



Truth To Wonder

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The Barbie Movie – Satan’s Entertainment?

These are strong words for a title I’m sure you will agree, especially considering that this is how we open our new issue of TTW magazine! Many of you will read this article and dismiss it as ‘overthinking’ and ‘reading too much into it’. Maybe so. People laughed when some said *The Matrix* was anything more than a sci-fi fantasy movie. Many stopped laughing though when the movies creators, the Wachowski Brothers, admitted years later that the movie was about the journey to transgenderism that they experienced. So yes sadly, these are heavy opening words but be careful not to dismiss them. The title of this piece is an accurate reflection of just what the Barbie Movie is (in the writer’s estimation) and how expertly subtle it is in its crafting, so that its deliberate anti-God message is conveyed consistently but not so aggressively that it deters the majority from it’s visuals.

The Barbie Movie, became one of 2023’s biggest cinematic events, breaking box office records for pre-release ticket sales. The marketing campaign for the movie was a triumph of salesmanship as eager viewers gobbled up teaser trailers with glee, as each new glimpse of the movie seemed to reveal a self-deprecating film full of wit and humour. Nothing subversive was shown in the trailers to alert anyone to a narrative that was to defy God’s ordination on male and female relationships and societal order. Interestingly, the film ensured a ban on any reviews being publically released before the movie’s opening in worldwide theatres. Normally, film producers are keen for reviews of their movies to be widely circulated before general release of the film to ensure widespread publicity and thus secure greater ticket sales. So, when a movie has a blanket ban on reviews being released before the film’s box office opening, it usually means the test viewings to selected audiences (to gauge potential filmgoer reception to the movie) and inside industry reports are that the movie is a total dud. In other words, movie review bans are typically done as damage control exercise by the studio which made the film. However, this was not the case with the Barbie Movie. There were industry rumblings of the film being a triumph and gaining high praise from industry insiders. So why the secrecy? Well, that is down to the narrative of the movie and how the movie’s producers were aware that advanced knowledge of the plot could upset ‘Bible Belt’ audiences and thus affect potential box office revenue.



The deeply troubling and deceptively Satanic narrative of the Barbie Movie is driven by a consistent message that the world is broken; patriarchy has destroyed any sense of personal fulfilment, and that feminism is the world’s best hope for some feeble semblance of law and order. Whilst many movie reviews easily picked up on this less than subtle message being deployed within the movie (which did harm the eventual box office revenue, proving the producers correct in their call on issuing a review ban before the film’s release), what appears to have been missed, even by some Christian movie reviewers, is a staggeringly apparent attack on the

Book of Genesis within the climatic scenes of the movie.

Towards the end of the movie, we are introduced to a strange, mysterious old woman called Ruth. Barbie comes across Ruth having evaded the clutches of the patriarchal businessmen who run Mattel, who have been chasing her through the company’s, bland, austere corporate building. As Barbie tries to make her way through a maze of corridors and doors, she stumbles across this Ruth character who is calmly baking in an old fashioned kitchen within one of the many office rooms of the Mattel headquarters. This whole scene will be instantly recognisable to any movie buffs as being a direct lifting of ‘mise en scene’ (general artistry of a movie scene) from the reality bending movie franchise *The Matrix*.

This mysterious ‘Ruth’ character imparts some enigmatic and almost mystical guidance to Barbie as to how she it to bring order back to her reality. She is to do this by fully embracing her inner potential and throw off the shackles of any system or individual that seeks to control her, curtail her or take advantage of her. In many

ways, it is a message that finds its twin within a recent perfume advert of, 'releasing our inner goddess'. Such a message is unapologetically New Age in its teaching and is a message that is totally opposed to the Biblical message of the state of the heart of the sinner before God; deceitful above all things (Jeremiah 17:9).

Several minutes later, as an enormous and alarmingly camp, mass battle is taking place between the assorted Barbies, Kens and Mattel businessmen (imagery of the collapse of society and the end of the world – a strangely popular theme in Hollywood today), all hope seems lost and Barbie, along with Ken, is left bemused as to how to bring peace back to her world. At the crunch moment, the mysterious Ruth character emerges, causing a pause in the anarchy to take place over Barbie World. We are informed that Ruth, is actually the ghost (now Spiritism is entering the scene) of the creator of the Barbie doll toy. Ruth, or the ghost of Ruth, then imparts a great revelation to Barbie that although she is her "Creator" (interestingly with the subtitles on, the dialogue puts the script, 'the Creator' with a capital C, as a subtle yet powerful twisting on the maleness of the Creator God of the Bible), she never wanted to limit Barbie, and that she is answerable to no one and can do whatever she pleases. The hissing perversions of the Serpent of Eden against the Word of God are evident within this interaction between the woman 'Creator' and Barbie in this scene, and is taken further with the revealing to Barbie by Ruth that 'Ken was made for Barbie'. This revelation is used to explain why throughout the entire movie, Ken is played by Ryan Gosling as a brainless, love sick fool who is desperate for approval and affection from Barbie, causing her a great deal of irritation throughout the movie! Here we have another subtle but immensely powerful twisting of God's Word that makes it clear in both the Old and New Testament that Adam was made first and that Eve was made for Adam to be a 'helpmeet' (Genesis 2:3 & 1 Timothy 2:13).

Within these climatic scenes, we have witnessed Spiritism being utilised (the ghost of Ruth character imparting knowledge to Barbie), the collapse of society being ended by the arrival of the Creator of Barbie World (a woman, not a Father), the flipping of the order of the Creation of man and woman, and an attack of everything that resembles any sort of masculinity. It could be even be argued that the basic plot of a woman's emotions whilst playing with her daughter's old Barbie dolls are influencing the equally real world of Barbie World, has elements of mysticism and Voodoo (dolls utilised to affect desired outcomes on physical world through magic enchantments and incantations).

These aspects, coupled with the on screen performance of a trans actor as one of the various iterations of a Barbie doll in Barbie World, and numerous nods to the *Matrix* (a franchise whose creators, the Wachowski Brothers, have admitted in interviews is an allegory about coming out as transgender as noted earlier) franchise point towards a movie written with a clear goal in mind. This message is one that is aiming to make the next generation turn angrily against everything that is ordained by God as good in the Holy Bible. This may sound extreme but just consider how the teenage daughter in the Barbie Movie, who is portrayed as moody, rebellious and arrogant, is actually lifted up in the script as the one person in the physical world of humanity, that has got it all worked out correctly. She is consistently portrayed as the voice of correct reasoning against the mother, who displays a more traditional mindset throughout the movie until the climax of the movie, where the mother 'bravely' throws off all the 'problems and limitations' of being a woman.

Having researched the movies produced by the Nazi regime and Stalin's Russia during my degree studies, the cinematic devices used within the Barbie Movie were reminiscent of those troubling eras. As these regimes would twist the accepted narrative of the Judeo/Christian world, so as to make their agendas appear to be enlightened, so too does this seemingly innocuous movie that is the *Barbie Movie*.

My hat is off to the scriptwriters of the *Barbie Movie*. They clearly know their stuff and the execution of the message is done with a rare panache combined with a brilliant subtlety that the majority would go away entertained but consciously questioning their own lives and the societal constructs of the western world in which we live. This movie is the most subversive mainstream blockbuster that has emerged from Hollywood since the first *Matrix* movie back in 1999. I was a teen when that movie came out, and I can tell you first hand that that movie changed behaviours and mindsets overnight amongst my generation, causing many impressionable young minds to question what is even reality.

In regards to viewing this movie, I advise you to not bother wasting your time indulging a movie that clearly has no time for the God of the Bible and to keep your children (especially teenagers) away from watching this

colourful bout of liberal propaganda. Again, as a former degree student of all things related to Hollywood, from it's birth through to the present day, and having viewed all the lauded movies of each decade since the Lumiere Brothers (film buffs will know these gentlemen), I can happily stand with the Apostle Paul and announce that all the achievements and knowledge of man is dung in comparison to what can be gleaned in the same usage of time in studying Holy Scripture. Yes it is hard to come away from the silver screen, and yes of course not all movies are God hating rubbish. So I encourage you to test all things by the Word of God and to employ the Lord's directive of being as wise as the serpent but as gentle as the dove. If something you are viewing is pricking your conscience as being unsuitable for a believer in Christ to indulge in, turn it off and do something that honours your Lord and Saviour.

We finish with this thought. How many times do we turn on the TV to watch a movie or programme with the tired intent of watching something that we can 'turn our brain off' whilst we view it. There's **immense** danger in this desire. When the brain is turned off but information is still being pumped into the mind, anything can slip into the mind and take hold, slowly altering thoughts and perceptions that were once held assuredly. Little by little, mindsets are changed and habits soon follow that mirror the world and not the Son of God. Keep that brain switched on and if it is feeling drained, then seek the Lord in prayer and ask for His refreshing of mind, body and soul so that He is glorified in our simple dependency on His loving kindness.

By Jonathan Badger

Charismatic Theology - A Road To Error

The Charismatic Movement has caused total chaos in the church today. There are endless questions like, Are there Apostles?, Have you ever met an Apostle?, Do you know anyone who has?, What about miracles?, is every page of the Bible filled with wonders?, Does the Bible tell believers to seek the miraculous works of the Holy Ghost? One has read endlessly and been informed times without number that the New Testament gives us an account of events that we should be seeing in the church every day. So, in these few thoughts I am only going to ask simple questions of ordinary believers but you are most at risk because countless meetings/churches etc. are full of 'teachers' whose knowledge of Scripture is zero. That is where many 'leaders' want your information levels to be because that enables them to peddle false doctrine.

So, does the Bible contain the miraculous? Yes of course. In the New Testament and the Old Testament? Absolutely. In fact there are three major periods that stand out. Firstly, the times of Moses and Joshua. Secondly, the days of Elijah and Elisha and thirdly the time of Christ and His apostles.



Miracles are spoken of all the time in the Charismatic Movement and cover a plethora of happenings without much explanatory meat on the bones. Lets look at miracles. They can introduce a new period of biblical revelation and give witness to the messengers of such revelation. Miracles can call us who are seeing or hearing these new things to note this revelation. Further, and often forgotten, miracles can be used to confirm the belief of believers and to make believers out of unbelievers.

Now, lets consider the question of apostles. There is clearly a link between New Testament apostles and the revelation of the New Testament. If you read 2Cor12v11-12 we find Paul defending his apostleship and he does so by referring to miracles, wonders and signs he had personally employed. Now, as other authors of the past have pointed out, if these gifts were a common possession then it would be a very weak way to try and prove your authority.

If you are looking for an apostle today, you have one and have had him for a very long time, the Pope of Rome. Direct descent from Peter according to Rome. The Charismatic Movement has nothing to compare with that claim. However, they are very good at making up theology as they go along, they are deceptive and without Biblical Authority on endless matters. Dear brethren we don't have apostles now. When for example we open up our New Testament and turn to the Pastoral Epistles we do come across those we do encounter now though, we find elders, pastors, deacons etc. but the apostles are gone. Yes such a statement is going to upset a lot of Charismatic leaders, but why? Does it undermine your Ego? God never sent you, gave you miraculous powers, or made you revelatory agents and you know it. You know that apostles had absolute authority, they were God's revelatory means, they didn't have successors.

Further, apostles had an eternal place of recognition, yes, I know you would like one also but God hasn't given it you. Take a look at Rev21v14. The Age of the Apostles is over. You may disagree, call it lack of faith, putting a time limit on God's plans etc. but the fact is that by the Second Century things have changed in the Christian Church with regards to miracles etc., and the Apostles have gone. These men are not here in your churches, halls etc., they are not working miracles. You may give the title to some big individual, yourself perhaps and claim wonders all day but there is no reality to biblical apostleship today.

Brethren, I said I wanted to write to simple folks, that is how I see myself, just a believer who loves the Lord, believes His Word and accepts those He appointed as His mouthpieces in the Early Church. Now, there are it seems countless 'authorities' and 'spiritual guides', they all make claims and grand statements and like their influence to range far and wide. They enjoy the plaudits of men and recognition of 'spirituality' and have little time for 'small fry' as they extend their power-base. Oh, you might attend one of their big congregations but your chance of getting a sound biblical word is nil.

Brethren, much of what is sweeping the church today is false and it will be seen to be so when the persecution that is coming on the true believers sweeps away the chaff from the wheat. We shall not hesitate to stand against the claims/teachings of endless Charismatic 'popes'. Don't let these self-promoting souls lure you into error with their Scripture rejecting teaching, drive them from your pulpits. You are a Shepherd so protect your flock and stand forth in the power of the Holy Ghost.

Let's then continue our thoughts on these vitally important Biblical matters. This question of Apostles is a really big one. Is it so difficult to recognise Apostles? Well not if you don't believe there are any now. However, believers in the Early Church must have had a way to know judging by Rev2v2. Further, note 2Cor11v13. Clearly the Church did face false apostles, but does that prove that true ones still 'minister' today? No. We have had Antichrists but that doesn't prove the Lord is still here on earth. Let me give you some scripture to read, you ask God to open your eyes to certain truths. Now, read 1Cor12v28, Eph2v20, Acts1v15-26, Acts2. Do you see Authority in Acts 1v15-16? What about 2Thess3v14 does that give you direction to where to look for authority? Authority is a big issue today, old believers like Clement when writing to the Corinthians says, 'The Apostles are from Christ'. One well known leader who wrote between 100-115A.D, wrote some very important words and makes a clear distinction between himself and the Apostles, he says, 'I do not lay injunctions on you as did Peter and Paul; they were apostles'. On today's vital issues of faith go to the Word of God, not the latest Charismatic soothsayer. Why would a true minister of God fear you reading the Bible for scripture's teaching on recognising an Apostle?

Another thought, do we believe that today's apostles are infallible spokesmen and interpreters, take a look at Ps69v25 and Ps109v8. In Acts1v20 Peter firmly asserts these references apply to Judas. Further, in Acts2- 4 we learn how Ps16, 110, 118 and 2 were predictions. None of these things would be apparent to their contemporaries or ourselves.

You should understand that today many reject sound Biblical rules of scripture interpretation, Charismatics are infamous for it, they are often perverters of the Word of God. Just taking an example, in 1Cor14 they put forth piles of false teaching when referring to speaking in other languages. They ignore certain apostolic interpretation of key words in Ch14 like 'mysteries', 'revelation' or they use them in a sense other than that of the New Testament.

Charismatics will twist interpretations and peddle every nonsense going. Their leaders love to talk of the supernatural and wonder-working abilities but do we really see such things? You get lots of noise, hype, clapping, dancing, positive enrichment etc. but are you growing in the things of God or just going back next Sunday for another dose of entertainment.

We will d.v. come back to all this (especially apostles) in coming days but many ask is the Charismatic Movement a mighty work of God? No. I don't believe so. It is full of deception. There are thousands in this massive 'church' that are no more true believers than J.W's, Mormons, Spiritists, and a host of other religious bodies. People come out of the Charismatic Movement every day but you never hear of that. You may have to go 'outside the camp' to separate yourself from error and falsehood, stop allowing yourself to be misled by 'happy days' theology.

To be continued...

God Bless - Dr Badger

Many pretenders, one truth

There is a Biblical account of a little known but steadfast man of God, told in 1 Kings 22. This humble servant of God was called Micaiah. I, like many others, was unfamiliar with this dedicated follower of the Lord, but I knew the names of two kings which he had an important interaction with. Who were those kings? King Ahab of Israel, and King Jehoshaphat of Judea. Doubtless, like myself, many of you will be familiar with the wicked acts of King Ahab and his notorious wife Jezebel, and how they ruled the ten tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel with great evil and rebellion against the Lord God. Strikingly though, we have on the throne of the two southern tribes of Judea, a king who lived in a very different manner to Ahab. That king was as already noted, King Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat ruled according to the laws and commands of God, governing his people under the fear of God. Here we have two very distinct lives being lived by two men in very similar positions. How they treat a man carrying the true Word of God is extremely revealing indeed, and its message resounds surprisingly loudly for modern Christendom.

In 1 Kings 22, we read of King Ahab being stirred up in his mind with a desire to retake the land of Ramoth in Gilead; a land that had been occupied by the King of Syria. His spirit stirred up by pride and ambition no doubt, a spirit matched by the blind acceptance of his people for warfare, whom he has wickedly led against God with great zeal. So, he puts his ambition to his peer, King Jehoshaphat of Judea, seeking an alliance against the King of Syria, as he looks to take Ramoth Gilead for his own. Note here that we read nowhere in the text of Ahab's desire to restore this region in accordance to the will of God, in what lands God had promised his forefathers. There is only an evident selfish desire to expand his own power base. Such a hope, even done in the pretence of a holy act, will never please God.



Jehoshaphat agrees to aid Ahab in this quest in principle (something he should've never agreed to so quickly – much like the actions of the young in faith), but before he commits troops to the battlefield he does request something very important is done that seems to have bypassed Ahab's consideration; that they are to consult the LORD on this matter on whether He will lead them to victory in this quest, or if it is not His will. Here we see the first important difference between a man led by his faith in God, over a man led by feelings, personal conviction, or going along with a group's call for action. The man of God, in this case Jehoshaphat, wants

proof that what they are to possibly venture into is actually the will of God and not just them getting swept up with a false spirit of leading. Isn't this tragic surrender of searching after revealed truth in God's Word for the sake of personal feelings, convictions or 'revelations', being witnessed again and again in modern Christendom. Churches today are filled with congregants who each have a different interpretation of God's will, solely based on what they are 'feeling' they are being led to do. When challenged on this by another believer in Christ, they often defensively retort, 'I trust the Holy Spirit over man'. Yet it never seems to dawn on them that there are many spirits who will come as angels of light, seeking to lure believers away from the true, pure light of Christ, and that as a result, we are called by the Word of God to test these feelings of the spirit according to the written Word of God. Isn't this exactly what Jesus did in the 40 days of temptation? He sent the devil packing because when the devil came to him with subtlety of quoting Scripture without context, Christ defended resolutely, not timidly, with the actual Word of God. It would've been so very easy for an exhausted, thirsty, starving Christ to fall for such intricate deception as laid out by Satan, but He didn't trust in the weakness of feelings, no matter how intense, but in the revealed Word of God as the defence against such sinister attacks.

Returning to Ahab and Jehoshaphat, we see that Ahab reluctantly agrees to this request by Jehoshaphat for the seeking of the Lord's will on this important matter, and so he summons 400 prophets. Ahab is clearly seeking to have his desire rubber stamped by these 'prophets' and has simply assembled a vast throng of blind yes men who believe themselves to be mouthpieces of the gods, and yet only exist in their roles to further the worldly desires of a fallen and sinful ruler that is Ahab. It is evident, that even a defiant and rebellious man such as Ahab is happy to engage in 'religious practice' as long as it affirms his personal feelings and desires. Again, the church today is populated by ministers who are affirming rebellious and godless lives so as to appease their congregants and thus ensure they return to the pews each week. Such is the vastness of this compromise amongst the prophets, that Ahab has managed to assemble 400 of them in the attempt to prove his personal convictions are indeed the will of God. As the text reveals, every one of the 400 'prophets', assure Ahab and Jehosaphat, that God will indeed give them victory against the King of Syria and thus secure the land of Ramoth in Gilead. These false prophets, are evidently concerned with appeasing Ahab over serving the Truth that is held in the will of God.

Jehoshaphat though, under the prudence of the true Spirit of God, is evidently dubious of this mass approval of all the assembled appeasers of Ahab, and so pushes Ahab for further testing on the matter. He asks Ahab if there is no other man of God that be consulted on what is a sizeable issue, whether to go to war in God's name or not! You see, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth, and He discerns where God's truth, not man's truth, is to be found. The Holy Spirit knows better than anyone, that the true Word of God is rarely found in this world, for it is pure and precious, and how can such a precious jewel be easily found in a world running rampant in sin?! Returning to present day Christendom, how can the true Spirit of God be found in churches that happily compromise on God's written Word on issues such as LGBTQ+, sanctity of marriage, gender identity, sanctity of life, the deity of Christ, the sufficiency of Scripture, the authority of Scripture, the inerrancy of Scripture, etc, etc? He simply won't inhabit such places where His perfect truth is not defended fiercely and boldly, because if He did, He is compromising with sin! That would thus make Him imperfect, and if the Holy Spirit is equally God as the Father and the Son, then that means that the whole Godhead is no longer perfect! If this is the case, then how can the Son's sacrifice for our sins be trusted as sufficient or even necessary?! What apparently starts off as a minor issue, soon becomes a massive attack on the very truth and necessity of the Gospel if followed with logical consistency!

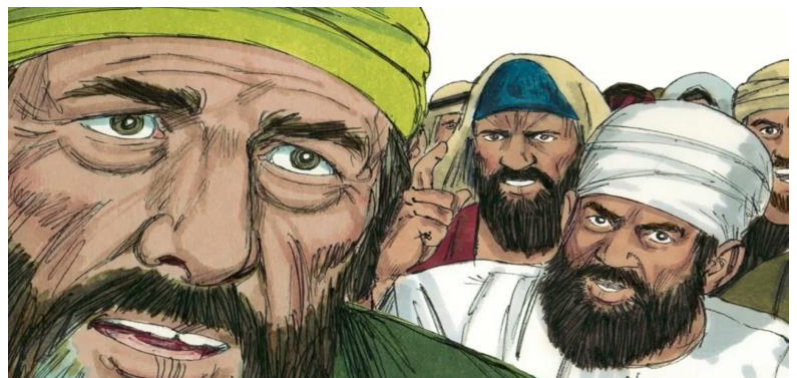
So Jehosaphat pushes Ahab for another opinion of the matter, not trusting Ahab's 'prophets' and their declarations of imminent victory. Under pressure (watch how many modern Christians crack under a logical challenge to the veracity of their feelings/claims) Ahab relents and reveals that there is one other man who is known to be a man of God. This man is Micaiah. Ahab however, had not summoned Micaiah because Micaiah only 'spoke evil' against him. In other words, Micaiah had not been initially summoned by Ahab, because the truth which Micaiah spoke offended Ahab's feelings and sensibilities. Once more the parallel is there to be seen with many attending churches today. Those few faithful ministers who do preach the truth are shunned and dismissed by many because they dare to speak against the feelings, desires and personal convictions which have lured so many into walking against the will of God. I have experienced this first hand. I have had people murmur against me that I'm 'too aggressive', 'vitriolic', or 'critical of other churches'. Well if so, then I'm as guilty of this crime as Micaiah was or John the Baptist was, and my what company to keep if

that is to be the case! Yet with that being said, I know full well the anger that springs up in the heart when it is challenged by Truth, and how for a moment I am stirred against the one who is rightly speaking against my error. By the grace of God though, I have learnt that such powerful words against my error is not done in bitterness, pompousness or self-righteousness on behalf of the speaker against me; but in love towards me. For what is kinder and more of Christ Jesus Himself? To speak softly and appease the errors of a person and let them walk into sin and following heavy consequences? Or to speak boldly and openly, alerting them to their predicament, and placing their welfare over how you are loved by them? Surely the latter is more of Christ Jesus and the Spirit of Truth than the former!

So, reluctantly, Ahab summons Micaiah and Micaiah is consulted on the matter as to what the Lord has to say on this proposed military action. Micaiah initially and in a likely wry manner (doing in accordance to the demands of the messenger sent to bring him to the kings that his prophesy be the same as the 400 other prophets) says the same as the 400 prophets had already advised, that victory was assured by God. Micaiah would know Ahab well and that all the King was looking for was affirmation, and so this is likely the cause of his initial response, a going along with the wishes of the rebellious king, for Micaiah knows that Ahab has no desire to hear truth. Micaiah's actions here reflect the manner of God, that He often allows the wicked and rebellious of spirit what they want, even after warnings in previous times that it will fail. He removes His loving hand and gives that defiant spirit what it wants, freedom from God. As Winston Churchill responded to a soldier who defiantly exclaimed that 'he didn't need God', Churchill retorted, 'My boy, you have just relieved God of a solemn duty'.

The king however does not accept this first response by Micaiah, pushing him to speak the words of God as he has always done so. How often will people demand truth be spoken, only to dismiss it when it does not go along with what they have already decided in their hearts! So, Micaiah reveals the message of God, one of bloodshed and defeat for the Israelites. It is a warning that the sons of Israel are to not go up to war but to return to their homes in peace. On hearing these words, Ahab is furious, turning to Jehoshaphat and exclaiming in a manner of, 'See! I told you he spoke nastily and was negative all the time! He's always telling me I'm wrong!' Well that's because you were Ahab. Every life wants to know peace, but peace on their terms not God's, and so when that offer from God of peace by His deliverance is spurned, it is always deemed to be God's fault. Again, this is the tragedy of so many churches today. So much is promised of prosperity and God's peace to the eager congregants, and yet the preaching of how to obtain His wondrous peace (those who love me keep my commandments - John 14:15) is often omitted. So, the congregants are left fumbling around on square one of Biblical knowledge and understanding, becoming disillusioned and hurt by the tests and trials of life and leave the church altogether. It is a sad fact, not opinion, that churches in the western world are losing as many congregants as are entering. Just go and research it. Many of those who do leave are left so embittered by their experience that they distrust Christianity as a whole!

Yet the mercy of the Lord is rich and deep. Micaiah speaks on and reveals that his message is not of his own interpretation or conviction, but the word of the Almighty Lord God. He emphasises this amazingly with a pulling back of the curtain between the physical world and the spiritual world, as he speaks of how the hosts of heaven had assembled before the throne of God. Micaiah speaks of how God had enquired of the assembled hosts, who might go up and



persuade Ahab, that this military conquest would be a good idea but that actually would lead to his death. One may consider here that God is being cruel and deceitful by sending a spirit to persuade Ahab wrongly, even to the point of death. Let that thought perish from the heart and mind! Remember that Ahab has lived in great sin and evil against the Lord God, and has overseen a nation in open defiance against Him. Ahab had been given a great position of responsibility, and he had willingly corrupted it. Time and again, we read of the wicked acts of Ahab and his wife Jezebel in Holy Scripture. The warnings had been given time and again by God through His prophets. The Lord in this revelation by Micaiah, is showing to Ahab's face, that He alone holds all power and truth, and that if Ahab listens to this message from God through Micaiah, Ahab can

escape impending judgement of death! This revealing of what is taking place in the heavens concerning Ahab, is one last attempt by God to offer life through the trusting of His Word. God is highlighting unmistakably that the Truth of His Word is not found in the din of many people pleasing 'prophets', but in the cry of lonely voices who speak out daily for the lost as in the manner of God's own heart.

Let it be made known in this revealing of the movements of heaven, that spirits of confusion are sent to persuade men of acts against God. Why does He do this? Because He knows how many voices fill our ears each day, all claiming to be truth. These voices can bear all the manner of the Truth of God, but they are not consistent with the written Word of God. These tests are sent to sharpen us to hearing the Spirit of Truth amongst the din of false spirits. See how Jehoshaphat was not happy to accept the word of the 400 'prophets' whereas Ahab was. The Godly man, living in accordance to the written Word of God, was blessed with the Spirit of discernment so that Micaiah was sought out. Whereas Ahab, though going through the motions of religiosity, was blind to what God was seeking to show, that He alone is the voice of Truth.

What is Micaiah's reward for speaking the truth? Physical abuse at the hands of the so called 'prophets'. It is a sad truth, that those who are often the most vicious against the servants of the Lord, are those who claim to be great workers of God! Isn't this what John Wesley and George Whitefield encountered when they were banished from pulpits by the pompous clergy of the day?! The man who strikes Micaiah, Zedekiah, one of the assembled 'prophets', is so incensed that his 'spirit of truth' has been revealed to be a lie in front of everyone, that he demands from Micaiah where to find this deceptive spirit. Suddenly this people pleaser of a prophet wants proof of what Micaiah is saying. So Micaiah advises him that Zedekiah will soon come across this lying spirit once again when he seeks to find rest in his bedchamber. It is as truth that there is no rest for the wicked, and so Zedekiah's rest will be taken from him for his misleading of others and wilful surrender to a false spirit.

After this assault on Micaiah, imprisonment follows. How often do we see this throughout the centuries recorded in Scripture? Those who speak the truth of God are hated, reviled and imprisoned simply for speaking the truth. How repulsive is mankind, that it can declare it wants truth, and yet when it is gifted unto them, it desires nothing more than to destroy it. Just look at Jesus Christ and His trial and crucifixion. This is humanity. Deplorable. This is why we all desperately need a Saviour; because this is what we are at our natural, fallen level. This realisation, is why the love of God is all the more stunning, all the more rare and valuable. In a world of vile sin and corruption, stands this one gleaming jewel that is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And why didn't Jehoshaphat intervene to help Micaiah? Because even though he followed the Lord, he was not bold enough in his stand for God so as to defend a humble servant of Christ. The cowardice of the disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane was no surprise to God. He has witnessed the silent inaction of even faithful men unfold for generations.

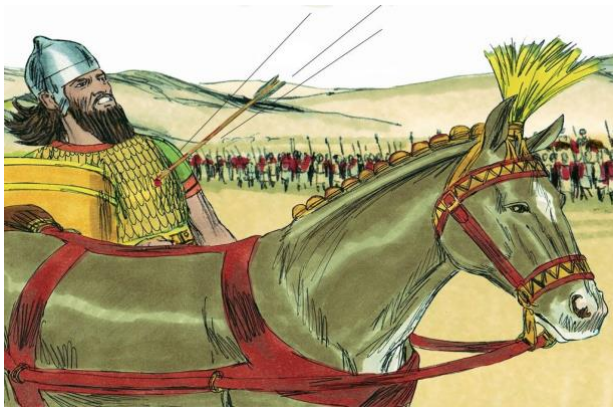
The punishment of Micaiah by Ahab for speaking the truth is furthered by the extent of suffering that Micaiah is to endure in prison under the wishes of Ahab. This cruelty and hatred of the Word of God exposes Ahab for what he truly is, a wicked man intent on defying God. Ahab tells Micaiah that he will be imprisoned until Ahab returns victorious (clearly the warning from Micaiah had been dismissed once again by Ahab). To which Micaiah responds that Ahab will not return in peace, for he will die on the battlefield that he is so intent on marching towards. Micaiah is so certain of this Spirit of Truth that has rested upon him, a Spirit that is unique in the face of hundreds of imposters, that he speaks loudly to all in the royal court so that they can act as witnesses, that when all these things happen, they will know who spoke the truth.

Now to the crunch. Who was speaking the truth? The great mass of the 400 prophets? Or the one 'evil speaker' (according to Ahab at least) that is Micaiah? Both Ahab and Jehosophat assemble their armies ready for battle at Ramoth, having dispensed with the warning given by God through Micaiah. How sad it is that even Godly souls such as Jehosophat can be swept along with the will of the godless simply because some pretense of religion and 'faith' has been wheeled out. How common it is that good men/women are pulled away from following Christ by the blind of heart.

Clearly however, the words of Micaiah are troubling Ahab. So much so that he tells Jehoshaphat to go into battle in his kingly attire (thus making him a clear target for the enemy - take out the king and the army will collapse), whilst he will disguise himself as a normal soldier (what a brave soul Ahab is). Here is another witness being quietly given to the heart of Ahab by God. If he was so certain of the prophecy of his 400

prophets, why would he go to such lengths to hide himself away from danger? His own actions are confirming to him that Micaiah's prophecy is correct, he's just too blind and defiant to acknowledge it! Again, why do so many 'Christian's' today faint over powerful preaching and say it's too negative or intense? If they're the Lord's then they are safe and the righteous judgment of God that is being preached is no longer over them through faith in Christ Jesus. Yet they will thank the Lord God even more on hearing such bold and stern preaching, because the Holy Spirit will minister to them of the enormity of Christ's grace all the more in knowing that such wretches as they have been spared of this just judgement! The humble of heart know the heavy warning to be true and give thanks for the clarity of the warning. The arrogant dismiss it and attack it but then go off and do all they can in their estimation to 'save themselves' anyway; just as Ahab did at this point of the text.

We read in the text that the Syrians are ordered to concentrate their efforts on killing the King of Israel, namely Ahab. It would not be unknown to them that Ahab was the instigator of this war, and so they are seeking to kill the head of the snake that is the invader. As the battle rages, the Syrians see a man dressed as a king of Israel, but it is not Ahab but Jehoshaphat. Ahab's plan to hide away and have Jehoshaphat killed in his place (thereby opening a route to reuniting the kingdoms of Israel and Judah under Ahab) appears to be working nicely. Jehoshaphat is under enormous pressure in the battle, so much so that he cries out in fear. Following this, the Syrians realise that Jehoshaphat isn't the man they are after and so take the battle away from him. How good is the Lord to hear the cries of the Godly (and what a picture this is of what is to come upon Israel in the Last Days!). Yet also, Jehoshaphat would've not found himself in this predicament if he had simply stood up for the bold words of the prophet Micaiah, who alone had the Spirit of Truth!



In the ensuing chaos of the battle, Ahab's attempt of protecting his life is chopped down. Literally! He is heavily wounded on the battlefield and his chariot is so effectively pinned in by the enemy, that he is unable to escape the conflict and find help for his wound. So, he dies a slow and miserable death, bleeding out painfully, without any kingly attire or comfort. If only he had listened to the warnings given by God through the one voice of truth given through Micaiah, this horrible end wouldn't have ensued. However, God knowing the hearts of all mankind, knows that such was Ahab's hardness of heart towards Him was so set, that

He spoke how dogs would lap up Ahab's blood on his death. A miserable demise for anyone, let alone a king! Yet, as always, the Word of God is proven true, and all these prophecies take place on this field of death that Micaiah had spoken of through the revelation of God.

So, we come to end of Ahab. A wicked king dies a miserable death after angrily dismissing the witness of the truth of God's Spirit. Micaiah is shown to all the land that he alone spoke the truth of God. Whilst literally hundreds all claimed to be 'prophets', all were far from it, and were instead servants of man. The Spirit of God is to be found outside of the world, outside of the majority who seek to conform, to please people, to affirm what God has said in His Word what he finds an abomination. How sad it is that so many true believers in Christ, can find themselves swept up in this mass noise of claims to be in 'the spirit', and follow it only to find themselves lost in the middle of a battle they should've never placed themselves; just as Jehoshaphat did.

Don't be afraid to stand for the full Word of God, even if there are a whole army of pretenders who claim to be working in the name of God. Aren't we told by Our Lord Jesus, that many shall say, 'Lord, Lord, haven't I done works in your name?!' Yet He shall say unto them, 'Depart from me, I never knew you'. Heavy words indeed, but truth they are. Dismiss them at your peril. Instead, hold on the fullness of His Word, because it is written in heaven forevermore in all its purity! Yes, the world will hate you for it. Even those closest to you or those who first say they are with you. But do not be fearful. You shall be validated as having stood for truth, just as Micaiah was before all of Israel. So be of good courage, and inherit all that which has been given to you in God's name. For it is the very Word of God that has been given to you in its eternal purity, and He is His Word. Thus, in this Spirit of Truth, you may know that you are His, and He is yours. Amen.

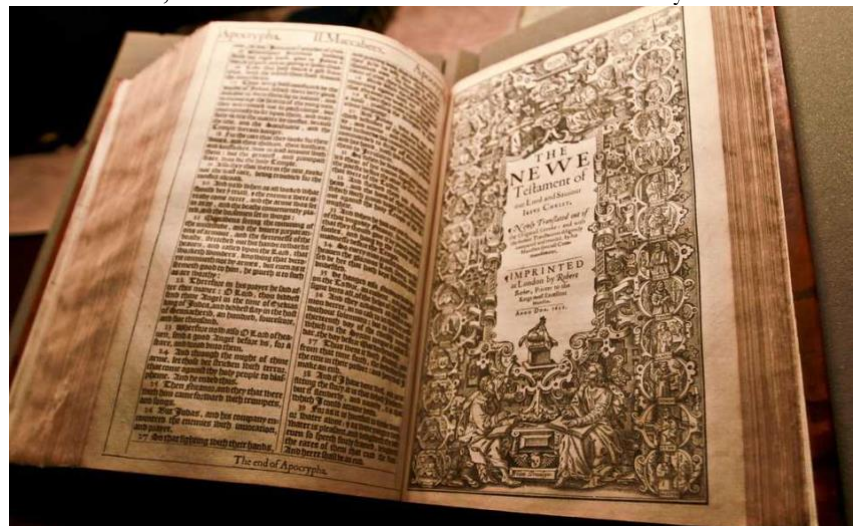
By Jonathan Badger

The A.V 1611 – An English Original – Part Two

Humanly speaking a great piece of literature is apt to dilute or even evaporate as it is translated. However, here again a point has to be emphasised, and that is, Hebrew was a supremely translatable tongue, this was because of its certain qualities of vocabulary. Hebrew was pictorial and concrete. The writers of the sold Old Testament often felt and thought and spoke in images – in a vocabulary compact of nearly all physical sensations that flesh is heir to. Luther said of Paul's words, they '...are alive; they have hands and feet; if you cut them they bleed.' That would equally apply to Hebrew words. The diction of the Hebrew then has an incomparable vividness. Those Biblical writers can trigger imagination with a word or phrase. Instead of just naming and emotion, they reproduce the physical sensation that attends it. The AV reaches out humanity. The meaning of the Hebrew words are 'Carried...', to use Wordsworth's phrase, '...alive into the heart.'

Now, in God's plan these qualities of the Hebrew and, to a lesser degree, the Greek can be met by the English vocabulary. How? Because in the English vocabulary we have two chief elements – one native and one complexly foreign; together they give an unrivalled flexibility. The Saxon gives a homely vigour, forthrightness, vividness and concreteness which matches the Hebrew. The foreign element gives a capacity for delicate discrimination. Sometimes one leads over the other and at other times they fuse together. Further, while it is true in many cases that a Greek word might require a sentence in English, yet the translators were adept enough to be able to find just the right word to express the fullest, richest meaning of the Greek text. But they were not inspired, cries the modern day rejector of the A.V. Perhaps. Language is an expression of thought, and to know what God transmits from His mind to ours, we have to know what God's word really is.

At the time the Bible was being translated into English, the English language was in what some have termed as a plastic stage. Let me take a short moment to set the scene in England from 1600-1642. The habit of reading had become widespread through society in this period. The people had sermons, histories, handbooks on manners, the beginnings of newspapers even. The writers of this period, and not merely the most famous, reveal an astonishing versatility and range of knowledge. Breadth of learning was met by breadth of experience too; most



writers were not solely men of letters but had careers in the political, academic, or clerical world. At Oxford University for example, Sir Thomas Bodley's munificent foundation, together with many subsequent gifts of books and manuscripts gave the university a library second only to that of the Vatican. From Cambridge a large number of learned and intellectually keen men emerged. 'To get learning' was common advice from father to son. Religion dominated national and personal life, probably half the books published between 1600-1640 being religious. On the throne, James, far from being a slobbering fool, as he is often made out, was in fact a learned man. One happy result of the Hampton Court Conference was that the King authorised a new translation of the Bible. We are at a point in time in English history when we might say living was intense, there was a zest for life, England, to use Milton's picture, was a Nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep.

Now, what is of interest here is the fact that the Elizabethan's dealt with their speech as they dealt with life, with an adventurous zest in taking from it all it had to give. It was a case of the language confined the expression of a thing, then the language must expand!

By Dr David Badger

God will comfort you

Isaiah 66:13 – As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem

Just a few weeks ago, we reflected and gave thanks for the love and sacrifice of mothers everywhere on what was Mothers Day. This most precious of roles, that is of being a mother, a role ordained by our loving God, has been a consistent living witness of the compassion, tenderness and love of God for all the generations of humanity to see and benefit from.

In this wonderful verse, broken up into three (note a gentle reflection of the love of the Triune Godhead unto mankind), we have a repetition of the most gentle and loving of hopes mankind can ever ask for. In these words, given to Isaiah to relay to the Jew first and then the Gentile, God is assuring that there will come a day, when all the pain and suffering that the righteous and faithful have endured for the Lord God against a fallen and wicked world, will be swept away forever.

Come that appointed day, the beloved of God, will be as a tearful and wounded child which has sought the love and care of its mother, seeking comfort over the miseries they have known. This moving image of a loving mother delivering their wounded child from their sadness and into joy once more, is but a picture of a love that all Creation will be witness to, when the Lord God delivers His children from this world of sin, into a perfect world crafted for them by His gracious and loving hand.



The language of the A.V/KJV is supreme above all other renderings, for in just one verse we grab hold of the majesty and the intimacy of God's love unto both the brethren in Christ, and the individual servant of Christ. As Isaiah relays the words of God, he addresses 'you', so that the individual may be assured that even little old you will be comforted by the Almighty God. Yet here is a wonder of wonders, how the Lord knows so many of His children feel so lonely and isolated in times of hardship and suffering. So in this promise revealed in this sublime verse, we read that the same comforting from the Lord God, will be shared amongst 'ye', that is the plural of you. In other words, the individual that had first been offered the hope of God's comfort towards them, is now being assured that they are but part of a great delivering of comfort to all who are redeemed in Christ.

How joyful will that day be, when the Lord Jesus puts down all evil, and the cup of trembling that was Jerusalem, shall at long last be the source of the meaning of its name, 'the city of peace'. We, the redeemed in Christ, shall know firsthand the comforting and love of God, as the child knows firsthand the comforting and love of their dear mother when they have been suffering.

The richness of the A.V/KJV again attests to a beautiful revealing of the nature of God, for as a mother comforteth a child, so shall God comfort His children. This 'old, archaic' word is a rendering of comfort in the 3rd person singular, a tremendous linguistic device used to point the emphasis of the verb on the other person discussed; in this instance the emphasis is being placed on God providing the comfort to His children. This exquisitely underpins the tender image used by the Holy Spirit (the Comforter no less) to aid our mortal minds to grasp the depth of tenderness and love He holds towards His adopted children through Jesus Christ.

Yet the wonders of the Word of God do not cease there. Three times we have comfort written for the ensuring of message from God to hearing humanity, that He will come to bring them comfort forevermore. In the Hebrew, when a

message or word is given three times in succession, it is of the utmost importance and significance, demanding our earnest attention and adoption of its words. So then, we have the earnestness of the Spirit of God (again, the one whom Christ Himself calls the Comforter) in His delivering of the message of God's love, care and comforting to His own so that we can endure all things, for the love of God ensures all things as we read in 1 Corinthians 13.

Finally, note how we read of the comforting of God being given to us both throughout the past (comforteth), experienced in our present through His daily provision of our needs (comfort) and how we shall (a legal term making a binding declaration that God will not disavow Himself from upholding) know His comfort in all fullness and glory in the coming days though to eternity itself. Doesn't such a revelation uphold the words we read in Book of Hebrews, that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever? Yet the prophet Isaiah spoke these tender words some 700 years before the writer of Hebrews made the same statement on the nature of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. Truly the Holy Bible is a unique Book, and the A.V/KJV is the most exquisite and accurate rendering of His Word the world has ever seen. Go and study thoroughly this claim yourself; you will not be disappointed. Hallelujah and amen.

By Jonathan Badger

Moses my servant is dead

The day will come to each of us when our name is given attached to this inevitable news, that we too are dead. If the great Law Giver that was Moses saw death, then what hope do we have that shall escape the cold clutches of death upon our frail bodies? Verse two of the Book of Joshua chapter 1 opens with the brutally true reporting that the mighty Moses had died as will all men, and so we could hang our heads in despair at the thought of such a strong and faithful man of God as Moses being sent off in such a seemingly cold manner by the Word of God. But as always, our limited and worldly eyes do not see the glory and hope of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and that even in such seemingly heavy and cold words as is this reporting of Moses' death, there is hope that points to eternity with Jesus Christ.



In this opening to the Book of Joshua, we see a powerful picture of a truth that would see its final and full revelation being given in the New Testament; that the Law brings condemnation of sin unto death. The one who delivered the Law of God unto mankind, now lay dead in a grave known only to God. In this sad scene, we have a picture painted boldly with the colours of weeping by the hand of God. Its scene is one of a declaration that not even the greatest of men can ever hope to escape death through the Law. It is a universal truth and one that the Apostle Paul would frequently preach on in his epistles unto the New Testament churches.

One can only imagine the despair and grief of Joshua at the news from the LORD God. Here he stood, crestfallen, and yet God instructs him to be strong and of a good courage, and to go up into Canaan and take all that is promised to the children of Israel. How can such a command be so boldly given in such a time of mourning for such a servant of God? It can be given because its strength is held in the one who fulfilled the Law and has enabled Moses to pass over that great spiritual River Jordan that leads from death unto life eternal. Moses did not trust in his ability to uphold the Law, for he knew firsthand the weakness of his own fallen flesh. No, he trusted in His Saviour, the Lord Jesus, the one he encountered at the burning bush, the great I AM who parted the Red Sea so that he and all His people could flee from bondage and into freedom at long last. He had seen the power of Jesus Christ firsthand and so trusted that He could part the waters of death that are pictured in the image of the River Jordan, and lead him safe to Canaan's side, as the hymn so eloquently sings. He trusted in the guidance of his Redeemer, and so yes, he was dead unto the physical River Jordan, unable to pass through its waters and set foot upon that Promised Land because of his sin against God. Yet in the grace and mercy of God, he passed over another River Jordan, by the blood of the Lamb, Jesus Christ. This picture is beautifully upheld by the use of the term

'this Jordan' in the text, so as to highlight that yes, Moses did not pass over the physical River Jordan, but he did pass over the spiritual River Jordan through faith in His Saviour Jesus Christ.

In this scene at the opening of the Book of Joshua, we read of the LORD instructing Joshua (the Hebrew root of the name Yeshua or Jesus) to arise and take the people into the land which He gives them. Joshua's leading of the nation of Israel into Canaan is real physical history, but it also points to something more beautiful, more glorious. That is the words of God unto His Son Jesus Christ, to arise from the tomb and cross over that River Jordan that is death, and step into that Promised Land that is giving of all power and authority in heaven and earth by the will of the Father. Not only that, but that He should lead His people, the children of God, into this same Promised Land of life eternal to the glory of God so that all Creation might know He is the One True God.

Thus, in these honest words by God unto His servant Joshua, of whom is a type of Christ, we are seeing the doctrines of the New Testament being lived and applied in the Old Testament. Through these events, we see the heavy weight of the Law, and how all men are condemned under it, no matter their prominence or renown. Yet under Jesus Christ, the weight of the Law is satisfied, and all manner of souls, whether great or small, are offered the hand of God to lead them through the waters of the River Jordan and be led into the Promised Land of paradise with our Lord Jesus.

Where there is the Lord, there is hope. So, Joshua could indeed be of good courage, even in the hours of fear, despair and grief; for his confidence was not founded in the heaviness of the Law, but in the lightness of touch offered unto him by the nailed pierced hands of Jesus Christ.

By Jonathan Badger

Super-Bowl Pastors

'As long as the Gospel is preached'. That's what I hear so often from many Christians, as they seek to appease their conscience over what they are witnessing in many churches today. Now I have been accused of being 'vitriolic' and 'aggressive against other churches' by some disgruntled Christians, and yet all I have ever done is highlight what many places of worship are calling 'church' today. I have done nothing but point out how so many once faithful gatherings, have compromised so far to reach people with the Gospel (a noble and good desire without doubt!) by making it more palatable, entertaining, or life affirming, that they have made the Gospel of Jesus Christ, a joke in the eyes of the world.

Some of you reading this will have seen the many videos on YouTube that popped up after the Super-Bowl weekend in America, showing various 'football themed church services'. This massive sporting event, shuts down the United States for the weekend, and as a result of this mass appeal with which American Football holds over the nation, many churches felt the need to craft the Sunday Service around this entirely secular event.

The picture shown below is taken from a church service in America on Super-Bowl Sunday (apparently the sport has claimed the day from it being the Lord's Day but we'll gloss over that one for the moment). As you can see, it shows the female pastor (again, just ignore what the Lord has to say on the issue of 'female pastors' as recorded in 1 Timothy and move along quietly, as we mustn't upset anyone, love is love after all as we're being indoctrinated, ahem, encouraged to say by many liberals). As you will see, the item which the elder is holding ready, circled in red, for the female pastor to kick is indeed a copy of the Holy



Bible. Looking at the picture you might be forgiven for thinking it's all just a bluff and that she doesn't actually kick the Bible, and that she stops herself from doing so at the last minute (as if doing that would make all this sham of service ok!) Alas, she didn't stop, and she went on to thoroughly punt the Bible off the stage into a shocked and bemused congregation! What made it all the worse was that moments before she did this horrendous act, she says, "I'm going to get in a lot of trouble for this!" She knew what she was about to do was wrong but she carried on anyway so as to entertain the audience (again, let's face it, it is an audience at this point as any real church congregation would've walked out in disgust on seeing the whole pre-amble to this event, let alone stick around to watch it unfold!).

This disgusting act was done under the justification of making the Gospel 'relevant and accessible' to people today. Ah, well in that case it's all fine then! God's Word obviously needs a lick of paint and a remodel to make it appeal to people today as He's become out of touch with what the modern individual wants and needs. The Gospel has to adapt to meet people at their own level, at their own point of need. So, if that means that the Gospel message needs to be repackaged in a sports apparel and elaborate stage props that any amateur dramatics society would be proud of, that's absolutely fine. Isn't it?! Isn't that what we are told to do by Jesus, to 'go out into the world and make disciples'. Oh what a slippery slope it is when we but begin to doubt the efficacy of the true Gospel of Jesus Christ to reach any soul at any era of history. How blind many well-meaning Christians are today to the simple fact that such an approach is to rob God of His glory.

Tragically, this one incident wasn't an isolated church service in America. There were many others who were amazingly 'led' to do the same or very similar style services that Sunday morning. Was this an act of the Holy Spirit leading new sections of society to hear the Gospel? How deluded have we become to think that God would cheapen the blood of Jesus Christ so happily so that people might be entertained into accepting Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour?! Who has ever come to true salvation in Christ Jesus looking at the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and thought to themselves, 'Ooh that looks fun!'?! Souls have been saved from damnation because they threw themselves at His merciful feet when they saw for themselves what they were before a thrice holy God; that being a wretched sinner drowning under the weight of their sin and in desperate need of a Saviour!

How did these churches get to such a point? Because some years back, they said to themselves, 'as long as the Gospel is preached, does it matter if....' Such thinking is an extremely slippery slope, and those who find themselves careering down it often started sliding away when they didn't entrust their labours to God's will and timing. Pride and impatience took hold so gently at first that its eventually crushing grip wasn't even noticed at first. So, the first compromise was taken, whether it be appointing a female pastor; replacing sermon quality and length with singing; changing the Bible used to a newer and 'better' translation; holding yoga groups, etc, etc. Any and all such steps are taken because the leaders doubted the ability of the Holy Spirit to reach people through His ordained means, the Pure Word of God. If you doubt this, just look at where the fastest growing churches are in the world today. In places such as Iran, China, South Sudan. In these places where gatherings to hear the Word of God are done in secret for fear of death for proclaiming the Holy Scriptures, the Holy Spirit is at work. He is doing so without fancy lighting, 'worship teams', overly themed services, etc. He is leading people to Christ by the same means that He has used for millennia; by the preaching of the Pure Word of God. You watch underground videos on the internet of these humble gatherings, and the heart is moved to praise of God, for we see simple crowds often packed into small rooms that are bare of embellishments or comforts. All their eyes and ears are trained on the man holding dearly onto his Bible and simply unleashing the power of the Gospel by preaching it unadulterated, undiluted, uncompromisingly. How such simple gatherings show the true nature of God. Gentle, humble, meek but also strong, and powerful. Let's not forget that Samson needed only the jawbone of an ass to kill 5000 enemy soldiers! Nothing elaborate was needed; just a trust in what God had provided unto him.

Many churches today are following this slippery slope to the preaching of an unrecognisable gospel because they have already compromised with the world, fearing that they would become irrelevant if they didn't compromise. Their God is not like mine. My God doesn't need my help to be relevant for a modern world. My God doesn't need my help in anything! And yet my God is so meek and loving that He invited me to be a means by which His Pure Word, the Gospel of Jesus Christ might be shared with the world. My God is powerful and gentle. My God is mighty and meek. My God is just and merciful. My God is righteous and full of grace. My God is my Judge and my Deliverer. What more do I need than Him? This is power of the

Gospel. Sadly, I do not see or hear this Gospel in many churches today. Do not misunderstand me, I would love nothing more than to praise and encourage all my brothers and sisters in Christ continually. That actually was the original hope of this entire ministry, to encourage unceasingly. What I have learnt though through these years of ministry work, is that sometimes a heartfelt rebuke of a loved one is still an encouragement. How so? Because it encourages a slipping foot to find firmer ground once more.

I thank the Lord for all those faithful gatherings who rightly divide the Word of God and treasure it above mortal life itself. The comforting of the Lord be known unto you in the days of testing and trial and fight the good fight, knowing there are many known unto the Lord who stand beside you in the Spirit. To those who have compromised seeking to reach the lost, I know your motivations all too well, and I have been rightly rebuked for chasing them myself in the mercy of the Lord. Hear my plea unto you now and repent of the doubting of the power of His Pure Word, of the true Gospel of Jesus Christ, and be ready for many false converts to leave your congregation when you preach His Word unashamedly. But know that whilst men may fall away from you and leave you for Christ's sake, the Comforter will be with you, and He will refresh you in the hope of that same Gospel message first delivered unto Adam in Eden. Amen

By Jonathan Badger

Teach Them In The Way

The number of children I have come across, taught, helped, etc is well into the thousands now I'm into two decades of working in childcare and/or education. But sadly, as the years go on, and as we live in a less and less Godly world, I meet and help more children with ever saddening 'stories' as to what their lives have been/are like, to the point it's getting harder and harder to even comprehend.

Some 'stories' of children as young as four and five years of age, are of being in a broken family because the parents just simply do not 'love each other' enough or anymore. So sadly, and selfishly they put their needs above that of their children's, and others are just too much for me sadly to mention even a little, and I of course can not because of being bound by confidentiality.

Thinking back, one particular child's story is just beyond even the imaginable. It was the hardest story to try and comprehend. Without saying what the said child had been through it is hard to explain, but let's just say that their behaviour was absolutely all over the place. They could be completely dis-regulated as soon as they left their adult and sometimes even be in this state consistently throughout the whole day, especially through transitions from learning to play and back again. Their behaviour could be extremely challenging and incredibly disruptive for their peers, so they had to be removed a lot from class, if they did not remove themselves anyway. At the time of this situation, I was a general TA over a particular year group but was timetabled to be in this particular class a lot more than the other classes. So I was their TA a lot, therefore 'helping' the said child fell on me regularly in not just helping them to calm down, stop crying, not be scared, not be angry, stop being violent with furniture around them, but also to get them to do some learning. It could be extremely physically and mentally draining as you can probably imagine, and sometimes take quite a bit of time too in helping them to be doing what they should be doing and be where they should be. But I did so for this said child daily, as I looked to teach the struggling child (and watching staff) that loving discipline, as laid out in Scripture, is the single best way to aid a child develop well in all ways. Are we not told to 'spare the rod, spoil the child'?

Proverbs 13:24 - He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.

Proverbs 22:15 - Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.



Being new to the child, I at first used to be asked by many members of my team/the school if I needed assistance, as their 'noises' of discontentment could be heard across the school sometimes. But as people quickly learnt, I usually always refused the help, as I pulled on my love of the Lord to help this child and therefore was not alone in my hope to help the poor child. It was exhausting and sometimes it would feel overwhelming, but I was there to serve the Lord in aiding His little ones, and so I took strength in His words:

Joshua 1:9 - Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not

afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

Their challenging behaviour was often worse through the morning in the more challenging subjects as they simply did not want to do them. Even sitting and listening to the input from the teacher would be challenging, as they wanted to be outside of the classroom playing, drawing, etc, anything from what they were being told to do. They desperately wanted the control they did not have in their lives throughout their life since birth up to just months before I first met them. It would be easy and understandable to give in to such desires from a wounded little one, but doing so only made their behaviour worse, as my colleagues found out. Not giving them what they wanted in the short term to make them happy (in their thoughts at least) was better for their long-term development. Instead, giving them clear boundaries, explained in calmness and love, gave them a consistency of relationship and interaction they so clearly had never known and enjoyed.

People asked me how I did it, but it wasn't me who did it, it was all the Lord giving me all I needed at the time to help this said child.

Philippians 4:13 - I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

I often broke down when I got home or was even exasperated driving home as soon as I left them. Even on my lunch break I would sometimes feel the effect of the intense mornings, as I had to dig in deep to keep up my consistent care and support, I gave them. But I always said to everyone I met, through my work, or people outside of work, discipline in love and the child will listen, whatever they have gone through, our Lord instructs us to do so!

Proverbs 3:11-13 - My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth. Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.

I disciplined this said child, and all other children, in/through the love of my God. It could be exhausting keeping it up for challenging and disruptive children, but they have to have boundaries put in place for their good, short term and long term. In consistent, strong boundaries, they will feel loved as shown by this particular said child, as I did not ever back down, however much they cried, threw things, even screamed at times. The progress they made in such a short space of time was phenomenal with what their young mind had had to try and comprehend through their entire life. They continued to have wobbles of course, and tried to push the boundaries daily, but I remained strong to how I started out in consistent love and discipline, all in service of my Lord and God.

By Donna Badger

A settled word of God

For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven. Psalm 119:89

Within these words given to us by the Holy Spirit through the pen of the Psalmist, we see a concise and eloquent answer to a problem that has plagued the Church since the late 19th century. In this brief piece, I do not wish to delve into a

lengthy theological/historical debate on the highly contentious issue of 'Bible versions'; I merely wish to apply a most useful tool of discerning truth and clarity from falsehood and confusion, namely logic.

Let's pose a question regarding this simple verse. If God's word is settled (or established depending on which version you use), doesn't that logically mean that there is one rendering or version of God's word set up in heaven forevermore? If the Holy Spirit is the author of the Scriptures (any Christian should agree on that surely?!), and we are told that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth (John 16:13), and guides believers into truth and not confusion; then why would He lead us into the world of utter confusion that is ever increasing plethora of Bible versions?!

If the LORD's word is settled in heaven (or established again depending on which version you use), doesn't that logically imply that there is one version of His word set up for eternity? If you make a statement in a court, you make one statement and that is your settled word on the case. Any worthwhile court wouldn't accept multiple different statements from the same witness all giving differing details. Any judge requires a settled statement from a witness, this is not ever questioned in our courts of law. Yet strangely, when we go to the ultimate Judge of all Creation, we seem to think that He is perfectly accepting of multiples versions of what He has said to be declared as a sensible demonstration as to who He is as a being, namely pure and perfect. Surely logic dictates that if His word is pure (again a consistent Scriptural point), how can there be multiplies varieties of the same thing and it be declared pure?! It's logically inconsistent, isn't it?!

Again, if His word is settled in heaven, then the unavoidable implication of these words is that there is one rendering of them preserved for eternity by God. Surely God does not have over 200 versions of His word settled in heaven! That doesn't sound 'settled' in any sense of the word, does it? Or let's use a modern version and use the term 'establish'



instead of 'settled'. Does the ever-growing maze of bible versions appear an 'established' setup of God's word to you?!

Ah well it's the 'original autographs' that are settled in heaven, you may cry. Ok. Do you think that the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth remember, would be so self defeating in being what He is (the Spirit of Truth), that He makes Himself unable to give to mankind the actual, settled word of God? Is He that weak in His ability or poor in His delivering of the word of God to humanity, that He is unable to ensure that the purity of the original

autographs is given to each generation of mankind? What was so special about the generation that lived in the era of the 'original autographs' that they got a pure version, and we didn't? Wouldn't that be favouritism of the most troubling kind on God's behalf?! I truly hope you don't think that, because if the Holy Spirit is equally God as the Father and the Son, and that nothing is impossible to God (again therefore nothing is impossible to the Holy Spirit), why do we readily dismiss that it is impossible to know that we have that pure word of God still today?

Why do we fumble about from version to version hoping that we in our brilliance of hermeneutics, can decipher which version to use for each verse. Think about it, how many ministers, preachers, theologians etc, jump from one version to another as they try to exposit the word of God? A lot isn't it. The logical end point of this type of preaching is that the preacher is creating his own version of the word of God to reach his desired teaching point. Thus, you have a myriad of different interpretations of the same passage from men of God, all preaching with determination that they've got the right rendering of the text. To take this point to its worrying ends, if each jumbled message put together by a well-meaning preacher, using a few/many different versions in the same passage, is equally 'of the Spirit', then that means you've got to add all the multiples of combinations of Bible versions also to the settled word of God in heaven! Doesn't such a logical endpoint rob the Holy Spirit of that glorious title of the Spirit of Truth! After all, the title used is singular (truth, not truths).

Conversely, there are preachers, ministers, pastors etc who don't use multiple versions when they put together a sermon, but consistently use one version throughout. Yet how often is it that many of these same men hit out at users of the A.V/KJV Bible as being narrow minded or bigoted because they stand by one version, when they are actually doing the same thing. A curious thought isn't it. They have, by logical implication, drawn their line in the sand on the matter of

bible versions just as steadfastly, they've just plumped for an NIV or an ESV or whatever, over the A.V/KJV. Doesn't logic when consistently applied aid tremendously in discernment over tricky issues!

Now, if there is one, settled word of God in heaven, the question remains, which one is it? Surely the Holy Spirit wouldn't have left the Church to fumble around hopelessly for nearly two millennia without anything solid to grab hold of in this crucial matter?! If God is as gracious as we believe Him to be as to give His Only Begotten Son for our sins, is He not also gracious enough to give us a pure and settled means of the delivery of the message of the giving of His Son for the world?! Isn't that the whole point of the Gospel?! To give certainty to a soul that is wrecked with sorrow, pain, doubt and confusion!

What if we haven't even got the settled word of God yet?! That's a possibility, isn't it? It's a possibility being milked by the publishing houses with great efficiency, as each new version is marketed as 'the best and most accurate translation'. Again, by logic, if each new version is the best, then why bother with this latest one and just wait for the next version on the conveyer belt which will be better? Soon, you find yourself drowning in a sea of self-made confusion. Would the Spirit of Truth lead in such a manner?! Surely not!

So to avoid this horrible scenario, a version has to be chosen. Yet how do you know you've got the right one? 'Well, the Spirit led me to this one'. Ok. Well, the 'Spirit' led the person in the aisle over from you to a different version. If as we opened with, there is a settled word of God in heaven, then the 'Spirit' of which you speak has misled one of you. Maybe He's misled both of you. What a horrible mess of doubt we soon find ourselves in. A doubtful Christian is a poor witness, and isn't that what the enemy wants? Think about it, when was the last time you were convinced to follow someone you could tell was clearly unsure themselves? We wouldn't do that if was a choice to be made over a career, our health, our finances etc. Yet we seem happy to do it with something far more important than any of that temporary stuff; we do it with the settled word of God.

I am convinced of the version I use. The doubts and attacks have come to make me question it, so I have studied (why is that word – study, removed in many modern versions interestingly?) and challenged it, only to find that it humbles me each time. Each time I have sought to see if it's as great as others have proclaimed it to be and each time it astonishes me with not only meeting my challenge but far exceeding my expectations. I use a version put together by 47 of the finest minds this land has ever seen. Men who were experts in dozens of languages; men who were Chaplains to literal Kings and Queens; men who could read the whole of the Old Testament in Hebrew by the age of 5 (Dr John Bois if of interest); men who were Professors at Oxford and Cambridge for decades; men who wrote great volumes on the Church Fathers (Dr Andrew Downes, again if of interest to you); men who spent seven years pouring over every manuscript, testing them beyond necessity for their historicity and accuracy; men who went through their work with unequaled fineness of exactitude time after time to ensure that it could not be any finer. Most importantly of all, men who were truly humble of faith, that the preface to the version is a heartfelt message to all who pick up its pages, that their work has been done in trembling of knee and humility of heart, understanding that they are working with the words breathed out by Almighty God. The version I use is the A.V/KJV. The version that even great minds of the secular world acknowledge to be one of the greatest works of the English language the world has ever seen. A version that has brought the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to more souls across the world than any other version before or since. A version whose roots of translation of manuscripts can be traced back to the earliest days of the Church, through the lives given unto Christ by many faithful martyrs. A version that abounds with a musicality, rhythm and life that reflects the artistry of God. A version that is deep with the wounds of a high priest that knows our infirmities and cares for us daily before the Father. A version that has a consistency of message of the everlasting love of God towards the humble of heart. A version that the more I challenge it, the more my confusion melts away to a spirit of truth, all to the glory of God. Amen.

By Jonathan Badger

A broken body?

At the time of writing, Easter is just a couple of weeks away and Christians will be rightly reflecting and thanking God for the full and final sacrifice of His Only Begotten Son Jesus Christ, on the cross at Calvary for the sins of the world. Many will pause and remember the amazing offering that Christ made for we sinners through the giving of His body and blood when they come together in remembrance of the Lord's Supper, or Communion.

On reading 1 Corinthians 11:24, we come across the Apostle Paul's words on the correct manner of which this remembrance of the offering of Christ for the sins of mankind is to be conducted. In this particular verse, we read a reiteration of Christ's own words where He said, 'Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do ye in remembrance of me.' Some noted theologians (Dr John MacArthur for example) have spoken against the rendering of Christ's words as seen here in the A.V/KJV Bible as being 'unscriptural'. They argue that the word broken goes against the Old Testament prophecy and fulfilment that not a bone of Christ's body would be broken during His crucifixion. It is correctly asserted that it was important that Christ's body be so kept from any breaking of bones because it was a requirement of Levitical sacrificial offerings that a lamb given as a sin offering must be blemish free (perfect in physical makeup with no deformities or broken bones). Such a blemish free offering had to be supplied because it pointed to the perfection of offering seen in its fullest and most complete form in the offering of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ on the Cross.

So, is Dr John MacArthur correct in his estimations that the A.V/KJV is a poor translation of what Christ said in regard to the observance of the Lord's Supper? In a word, no. You see, as brilliant a mind as Dr MacArthur is, he has failed to grasp something very important about language, that it devolves over time. Entomologists (those who study words and their history) have a term that notes this universal downgrading on language over time, no matter the nation or tongue. It is called paradigm levelling. It is a fancy term for the simple observation that any language grows over time with an expanding range of vocabulary and articulation but at some point, reaches a peak or zenith of expression, before it then begins to break downwards again into a simpler form. As an example, just compare the scope and scale of Elizabethan/Jacobean plays by men such as Shakespeare, Marlowe and Bacon as against the adoption of emojis as an ever increasingly legitimate form of language communication today. In many ways, the English language having reached its peak during the era of Shakespeare (the era of the A.V/KJV Bible interestingly - this point has been acknowledged as correct by many of the worlds leading non- Christian scholars and linguists) is now trending downwards to a form of colloquiums and pictographs.

Anyway, my point is that many theologians don't wield the fullness of language anymore and are applying a very narrow modern definition of a word that had much greater scope and scale for capturing an act, thought or emotion just a few centuries ago. You see the word broken in the peak of the English language didn't just mean the snapping of something that we often jump to in our minds. It meant a tearing apart or an exhaustion of usage (think how we use the term 'I'm feeling broken' to describe when we're physically/mentally exhausted or spent). This usage of the word broken accurately depicts what Christ actually endured for us on the cross. Christ's body was ripped apart with the barbarous bone studded lash of the Roman scourge (heavy leather and bone or metal studded whips) even before He was nailed into place on the cross. The Roman scourge was so horrendous that it's application would often tear flesh so violently that bone would be exposed! Now add the utter exhaustion, both physical, emotional and spiritual that Christ endured on the cross for we sinners, and you have a picture of a torment unimaginable to the mortal mind! Yet in the excellence of linguistic execution that the A.V/KJV renders of God's Word, we have this horror that Jesus Christ took in our place, all conveyed in just one word, namely broken.

Furthermore, when the fullness of Christ's words are applied with this word broken, any preacher is given a gloriously powerful Gospel message in stunning brevity and clarity that anyone can understand it. When Christ said, 'this is my body, which is broken (*my emphasis*) for you', we are being hit powerfully by the testimony of the Holy Spirit of just what level of utter horror and torment Christ took for you! Such a witness of God's love towards sinners crushes the pride and stuns the heart into awe at just how monumental His love is towards those who are completely undeserving of it! Who can be so loving and gracious as to endure such a thing for those who hated Him?! Surely this man must have been the Son of God for no one else in all Creation could endure such a thing with love in His heart throughout! This is what moved the centurion who watched His crucifixion to testify that surely Jesus is the Son of God. That centurion, a disbelieving pagan, part of the execution team watched all of the brokenness of Christ unfold before him and he came to the unmistakable conclusion that Jesus is indeed the Son of God.



If we remove that important word of broken as many modern theologians would have us do, we tone down needlessly the enormity of what Christ did for the world at Calvary. We lose that testimony of the magnitude of what He endured for us so that we could be delivered from such a heavy judgement that is eternity in Hell.

Yes, the essence of the Gospel message is still intact even if the word broken is removed but don't you see you have removed so much of it's power of message in doing so! It's like taking away 3rd, 4th and 5th gear out of a car. Yes it will still work and move as a car does but it will not be able to work anywhere near as effectively or efficiently as it could do if you simply left all the gears in. Who could you convince to buy your missing geared car, as you struggle to pull away down the motorway, with an engine and gearbox sounding like it's about to blowup! Yet this is what is limiting so many well meaning gatherings in the Lord's name today. A Bible is being used that is hamstringed from the very outset and has so much of it's power and depth removed from it needlessly and inaccurately.

Language is a beautiful, beautiful thing. Just think we would be without it! Shudder at the thought of what your life would be like without that wondrous gift of God that is language! How would you exist in life without it?! So why treat it so negligently? Treasure it, protect it, study it, enjoy it, for then you will know the depth of love of God towards you so much better. Amen.

By Jonathan Badger

I myself will awake early

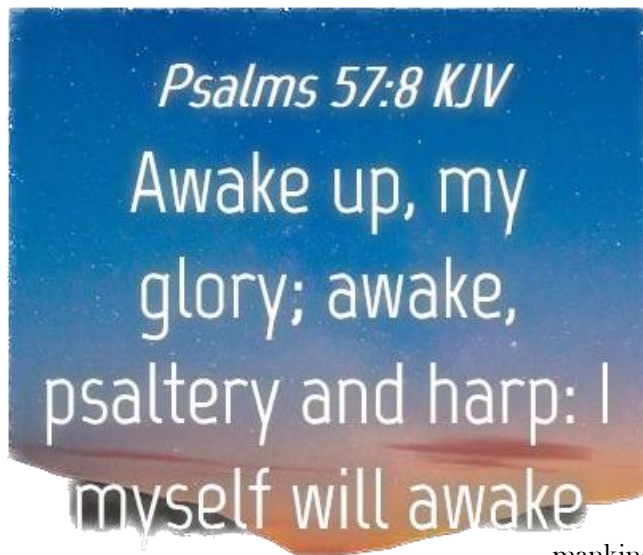
Psalm 57:8 KJV - Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early.

David penned these joy filled words of hope, when he was taking refuge in a cave after fleeing from the murderous anger of Saul. Whilst the preceding verses of this Messianic psalm speak of the despair experienced by many faithful servants of God when times of suffering hit hard; here we have expressed so beautifully, the hope of the redeemed in Christ. What is that certain hope that is confirmed to us in times of pain and sorrow by the witness of the Holy Spirit to our hearts? The certain hope that even if the greatest pain and sadness of all, that is death, were to come to us swiftly, we shall awake to everlasting glory through the risen Lord Jesus.

Though David wrote this eloquent verse, it's content was breathed out by the Spirit of God, and testifies of the sufferings, faithfulness and hope of Christ Jesus Himself. It is a most wonderful truth, that God in His tenderness reveals the fullness of the Godhead in Jesus Christ to each generation of man. Here, a millennia before the fleshly foot of Christ set foot amongst the same lands that David walked, the sufferings, sacrifice and risen glory that the Son of God would know, was testified to those who had eyes to see and ears to hear.

These precious words of radiant hope sung by the humble heart of David, all do but point forward to Christ Jesus. He who experienced such calamities (verse 1 of Psalm 57) during His Passion, that the mortal mind breaks under the weight of its horror and misery. The words of this psalm are crafted to drive the heart not to the sufferings of David, but to those of Jesus, the one who was set 'among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword' (verse 4 of Psalm 57). He whose 'heart is fixed' (verse 7) on fulfilling the will of the Father. That gracious and merciful will that loves the world so much that He gave His only Begotten Son for us (John 3:16). Praise the Lord God, that Christ's heart was so firmly fixed in obedience to the will of the Father, for if it wasn't so, we would be fixed on a certain and just eternal damnation for our sins.

Praise the Lord God, that His obedience unto death, meant that His perfect blood was a full and final offering for our sins, satisfying forever the righteous anger of God against sins committed against His thrice holy throne. Thus, the sting of death was removed to all who believe in Jesus Christ, and in this greatest of victories won by the Son of God, He was risen from the grave and restored to the glory He had known with the Father from eternity past. His glory did indeed awake that Easter morning some two thousand years ago. How blessed a morning that dawn was, as David sings in our verse of study, 'awake, psaltery and harp'. These instruments were played in great praise and worship of the goodness of God in the dedication of Temple itself. Ah but now, through the sacrifice of Christ, the Temple of God would be in the heart of the redeemed in Christ, and so the song of the humble before God would be received with great delight by the Father, in the name of His Beloved Son.



So, as we read, 'I myself will awake early', we read of the hope that David knew and that he shared with Job, a man who lived centuries before him. That hope being that he would see his Redeemer with his own eyes. This could only be done in the certain hope of being risen from the grave by the mercy of God through Christ Jesus! How these words, felt by Job no doubt, written by David, were lived by Christ Jesus. For He came forth from the darkness of the tomb, awaking early so that the women (who had themselves come His tomb in the dawning hours of the day) only found an empty tomb. In the power of God, Jesus Christ had been pronounced Conqueror of death, through His sinless life and selfless sacrifice for the sins of the world, and so had risen to life in the earliest hours of the day. Such was the radiant triumph of His victory, that the darkness of the night, the shroud of death and the grave could not withhold Him from awaking to His rightful glory as the Son of God and Redeemer of mankind.

How eloquent, beautiful and true a rendering of that blessed morning was given unto mankind a full thousand years before it took place. Yet this was how fixed the heart of God was to offer salvation to the world. That it's certainty of action was so settled in the heart of God, that nothing in heaven or earth could stop Him from sending 'forth his mercy and his truth'. This mercy and truth of God was the Light of the World, the Lord Jesus Christ. The one who made the world, and yet the world knew Him not (John 1:10).

Yet in the tenderness of His grace, He revealed Himself to the humble and the few. David, hiding in fear in that dank cave in ancient Israel, was one of those poor, humble, frightened and broken few. David knew Christ Jesus so well that his heart was after the Lord Gods (Acts 13:22). If Christ can find such a weary, frightened and helpless soul as David and stir up his heart to immense levels of hope and faith in Him, then He can find you too. Simply cry out those words which open the very same psalm, Psalm 57, as David begins to appeal to God with, 'Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me'. The Lord Jesus is good, and He turns away none who seek Him. So, cry out those same words to Him now, repent of your sins, believe in Him as the Son of God, and that He is in risen glory at this very moment. Ask Him humbly that He might raise you to glory come that hour of death also. For He alone conquered death and is the way unto the Heavenly Father. Thus, through faith in Him, you will also awake to glory, because He is risen (Luke 24:6). Hallelujah and amen.

By Jonathan Badger

Only God can change this place

These are the words of Farah Oxima, a mother of nine living in the gang-controlled country of Haiti. Haiti is in the midst of a complete social and political 'collapse' (I've lost count how many times I've read this word being used to report on what chaos has descended on Haiti). At the time of writing (March 19th 2024), the BBC were reporting that overnight, another dozen "bullet-ridden bodies lay in the street – the victims of the latest gang rampage" (BBC news article 'Only God can change this place': Haitians see no end to spiralling violence by Will Grant, 18/03/24). These dozen bodies were in the Petionville district of the Haitian capital Port-au-Prince, a wealthy area of the city, an area many thought would be secured from the recent violent events that have been plaguing Haiti. How wrong they were in this hope.

Haitian hospitals are lying empty despite the bloodshed and chaos as gangs control the roads to the hospitals and prohibit people accessing the much-needed medical care. The few hospitals that are still functioning are in desperate need of resources such as fuel to provide electricity and medicines. The medical situation is so dire that the UN estimated that some 3000 pregnant women in the capital city, were in danger of receiving no care at all during labour, thus



endangering the lives of mother and child. Indeed, UNICEF's executive director, Catherine Russell, has called the situation "horrific", likening the lawlessness to the post-apocalyptic movie *Mad Max*.

It is estimated that some 360,000 people have been uprooted from their homes within the country, and there are growing threats of famine and rampant disease to accompany the extreme violence consuming the nation. Amidst all this horror, there seems to be no viable solution to restoring any degree of law and order within the country, thus prompting Farah Oximo to note that only God can change Haiti.

These awful events that are threatening to destroy the country are a grim warning to the rest of the world and marker to all who would listen as to what every nation will look like come the final days of the Book of Revelation. Such utter horror will be so universal, as it was in the days of Noah (Matthew 24:37), that these terrible events unfolding in Haiti now, will be sprawled out across the globe and be so all consuming that mankind would destroy itself if Christ Jesus did not return for the sake of the elect (Matthew 24:22).

How did this land that is Haiti find itself in such turmoil? Isn't it a predominantly Christian country after all? Well Haiti does have a Protestant contingent, but it is predominantly a Catholic country (the official religion since 1697), mixed with a heavy usage of Voodoo practice. Historically, the importance of Voodoo (or Voudou, as it is known in Haiti) was firmly established in the country after the 1791 Haitian Revolution, which many believe was sparked by a Voodoo ceremony in that same year. Whilst the practice of this Occultic religion was public ally suppressed by the wealthy elites (the mulatto class) during the 19th and early to mid 20th centuries, it was still widely practiced amongst the people within their own homes.

This historical usage of Voodoo within Haiti was brought to the country through the slave trade, taking the roots of the religion back to its African origins. Yet this historical embracing of Voodoo found itself at ease with the historical following of Catholicism, which can be traced back to 1511, with the work of Catholic missionaries founding the Dioceses of Santa Domingo and Concepcion de la Vega. The slaves who were brought to this land in the late 15th century and onwards, found themselves at ease with the superstition and mysticism of Catholicism and began to blend the two religions together. As noted by scholar Leslie Desmanges, "slaves used the rituals of the Catholic Church to mask their practices of their native traditions". One example of this being the usage of worshipping and praying to Saints within Catholicism and how closely this matches to Voodoo in the practice of worshipping/praying to Lwas/Loas (spirits of Haitian Voodoo).



Thus, within Haiti, centuries of a strange mingling of the religions of Voodoo and Catholicism have taken place. This wicked union between two mystic religions has brought about a nation whose official religion is an acutely corrupted perversion of the Word of God. God has been richly patient with this land and it's wilful embracing and practice of this perversion of true Christianity in withholding judgment for centuries, just as He did with the Canaanites and the Babylonians. Could it be that Haiti is witnessing such a similar situation as these ancient peoples did? It is a sobering thought to consider.

We must pray for the people of Haiti, for the Lord is rich in mercy, as the people of Nineveh experienced under the powerful preaching of Jonah. Yet also we must take heavy consideration to our own nations. Nations such as Great Britain; a land which has enjoyed great blessing and prosperity under the gracious hand of God when it stood to defend the purity of the Word of God. However, look now as these very isles, look how many infants are denied tasting the air of this world as they are killed within the womb. Look at how simple men of faith are being locked up for simply preaching the Gospel in the streets. Look at how children are being encouraged to wilfully abandon their God given gender on the slightest of youthful doubts. Look on these things and consider how this nation of us is corrupting the same Word of God it not so long ago stood to defend. Look on how so many faithful and strong churches and denominations, who once withstood the corruptions of Catholicism, are now running back to embrace the open arms of Mother Rome. A pure Bible has been set aside in the hurry to pick up the 'latest and best' version, a version that looks to set aside purity for the sake of unity. When I look at all these things and the breaking down of society, a breaking down that even the non-believer is deeply anxious over, I fear that the troubles of Haiti are not too far away for these shores and many more also. Let us pray that the Lord will have mercy on such lands as ours, but also let us look up, being watchful for the return of our Lord and Master, for He is nigh. Amen.

By Jonathan Badger

I ain't saying he's a man of God

If you're like me and of a similar age, you might be familiar with the line from a popular hip-hop track by Kanye West entitled Gold-digger. I have paraphrased one of the repeated lines from that track to highlight the sad case of the writer of that track, Kanye West, and how his much publicised 'Christian faith', is not what we hoped it would be.

Kanye West is one of the biggest names in music. A superstar of the hip-hop genre, and one of the commercially successful artists of the last couple of decades. Once married to one of the most well known women on the planet (Kim Kardashian), Kanye shocked the entertainment world when he professed a love for Jesus Christ. He appeared on numerous American talk shows, professing his love for Jesus and his adoption of 'all things Christian.' He became one of the celebrity attendees at Joel Osteen's megachurch in America; produced a Gospel music album, and led many Sunday services. Yet something has dramatically changed in Kanye, that has caused him to bitterly remark, 'I am my own God'.

Kanye endured a difficult period in the last few years, as his marriage broke down, and many business interests seemed to be struggling. After a couple of years of profession of faith to the world (so convincing it seemed that many close to him noted that he seemed calmer and humbler in comparison to his wild days of youth), Kanye began to sink into bitterness and resentment towards God for the arrival of the days of hardship and sadness that he was experiencing. He had been left unprepared for the inevitability of such days by the 'feel-good Gospel' of Joel Osteen, a false teacher and deceiver of souls. When Kanye tried to lean on that feel good faith, he found it had nothing to aid him. He was left dejected, angry and resentful towards God, as he felt that days of prayer were being consistently left unanswered by God. So, Kanye came to a pride-based conclusion, he would be his own God, and that he would be the one who would save himself from his problems and trials. This conclusion was recorded in a frank and bitter interview that was uploaded onto the internet, as Kanye voiced his frustrations with God and his anger that he felt let down by faith in Jesus.

This was a man who openly acknowledged to the world in various interviews that he had 'been raised a Christian', and to 'be Christ like' in how he treated others and viewed the world. He had had the witness of the love of God his entire life and had a sound knowledge of Biblical events and teaching, yet now he declares to an impressionable world, that God let him down and that he is around today because of his sacrifice, not Jesus'.

How many young and impressionable souls will be led away from faith in Christ from these proud and angry words against Jesus Christ, especially as it has come from someone who even recently was singing Gospel songs and leading church services?! How many times, do the deluded of heart, convince themselves that they are of God by simply loving Jesus Christ, and that when the testing of these claims come, they fold like a house of cards. So they become proud, bitter and angry against God, because in their estimation He has let them down. Such arrogance declares that such a heart was never the Lord's in the first place.

Kanye, like so many, had been raised a Christian (let it be established now, you cannot 'raise' a Christian – you teach your children diligently in the Word of God so that they know His voice and heed His call when it comes in His goodness and mercy) and had been encouraged by weak preaching that just 'love Jesus' and you're saved. What does that even mean, 'just love Jesus'? Is that exclusive to Christians even?! Don't Muslims love Jesus? He is a great prophet to them and second only to Muhammad in importance of prophet! If simply 'loving Jesus' is enough, then Muslims are saved too. And so are Hindus, because Jesus is a great teacher to them also. In fact, you will struggle to find a religion that doesn't love Jesus, for they all recognise Him as a great prophet, man or teacher. Even in the Word of God, we are told that as the Jews looked on Him performing miracle after miracle, they declared Him to be a 'prophet', not the Son of God. This is the kicker, as they say. This is the crucial point. True Christianity declares that Jesus Christ is the only way to the Father. True Christianity declares that Jesus Christ is the only way to life eternal.

Equally important is that true Christianity preaches repentance of sin along with recognition that salvation is through Jesus Christ alone. Many will happily declare faith in Jesus Christ but have at no point bowed their knees in pleas of forgiveness for sin before Him. At no point have they acknowledged that Christ Jesus alone has the power to forgive their sins, and that they must turn away from their sinful life and indulge it no more. Isn't this message made loud and clear by Jesus Christ Himself, when He forgave the adulteress and said to her, 'Go, and sin no more' (John 8:11). His instruction was clear, she must stop living in her sin. It is no good asking for forgiveness and then going off and doing the sinful act again and again and again. It makes the plea pointless! Repentance shows a desire to change and to please the Saviour. Kanye, and so many professing Christians throughout the generations of mankind, do not do this basic and vital step.

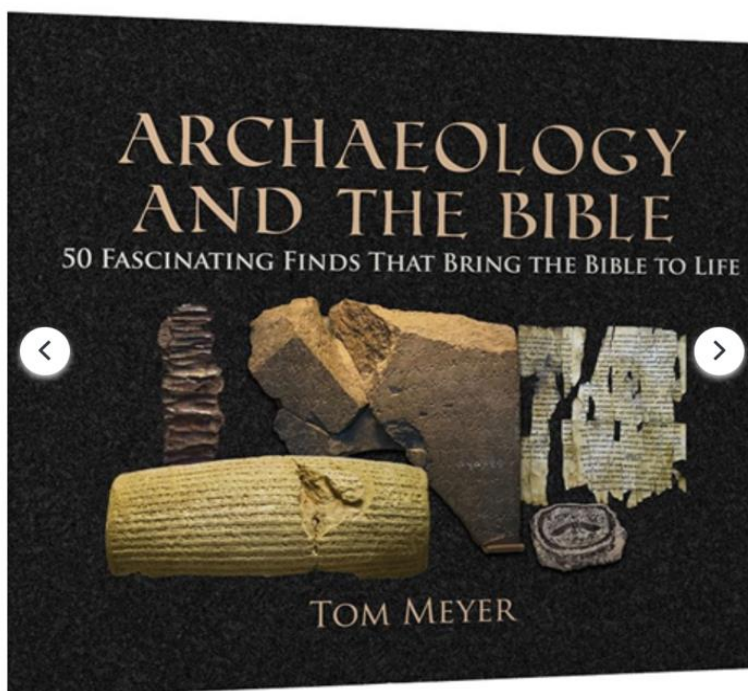
Tragically there are so many like Kanye in churches today. They attend in the thought that they are Christians because they 'love Jesus' and do good works in His name. Well, He had stern words on that didn't He! (Matthew 7:23) Such tragic souls are being encouraged in this empty enterprise by weak and often similarly deluded ministers, who teach that

'loving Jesus' is enough. No! No it's not! Stop preaching such empty and vain words that lead to death! Preach instead the desperate state of the heart before God! That is above all things deceitful and wicked! That we are each conceived in sin! That all fall short of the glory of God! Yet that God shows His love to the world so amazingly, that He loved us whilst we were yet sinners! Preach that He loves us so deeply that He gave His only Begotten Son for us so that we might not perish in hellfire forever! Preach that life eternal is offered to everyone and that He turns away none that seek after Him, and long to know who He is truly! Declare boldly that it is the humble of heart, the repentant of sin that receive His most gracious of gifts that is His righteousness being imparted to you, so that you might be made clean of all your sins! Declare that it is by faith in the risen Son of God that is Jesus Christ, that we too shall rise again when we are placed beneath the soil. This preaching produces true children of God, ones who do not fear powerful preaching but long for it, for it stirs up their love of Him, and brings a tear to their eye that yes, it is by such mighty means that we can know with certainty that we shall share in His risen glory. It is this Gospel message, that makes the soul ready for hardship, testing and sorrow. It is not held up by flimsy circumstance of the day, but in the steadfast faithfulness of Christ that will hand back to the Father all those who were entrusted to Him.

Sadly, such preaching is scarcely heard today. Pray for those men who speak so boldly. There is no more lonely and heavy a life than to be a preacher of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Thank the Lord for their labours in Christ's name, for they seek to build soldiers for Christ Jesus, souls that look to the heavenly city that awaits all His faithful servants; not those who look to happiness and security in this life. Pray for Kanye, and so many like him, that they might see Jesus Christ for who He truly is, the way, the truth and the life. Pray His words open their eyes and their hearts when he said, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

By Jonathan Badger

Resource Corner



Archaeology and the Bible

Examine archaeological discoveries from over 2,000 years of history that affirm the Bible's historicity. *Archaeology and the Bible: 50 Fascinating Finds That Bring the Bible to Life* will help equip you, your children, and your grandchildren with the truths you need to defend the faith.

The Bible has been God's Word to His people for millennia, but most people today question whether the events it records are actual history. Every time the Bible's claims can be tested, however, they stand up to scrutiny.

In *Archaeology and the Bible: 50 Fascinating Finds That Bring the Bible to Life*, Tom Meyer covers over 2,000 years of biblical history, from

the patriarchs to the early church period. Using discoveries unearthed from those periods, he demonstrates that the Bible's people and places really did exist and the events it reports really did happen.

Tom has an M.A. in the Historical Geography of Israel and an M.A. in Middle East Culture and Religion from Jerusalem University College. His unique insights into the world of the Bible—its cultures, geography, archaeology, and customs—will equip you with the truth you need to defend the accuracy and reliability of the written Word of God.

The Stones Do Cry Out

"Even though I and those close to me had gone to church our entire lives, we were totally incapable of defending our faith using biblical archaeology that is, until I became equipped and began to teach that indeed the stones do cry out ([Luke 19:40](#)). That, in short, is the aim of this book—not only to praise God that His Word is truth, as wonderfully demonstrated by archaeology, but to equip you, your kids, and your grandkids with the truths you need to defend the faith. So, grab your fedora, your leather jacket, a water jug, and your Bible, and let's embark on an exciting journey to the Holy Land." —Tom Meyer (from the Introduction of *Archaeology and the Bible*)

Available from Answers in Genesis

Who Am I? Solving the identity puzzle

The identity crisis compels us to look in all the wrong places to answer the question “Who am I?” But can the popular “my truth” and “their truth” provide the solutions they promise? What is the solid foundation of “the truth” that solves the identity puzzle?

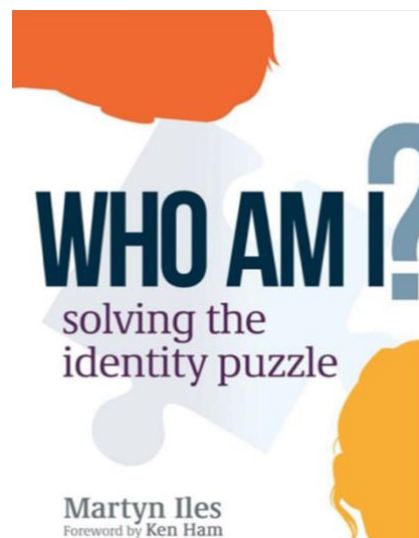
It Starts by Asking a Very Different Question ...

“Who am I?” A new generation is preoccupied with the question of identity, and it’s getting complicated.

We see a rise in psychological counselling, genders and sexualities, identity politics, and obsession with the self. The identity crisis is making us look at ourselves to come up with subjective answers based on how we feel and lists of attributes supplied by political activists, ideologues, and pop culture.

But do the shifting sands of “my truth” and “their truth” hold the answers? What is the solid foundation of “the truth” that solves the identity puzzle once and for all?

Available from Answers in Genesis

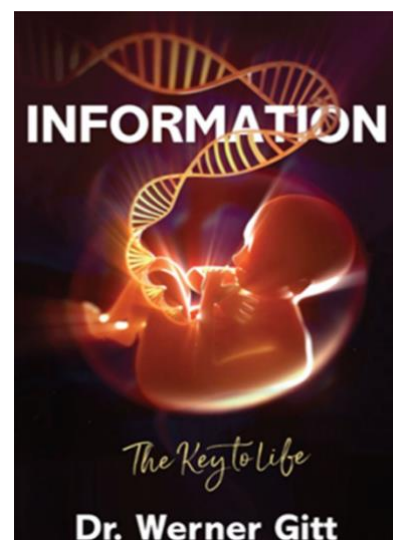


Information – The Key to Life

Go Beyond the Boundary of Science and Discover the Divine Source of Universal Information

Consider the complexity of information within our bodies and all other life on this planet, deliberately programmed into us by a powerful, all-knowing God. Engineer and author Dr. Werner Gitt has created a compelling argument in the evolution vs. creation debate with a ground breaking technical exploration of the Theory of Universal Information. He refutes the worldview in which matter or energy is the sole entity and cause for everything.

- Lays out the scientific logic for an alternate worldview in which a purposeful Creator God is the best and only rational alternative.
- Understand the true definition and source of information found within life
- Discover what can be learned just from the magnificent coding system found in the DNA/RNA system containing the richest source of information known to mankind as well as an incredibly complex, perfectly integrated molecular infrastructure to implement this information



This book refutes materialism, atheism, and the theory of evolution, and confirms the existence of an almighty and all-knowing God. What was stated almost two thousand years ago in the New Testament ([Rom. 1:19-21](#)) is here supported with

scientific arguments, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to Him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. My hope and prayer is that this book will "light a fire" and also encourage many to dig ever deeper for the truth. If this is done with unhindered sincerity, then in the end a person will turn toward the living God of the Bible — the scientific evidence demands it!

—**Dr. Werner Gitt, Author and Speaker**

" Gitt persuasively demonstrates that the biblical worldview is the only way to understand the information-rich world that God created ... I thoroughly recommend this book to you. "

—**Professor Andy C. McIntosh**

Available from Answers in Genesis

Bible Investigators – Creation

Bursting with 90 brain-teasing puzzles, 40 Bible passages and 30 concepts regarding God's creation, this lesson-and-activity book will give kids aged 8-12 skills to investigate the Bible for themselves—like a real investigator!

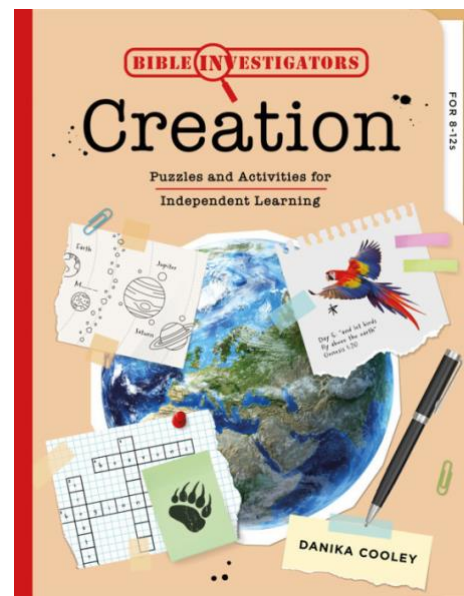
As kids apply logic and solve challenging puzzles, they will dive deeply into Scripture and examine the Bible's account of creation, picking up lots of skills for reading and interpreting the Bible.

As well as lots of puzzles, there are journalling boxes for kids to make observations and reflect on what they have learned.

Great for use in homeschools (independent work, morning time or Bible lessons) and also great for churches to use with kids.

Fun for road trips and rainy days too! –

Available from Creation Ministries International



Truth To Wonder Church

Join us at Truth To Wonder Church

- Focus on study of the Word of God and expository preaching
-
- Classic hymns & warm fellowship

11am every Sunday at Iford Scout Hut, Iford Lane, Bournemouth, BH6 5NF

Check truthtowonder.org for more details and information