

Light

A large, illuminated archway at night, covered in the word 'LIGHT' in various languages and scripts. People are walking through the archway, and a bright light source is visible at the top left.

...on a new world

VOLUME 29.3

a quarterly magazine focusing on the Bible and its message for today

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The word ‘light’ in three languages
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signs of the times

If you look around where you live, depending on your circumstances of course, you probably see lots of normal people living their normal lives. Although our media is full of bad news, where we live in Australia we are very unlikely to personally witness a bad news story. It is therefore easy to be complacent about all the bad news or even indifferent. The chances of something bad happening to us are low enough that we can live with it fairly comfortably until something does go wrong! Also, life does have its way of throwing up enough daily issues to keep a person feeling too busy to really take in bad news, to evaluate its tempo and severity.

‘perilous times’

Here’s a thought; read these verses from the Bible and spend a minute or two comparing what’s written with what you read in the news media about the things that are happening in the world:

‘But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, head-strong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!’ 2 Timothy 3.1-5

All in all, we would call those words a pretty good description of the bad side of the societies that most, if not all of us, live in now. We would also observe that in at least one aspect - ‘*lovers of money*’, things seem to have grown worse in our lifetime as the gap increases between the rich and the rest. It is suggested that 1% of the population own 50% of the world’s wealth and that is a conservative estimate.

So, what and when are **‘the last days’** referred to in the above passage from the Bible? We believe they refer to a time close to the return of Jesus to this earth. As to when, we don’t know and the Bible tells us that God alone knows the exact time. But we are given many indications and we can’t help but feel that the time will be soon, hence the importance of the ‘signs of the times’.

The Bible says: *‘O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps’* (Jeremiah 10.23). So, to find that no form of government appears to be working well would not be surprising would it? Let’s explore that theme a little.

the ‘best’ form of government failing

On 11 November 1947, addressing the UK Parliament, Winston Churchill said: ‘many forms of Government have been tried, and will be tried in this world of sin and woe. No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of Government except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time....’ So how has

democracy, in his view the best form of government available to mankind, fared since then?

Since Churchill made this statement, we have seen democracy and the capitalism that accompanies it, comprehensively defeat communism. From the 1950’s through to the 1980’s the animosity between Russia and its allies, and the USA and its allies, was so strong it was described as the ‘Cold War’. Although there were other factors involved, the rivalry was largely about democracy and capitalism versus communism. It was a values conflict and as we have stated democracy clearly won. So far so good!

But in relatively recent times we have seen more and more opinions expressed that democracy has increasingly lost its way. Once respected pillars of society, banks, religious organisations and even governments themselves have been shown to be widely failing to serve the interests of all citizens, with varying degrees of incompetence through to outright corruption.

the rule of law failing

A recent article we read entitled 'Flaws of self-regulation: trust some of the people, some of the time' suggests a number of interesting ideas. The title is indicative. The writer concludes that deregulation of much of big business has gone too far. The maintenance of what he calls 'good law' has largely been removed. Here is a quote from the section of the article dealing with this:

'But there is something more determinant of democracy's progress than economic performance. This is the rule of law, more importantly, the rule of good law. The erosion of the rule of good law began with the 1980's deregulation and privatisation. There was a lot of merit in a lot of it – getting rid of stagnant publicly owned monopolies and unnecessary red tape. But it went too far, especially replacing independent regulation with self-regulation. You can only trust some of the people some of the time.'

The words previously quoted from Jeremiah chapter 10 seem to apply very well. As we see from the quote, even when something is started with good intentions, there is

enough badness in human nature for people to take advantage and exploit circumstances for the advantage of a few. This certainly aligns well with the Bible's view on the nature of man. Some interesting Bible references to read concern the lack of justice (Exodus 23.1-3), and the words of Jesus about the teaching of men being far from God (Matthew 15.8, 9).

the rise of the strong man

Accompanying all of this is another strong trend which formed the subject of the cover story in the Time magazine dated 14th May this year. The article is entitled 'Rise of the Strongman' a reference in particular to so-called democracies like Hungary, Turkey and the Philippines (see overleaf). But are they really democracies when various techniques are used to suppress any opposition and the leader always wins any elections? Of course, this situation is not confined to the countries mentioned. They were just the starting point of the article. It gets worse for democracy!

The article even raises the question that the US, a nation founded on democracy with 250 years of political experience, is in danger of



the same trend. President Trump has the same characteristics as the other strongmen. One trait seems to be the 'only I can fix it' attitude. To a country in trouble this has strong appeal to many. However, in the US there are some checks and balances built into the system, with the separation between judicial and political systems and the non-inclusion of religion in the mix. But even those distinctions are blurring and the same limitations to near absolute rule either don't exist or are being widely eroded and circumvented in many other countries.

This whole trend puts more responsible political leadership at a disadvantage. The problems faced by mankind are increasingly complex. There are few if any simple solutions and not much that

A demonstration in favour of President Erdogan of Turkey after an attempted coup in July 2016. Erdogan is one of the so-called 'strongmen' who have increased their personal power at the expense of democracy and human rights.

can be put right quickly – certainly not within election cycles! This is complicated by the simple fact that there is massive disagreement both on what many of the problems are and what options are available to fix them. So how do you fix a problem that not everybody agrees exists and those that do can't agree on its scope or how much is needed to solve it?

the Middle East in turmoil

If all of this wasn't bad enough, we have the major change in U.S. policy in scrapping the Iran nuclear deal.

The U.S. will re-impose sanctions on Iran, which will hit an already struggling economy even harder. The Iranian government will now be under intense domestic pressure to resume aspects of the nuclear programme previously restricted.

Iran has already set the Arab world on edge through its support for Shi'ite militias in Iraq and Syria as well as its long-standing collaboration with Hezbollah in Lebanon and a more recent alliance with Yemen's Houthis. As President Assad of Syria re-establishes his hold on the country with Iranian help, after a seven-year civil war, Iran has been establishing bases in that country ever closer to Israel.

As a result of these changes, many people feel the world, especially the Middle East, has become an even more dangerous place. In May, Israel and Iran lurched closer to an all-out war after the Israeli military struck 50 of Iran's bases in Syria in response to what it said was an Iranian rocket barrage fired at the Israeli occupied Golan Heights. This followed isolated strikes by both sides on each other over the previous few months.

The Bible tells us that when Jesus returns to the earth: *'there will be...*

distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth' (Luke 21.25,26). Events in the world today could very easily lead to the scenario described by Jesus here.

a personal message

In the context of all these problems, and it's a long way from being a complete list, having the hope that Jesus will return to our earth and take total control is wonderful. He is the ultimate 'strongman' and has the knowledge and ability to identify and resolve all problems. Is he really coming back? The Bible says he is. The Bible will ultimately be proved right. You will lose nothing by making the effort to find out for yourself about the return of Jesus – and you have everything to gain.

David Gamble and Robin Snelling
Melbourne, Australia

which came first...?

the story of the chicken and the egg

In 2015 the number of eggs produced for the table in America was 83.1 billion.

Of these, about 6.4% were damaged or broken before they reached the consumer, amounting to a total loss of over 1 billion dollars a year. So a lot of people have a real interest in the strength of the hen's eggshell!

Perhaps this is one of the reasons why a group of scientists carried out a detailed study of the eggshell published in March this year in 'Science Advances' magazine. They found that what appears to us to be a single layer shell is in fact made of three distinct layers, each slightly different to the others. They are made from two main materials: the mineral calcium, and a special protein called osteopontin (OPN). Both are found in parts of our bodies like bones and teeth, and we ourselves need to absorb calcium as part of our diet to keep our bodies healthy.

In the eggshell, this special protein has the job of organising the calcium into a very fine crystalline structure which gives the shell its



strength. This is described as a nanostructure, where 'nano' means extremely small. The outermost layer of the shell has the finest structure and is the densest and strongest of the three. In the remaining two layers the structure gets bigger, and, as a result, each layer is slightly softer and weaker. The three layers combine to form an incredibly strong, lightweight structure, harder than some metals.

So that is the eggshell that we know from our cooking and our breakfast table. But of course the primary purpose of the shell is to protect and support the developing chick embryo until it is ready to hatch. We now know that the shell plays an active and vital role in the development of the embryo and

that the shell changes as the chick grows.

As the chick develops inside the egg it needs calcium to form bones, beak, claws and so on. Where does it get its calcium from? From the eggshell. As the chick grows, it absorbs some of the calcium from the innermost, softest layer of the shell. That layer gets thinner and weaker, and the overall strength of the shell drops. By the time the chick is fully formed and ready to break out, the shell has weakened to the point where a few vigorous pecks from the tiny beak cracks the shell, and a fully formed chick emerges. So a shell that appears to be simply a protective envelope in fact supplies an absolutely vital material for the chick's development, and finally losing its strength at just the right time, allows the chick to escape from its protective cocoon.

All this, so we are led to believe, is the result of millions of years of evolution, the accumulation of chance errors and mistakes that just very occasionally and fortuitously turned out to be useful. How many chicks perished because their shells were too weak to protect them or too strong to allow them to escape? How did the chick

learn to unlock the calcium from the shell that surrounds it? How did the chicken population survive an endless series of mindless and often fatal experiments before this beautiful integrated design solution emerged? How did this remarkable protein, osteopontin, invent itself with exactly the right chemical composition (a chain of over 300 amino acids) and shape to do the job that was required – not just here in the eggshell of course, but throughout our own bodies?

The well-known question that heads this article is answered by the book of Genesis. Birds were created fully formed, with all their reproductive systems in place, on the fourth day of the creation week – created with great potential for variation and adaptation, but within strict boundaries set by their creator. When God surveyed what he had done, He pronounced it ‘very good’ (Genesis 1.31). And so it is. We can see it when we look at the story of the humble hen's egg, and place it alongside a million and one other miracles of design in the natural world.

Roy Toms
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the Bible stands **THE TEST OF TIME**

Yes, real people!

Just imagine that in, say, 2,500 years' time, a receipt was discovered of something you had recently bought from a shop, identifying what you bought, who you were and the exact time you undertook the transaction. A snapshot in time, preserved over thousands of years, so that a future generation could say with certainty that you actually existed. The Bible is a unique book. Of all the billions of people that have ever existed on earth, the Bible mentions a very small number that have formed part of the backcloth to the Almighty's purpose. An increasing number of those we read about in the Bible are being identified as real

people who lived long ago, with snapshots in time unearthed by painstaking efforts of the archaeologist's trowel and brush. To dismiss the Bible as unreliable myth and fantasy is common these days, but that is an attitude of mind not based on the facts, and therefore ignorant of the implications of what is being unearthed. The purpose of this magazine is to underline the reliability of God's Word, and give confidence in its teaching.

Here are three examples of relatively obscure individuals whose existence has been shown to be factual.

Nebo-Sarsekim

Nebuchadnezzar's Chief Eunuch

In 2008 a cry of joy rang out in the research rooms of the British Museum, as a scholar realised he had unearthed an amazing find when translating a tiny clay tablet. (see right). The tablet had been found in the late 19th century, and had been in the possession of the museum since the 1920s, along with some 130,000 similar tablets.

This particular tablet concerned a transaction that a Babylonian official had undertaken when transferring 1.5 minas (0.75kg) of gold to another person. The exact time of the transaction was given as the 18th day of the 11th month of the 10th year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign; that is in the year 595 BC. But more importantly, the name of the person making the transfer was Nebo-Sarsekim, and his title was Nebuchadnezzar's chief eunuch. In ancient times eunuchs were the men who were promoted as the king's chief administrators, powerful men executing the King's will in the realm.

The cry of excitement related to the realisation that the very same man is mentioned in the book of the prophet Jeremiah, where he



describes the scene he witnessed. Here are mentioned the Babylonian officials present in 586BC when Jerusalem was besieged and finally taken after the rebellion of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah. Notice how exact Jeremiah is when he records these terrible events, and notice the name in bold. If Nebo-Sarsekim was the chief eunuch, it is not surprising that he would be present:

'And on the ninth day of the fourth month of Zedekiah's eleventh year, the city wall was broken through. Then all the officials of the king of Babylon came and took seats in the Middle Gate:

Nergal-Sharezer of Samgar,
Nebo-Sarsekim a chief officer,
Nergal-Sharezer a high official

and all the other officials of the king of Babylon.’

Jeremiah 39.2,3 NIV

This is how Irving Finkel, assistant keeper in the Museum’s department of the Middle East, described the significance of this discovery:

‘This is a fantastic discovery, a world class find. If Nebo-Sarsekim existed, which other lesser figures in the Old Testament existed? A throwaway detail in the Old Testament turns out to be accurate and true. I think that it means that the whole narrative (of Jeremiah) takes on a new kind of power’. We wholeheartedly agree with his assessment!

Balaam son of Beor the fallen prophet

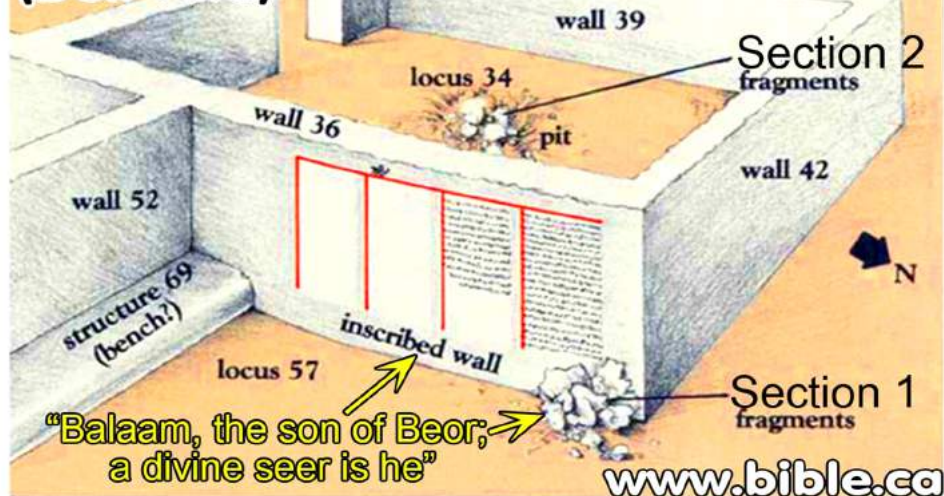
In the Book of Numbers chapters 22 to 24 we read about the activities and prophecies of a prophet called Balaam son of Beor, who was a sort of mercenary hired by Balak king of Moab around 1400 BC. He was prepared to take money for his predictions and prophecies and was clearly expected to give favourable answers to his pay-masters. He was the man who beat his donkey, which then turned round and

rebuked him for his cruelty (Numbers 22.22–32).

Balaam was hired by the king of Moab to curse Israel, who the Moabites perceived as a threat to them, just before Israel entered the Promised Land. The whole account of Balaam does not show him in a good light, but when he tried to carry out his prophetic cursing mission, the only words which came out of his mouth were those of blessing for Israel, rousing the anger of Balak. He was moved by the Spirit of God every time he prophesied, and God prevented him cursing Israel. Balaam eventually came to a sticky end, paying for his wickedness. But was he a real person? Did the prophet Balaam son of Beor, who we read of in the Book of Numbers, actually exist? Again the answer is, yes he did.

In 1967, at a place called Deir 'Alla in the kingdom of Jordan, about 8 kilometres east of the River Jordan near the Jabbok tributary, a most significant inscription was discovered. An excavation revealed a collapsed multiple-chamber structure that had been destroyed by an ancient earthquake. In the eighth century BC, Deir 'Alla was a large city, possibly even a centre of religious instruction. On the walls

Book of Balaam Inscription (Deir Alla)



of a room in one building that may have stood near a temple, a scribe had copied the text of an important religious manuscript.

Within four red frames (see above) were ancient texts with some illustrations. These texts were the visions and prophecies of the Prophet Balaam son of Beor who had lived centuries before. Three times in the first four lines of the text his name is mentioned as Balaam son of Beor, unmistakably the same man that we read of in the Bible. Interestingly, and in support of the argument that the texts themselves are preserved from an earlier era, they reveal references to names used for Israel's God before the time of Moses, 'elohim', 'el' and 'shaddai' (God and God Almighty).

The inscriptions, written in ink on plaster with a nib, were displayed on the walls and have been dated to the eighth and ninth centuries BC, with the inscriptions themselves dated on the basis of laboratory tests, to about 800 BC. The plaster inscriptions are on display in the Archaeological Museum in Amman, Jordan. Here then is an external reference to biblical Balaam – clear evidence that he existed.

Pelathiah

a wicked prince in the time of the Prophet Ezekiel

Just to the south west of the old city of Jerusalem at a site called Ketef Hinnom, on the ancient road leading south to Bethlehem, excavations dating from 1975 have

revealed many interesting finds. But one of particular interest can be linked to a high official of the kingdom of Judah in the time of Zedekiah, called Pelatiah. A sensational discovery was made which has been described as ‘an archaeologist’s dream’. When excavating many tombs in this dig, an untouched repository was uncovered with all of its original contents intact. Most such tombs had long ago been looted of their contents, but not this one.

Professor Patricia Smith of the Hebrew University, who studied the repository’s human remains, identified at least 95 individuals. A rock layer had collapsed many centuries ago which had hidden the contents from tomb raiders. It was the oldest such tomb ever discovered with the contents intact and was contemporary with Solomon’s temple, called the first temple period. So everything within the tomb related to the time of the Kings of Judah, before 586 BC, when the kingdom of Judah came to an end.

One of the articles found in the tomb was an official’s seal made of brown limestone, inscribed with the abbreviated Hebrew name

‘Palta’ and decorated with a lotus bud. The name on the seal was, of course, mirror-wise, so that when used it showed the name of the official correctly on a document’s soft clay seal. Experts say the full name of the abbreviation would have included the name of a god. In Israel’s case of course, like so many biblical names, it is the name Yahweh which is included. Thus the full Hebrew name is ‘Pelatiah’.

It seems highly likely that the Pelatiah, a wicked government official referred to by the prophet Ezekiel (Ezekiel 11.1), is the very same man who used this seal. The period is right, the place is right, and the title is right. He was an active high official of the king during the time of Ezekiel the prophet. The sudden death of Pelatiah (Ezekiel 11.13) occurred whilst Ezekiel was uttering one of his prophecies. How appropriate that he would be buried together with his personal official seal.

What is the lesson for us? Never doubt the accuracy of God’s Word, even in its smallest detail!

Justin Giles
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WHAT DID JESUS MEAN?

“He who has seen me has seen the Father”

How often in everyday life do we see a person looking at another and saying that he or she is very much like his or her father or mother? As a rule, such a comparison is mainly due to some outward characteristic that is very similar to that of the father or mother, such as a physical likeness, a typical behavioural gesture or such like. Sometimes we speak about the similarity of characters.

Children are often like their parents, so it is said that there is a family resemblance. It goes without saying that such a resemblance belongs to the members of the same family. Beyond any physical likeness the most important similarity involves intangible or spiritual resemblance through the continuance of the ideas, aims and actions of one's parents.

We learn from Luke's Gospel account that Mary was the mother of Jesus: *‘And she (Mary) brought forth her first-born son (Jesus), and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger...’* (Luke 2.7). But who was the father of Jesus?

The answer to this question is found in the first chapter of the same Gospel:

‘Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, “Rejoice, highly favoured one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!” But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was.

Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call his name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. And he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.

Then Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I do not know a man?” And the angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that holy one who is to be born will be called the Son of God”.’

Luke 1.26–35

God himself confirmed that Jesus was his Son at the moment of his baptism, as Luke also tells us:

‘Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while he prayed, the heaven was opened. And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven which said, “You are my beloved Son; in you I am well pleased”.’

Luke 3.21,22

The adherents to the doctrine of the Trinity often use the words of John that form the title of this article as clear confirmation that God Himself was embodied in Jesus and that Jesus was therefore God (John 14.9). Jesus did not in any way envisage that those who saw him would literally see his Father. Outwardly Jesus did not bear his Father’s image in a literal sense, for

God dwells ‘in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see’ (1 Timothy 6.16).

Therefore those who saw Jesus did not literally see his Father. Jesus himself said, ‘No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared him’ (John 1.18). The Son ‘declared’ the Father by the words that he spoke and by the deeds that he performed. Jesus said to Philip, one of his disciples: ‘The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own authority; but the Father who dwells in me does the works’ (John 14.10).

This was the sense that Jesus had in mind when he said to Philip, ‘He who has seen me has seen the Father’ (John 14.9). Jesus never said that he was God. The Gospel record of Matthew records the fact that Jesus prayed to his Heavenly Father in Gethsemane and said to Him: ‘O my Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will’ (Matthew 26.39). How would that be possible if Jesus was God Himself?

What then did Jesus have in mind when he said, ‘He who has seen me has seen the Father’? This comment was made to Philip by Jesus. We

need to look at the context of the comment. Jesus was telling his disciples about his departure to his Father; about the necessity of the belief in God and in Jesus himself and about the preparation of a place in the kingdom of God on earth. Thomas failed to understand what Jesus was saying and asked the question “Lord, we do not know where you are going, and how can we know the way?” (John 14.5). Jesus replied:

‘...“ I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also; and from now on you know him, and have seen him.” Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known me, Philip?

He who has seen me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own authority; but the Father who dwells in me does the works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me, or

else believe me for the sake of the works themselves”.’

John 14. 6-11

In his earthly life Jesus fully reflected the Father’s character. He reflected such glorious characteristics of the Father as love, patience, longsuffering, nobility, kindness, mercy, compassion, holiness, justice. These and many other wonderful qualities are personified in the Lord Jesus Christ. In the opening words of the letter to the Hebrews the writer wrote about him in this way:

‘who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better than the angels, as he has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For to which of the angels did he ever say: “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”? And again, “I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?”.’

Hebrews 1.3-5

Jesus demonstrated the Divine characteristics of his Father by his

words and by his deeds. He was led by the Father's Spirit. Therefore the Apostle Paul wrote concerning him:

'And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory.'

1 Timothy 3.16

Jesus said to Philip and his other disciples and followers that he would go to his Father to mediate for those who believed in God and in him. He said that the Father would have places in his kingdom on earth for all who put their full trust in Him. He also said that there was only one way to approach his Father: *'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me'* (John.14.6).

Through belief and baptism we can become brothers and sisters of our Lord Jesus Christ and, consequently, children of God. We become members of God's family and accept that we must strive to bear the same Christ-like characteristics so that we may be recognized as members of the Divine family. Jesus fulfilled the

Father's will completely, was made immortal and was honoured to sit on the right hand of God his Father. Jesus has set a pattern for the family of believers – for you and for me if we trust in him. It is a great consolation for us that the Father will receive us with pleasure as His sons and daughters and brothers and sisters of Jesus.

As God was seen in Jesus, so Jesus was seen in the Apostle Paul who said:

'I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.'

Galatians 2.20

What is your choice?

Would you not like to join God's family and receive the gift of eternal life when Jesus returns to establish God's kingdom on earth?

Now is the time to act – tomorrow may be too late!

Vladislav Monastyrev

Tambov, Russia



from the editor

A huge international operation was launched to rescue them. One of the divers sadly lost his life, but the mission ended with relief and joy as, over a period of 3 days, the rescuers brought all of them out alive.

Every so often the news media focuses our attention on events like this. But the outcome is often the opposite of what happened in Thailand. In some parts of the world, the plight of children and adults goes almost unnoticed. Life hangs by a thread and many succumb to the effects of malnutrition, disease and the ravages of war. Instead of relief and joy there is sadness and grief.

We all have to face the reality that one day we will die, but the Bible tells us we too can be rescued, saved from the consequences of our mortality. There is an escape route which is mapped out in God's Word and it is not too difficult to follow. It can give us peace of mind in this uncertain world and a wonderful hope for the future.

In the New Testament we read about the work of the Apostle Paul. He was given a commission to

The dramatic rescue of a group of boys and their football coach from deep inside a flooded cave in Thailand in July, has commanded world-wide attention. When they failed to return home, a huge search and rescue operation was launched. What had started out as an underground adventure turned into a race against time to save thirteen lives.

The party were lost in complete darkness 2.5 miles (4 km) from the mouth of the cave with a diminishing amount of food, drink and falling oxygen levels. Their prospects looked grim as heavy rain battered the region and flooded parts of the cave system, blocking their way to safety. When they were eventually discovered by divers, there was a glimmer of hope that they could be brought out but time was running out!

preach the gospel (the good news about the coming kingdom of God) throughout the Roman world. During his mission God had been close to Paul in adversity and ‘rescued’ him on many occasions from those who wished to silence him (2 Timothy 3.10,11 NIV). But he also recognised that he needed rescuing from something far greater: the consequences of his human nature. In a letter he wrote to the Christians at Rome he describes it as *‘the law of sin at work within me’*.

The Bible tells us that *‘the law of sin’* is a condition which we have all inherited from our first parents (see Romans 5.12). Paul wrote: *‘...I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?’* Paul answers his own question in the very next verse: *‘Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!’* (Romans 7.23–25 NIV).

The work of Jesus to save sinners is the theme of Bible teaching, as Paul told the Galatians: *‘he gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age’* (Galatians 1.4 NIV).

The Apostle Peter adds that God is *‘...not wanting anyone to perish but everyone to come to repentance’* (2 Peter 3.9 NIV). Repentance means a change of mind and a change of direction in our lives.

Through his death and resurrection Jesus has opened the way to a new life. The invitation has been extended to you and to me to believe the gospel, to be baptised, to live our lives in service to him and in expectation of his promised return. Death will be no barrier to Christ’s true followers, who are described by Paul as having *‘fallen asleep’* (1 Corinthians 15.20). This chapter is worth reading carefully from beginning to end. Its message is one of hope for the future which you can share if you are prepared to make a commitment now.

The rescuers of those trapped in that cave realised that time was running out and they needed to act quickly. We believe that Jesus will soon return to bring salvation to those who eagerly wait for his return (Hebrews 9.28). Now is the time of opportunity that God has given us, and it is fast running out!

Editor



THE BIBLE IN TODAY'S WORLD

drugs and alcohol

Every country in the world is probably affected in some way by drug and alcohol use. In many countries drug use is an acceptable and lawful activity. There are the legal 'drugs' such as alcohol, caffeine, nicotine and prescription drugs. Then there are of course the illegal ones. This article does not have the space to list them but I am sure we are aware of many of them even if we have never used them.

In a recently published statistical report of drug use among 16 to 59 year olds in the UK, 1 in 12 had used an illicit drug in the last year and of the 16 to 24 year olds included in this number, 1 in 5 had used an illicit drug (National Statistics Drug Misuse: findings from the 2016/17 Crime Survey for England and Wales www.gov.uk).

Another study showed that in the UK over 81% of adults over the age of 16 had used alcohol in the past year (Consumption: Adult drinking in the UK. www.drinkaware.co.uk).

In whatever country you are reading this article your country will have its own rules, legislation, problems and statistics around drug and alcohol use. Wherever we live there is no escaping its presence!

problems caused by alcohol and drug abuse

Now some would say that to be a Christian we must abstain from all drug use. Is this what the Bible says? Some might even say that the Bible does not specifically mention drugs, only alcohol, but it is important to note that alcohol is in itself a drug so references to alcohol abuse in the Bible contain lessons and directions that could be used for any form of drug abuse.

The Bible does not necessarily teach total abstinence from alcohol, except in special circumstances. For example, in the Old Testament we read about priests abstaining from alcohol when performing their duties in the tent of meeting (Leviticus 10.8, 9). Another example of such abstinence was associated with taking the Nazirite vow (Numbers 6.1–8).

In some cases the Bible even recommends alcohol use. For example we read about a possible medical use for alcohol in one of Paul's letters to Timothy: *'Stop drinking only water, and use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses'* (1 Timothy 5.23). The emphasis here must be on the word *'little'* – not quantities

that could be called abuse, quantities that lead to intoxication and which can lead on to more complicated problems such as addiction.

When we think of the problems caused by drug and alcohol abuse, the list is very long. We think of the long-term physical effects and how the body gets worn down by having to manage the effects of drugs on the body's organs. It raises blood pressure, it increases the risks of some cancers, the liver becomes inflamed, enlarged and stops working as it should. We think of the effects on the brain and our mental wellbeing. It can cause certain types of dementia, make our mood low and it can make us aggressive and argumentative. This in turn can adversely affect relationships with family, friends and peers within our work place.

The insidious effects of drug and alcohol abuse reach far and wide. What might have started out as a choice, a feeling that we are in control, can very easily become a situation where choice is replaced by an absolute need for the substance above everything else in our lives. So it is no longer an option of free will, one has become

overwhelmed by an illness or disease due to addiction.

what does the Bible say about the effects of drug and alcohol abuse?

The Bible is very accurate and very clear about the nature and problems of excessive alcohol use and the power of addiction. For example, think about these words of the wise man Solomon from the Book of Proverbs:

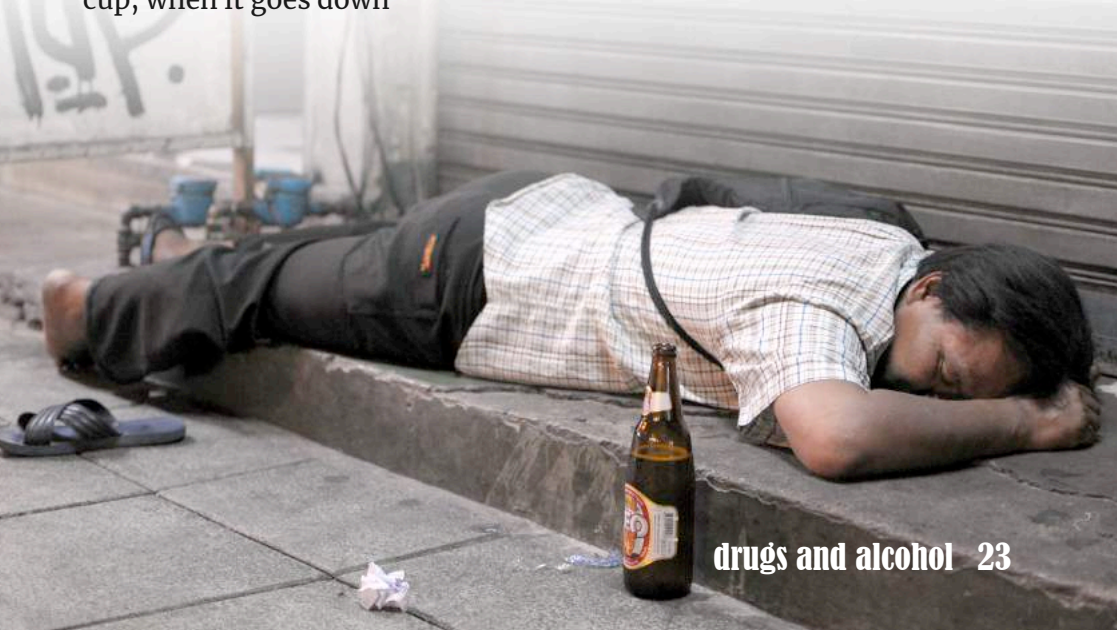
‘Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has strife? Who has complaints? Who has needless bruises? Who has bloodshot eyes? Those who linger over wine, who go to sample bowls of mixed wine. Do not gaze at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it goes down

smoothly! In the end it bites like a snake and poisons like a viper. Your eyes will see strange sights and your mind imagine confusing things. You will be like one sleeping on the high seas, lying on top of the rigging. “They hit me,” you will say, “but I am not hurt! They beat me, but I don’t feel it! When will I wake up so I can find another drink?”.’

Proverbs 23.29–35

An even more graphic account is recorded by the prophet Isaiah:

‘And these also stagger from wine and reel from beer. Priests and prophets stagger from beer and are befuddled with wine; they reel from beer, they stagger when seeing visions, they stumble when rendering decisions.



All the tables are covered with vomit and there is not a spot without filth.'

Isaiah 28.7,8

I think we get the picture don't we? The Bible leaves nothing to our imagination! Here are two other examples of what the Bible clearly says about alcohol abuse:

'Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead be filled with the spirit.'

Ephesians 5.18

'Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler; whoever is led astray by them is not wise'

Proverbs 20.1

In the first book of the Bible we read about Noah who was perhaps the first man to experience the negative effects of alcohol use. We are told that Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time and he did everything that God

asked of him (Genesis 6.9). After the flood we are told that he planted a vineyard and when he drank the wine produced from it he became drunk and fell asleep naked in his tent, a behavior seen as immodest and shameful (Genesis 9.20-27). So if someone as righteous as Noah, even though his actions could be seen as naïve rather than intentional, was affected by the power of alcohol, we must learn from this, as it shows us that no one is immune from the effects of drugs and alcohol.

why do people use drugs and alcohol...?

We can think of many reasons why someone will use a drug. Firstly there is the social context. Many people see the use of alcohol as being associated with relaxing with friends and family around the meal table to accompany food perhaps.



We maybe have been to a celebration such as a wedding where there has been champagne to toast the bride and groom. We read in the Bible that Jesus turned water into wine for a wedding feast, so this has been a custom for thousands of years.

But for many, drug and alcohol use becomes much more than a social nicety. It becomes a coping mechanism to alleviate the stresses and strains that living in this world gives us: low self-esteem, anxiety, low-mood, hopelessness, life traumas such as loss or hurt, the list goes on. Drugs and alcohol become a way of filling a void within us, a buffer or cushion to the difficulties and worries we experience.

We have already referred to the words of Solomon in Proverbs. God gave him everything a man could desire but Solomon's evaluation, recorded so forcefully in the book of Ecclesiastes, was that everything that one could experience or achieve in this world was '*meaningless, a chasing after the wind*' (Ecclesiastes 2.11) and that without the hope of something more, this world eventually leaves us feeling that something is missing. And this is where God and

His Word the Bible really have the answers.

In many western countries there is an organization called Alcoholics Anonymous (UK website: www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk) which was created to help people who have become addicted to alcohol. Interestingly, the philosophy that underlies their model of support and recovery for AA group meetings is that there needs to be a recognition of a power 'greater than ourselves'. Addicts can no longer rely on themselves, they have little or no resolve and only have eyes for the drug in front of them. Their minds are consumed by the drug they desire. The remedy is to put themselves in the hands of a higher being, in order to gain strength and hope.

what is the Bible's answer?

As Christians we believe that there is no greater being, no greater power than God, the Creator of this world and on whom we are all reliant. God says through the mouthpiece of the prophet Isaiah:

'He (God) gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who

hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.’ Isaiah 40.29-31

Jesus appeals to all who are troubled in mind or body:

‘Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.’ Matthew 11.28,29

The trouble with drug and alcohol abuse is that it gets in the way of seeking God and praising Him. The addict is taken up by the desire to experience the effects of the drug that his mind and body crave. It is both a physical and a mental need and if the mind is being taken up by these thoughts how can he or she give to God what He wants from us as a believer? Jesus said: *‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind’* (Matthew 22.37). A total commitment is needed then. The Apostle Paul wrote:

‘Everything is permissible for me but not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible for me

but I will not be mastered by anything.’ 1 Corinthians 6.12

‘...You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.’

1 Corinthians 6.19,20

If we are abusing a drug can we fulfill this command to ‘honor God with your body’?

Some people in this world can be proud, boastful even, of the amount of alcohol or drugs they consume and others can be looked down upon if they can’t keep up with this shallow lifestyle choice. Here are some words of warning from the book of the prophet Isaiah:

‘Woe to those who are heroes at drinking wine and champions at mixing drinks, who acquit the guilty for a bribe, but deny justice to the innocent. Therefore, as tongues of fire lick up straw and as dry grass sinks down in the flames, so their roots will decay and their flowers blow away like dust; for they have rejected the law of the LORD Almighty and spurned the word of the Holy One of Israel.’ Isaiah 5.22-24

But for those who want to follow God’s ways there are words of encouragement:

‘Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. That you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will.’

Romans 12.2

The Apostle Peter added: ‘Cast all your anxiety on him (God) because he cares for you’ (1 Peter 5.7).

In conclusion then, the Bible is very clear that to abuse any drug is detrimental to the health of an individual. But more importantly, it is detrimental to our spiritual wellbeing and is sinful behaviour that gets in the way of developing a rewarding relationship with God. As with all things of this world, drugs and alcohol offer empty, short-term comfort. The Bible guides us then to have self-control, to avoid the traps of this world, and to rely on God our Father for support, strength and guidance.

‘For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say ‘No’ to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope – the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.’

Titus 2.11-14

Richard West
Norfolk, UK

Note: Bible quotations are taken from the New International Version (1985).





from our mailbag

A reader has written to ask whether God has a soul. Let us examine the assumptions that the questioner has raised. Many Christians believe that the soul is something separate inside our bodies, and lives on after death. It can be clearly demonstrated from the Bible this is not the case. So we need to understand what is meant by the word 'soul' in the Bible, before thinking about whether God has a soul.

In the King James Version of the Bible the word soul first occurs in the book of Genesis: *'...the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul'* (Genesis 2.7 KJV).

First we need to go back to the original Hebrew text from which our translations have been made. A good Bible concordance shows that the two words are 'living' (*chaiyah*) and 'soul' (*nephesh*), so the two words translate as *'living soul'*.

In order to obtain a clear understanding of the Hebrew word 'nephesh' we also need to see how this was used in God's act of creation. We read that *'God created great whales, and every living creature (nephesh) that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly'* (Genesis 1.21 KJV). Then the word is used again: *'God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature (Hebrew: nephesh) after his kind... cattle, creeping thing and beast of the earth... and it was so'* (Genesis 1.24 KJV).

This use of the word 'nephesh' makes it quite clear that all living animals, including man, are created beings. Therefore the word translated soul doesn't only apply to human beings, and there is no suggestion that this word refers to some mystical inner part of a human body.

Modern translators of the Bible have recognised the need to clarify the meaning of 'nephesh' in Genesis 2.7. We read in the New International Version or the New King James Version *'the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a*

‘LIVING BEING’ (**not** a ‘LIVING SOUL’).

If we are still in any doubt, we can refer to the words of the wise king Solomon which make it very clear that there is no difference in this respect between humans and animals:

‘...Concerning the estate of men, God tests them, that they may see that they themselves are like beasts. For what happens to the sons of men also happens to beasts; one thing befalls them: as one dies, so dies the other. Surely, they all have the same breath; man has no advantage over beasts, for all is vanity. All go to one place: all are from the dust, and all return to dust.’

Ecclesiastes 3.18,19

We then need to ask the question ‘why do people die?’

The book of Genesis gives us the answer. Death is a punishment for disobedience toward God, described in the Bible as ‘sin’. The Apostle Paul wrote: *‘Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man (Adam), and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.’* (Romans 5.12 NIV).

This takes us back to events in the Garden of Eden when first Eve and then Adam disobeyed God’s command, and ate the fruit of one particular tree with the result that God had decreed. They understood the importance of the command, for Eve remarked: *‘of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, “You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die”’* (Genesis 3.3).

With this clear instruction that death was the penalty, it would have no effect on Adam and Eve and for that matter us as well, if a part of the human make-up is an immortal soul that lives on after death. The penalty of death also applies to us as Paul told the Christians at Rome (see Romans 5.12 above).

We have established from Bible teaching that we cannot rely on an immortal soul to provide hope for life after death. We need then to consider exactly what God has promised to faithful men and women who die. This is another subject which relates to the return of Jesus Christ and the establishment of God’s kingdom on the Earth. The Apostle Paul told believers that a resurrection of

those who are described as being 'asleep' will then take place:

'But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you should sorrow as others who have no hope...For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.' 1 Thessalonians 4.13,16

It is well worth reading all of Paul's words in 1 Thessalonians verses 13 to 18.

So now we come back to the reader's question – 'does God have a soul?' It has been necessary to refute from the Scriptures the assumption that human beings have a soul. God created all life the same but, after Adam and Eve's transgression, death followed as the punishment for their sin. All their descendants fall under the same condemnation.

God does not have a soul, and is not a 'living soul' (living creature) in the sense that we are. He created all life on this planet and is therefore in all respects superior to His creation. But what do the Scriptures tell us about God?

- ❖ God is omnipotent or all powerful as that word means (Revelation 19.6).
- ❖ God is a spirit (John 4.24).
- ❖ God is everywhere present (Jeremiah 23.24).
- ❖ God is all knowing (Psalm 139.2-12).
- ❖ God is eternal i.e. without beginning and without end (1 Timothy 1.17).
- ❖ God's characteristics are righteousness, mercy, long-suffering, goodness, truth (Exodus 34.6, 7) and love (John 3.16).
- ❖ God wishes to be recognised as our Father (2 Corinthians 6.18).

It is vitally important that we know God and understand his promise to us, as Jesus said:

'... this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.'

John 17.3

Correspondence Secretary



BASIC BIBLE TEACHING

The Creation

God the Creator

In the first chapter of the Bible we read that...

‘In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.’ Genesis 1.1–5.

... and concerning the origin of the human race we read that

‘...God created man in his own image; in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them’ (Genesis 1.27).

The ‘Pillars of Creation’ in the Eagle nebula,
7,000 light years from the earth

That God is the Creator is repeated either directly or indirectly in many other passages of the Bible:

God speaking to Job:

‘Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?’

Job 38.4

David the psalmist:

‘When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have ordained, what is man that you are mindful of him...’

Psalms 8:3,4

the prophet Isaiah:

‘Thus says God the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it...’

Isaiah 42:5

Jesus Christ:

‘...from the beginning of the creation, God made them male and female.’

Mark 10:6

the first century Christians:

‘...when they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. “Sovereign Lord,” they said, “you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and everything in them”.’

Acts 4:24 NIV

There appears to be evidence in the world around us to support the theory that the earth has been in existence for many, many thousands of years. For example, the sedimentary rock formations in Dorset in the UK, and the skeleton remains within the rocks appear to support this as does the geological evidence of an ice-age that covered Northern Europe. Evidence indicates that dinosaurs existed on this earth at some point in the past. I do not think these ideas conflict with the Biblical account of creation.

should I believe all of the Bible?

The Bible teaches us that we should not pick and choose which parts of it to, study and believe; it says that ‘all’ of the Bible should be believed. The Apostle Paul made this very clear when he wrote to Timothy: ‘All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work’ (2 Timothy 3:16,17). Bible students who want to follow the Word of God must have faith in God the Creator as described in the early chapters of Genesis.

what is faith?

Faith is defined in the New Testament in this way:

‘...faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.’

Hebrews 11.1–3 NIV

It is through faith that Bible students accept that God created the universe, the sun, the moon, the stars, the earth and the many forms of life that live on this earth. It is the faith of Bible students that gives them the ‘assurance’ that God created all things. The Bible does not tell us the exact way in which God created the world and every living thing; it tells us ‘*by faith we understand that the universe was formed*’. It does not tell us ‘the how’ or the order in which God manipulated this DNA, that enzyme, this molecule and that atom, but it was His creative power that caused it to happen in the way that is described in the Bible.

Creation cannot be reproduced and measured in a laboratory. Neither can evolution. How can we be sure of the ‘facts’?

is there proof of creation?

When I was at school, practical science lessons would often be spent trying to prove that a scientific theory or law was correct. For example, a fundamental principle of physics is the conservation of momentum. We can perhaps remember causing collisions between spheres with different masses and measuring the masses and velocities before and after the collision to prove this principle of physics. Excepting experimental error, the results are easy to see and interpret and we can



reasonably prove to ourselves and others that this principle of physics is true.

Proving creation is more complex and cannot be demonstrated at home or in a school laboratory. Look at the many different life forms and the complexity of these life forms, or consider the majesty of a mountain range with snow, lakes and waterfalls. Bible students see these as wonderful examples of the power of God and His creative work, but to someone looking for ‘proof’ of a Divine Creator they are often not enough.

experts and faith

Some people will look to science to prove that ‘evolution’ is not true and could not happen as described by some scientists. I have not read the scientific papers which either directly or indirectly relate to the way that the world and our fellow

creatures have come into being. I am also not an expert on bio-chemistry and I do not have a good knowledge of DNA – so I would have to rely on others to interpret the data for me.

Unfortunately there are many so-called ‘experts’ who will put forward a view for an atheistic explanation of the origin of life, but equally there are many ‘experts’ who will put forward a Biblical view of creation. The internet is full of intricate details of hundreds of different opinions on a vast array of topics from every type of so-called ‘expert’. The origin of the world is no exception to this. There are also many books, scientific papers and articles, as well as the popular news media, all with differing views on the subject.

Bryce Canyon National Park, Utah USA,
a wonderful example of the Creator’s handiwork – or not? How do we decide?



Which ‘experts’ to trust and believe is a difficult choice. Instead of putting my trust in them, I would rather put my trust in God and have faith in His Word the Bible. I can then believe the Bible account of creation. To believe in the Bible takes faith, but trusting in an ‘expert’ also requires faith in perhaps an unknown author with unknown allegiances. As a Bible student I choose to put my faith and trust in the Bible and not in these unknown ‘experts’.

Bible students are not required to exercise ‘blind faith’; it is faith that is based on the reliability of the Bible. It can be proven from history, prophecy and archaeology that the Bible is reliable, factual and can be trusted. I would like to focus on just one example.

the example of Israel

The nation of Israel is a clear, visible and easy to understand proof that the Bible is a very special

book. Thousands of years ago the Israelites were told that they would be punished if they disobeyed God. For example, in Leviticus 26, we read about the blessings that would be given to the people if they obeyed the Divine commands and what would happen to the people if they disobeyed the commands of God:

‘And if by these things you are not reformed by me, but walk contrary to me, then I also will walk contrary to you, and I will punish you yet seven times for your sins. And I will bring a sword against you that will execute the vengeance of my covenant; when you are gathered together within your cities I will send pestilence among you; and you shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy.’

Leviticus 26.23-26

Israel did disobey God and as a result they were punished. They were divided as a nation and then





exiled. But significantly at the hands of the Romans, shortly after the time of Jesus, they were banished from their homeland. The promise that God made to Israel is that He would never forget them. Indeed, the promise goes further and says that at a time in the future He would gather them from all over the world and bring them back to their ancient homeland. The prophet Ezekiel foretold that although the Jews were to be punished for their disobedience, and would be scattered all around the world, they would eventually return to the land of Israel:

‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel...”’

Ezekiel 37.21,22

Ezekiel is not the only Old Testament prophet to allude to the return of the Jews to the land of Israel. Look up these additional

LEFT: 1947 Jewish refugees crowded onto the illegal immigrant ship Theodor Herzl on the way to Israel



examples from the many found in the prophetic books of the Bible : Jeremiah 33.7; Zechariah 8.7; Isaiah 11.12.

History tells us that after their terrible persecution during the Second World War, increasing numbers of Jews returned to their ancient homeland and on 14 May 1948 the State of Israel was established. The survival of this remarkable people has never left the media headlines since that date, yet they continue to survive and develop as a nation. It is possible to visit Israel, to look in its museums and archaeological sites and see for yourself this incredible story – a story that was foretold in God’s Word thousands of years ago.

The Yad Vashem memorial in Jerusalem to the Jews who died in the Holocaust

To trust in this account of the nation of Israel does not need faith, it can be established as fact. The story of the Jews is interwoven into the Bible and it can be proved beyond doubt.

can the Bible be trusted?

The Bible can also be proven to be trustworthy by fulfilled prophecy (the history of Israel is but one example) and by the evidence of archaeology. Both of these topics have been covered in detail in special issues of Light (see editor’s note below).

The Bible can be relied on as being an accurate record of historical

events and trusted because the words of the prophets of Israel have come true in every detail. If the Bible can be trusted, then it is a logical extension of this trust to believe that creation as recorded in the Bible is also true. Bible students should not shy away from God being the Almighty Creator. Let us share the confidence of the Psalmist who exclaimed:

‘How many are your works, O LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.’

Psalm 104.24

Andy Gray
Nottingham, UK

editor’s note:

For more information on this topic send for or download your free copy of ‘Light on Creation’ (see back cover). Other topics mentioned in this article are also covered by special issues of Light dealing with Israel, Bible prophecy and archaeology.



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We believe that over the centuries the original message of Christianity has been corrupted and **Light** is published to provide a better understanding of the true Christian hope.

All Bible quotations in this magazine are taken from the New King James Version (NKJV) except where another version is indicated after the text.

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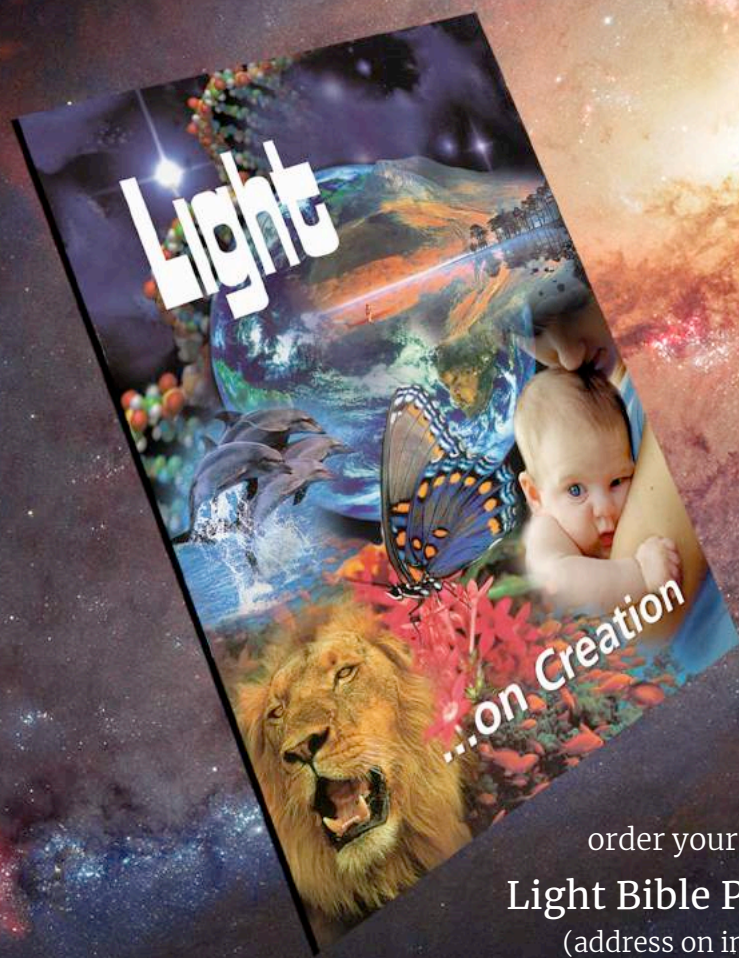


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