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Trumpet OF THE LORD

"I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: Ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence."
ISAIAH 62:6

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EDITORIAL

"But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets" (Rev. 10:7).

The book of Revelation is Apostle John's panoramic vision of the end times. Broadly speaking, three things were revealed to him. First, he was given knowledge of the many years beyond the Dispensation of Grace i.e., the period of Tribulation and the Millennium. Secondly, he had an understanding of how this world would actually end i.e., with the judgment of the great White Throne. Thirdly, he had a glorious insight of life beyond this world, i.e., a vision of Eternity.

In one vision pertaining to the time beyond us, John saw seven angels who were prepared to blow their trumpets, each in succession. *"And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets ... And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound" (Rev. 8:2, 6).*

This awesome event marks the beginning of the second half of the seven years of Tribulation, namely, the Great Tribulation. After the Battle of Armageddon, the seventh angel sounds his trumpet. It is then that the 'third woe' begins (Rev. 11:14,15);



the greatest earthquake in all of history shakes the planet, destroying all of its islands. But the blowing of the seventh trumpet also heralds a period of amazing transformation for our world. When the dust settles after this series of cataclysmic events, the earth becomes most beautiful. This wounded planet is totally healed. Nature is renewed, the weather becomes calm and global warming ends. As the atmosphere is no longer polluted, sunshine bathes the earth in brilliant light. Longevity is restored, violence is abolished and true peace prevails. As the curse of man's fall is lifted, Edenic perfection will be restored; the lamb and the lion will feed together and a child will play with a snake! One astonishing feature of the Millennium is that this

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earth "...shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:9). Indeed, all mankind will begin to know about the true and living God. While atheism plagues this present world, in the Millennium God would no longer be an enigma. This explains why the 'mystery of God will be finished' as we read earlier (Rev. 10:7).

For the present time, however, God continues to remain a mystery that many are struggling to understand. The world cannot reconcile the goodness of God with the succession of natural calamities that visit the earth. They ask questions like *How can an all-loving and all-powerful God permit so much evil in the world? Why do the wicked prosper and the innocent suffer?* Sincere Christians grapple with gut-wrenching questions that arise out of their own suffering. *Where is God when it hurts? Why does He keep silent when I need Him most?*

There are two aspects of God that we must consider: His character and His ways, i.e. His heart and His mind.

1) GOD'S CHARACTER (i.e. God's heart)

God's character proceeds from His selfless heart. This character is unchanging. Although we cannot fathom the depths of His personality, yet we know He is not erratic or impulsive. He is not unpredictable like human beings who are subject to ever-changing moods. He is stable. His love is always the same and is everlasting. His mercy endures forever and His truth contin-

ues to all generations. He is always faithful, always compassionate and always holy. He is never hasty; He is always patient and always understands us. He never listens to gossip; He is always just in His dealings and impartial in His judgments. He always speaks the truth and always desires our good. He is never involved in some personal struggle that makes Him too busy or too weary to listen to us: He is always available to us. It is because of such immutability of character that God can always be trusted. Even when circumstances seem to be uncertain, we can safely trust in Him. This was the strength of Abraham's faith. When all seemed lost, Abraham

was able to praise God because he had unwavering confidence in God's goodness and sovereignty. His anchor of hope was grounded in the knowledge that God was always good. Job, too, had this inflexible faith.

2) GOD'S WAYS (i.e. God's mind)

The ways of the Lord often seem to be obscure. His ways proceed from the depths of His infinite mind. "*For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts*" (Isa. 55:9). "*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD*" (Isa. 55:8). St. Paul says, "*...how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? ...*" (Rom. 11:33,34).

It is this aspect of God that accounts for His mysteriousness. God's thoughts,

and therefore God's ways, are too deep to be analysed or understood. Any attempt to anatomise what God does is like sifting through sea sand, grain by grain. Such foolish endeavours only do us more harm than good; we will end up with a total misconception of God.

The times we are most often tempted to question God is when we do not like the way He leads us. When we have to endure suffering, we somehow tend to assume that we would bear the suffering better if we only knew the reason behind it. It is not easy to understand everything God does; yet we must learn to trust Him. We must not desire an explanation for everything. God cannot explain everything to us for we would not be able to understand it. How would you describe the colours of a rainbow to a person born blind or a Mozart symphony to a person born deaf?

God sometimes deliberately keeps His saints in the dark. It is in the dark that we must take hold of the hand of God. This is trust. When we trust God, we will believe that His way is perfect and that He wants to make our way perfect too (Psa. 18: 30, 32). So we must choose to trust God for trust is a choice. "*Where there is no longer any opportunity to doubt, there is no longer any opportunity for faith either.*" Paul Tournier.

When we truly love God, then where we could doubt God, we will choose to trust Him. Through all his suffering, Job could not understand God's mind. Though he asked many questions, God

did not answer any of them. In the end, Job might not have understood God's mind but he trusted God's heart. His trust was radical. "*Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him...*" (Job 13:15). Although he was uncertain of the way God was leading him, he knew that when God had finally finished what He was doing, the end-product would be like gold. "*But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold*" (Job 23:10). His trust was not misplaced. "*So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses*" (Job

42:12). Many years later, James tells us, "*Behold, we call them blessed who have endured. Ye have heard of the endurance of Job, and*

seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is full of tender compassion and pitiful" (Jam. 5:11, Darby).

Perhaps some may ask, *Is it not possible at all to understand even a fraction of the mind of God? Has there never been anyone with some insight into God's mind?* The answer is yes! The latter part of the key text gives us a clue as to who they are. "*...as he hath declared to his servants the prophets*" (Rev. 10:7). God declares His mystery to His servants, the prophets. St. Paul says, "*Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit*" (Eph. 3:5). Through their consecration, the apostles gave themselves totally to the

The times we are most often tempted to question God is when we do not like the way He leads us.

The difference between His ways and His acts is that His ways are learned by revelation whereas His acts are a matter of observation.

will of God. In exchange, God revealed to them a part of His mind (1 Cor. 2:16). To the Apostle John was given the Revelation of Jesus Christ. This revelation became John's revelation and was called the Revelation of John. To many, the Revelation remains too abstruse and mysterious. But consecrated apostles, like John, straightway understand this mystery. The Revelation of John is the 'Apocalypse' or the unveiling of the mystery of Jesus. As a type of this in the Old Testament, let us consider Moses.

We read in Psalm 103:7, "He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel." God revealed His 'acts' unto the Israelites; they saw awesome displays of His power through the ten plagues on Egypt, the crossing of the Red Sea on dry land, the splitting of a rock to give them water and so on. Any Israelite who was in the wilderness would describe in fascinating detail how Sinai trembled and was smoking right before their eyes as their God descended upon it. They saw God's glory and His cloud. The Israelites, however, saw God's glorious exhibition merely as an 'act'; they never understood God's heart or His mind. But God revealed His 'ways' unto Moses i.e. Moses understood the 'mind' of God. Moses knew the mind of God to a certain extent. He was a servant of God. "My servant Moses..." (Num. 12:7). "So Moses the servant of the LORD ..." (Deut. 34:5). He became the friend of God (Exo. 33:11). God spoke to him very intimately (Num. 12:8). God took him into His inner counsels and shared His plans and purposes with him. The people of Israel saw only the practical outworking of

these plans. The difference between His ways and His acts is that His ways are learned by revelation whereas His acts are a matter of observation.

God reveals His mind to His servants and they in turn share it with us. We do not have to wait with the rest of the world for the seventh angel to blow the trumpet in order to know the Lord. The apostles are blowing *the trumpet of the Lord* in this Period of Grace. But our understanding depends upon our consecration. Let us therefore willingly give ourselves to the Lord in consecration. Let us make a whole-hearted surrender to His will. Then God will joyfully give us an understanding of Himself. This is not merely something that man can do; it is the work of grace. Only grace can open our eyes to see the glory of God. St Paul says: "For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:12).

Our finite minds can cope with only a limited knowledge of Jesus. "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (1 Cor. 13:12). In the Millennium, we shall understand the mystery of God a little more. In heaven, God will continue to unveil this glorious mystery for us, and, for all Eternity, we will continue to study God as part of the greatest course ever undertaken since time began.

There are many things in life that may continue to puzzle us. We may not have answers to all of life's questions. But let us, in the here and now, choose to trust our God with all our hearts; for He will always be faithful to us and will never do us wrong.

Sanford F. Bennett Joseph P. Webster

THE STORY

Behind The Song

1. The
2. We
3. To

by faith we can
me - lo - di - ous
our boun - ti - ful Fa - ther a - bove We will of - fer our

In The Sweet By And By

*There's a land that is fairer than day,
And by faith we can see it afar:
For the Father waits over the way,
To prepare us a dwelling place there.*

*In the sweet by and by,
We shall meet on that beautiful shore.*

The year was 1868 and the setting was a pharmacy in Elkhorn, Wisconsin, USA. It was here that 'In The Sweet By and By' was written by Sanford Fillmore Bennett a pharmacist, inspired by a comment from his friend and co-composer, Joseph Webster, a local musician. Webster, born in the East Coast of America in 1819 had been a member of the Handel and Hayden music society and an avid composer. He had moved to Indiana and then to Wisconsin in the 1850's, where he eventually settled. Webster and Bennett, living in the same time, struck up a musical partnership and friendship. One day, when Webster, who was frequently prone to bouts of depression, entered the pharmacy looking melancholy, Bennett instantly perceived that something was troubling his friend and asked,

"What's the trouble now"? Bennett was familiar with Webster's gloomy bouts and knew that the best remedy for his friend was through music. On that day, he had no music that would pacify and soothe his heavy heart, so he offered his time to hear his friend unload his burdens. Webster responded by pouring out his heart and sharing his problems, frustrations and life's hardships but then finally concluded by saying, "Everything will be alright in the by and by". This up-beat throw-away comment moved Bennett to pick up his pen and he immediately went to his writing desk and started to write. Turning to Webster, Bennett asked, "Wouldn't that make a good hymn" and Webster indifferently responded, "maybe it would".

*We shall sing on that beautiful shore
The melodious songs of the blest,
And our spirits shall sorrow no more,
Not a sigh for the blessing of rest.*

*To our bountiful Father above,
We will offer our tribute of praise,
For the glorious gift of His love,
And the blessings that hallow our days.*

Bennett then quickly penned the hymn and presented his writing to Webster as the prescription for his malaise. Webster then read what has now become known as the first stanza of the famed hymn...

*"There's a land that is fairer than day,
And by faith we can see it afar:
For the Father waits over the way,
To prepare us a dwelling place there."*

In less time than it took Bennett to write the words, Webster, a talented violinist, improvised a melody. Two customers entered the store at this time and Bennett invited them to join Webster and him, as they were seated at the stove. Within some minutes, Bennett handed them each a copy of the three verses and a chorus. The four sang the hymn together for the very first time

then and there in the apothecary store, accompanied by Webster on his violin. Within a few weeks, the song was being sung by children in Elkhorn and the words "In The Sweet By and By" has long since become a much treasured refrain.

This hymn is often sung at funerals and has become well-known and loved for the hope it inspires. During the Mexican Revolution in 1910, the song was banned from being sung in public and then a translated and modified version was permitted to be sung in parts of Latin America. However the English hymn has stood the test of time and has been covered by many singers over the last century and, until today the up-lifting melody is regarded as one of the favourite old-time gospel hymns.

REVIVAL MEETINGS 2010

Southall - February 19th to 21st

Liverpool - March 26th to 28th

EASTER WEEK

Fasting Prayers - March 29th to April 3rd

Easter Sunday - April 4th

Solutions To Last Issue's Puzzle

Find the Verse

Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.
Psalm 103:1

Equal Numbers

A. Bethel
B. Andrew

A Christian Soldier

I am a soldier in the army of God. The Lord Jesus Christ is my Commanding Officer. The Holy Bible is my Code of Conduct. Faith, Prayer, and the Word are my weapons of warfare. I have been taught by the Holy Spirit, trained by experience, tried by adversity and tested by fire.

I am a volunteer in this army and I am enlisted for Eternity. I will either retire in this army at the Rapture or die in this army; but I will not get out, sell out, be talked out, or pushed out. I am faithful, reliable, capable and dependable.

If my God needs me, I am there. If He needs me in the Sunday school, to teach the children, work with the youth, help adults or just sit and learn, He can use me because I am there.

I am a soldier. I am not a baby. I do not need to be pampered, petted, primed up, pumped up, picked up or pepped up. I am a soldier. No one has to call me, remind me, write me, visit me, entice me, or lure me. I am a soldier. I am not a wimp. I am in place, saluting my King, obeying His orders, praising His name, and building His kingdom! No one has to send me flowers, gifts, food, cards, candy or give me handouts. I do not need to be cuddled, cradled, cared for, or catered to. I am committed. I cannot have my feelings hurt bad enough to turn me around. I cannot be discouraged enough to turn me aside. I cannot lose enough to cause me to quit.

When Jesus called me into this army, I had nothing. If I end up with nothing, I will still come out ahead. I will win. My God has and will continue to supply all of my need. I am more than a conqueror. I will always triumph. I can do all things through Christ. The devil cannot defeat me. People cannot disillusion me. Weather cannot weary me. Sickness cannot stop me. Battles cannot beat me. Money cannot buy me. Governments cannot silence me and hell cannot handle me. I am a soldier.

Even death cannot destroy me. For when my Commander calls me from this battlefield, He will promote me to Captain and then allow me to rule with Him. I am a soldier in the army, and I am marching, claiming victory. I will not give up. I will not run away. I am a soldier, marching Heaven bound.

B.J. Morbitzer



Beholding HIM

"And he (Moses) said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory" (Exo. 33:18).

To behold our loving God is to have an unswerving gaze upon Him with our soul. All too often, the focus of our soul is the affairs of this world; we become entangled in them and struggle to see God. However, if we sincerely seek God and desire Him above all, we can see Him, know Him, delight in His presence and taste the inner sweetness of the very God Himself in the core and centre of our hearts. Moses, who had this burning desire, pleaded with God to see His glory. In New Testament times, we can have a much greater and infinitely more satisfying experience if we long for it.

To behold God's glory is to behold the beauty of His divine character. Studying the spiritual meaning of the name 'Moses' and the various character traits found in his life would inspire us to seek such a lofty experience. As we behold Him (His divine character), we are being changed from glory to glory (growing in that divine character) and finally we will be ready to see Him face to face when He appears.

1) The name Moses means 'drawn out of water'. "...she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water" (Exo. 2:10).

a) At Salvation, we are drawn out of the waters of **sin and iniquity** (Job 15:16). The Samaritan woman was

drinking from Jacob's well, the well of deception. The waters of the well of deception provide nothing but sinful pleasures of this world which can never satisfy us. Jesus offered her the waters of eternal life, which she gladly received and was truly satisfied. If our soul must gaze upon God and His glory, we first need to be drawn out of the waters of sin; for it is sin that robbed us of God's glory in the first place. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). We can receive this experience as we come to Jesus confessing all our sins with true repentance and be cleansed by His precious blood (1 Jn. 1:9).

b) Though Jonah was a prophet, yet he was disobedient to God's voice that dictated God's will for Him. He had to be thrown into water and drawn out before he could learn to do the will of God. This **disobedient nature** is seen in every man. To be set free from this disobedient nature we have to be "thrown into and drawn out of water". We receive this experience at Water Baptism. The death and burial of the Lord Jesus is compared to Jonah being in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights (Matt. 12:40). We are united with Jesus (who did all the will of God) in His death and burial at Water Baptism. In this union with Christ, we die to the disobedient nature, and our soul is further set free to behold God's glory.

c) "And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues" (Rev. 17:15). Here waters show the **nations of this world**. In the world, we see various distinctions of culture, language, colour, caste and creed. We who are going to New Jerusalem need to be drawn out of the waters of all kinds of distinctions and be made into one holy nation. God baptizes us with the Holy Spirit whereby our fleshly mind is removed. All distinctions of caste, creed and nationality are taken away and we are made one in Christ Jesus (1 Pet. 2:9; 1 Cor. 12:13).

d) We also need to be drawn out of the waters of **reproach, shame and mockery** from people around us. "Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place" (Psa. 66:12). We need to consider Jesus who joyfully endured such paths so that these waters might not drown us (Heb. 12:2). Peter was eager to walk with Jesus on the water. He stepped forward with his eyes on Jesus. But the moment he saw the boisterous wind, he was afraid and began to drown. He then cried out, "Lord, save me" (Matt. 14:28-31). Jesus immediately drew him out of the water. He is willing to do the same for us who may be drowning in the waters of reproach, shame and mockery.

e) "He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters" (Psa. 18:16). Here waters show the **spiritual enemies** we face in our lives. David spoke the words of this song in the day the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of

Saul. In this spiritual life we have to overcome the enemy that is within us and the enemies that confront us from without. Saul can be compared to the 'self', the enemy that is within us. The other enemies David faced can be compared to the attacks we face from the devil and other fallen spirits. Just as the Lord delivered David from the hand of all these enemies, He is able to help us to prevail over all our enemies and draw us out of many waters.

2) The life of Moses highlights the importance of being **broken**. Moses understood how God, by his hand, would deliver the Israelites out of Egypt. However, his first approach to the issue went wrong. In his own power he began to deliver and set the captives free. In order to save one Hebrew, he killed an Egyptian. The following day he preached peace to two Hebrew brethren who strove against each other. The offender, who knew all about the previous day's incident, accused Moses of murdering the Egyptian. This abruptly brought his ministry to an end and put his life in danger (Exo. 2:11-14). Moses ran to Midian to save his life. He lived there like a stranger. He wandered in the mountains of Sinai behind Jethro's flock, being broken and stripped of all the wisdom he had gained in Egypt. After forty long years, he who was mighty in words and deeds, now, as a broken man says, "...I am not eloquent ... but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue" (Exo. 4:10). It was then, as he came to the end of his 'wilderness training' the Lord appeared to him, empowered him and commissioned him to be a deliverer of God's people (Acts 7:30-34).

3) **Meekness** was an outstanding quality in Moses. " ... *Moses was very meek, above all the men...* " (Num. 12:3). When Jesus said, " ...*learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart...* " (Matt. 11:29), He revealed the secret that true wisdom dwelt in Him because of His meekness and lowliness. Those who desire His wisdom must be willing to be meek and lowly. Meekness is needed in order to learn from the Lord. "*The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way*" (Psa. 25:9). Christ, the Teacher takes pleasure in teaching anyone who is willing to learn in all humility and obedience. James says " ...*receive with meekness the engrafted word...* " (Jam. 1:21). Meekness is also needed to teach others. St. Paul says, " ...*Be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing...* " (2 Tim. 2:24,25). Meekness is not weakness; it is the strength of our inner man.

4) The life of Moses also shows a life of **faithfulness**. "*Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant ... But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we...* " (Heb. 3:5,6). Moses was faithful as a servant in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, our faithfulness has to be like that of Jesus, who

was faithful as a son. The servant is faithful out of duty but a son is faithful and acts responsibly because He loves the father. The servants who made profitable use of the gifts the Lord had given them were called good and faithful servants. But, the one who received just one talent and did not use it was called a wicked and slothful servant. He did not misuse or lose it, but hid it. He said, "*I was afraid*" (Matt. 25:14-30). Lack of love for and trust in our heavenly Master will only bring unnecessary fear and make us unfaithful servants. Perfect love will cast out fear and equip us to serve the Lord faithfully till the end.

The Lord was frankly pleased with Moses' daring request to see His glory. The Lord called Moses into the Mount, and there in solemn procession made all His glory pass before him. We, who are living in this Grace Period are called not just to have a glimpse of His glory but to attain that very glory in our own lives. Let us with unveiled eyes gaze upon Him alone all the days of our earthly pilgrimage. Then shall we be prepared to behold Him in full splendour when He comes to be glorified in His saints and to be admired in all them that believe (2 Thess. 1:10).

NEW YEAR PROMISE

But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

1 Peter 5:10

TONGUE CONTROL

"The tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things ... The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity ... it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell ... The tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison" (Jam. 3:5-8). This is a brief yet befitting description James gives about the tongue. The tongue can give either life or death, and make our lives fit for heaven or hell. Having understood this, the Psalmist cries, "*Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips*" (Psa. 141:3).

Have you ever squeezed too much toothpaste onto your toothbrush? And then have you ever tried squeezing it back into the tube? Sometimes in our efforts to say exactly the right thing at the right time, we speak words in haste. Usually, we later wish we could recall those words. Words spoken in haste are all those words we speak without weighing how each could be misunderstood by the hearers, all those words we utter in jest, and everything we say without thinking. Perhaps the preacher was right when he quipped, "God gave us two ears and one mouth - that ought to tell us something."

How many times have you said something you wish you had not? Oh, the pain! But after it is said, it is next to impossible to recall the bumbling rhetoric. Once an attorney was pleading the case of his farmer client who had lost a shipment of twenty four pigs. He was prosecuting the trucking company that had lost the animals. The lawyer wanted to impress the jury with the magnitude of the loss so he said very innocently, "Twenty four pigs, gentlemen! Twenty four! Twice the number in the jury box!" Oops! Too late! The damage was done.

Once, when Dr. Pierson was in George Mueller's study, he took a glance into his Bible. As he was leafing through it he came to Psalm 37:23, "*The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD.*" He noticed that George Mueller had written by the side of it in the margin, "and the stops!" If our tongues know when to go and when to stop, then our whole bodies, our whole personalities, will know when to move and when to stop. If we don't have God's bridle, these tongues of ours will keep going incessantly. We need the steps and the stops, too! If it were not for the bridle, the rider would find it very difficult, if not impossible, to stop the horse. Why does the horse stop? Because the bits in the bridle hurt his tongue. It is so with God in His dealings with us. When we are moving fast in the wrong direction, towards our own goal and destruction, God has to pull hard on the bridle to cause us to stop. Let us stop before it is too late. "*Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles*" (Pro. 21:23).

In the last issue, the Israelites travelled to the camp at Ebronah (Num. 33:34). The meaning of Ebronah is "passage" or "door". This speaks of an opening or entrance that God grants us, as opposed to a wall or a dead end. Our God makes a road through the wilderness, a way through the mountains and even a path through the sea! St. Paul asked the Colossian believers to pray for him that God might open the door of the gospel for him (Col. 4:3). The Bible tells us that God can open for us the door of faith (Acts 14:27). We also read how the valley of Achor was made a door of hope for us (Hos. 2:15).

While Jesus, the Door, remains open for us throughout the Period of Grace, the door of our hearts must be kept open for Jesus to enter in. The many doors of intimacy in our hearts are opened to Christ through a life of surrender. Christ is left knocking at the door when we do not surrender ourselves to His will at some level of intimacy (Rev. 3:20). When the door is opened for Jesus, then we can sup with Him while He sups with us.

From Ebronah, the Israelites journeyed until they encamped at **Eziongaber** (Num. 33:35). Eziongaber means the 'backbone of a man'. Other commentaries translate it as the 'backbone of the mighty' or a 'giant's backbone'. Thus the meaning of Eziongaber is 'strength'. Figuratively, it speaks of firmness of purpose, grit and determination.

We need to possess great resolve in a time when terrible events are shaking the world and apostasy is plaguing many churches. We need to keep press-

ing on no matter how powerfully the tide comes against us. In the midst of afflictions, trials and temptations, we must be like a rock. "...therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? let us stand together: who is mine adversary? let him come near to me" (Isa. 50:7,8). The wilderness journey might have been arduous and tiresome; but all through God was encouraging the Israelites to keep pressing on. That was the message all the way through their journey.



(A BIBLE STUDY ON THE JOURNEY OF THE ISRAELITES)

*"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."
(1 Corinthians 10:11)*

We need supernatural strength in order to face our adversary, the devil. He comes to steal, to kill and to destroy. The word of God likens him to a lion, a serpent and a dragon. We need Eziongaber strength in order to overcome him. When Satan tempts us, we must be faithful to preserve our lives. When the world allures us, we must remain strong and stand on the Lord's side. When people provoke us to do wrong, we must be determined to do what is right. While

Lot was making the wrong choice, Abraham was following the vision the Lord gave him. While other Jews in Babylon were drinking the king's wine, Daniel and his three friends kept themselves with a firm determination. While Demas departed from the Lord, St. Paul was preparing to depart unto the Lord (2 Tim. 4:6,10). A few verses later, he says the Lord strengthened him and saved him out of the mouth of the lion. It is only an Eziongaber resolve that can help us.

Let us consider four men in the Bible who received gigantic strength from the

Those who love God will know Him (1 Jn. 4:8). Those who know their God will be strong and do exploits (Dan. 11:32). Thus, David speaks of the **love** of God.

BENAIAH (2 Sam. 23:20)

Benaiah faced a lion in time of snow and killed it. 2 Samuel chapter 23 names the strong men of David's army and mentions the daring feats they carried out. This chapter reminds us of Hebrews chapter 11 that enlists the heroes of faith and their exploits. In these last days, atheism is rampant and faith is becoming extinct. We must therefore be strong in faith and resist the devil steadfast in the faith. When we lack faith, we will fear, worry, panic, grumble and so on. But when we have faith, we will enjoy a rest in our soul. Benaiah speaks of **faith** towards God.

SAMSON (Judg. 14:5,6)

Samson was a Nazarite. The word 'nazar' in Hebrew is used for Nazarite; literally, it means separation and is sometimes used in reference to 'consecration'. While under the Nazarite vow, a person had to abstain from anything associated with alcohol. He also refused to cut his hair or shave (Num. 6:5). A Nazarite also refused to touch or go near a dead body because this would make him ceremonially unclean. The Nazarite could not even help to bury his own relatives.

The three main Nazarites referred to in the Bible are Samuel, Samson and John the Baptist. All three were extraordinary men whom God used mightily; Samson, in particular, possessed immense strength through his Nazarite consecration. As long as he remained

Lord to be bold to face a lion that came their way.

DAVID (1 Sam. 17: 34, 36)

When both a lion and a bear came against his father's sheep, David received amazing courage to challenge these huge creatures. David was one who loved God from his childhood. As he grew into manhood, this love never left him. We too must be filled with the love of God if we must be bold to face the lion. Love is as strong as death.

obedient to his consecration, Samson remained strong and defeated the lion. The moment he disobeyed, the enemy overpowered him. In another portion of Scripture, we read of a prophet who was given a definite command from God not to eat or drink anything in a certain place. As long as he remained obedient to this commandment of God the Lord was with him. But the moment he disobeyed God, a lion slew him (1 Kings 13:24).

In order to receive such strength from the Lord we must maintain a life of separation. "God brought them out of Egypt; he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn" (Num. 23:22). The unicorn was a mythical horse-like creature with one spiraling horn growing from its forehead. The unicorn was believed to be fierce and difficult to capture. Medieval writers even associated the unicorn with Jesus. Some suppose the animal mentioned here to be a wild bull, a raging rhinoceros, or a bison. Whatever, the animal depicts great strength. For the Israelites to have such strength, they had to come out of Egypt. They had to be separate from all nations. "...lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations" (Num. 23:9). In the NIV, it is rendered " ...a people who live apart and do not consider themselves one of the nations". This separation gave them strength against all evil power of witchcraft. "There is no magic charm, no witchcraft that can be used against the nation of Israel. Now people will say about Israel, 'Look what God has done!'" (Num. 23:23, GNB). Egypt is a type of the world. Separation from the world gives us much strength. On the

other hand, when we compromise with the world, we will lose our strength and become a prey to the devil. Samson speaks of **obedience** or a life of doing the will of God.

DANIEL (Dan. 6:16)

Daniel was a man who was concerned about his personal purity. He refused to defile himself (Dan. 1:8). He also had a good conscience before God and man. His innocence and purity was his strength. We too must desire to live an upright and pure life before God and have a good conscience before God and man. God will show Himself strong in the behalf of those whose hearts are perfect towards Him (2 Chron 16:9). The way of the Lord is strength to the upright (Pro. 10:29). Daniel speaks of **holiness**.

Thus, David, Benaiah, Samson and Daniel are a type of love, faith, obedience and holiness which are the four areas of perfection in the New Testament period. These four qualities give us strength to overcome the loin.

It is the backbone that makes a person stand upright. We read of the woman who was bent over because of her spinal disorder. It was not merely a physical problem; it was the affliction of the devil. As a result she could not look up. But the moment Jesus touched her, she was straightened. The devil does not want us to 'look up'. So he tries to bring us down under his yoke. "...and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing" (Isa. 10:27). The Lord is willing to touch us too and straighten us. Let us receive that anointing from the Lord to make us strong to face the enemy and look up for our redemption.

To be continued...

"...She Loved Much"

"Sister Brenda" was a well-known name and much-loved figure amongst all the needy new souls who visited the Church in Brixton, and among the believers, young people and children. She had time for everybody - to speak to them, pray for them and advice them. It was such a comfort to see such a calm, compassionate person amidst the hustle and bustle of everyday life on Acre Lane.

Sis. Brenda was born in 1924 and enjoyed a happy childhood. She was married and had five children; however the marriage broke up and she took solace in her children, whom she brought up to be God-fearing, considerate and kind. During this time she worked with the Salvation Army, helping the alcoholics, drug addicts and other needy ones.

As she was a seeker of the truth, God marvellously led her to this Pentecostal fellowship through her neighbour. One day her neighbour invited her to a cottage meeting in their home. She enjoyed the word of God and the deeper truths that was taught by the saints. Thereafter she accepted their invitation to attend other meetings and eventually became a faithful believer. Sis. Brenda did not waste any time investing the rest of her life in things of eternal value. Her experience with Jesus was real and it affected every aspect of her life. The family of God became very dear to her.

She had an unquenchable thirst for souls. God opened a door for her when she was asked if she could come and spend time in the "Reading Room" of the Church. The Reading Room had a large Bible in the window and a little reception area. This room became a "Welcome Break", where many weary souls came to find comfort and relief. She shared the gospel to all who came in contact with her. Her love for Jesus and her faith in God touched their lives and many became faithful followers of Jesus. Sis. Brenda braved the worst types of weather to be present in the Reading Room. The many unpleasant incidents that she faced, like having her bag stolen several times and being threatened by disturbed people, did not deter her or slow down her ministry there.

She was a great source of encouragement to the new believers who came to the Lord through her. She would make sure that they attended all the meetings. If they were not there, she would call them or go to their homes and bring them for the meetings. She knew how to speak to each one of them and persuade them to come to the presence of God. She counselled and encouraged them to walk in the ways of the Lord and live according to the standards of the word of God. She would be firm and persistent in her endeavour to establish them in the faith. Although she was spiritually minded, she never failed to offer physical and material help. She was kind and

helpful to the poor and visited the sick. Her wise advice and counsel from the word of God helped many to find direction in their life.

A quiet and meek person, Sis Brenda revealed the nature of a lamb. When accused falsely or humiliated, she did not retaliate but immediately began to pray. When asked if she was going to do something about it, she would always say that God had permitted it all for good.

Once she suffered with severe pain in her arm. She requested prayer for her healing. One Sunday evening, she came forward and testified, that, during the time of worship, as the congregation sang the chorus,

*Jesus breaks the bands
As I raise my hands
And gives glorious victory,*

she joined them in the song and raised her hands by faith, and God healed her completely. Such was her trust in God.

Sis. Brenda was a dedicated Sunday School teacher for many years. Her godly influence on the children helped them to grow to become faithful believers and Sunday School teachers.

A few years ago, Sis. Brenda took ill and was moved to a Care Home. Even there she was an encouragement and a channel of blessing to the staff and residents. One staff member and her entire family are faithful members of the Church today.

Even during her illness her love for God and faith in adversity shone through. Like David of old, her love was

always toward the House of God. In spite of her weakness and disability, with the help of her devoted daughter and sons, she attended the Conventions and Church services quite regularly. Though she could not speak much, she was alert to repeat the Bible verses and to praise God. It was a pleasure to see her eyes light up as she watched the Children's Programme and other children's activities at Church. Her daughter, knowing the love she had for the word of God, made every arrangement for her to hear all the messages of the meetings that she was unable to attend.

Although her body was wasting away, God continued to do a glorious work within her. When she was ripe and ready for harvest, the Lord took her. She was surrounded by her children, servants of God and believers, who were praising God, when she peacefully entered glory. Jesus broke every physical band and gave her glorious victory. Now she has gone home to receive her well-earned reward and rest. She is with her Saviour whom she loved and served faithfully.

Sis. Brenda's life is a witness to what God can do through a fully surrendered person. As she emptied herself and poured out her life in selfless service, the life of Christ was revealed and drew many to Christ. She was addicted to the ministry of the saints, we may say, and became a blessing to servants of God, believers and new souls. May God raise up many more such praying mothers who will be a help and support to the work of God and a channel of love and mercy. Praise the Lord.



The Jerusalem Clock

THE COUNTDOWN BEGINS...

INTRODUCTION

A clock is a machine or electronic device for telling time. Both simple and elaborate clocks, as well as sundials, candle clocks, and sandglasses, were used for measuring time in ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome. The first European public clock that struck the hours was erected in Milan in 1335, and the oldest surviving clocks are in England (1386) and France (1389). The first domestic clocks appeared late in the 14th century. Pendulum clocks were invented in 1656. Big Ben, the great clock at Westminster in London, was installed in 1859 and is the standard for all accurate tower pendulum clocks. In 1929 the extremely accurate quartz-crystal clock was invented. The first atomic clock went into operation in 1951. Atomic clocks are regulated by the natural periodic behaviour of a system of atoms and can have accuracies exceeding one billionth of a second per day, making them the most accurate clocks yet invented. Since the cold war began, the bulletin of Atomic Scientists has used the Doomsday Clock (created in 1947) to show us how close we are to a nuclear disaster.

Nature, in one sense, too is a clock. Farmers tell the time by the position of the sun. But nature also has its way of forewarning us when some calamity is about to happen. That is why animals and birds become very restless before

any big natural disaster like an earthquake or a tsunami. Fish in their aquaria start jumping around irrationally; birds migrate in alarming numbers while dogs begin to howl. *"Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the LORD"* (Jer. 8:7).

Nature has its way of ringing an alarm to warn us about the imminence of Christ's return. For example, Jesus said that as a sign of the time of His return, earthquakes would increase rapidly. 90% of history's worst earthquakes took place in the last 100 years i.e. the 20th century. At the beginning of the 20th century, major earthquakes took place on the average of one in two or three years. At the end of the century however, there had been at least 100 major earthquakes each year. Scientists are alarmed at the way the earth's axis is wobbling violently around the geographical North Pole. In 2000, 231 were killed by earthquakes. The very next year, 2001, there was a huge jump in the number of deaths, 21,357. In 2004 the number of people who died from quakes skyrocketed to 284,012 people. Other signs in nature are found in the sky. Jesus warned that there would be signs in the sun, moon and stars. Pestilences and epidemics like the swine flu are warning signs. Man-made calamities on a global

scale like an increase in crime and violence and an economic downturn are also indicators of Christ's return.

God condemns His people for not being able to discern the times. *"And in the morning, It will be foul weather today: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?"* (Matt. 16:3).

According to the Bible there is one clock we must all watch to know the times we are living in. We shall call it **The Jerusalem Clock.**

The Bible makes it clear that Jerusalem will play a prominent role in global politics of the last days. That is why, many are closely monitoring the events that are taking place there.

The city of Jerusalem is the religious capital of Israel. Located in the heart of historic Palestine, it nestles between the West Bank and Israel. The Old City is a typical, walled Middle Eastern enclosure; the modern city is an urban agglomeration of high-rises and housing complexes. It is holy to the Jews, Christians and Muslims. The Temple of Jerusalem is important to the Jews. There are other Jewish shrines, including the Western Wall. Christians consider Jerusalem sacred because of its association with Jesus and the Muslims have a few mosques there, including the Dome of the Rock.

Scripture attaches great importance to this city. In this brief series, we shall look at some prophecies in the Bible concerning Jerusalem in relation to the end-times. But, first, let us begin with some history of this remarkable city.

THE BIBLICAL HISTORY OF THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM

Also referred to as Salem, Ariel and Jebus, Jerusalem was always known as the 'city of God' or the 'holy city'. This name is in the original in the dual form, and means 'possession of peace,' or 'foundation of peace.' The dual form probably refers to the two mountains on which it was built, viz., Zion and Moriah; or, as some suppose, to the two parts of the city, the 'upper' and the 'lower' city. Jerusalem is surrounded by mountains. *"As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about his people from henceforth even for ever"* (Psa. 125:2). It stands on the edge of one of the highest table-lands in Palestine.

It is first mentioned in Scripture under the name Salem (Gen. 14:18; comp. Psa. 76:2). After the death of Joshua the city was taken and set on fire by the men of Judah (Judg. 1:1-8); but the Jebusites were not wholly driven out of it. The city is not again mentioned till we are told that David brought the head of Goliath thither (1 Sam. 17:54). David afterwards led his forces against the Jebusites who were still residing within its walls, and drove them out, fixing his own dwelling on Zion, which he called 'the city of David' (2 Sam. 5:5-9; 1 Chron. 11:4-8). He brought up the Ark of the Covenant and placed it in the new tabernacle which he had prepared for it. Jerusalem now became the capital of the kingdom. This was in 1000 BC. In the time of David it was divided between Benjamin and Judah. After the death of David, Solomon built the temple, a house for the name of the Lord, on Mount Moriah (959 BC). He also greatly strengthened and adorned

the city, and it became the great centre of all the civil and religious affairs of the nation (Deut. 12:5; comp. 12:14; 14:23; 16:11-16; Psa. 122).

God chose Jerusalem as the place where Israel would offer sacrifices. *"Then there shall be a place which the LORD your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices ... But in the place which the LORD shall choose in one of thy tribes, there thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings, and there thou shalt do all that I command thee"* (Deut. 12:11,14). It was to Mount Moriah in Jerusalem that Abraham had brought Isaac 450 years earlier. Many years later, when Solomon built the Temple on Mount Moriah in Jerusalem, God confirmed to him that this was the place He had chosen for sacrifice. *"And the LORD appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for an house of sacrifice"* (2 Chron. 7:12). Even today, God has appointed a place for us which is the fellowship of the apostles. *"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching"* (Heb. 10:25). Just as Jerusalem was built upon the mountains of Moriah (where Abraham offered Isaac, a type of Calvary) and Zion, the Church is built upon the foundation of Christ (Isa. 28:16) and the apostles (Eph. 2:19-21).

After the kingdom was divided, Jerusalem became the capital of the kingdom of the two tribes. Finally, for the abounding iniquities of the nation, it

was taken after a siege of three years, and utterly destroyed; its walls were razed to the ground, and its temple and palaces consumed by fire, by Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon (2 Kings 25; 2 Chron. 36; Jer. 39). This happened in 588 BC.

The desolation of the city and the land was completed by the retreat of the principal Jews into Egypt (Jer. 40-44), and by the final carrying captive into Babylon of all that still remained in the land (Jer. 52:3), so that it was left without an inhabitant (582 BC). But the streets and walls of Jerusalem were again to be built, in stormy times (Dan. 9:16, 19, 25), after a captivity of seventy years.

This restoration began in 536 BC, "in the first year of Cyrus" (Ezra 1:2, 3, 5-11). The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah contain the history of the re-building and the restoration. The kingdom thus constituted was for two centuries under the dominion of Persia, till 331 BC; and thereafter, for about a century and a half, under the rulers of the Greek empire in Asia, till 167 BC. For a century the Jews maintained their independence under native rulers, the Asmonean princes. At the close of this period they fell under the rule of Herod and of members of his family, but practically under Rome, till the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, AD 70. The city was then laid in ruins.

Jerusalem is called the city of peace; ironically, it has been quite the opposite. In the subsequent issues we shall study about Jerusalem's troubled history and its pivotal role in the last days as a fulfilment of prophecy.



The Guiding Light

An Introduction to the Holy Bible - Part 1

The Bible

contains 66 books, 1189 chapters, 31,175 verses, 810,677 words and 3,566,480 letters. The longest chapter is the 119th Psalm. The Shortest and the middle chapter is the 117th Psalm. The middle verse is Psalm 118:8. The longest verse is Esther 8:9; the shortest verse is John 11:35. The longest name is in Isaiah 8:1 and contains 18 letters. The 37th chapter of Isaiah and the 19th chapter of II Kings are alike. The word 'Lord' occurs 1855 times.

THE BIBLE IS A BOOK OF MIRACLES. Its origin, authorship and contents are filled with miracles.

The word "BIBLE" is derived from the Greek word "BIBLIA" which means "BOOKS". It is indeed the Book of books which narrates the story of the King of kings and Lord of lords - the best Book ever written and the most widely circulated and read.

The aim of this Book is, "Perfect salvation of the fallen man." The story and the central theme of the Book is one - the undying love of the Saviour. The Author is One though the writers are many.

The Bible is unparalleled in divine beauty. All of the Scriptures hang together in wonderful detail when Christ is the goal of our study. It contains 66 Books written in three different languages over a period of 1600 years. It was written by about 44 writers of different lands and dispensations, varying in standards of education and the widest range of social and cultural background - kings, shepherds, military leaders, poets, philosophers, statesmen, prophets, Pharisees, fishermen. Though most of them had not even met each other, the unity in the 66 Books is remarkable. There is not a single fundamental contradiction in it.

In this most interesting Book, we find history, geography, botany, zoology, horticulture, architecture, philosophy, literature, poetry, story, biography, autobiography, prophecy, astronomy, law, science etc.,

Its scientific statements are all true. Though it was written at a time when scientific knowledge was extremely faulty, it contains none of the crude fallacies that were believed by men in those times and later. Science is constantly changing its views and rewriting books. But the Bible needs no such revision.

Jesus always quoted from the Old Testament thus proving the authenticity of the Bible.

It is a Book of prophecies. One third of its prophecies are all fulfilled in detail. Jesus' life was prophesied hundreds of years before His birth.

This Book has survived the attack of enemies like Voltaire.

Countless lives have been transformed - sometimes because of reading just one verse!

It is inexhaustible. Although the Bible is like a bottomless mine, its simplicity is such that even a child can grasp its message. The keenest intellects have spent a lifetime studying it but have not even scratched its surface because it is hid from the wise and the prudent and revealed unto the babes (Matt. 11:25).

It is the most ancient Book, nevertheless it is the most modern Book in its message. Practically, it is the only authentic Book in the world which reveals the character of God and the glory of heaven. It is the only Book which unfolds the future of every human being whether sinner or saint. Though it was written centuries ago, a humble man even from the present century can find answers to all his questions.

THE IMPORTANCE OF READING THE BIBLE

History proves that a man who never read or understood God's word never became great in the sight of God. If you say that you cannot adjust your time to read the Bible daily, your life needs adjustment. God's word alone can do that for you.

The Bible is the infallible declaration of God's character, mind and plan, concerning the past, present and future of man. A man who does not read the Bible virtually does not know God's character and mind. He also is bound to be ignorant of his own faults, his future and God's plan for his day to day life.

Once a man of God said, "*God's word is supernatural in origin, eternal in duration, inexpressible in value, infinite in scope, regenerative in power, infallible in authority, universal in interest, personal in application, inspired in totality.*" It transforms the mind, changes character and moves man from grace to grace, making him an inheritor of the very nature of God. Once a devout Christian mother while handing out a Bible to her son who was leaving home to take up a job in the city said, "*Son, reading this book will keep you from from sinning or sin will keep you from reading it.*" It is indeed a universal truth.

Perhaps the following testimony of a man of faith would be most encouraging: "*The measure of our spiritual life will be in exact proportion to the place held by the Bible in our life and thoughts. I solemnly state this from the experience of fifty five years.*"

The first three years after my conversion I neglected the Word of God. Since I began to search it diligently the blessings have been wonderful. I have read the Bible through 100 times and always with increasing delight. Each time it seems like a new Book to me.

Great has been the blessing from consecutive daily diligent study. I think it as a lost day when I have not had a good time over the Word of God. I believe that the one chief reason that I have been kept in joyful useful service is that I have been a lover of the Holy Scriptures. It has been my habit to read the Bible through four times a year in a prayerful spirit to apply it to my heart and to practice what I find there. I have been for sixty nine years a happy man, happy, happy, happy."

We very often speak exhorting, defending and admiring the Word of God, yet seldom read and digest it.

THE SCRIPTURE EMBODIES REVELATION AND INSPIRATION

What is Revelation?

Revelation is the supernatural disclosure by God Himself to human beings. By this definition, the Bible is a revelation.

What is Inspiration?

Inspiration is the divine influence which moved sacred writers of old to write the Bible (2 Pet. 1:21).

We have to defend both the revelation and the inspiration of the Scripture.

HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE

The distinction between all other books and the Bible is that we love all other books only after understanding them but we can understand the Bible only if we love it. If we love God surely we would love what He writes to us. Indeed it is a love letter from the heavenly Bridegroom to His Bride. If someone refuses to read her lover's letter or excuses herself saying she has no time to read it, it simply proves that she no more loves him or her love is divided. So is the state of a Christian who does not care to read and understand God's Word.

To understand God's Word, two things are essential:

1. One should be right with God and man.
2. One should read it in a right spirit, i.e. with a hunger and thirst for a higher spiritual life.

If you read the newspapers and other things first and then try to read the Bible (if time permits it), you may never get time to read it and even, if you do get time, you will never understand the Bible as you ought. If God has pre-eminence in your life, why do you not give first place to the reading of the Bible? Practise reading the Scripture very early in the morning. Manna has to be collected early in the morning or else it will melt away. This is also true with God's Word, which is our heavenly Manna. Let understanding some part of the Bible clearly, be the first thing you do everyday. Then, also make it your daily routine to obey all that you do understand.

READ IT DILIGENTLY

Never skip over any portion; while reading, meditate on it. If you find some new thoughts or interesting facts note them down straightaway. Every book, chapter and sentence reveals the character and glory of Christ, directly or indirectly. Similarly, study the Scripture, meditating deeply on every sentence and every single word. You will be delighted as you read in this manner.

God's Word expresses His mind. So when we fill our mind with God's Word, our mind grows like God's mind and our thoughts transform to God's thoughts. The best way to have faith is to read and understand the Bible. Faith starts growing as we start reading His Word.

BURNT ALIVE FOR READING THE BIBLE (27TH MARCH 1555)

William Hunter was the son of honest and religious parents who had brought him up in the reformed faith. While at Brentwood in Essex, one day, he went into the chapel, and seeing the Bible lying on the desk, opened it and began to read. Seen by an officer of the bishop's court, he was taken to task for opening the sacred volume. When questioned, Hunter replied, "Finding the Bible here, I read it for my comfort and improvement". The officer at once informed a priest that Hunter had taken to reading the Bible. The priest sent for him, and said angrily, "Who gave you leave to read the Bible?" He answered him as he had done the officer; and on the priest's saying that he was not to meddle with the Scriptures, Hunter courageously said that he intended to read them as long as he lived. The priest then accused him of being a heretic and threatened to complain to the bishop.

Hunter was arrested by the constable of the parish, and later taken before the justice who charged him with heresy, and wrote an account of his conduct to the bishop of London. Hunter was then summoned to appear at the Consistory Court held at St. Paul's. After he had been brought several times before the bishop, it was decided that he should be taken to Brentwood, where he should be burned.


Hunter was confined at an inn till the day of his execution. During this time he was visited by many. His father and mother came to him, and prayed to God that he might continue to the end in the good way which he had begun. His mother said to him that she was glad she had such a child, willing to lose his life for Christ's sake. Then Hunter said to her, "For the little pain which I shall suffer, which is but short, Christ has promised me a crown of glory."

On the morning of the 27th March, 1555, as soon as it was day, the sheriff began to prepare for the burning of Hunter. The sheriff's son who was Hunter's friend, came and took him by the hand, saying, "William, be not afraid of these men who are here present with swords and spears to guard you to the place where you shall be burned." William answered, "I am not afraid; for I have that in my heart which shall bear me up until the end." At this, the sheriff's son began to weep so much, that he could no longer speak to him.

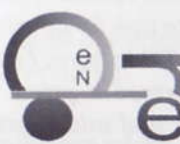
So William went to the place where the stake stood. There he knelt down on a faggot. Hunter's brother stood near him and encouraged him to make a good end. As soon as the fire was kindled, he said, "Be of good cheer, William!" to which the man at the stake replied, "I fear neither torture nor death; Lord, receive my spirit!" These were his last words; the fire burned rapidly, and the martyr was soon consumed, yielding up his life with patience and courage.

Men were willing to lay down their lives rather than cease from reading the Word of God. How shall we give account to God if we neglect to read His Word in times of freedom as this, when the precious Word of God is freely available to every individual. Let us love God, love His Word and read it daily for as long as we live. In those sacred pages, we shall discover God's will for us and thereby live to please Him.


Who are these people?



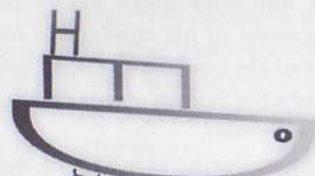
1. A sleeper in Church




2. Unstable



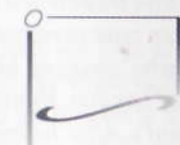
3. Achsah's father



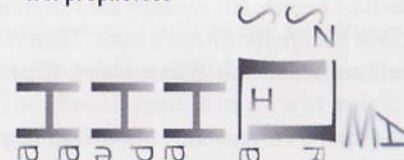
4. A prophetess




5. Survived the fire



6. Grandmother



7. Man with the longest name



8. Put out of the camp for seven days

QUOTE MAZE

Starting from the top left, step through the maze by moving in a straight line, up, down, forwards, backwards but never diagonally to reveal a famous promise from the Old Testament.

I	A	B	V	K	L
T	M	S	T	H	Z
H	E	R	D	A	T
E	L	O	A	E	H
H	E	E	L	E	H
T	H	T	F	G	O
H	E	A	J	R	P
A	E	N	C	S	D