Plant.

JULY 12

Ballybollan: Conference to be held in the Conference Hall BT42 2RA. Ministry from 3.00pm to 4.30pm. J Hay, D Gilliland.

JULY 23 - AUGUST 7

Portrush: Drive-In Gospel Meetings at The Pits, Portrush Road, Portstewart from 7.30pm - 8.15pm. J Rogers, E Fairfield.

AUGUST 26-29

Larne (Craigyhill): Annual Conference and Bible Readings from Friday 26th to Monday 29th August (inclusive) in Larne Leisure Centre, Tower Road, Larne. Subject for Bible Readings: '1st-Century Counsel for 21st-Century Churches' (A Practical Consideration of the Seven Churches in Asia). (See box advert for further details.)

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

AUGUST 6-11

Bridgetown (Co Donegal): Gospel Hall. Saturday 6th from 2.00pm - 4.00pm and 5.00pm - 7.00pm. Ministry. J Fleck, R Kirkpatrick, D Strahan, G Woods. Monday 8th to Thursday 11th at 8.00pm. Ministry. W Martin.
(*Please note: There will be no Ministry Meeting on the afternoon of Lord's Day 7th.*)

ASSEMBLY REPORTS

ENGLAND

Bicester: The Annual Easter Conference took place on 17th and 18th April. The Bible Reading was led by Mark Sweetnam, and there was a profitable exposition and practical application drawn from the "Armour of God" in Ephesians 6. The Conference at the Heyford Park School auditorium was very well attended. The ministry given by Iain Lewis, Peter Scarsbrook and Jonathan Black was refreshing, expositional and challenging. An appreciative spirit prevailed throughout the Conference weekend, and local believers as well as visitors were uplifted.

NORTHERN IRELAND

BELFAST

Belfast: After a two-year break due to COVID-19 restrictions, it was a joy to be able to hold the Annual Belfast Easter Conference again from 16th - 20th April, for ministry of God's Word, reports of His work at home and abroad, and the preaching of the Gospel. The ministry was timely, encouraging and challenging; reports gave cause for praise and prayer; and the Gospel was faithfully and simply preached. Attendance was higher than expected, given the recent restrictions, and we thank God that His preservation, presence and help were experienced throughout the days of the Conference.
Newtownbreda: The assembly enjoyed three weeks of Gospel Meetings with P McCauley and D Williamson, when the Gospel was presented clearly and faithfully. The attendance, both physically and virtually, was most encouraging. Some joining on Zoom were reluctant to come into the Hall. The district was well visited, with some good conversations at the doors, and the results are left in God's hand.

CO ARMAGH

Armagh: Gospel Meetings commenced in the Hall on 24th April with J Fleck and R Kirkpatrick. There has been an encouraging start to the meetings, with many young people in nightly.

CO DOWN

Ballymagarrick: The assembly enjoyed a week of very profitable and challenging ministry in the first week of April with John Fleck. His subject was 'Some Important Relationships in Christian Life' – 'Husbands and Wives', 'Parents and Children', 'Fellow Believers', 'Disciples and the Master', 'The Shepherd and the

Flock'. Very large numbers attended nightly, and the ministry was greatly appreciated.

Newry: Four Tuesday nights of Children's Meetings were held in Burren, Warrenpoint before Easter, arranged by Alan Finney and shared with Jeff Rogers. Over 160 local children attended nightly, most with no Gospel background. Pray for their salvation. "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple" (Psalm 119.130).

Newtownards (James St): David McAllister conducted five nights of very profitable Bible Readings on 2 Timothy in the large, hired venue. Attendance was excellent, with support from neighbouring assemblies greatly appreciated.

CO LONDONDERRY

Limavady: The Annual Conference was held this year on 2nd May via Zoom. The assembly was most encouraged by the response from many areas, both home and overseas. The ministry was shared by Elton Fairfield, Alistair Sinclair and Sandy Higgins, and many have been blessed by the considerations on the subjects of the Life of the Lord Jesus and the Earnest of the Holy Spirit, and the practical challenges arising from them.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

CO DONEGAL

Bridgetown: Stephen Gilfillan and John Rogers continue Gospel Meetings in the Hall, with a good number of unsaved attending. God has been pleased to bless in salvation. Please pray that further fruit in salvation may be seen.

NOTICES

GENERAL

Almondvale, Livingston: Gospel and Ministry messages are available at www.almondvalegospelhall.com

Commendation: Samuel and Ruth Chesney have been commended (May 2022) by the Clonkeen assembly (currently meeting in Randalstown) to the grace of God for the work of the Lord in Mexico.

For audio requirements in your assembly: PA systems, induction loops for hard of hearing, radio microphones, video data projectors, screens etc - contact Andrew Borthwick on 01592 654549 or visit www.acav.co.uk

Limassol Gospel Hall: Logos School, 35 Agialousa Street, PO Box 51075, Limassol, Cyprus. A warm welcome is extended for believers to gather with us. Letters of commendation appreciated. For details of meetings and directions, email: clarkecp@hotmail.co.uk

Yorkshire Bible Study Week (residential): 24th - 28th October 2022 (God willing), at Cober Hill Hotel, Scarborough. Ministry and Bible Readings (1 Peter chapters 1 and 2) conducted by Mr Ian Jackson. For full details, contact Philip Kaye. Telephone 01484 865112. Email: ybsweek@gmail.com

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

All correspondence for **Gospel Hall, The Mall, Armagh** should now be addressed to: Mr Howard Milliken, 9 Drummanmore Grange, Armagh BT61 8RQ. Tel: 028 3751 8385. Mobile: 07801 115556. Email: howard.milliken@btinternet.com



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PORTRUSH GOSPEL HALL

Children's Meetings

11th - 22nd July 2022 at 11.00am
in Portrush Gospel Hall

Speaker:
Mr Robert Plant

Drive-In Gospel Meetings

23rd July - 7th August 2022
from 7.30pm - 8.15pm
at The Pits, Portstewart Road, Portrush

Speakers:
Mr John Rogers
Mr Elton Fairfield

Mayfield Gospel Hall Bible Study Weekend

Saturday 25th and Lord's Day 26th June

Subject: **Studies in Philippians**

Speaker: **Mr Jeremy Holifield**

Saturday 25th June

Welcome at 11.30am
Session 1 at 12 noon - *'The Gospel of Christ'*
Lunch at 1.00pm
Session 2 at 2.00pm - *'The Mind of Christ'*
Gospel Outreach at 3.00pm
Dinner at 6.00pm
Session 3 at 7.30pm - *'The Knowledge of Christ'*

Lord's Day 26th June

Session 4 at 11.45am - *'The Strength of Christ'*
Gospel Meeting at 4.00pm

Accommodation available:
Contact Alan on 07947 050655 or
mayfield.biblestudy.weekend@gmail.com

All welcome

CRAIGYHILL GOSPEL HALL, LARNE

Annual Conference and Bible Readings

will (DV) be held in Larne Leisure Centre Tower Road, Larne

Friday 26th to Monday 29th August

Subject for Bible Readings:

'1st-Century Counsel for 21st-Century Churches' (A Practical Consideration of the Seven Churches in Asia)

Revelation 1:12 - 2:7
'The Seven Lampstands and Exceptional Ephesus'

Revelation 2:8 - 2:17
'Suffering Smyrna and Pressured Pergamos'

Revelation 2:18 - 3:6
'Tarnished Thyatira and Slothful Sardis'

Revelation 3:7-22
'Praiseworthy Philadelphia and Lukewarm Laodicea'

Brethren responsible:

Mr C Logan
Mr A Summers
Mr D McAllister
Mr E Fairfield

For further information, directions or accommodation enquiries, contact Brian Gribben
Tel: 028 2827 7289 or 07484 857252

Annual Bushmills Gospel Hall Bible Readings 2022

in Coleraine Grammar School Castlerock Road, Coleraine BT51 3LA (kindly granted) at 8.00pm, DV

Speaker: **Mr David Gilliland**

Monday to Friday 11th - 15th July
Monday to Friday 18th - 22nd July

Subject: **Studies in the Book of Ruth**

Monday 11th
'The Crisis of the Famine' (*1.1-5*)
Tuesday 12th
'The Challenge of the Followers' (*1.6-15*)
Wednesday 13th
'The Confession of the Faithful' (*1.16-22*)
Thursday 14th
'The Coming to the Field' (*2.1-7*)
Friday 15th
'The Comfort of the Fellowship' (*2.8-14*)
Monday 18th
'The Collecting of the Food' (*2.15-23*)
Tuesday 19th
'The Communion at the Floor' (*3.1-9*)
Wednesday 20th
'The Calming of the Fear' (*3.10-18*)
Thursday 21st
'The Close of the Formalities' (*4.1-10*)
Friday 22nd
'The Child in the Family' (*4.11-22*)

"Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn" (Ruth 2:2)

Please bring your own Gospel Hymn Book

Open-Air Gospel Meetings

will also be held every morning at the Amphitheatre, Portrush (kindly granted) at 11.00am, DV

Everyone very welcome



Deputy Manager

We have a vacancy for a Deputy Manager to support the Home Manager and a team of staff in this well-established Christian home. This 67-bed facility has been operating since 1960 and offers both residential and nursing care. The successful candidate will have NMC registration and a minimum of 4 years post-registration employment with some leadership experience. They will have a caring and compassionate approach and excellent communication skills. They will work 40 hours per week, covering night duty occasionally if required. Other requirements include participation in auditing and governance programmes, liaising with residents, relatives and outside agencies and the sharing of an oncall rota system. The Deputy Manager will ensure the home is fully compliant in all matters of care, health and safety and will deputise in the absence of the Manager. We offer a competitive salary with excellent training and development opportunities.

We also have vacancies for a ***Cook***, ***Carers***, ***Senior Carers***, ***Domestics***, ***Kitchen Assistants*** and ***Laundry Assistants*** (various types of contracts available).

For details contact: Jane Moore, Home Manager, **jane.moore@faith-house.co.uk**
or telephone Faith House on (028) 90612318. Website: **www.faith-house.co.uk**

MANAGER REQUIRED FOR FLORABANK CHRISTIAN CARE HOME

Florabank is a Residential Home for the care of up to 22 elderly Christians in the East Lothian area. We are a registered charity, providing person-centred care for our residents.

Due to the present Manager retiring, we wish to appoint a new person to take over the day-to-day management of the Home. He or she will be responsible for all matters relating to residents, staff and visitors, as well as ensuring that the Home has, and maintains, as high a grading as possible with the Care Inspectorate. The Home has a strong Christian ethos, and we expect the Manager to lead by practising and actively promoting the Christian faith in every aspect of their role.

Applicants must be self-motivated and enthusiastic, and have experience in a social care setting. The requirement for this post is an N/SVQ Level 4 in Care, plus a Leadership and Management for Care Services award. Applicants should either hold, or be working towards, these qualifications.

A job description is available to any who are interested in learning more about the position. To apply, submit your CV, plus relevant details, in writing to Stephen Thomson, Cowrig Farmhouse, Greenlaw, Berwickshire TD10 6UN. Email: stephen@cowrig.co.uk

We would ask for your prayers, that we might be able to fill this challenging, yet fulfilling, post with the right person.

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We urgently need someone with clinical knowledge and experience to support the senior staff team in the delivery of outstanding care to the Residents of *Bethany Care*.

Bethany Care is a small Christian Care Community in the south of England, comprising a lovely purpose-built Care Home with independent-living cottages operated by a Charitable Trust.

The Trust is recruiting a 'Clinical Lead' who will have a background in nursing, or other related health-care profession, and will work with the Registered Manager, upholding the Christian ethos of the Home, mentoring staff, sharing on-call responsibilities and liaising with medical professionals.

Accommodation is available. Please contact 07771523522 or 07836702277 if interested.



Places are still available for the following events. For bookings or enquiries, please contact Grant or Bobbie at **manager@faskallyhouse.com** or call on 01796 474411.

13-17 June - Midweek Break Bible Teaching

12-16 September - Midweek Break Bible Teaching

8-14 October - Families Week

NEW TITLES

William Carey - Expecting Great Things

Linda Finlayson £6.99 / 9781527107939



Suitable for ages 9-14

With him coming from a working-class background, you might not have expected William Carey to impact the world, but God had other plans. William was an inquisitive child, keenly interested in the natural world around him. He was bright and intelligent enough to teach himself Latin and Greek. However, whilst young boys from wealthy families benefited from a university education, William was apprenticed to a local shoemaker.

In his adult life Carey fulfilled many different roles such as husband, father and schoolmaster. He was also a preacher and pastor for the Baptist denomination, and had a great passion to bring the Gospel to other lands. He was one of the key individuals who, in 1792, formed The Baptist Missionary Society.

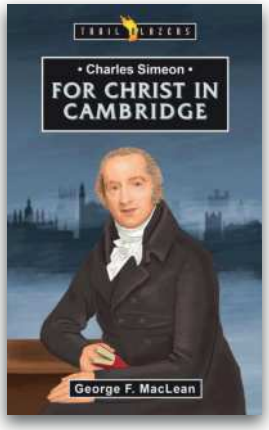
William Carey then left the United Kingdom with his family to take the good news of Jesus Christ to the land of India. There he used his linguistic talents to translate the Bible into many Indian languages, including Bengali, Hindi and Sanskrit.

This book will introduce you to a young lad who learned to make shoes, but who also became a pioneer of today's missionary movement. William Carey knew that we should expect great things from God and attempt great things for God.

Charles Simeon - For Christ in Cambridge

George F MacLean £6.99 / 9781527108417

Charles Simeon was well known among his peers for many things, including being one of the first among his set to purchase the new invention of an umbrella. He was smart and well turned out, and enjoyed all the pleasures that life offered a well-educated young man studying at Cambridge University in the 1700s. His interest in religion, however, didn't go much beyond trying to salve his conscience by good works. Yet, one day, at the age of 19, when he was preparing to take communion, he realised his sin could only be dealt with by transferring the guilt of it to another – the Lord Jesus Christ. With this realisation his heart was flooded with Gospel peace and, from that day on, Charles Simeon was set on a remarkable pathway to spread the good news of salvation through preaching God's Word.



Suitable for ages 9-14



God Save The Queen

Paul Coxall

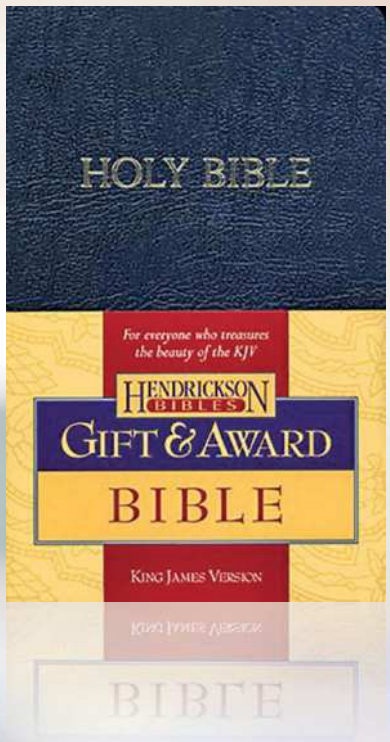
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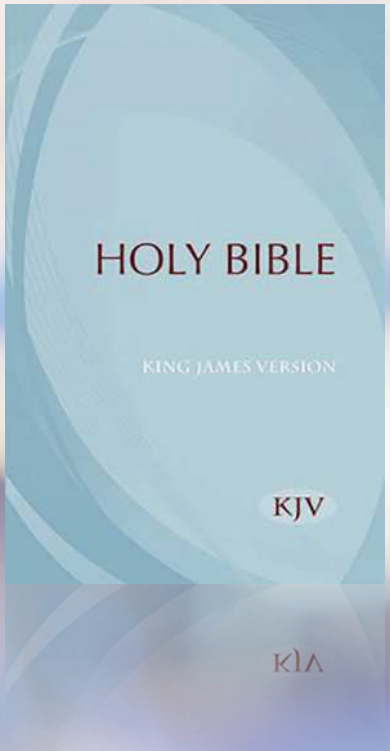
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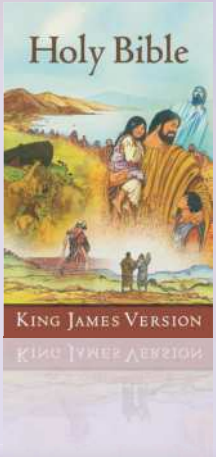
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