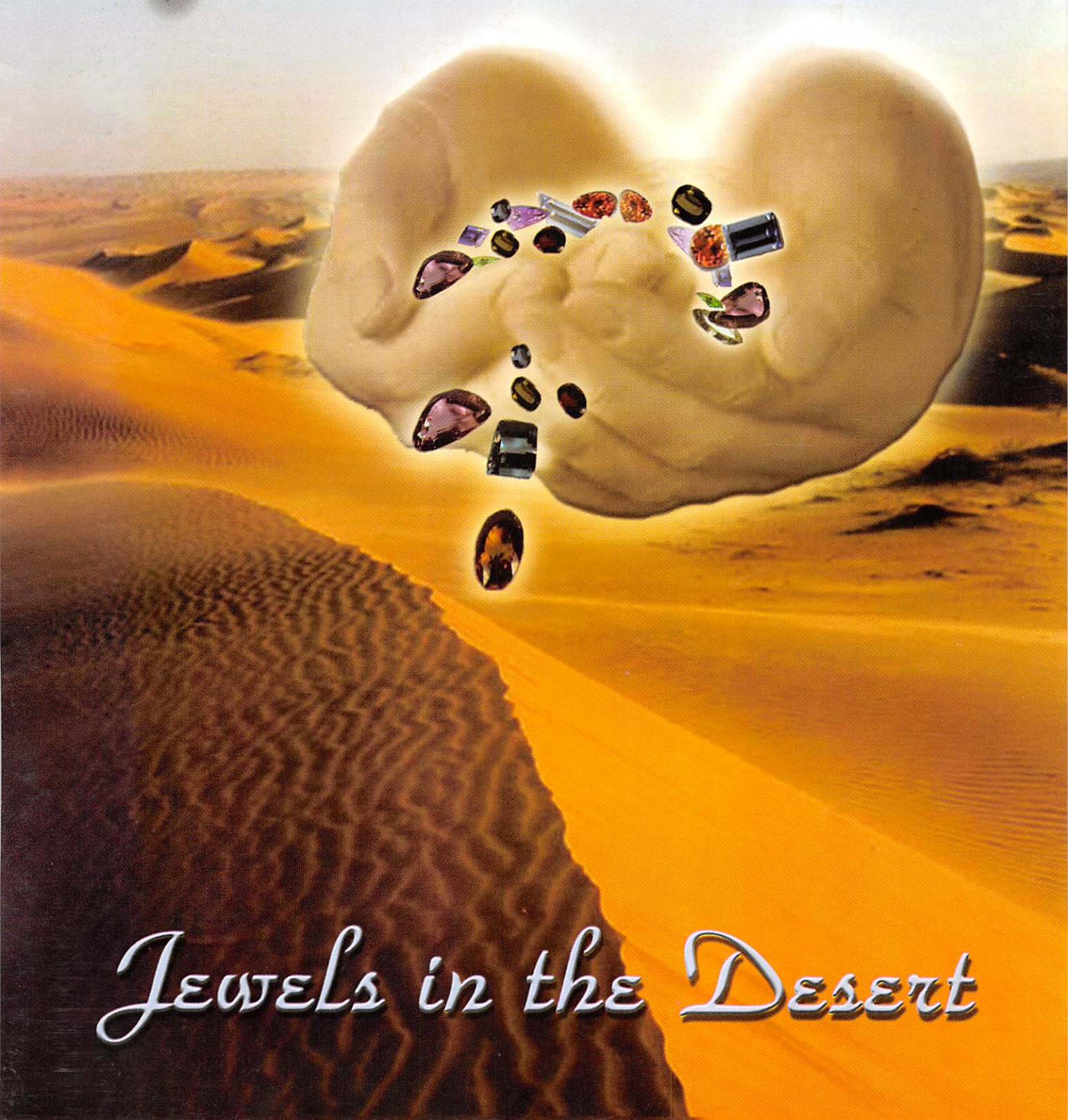




# HEART OF A WOMAN

Volume 7 Issue 1



*Jewels in the Desert*



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### Themes for 2007

2. "Learning From Ants"
3. "Near To The Heart Of God"
4. "Peace Amongst the Turmoil"

### Themes for 2008

1. "Slave or Free"
2. "The Gift of Suffering"
3. "Training the Child"
4. "Walking Alone"

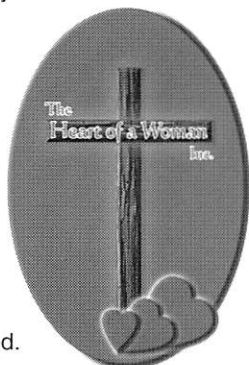
### Closing dates for 2007

Spring	17/7/07
Summer	16/10/07

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## From the Editor's Desk

Greetings to all,

I don't suppose many of us have really ever been to a desert—one filled with sand, wind, cold, thirst and camels; but most of us usually have at some time or other entered many deserts emotionally and possibly spiritually. This issue deals with these and gives us some solid ideas as to why they come about and how to get through them. Like all trials when they are over, we always hope to come out the other side having learnt something valuable—thus shining brightly as the gleaming jewels we were always meant to be.

It is a delight to welcome three new writers. Bruce Poulsen brings to us our new regular item called "From a Man's World", we do hope you not only enjoy it, but find yourself looking for it. At least it will give the gentlemen that already read our magazine a valid reason for doing so! We also welcome Julie Mayer, Julie is at present Regional Manager for Chaplaincy with Scripture Union; but has been a speaker for CWCI, is highly trained and experienced and we thank her for taking part when she can. Lorraine Addison, heads out the ministry of "The Wives Support Group" and has also agreed to write as the Lord leads.—As time goes on, I am sure you will get to know each one more fully. Their photos will be in the next issue.

We are always looking for more testimonies, so if you would like to send in yours, we would gladly receive them. Please try to keep them to no more than 1200 words. They may not be used immediately, but be assured they will be used. Always take a look at the up-and-coming issues and their closing dates and this will help yours being used more quickly.

May our Lord bless and keep each one of you in His loving arms.

Wendy Davie



## Letters to the Editor

I have really been enjoying the magazines you have been giving me. They are so chock full of excellent articles that they are like treasures that you can't part with. I am happy to keep re-reading those seriously biblical and heartfelt articles. I have shared them with some friends and of course they all want them. I read in that last copy that limited numbers are printed and have been quite reticent to part with them. I have the three different volumes now and have decided who to give the previous two away to. The last one I will hang onto for just a little longer. I am going to become a member.

C.J. Sydney Area

Dear Madam,

I read your magazine for a few moments in the waiting room of the Evans St. Surgery. On my next visit it was gone. I would be very happy to receive the magazine quarterly. If you have a spare old copy I would be very grateful to receive it. Thankyou.

FY NSW

Congratulations on your books.

Love JG NSW

Thank you for the 'Spring' edition of "The Heart of a Woman," my husband also finds much of it profitable.

Would it be possible to have a second copy sent to me? We would like to give this 'Spring' copy to a friend and our copy is being circulated to other friends. Yours sincerely,

GL QLD

Dear Heart of a Woman,

Enclosed is my membership fee. Thankyou for the excellence of the magazine, it is a pleasure to distribute and I pray it may bring much blessing. May you also be blessed in the work involved in production, the dedication is very evident. Thanking you all, yours in His love and grace.

DR QLD

Please find my subscription for 2007. Please can you send me 4-6 copies of your magazine, as I have ladies wanting copies? Yes, we will pray for you all — especially in health — one area the enemy certainly tries to get at us, but, 'greater is He that is in us, than he that is in the world'. What a scripture to stand on. God bless you in your ministry. Love in Jesus Name.

RS WA



# How It Came To Be



eat from that tree I told you not to eat from?" The Man said, "The Woman you gave me as a companion, she gave me fruit from the tree, and, yes, I ate it." God said to the Woman, "What is this that you've done?" "The serpent seduced me," she said, "and I ate." God told the serpent: "Because you've done this, you're cursed, cursed beyond all cattle and wild animals; cursed to slink on your belly and eat dirt all your life. I'm declaring war between you and the Woman, between your offspring and hers. He'll wound your head, you'll wound His heel." He told the Woman: "I'll multiply your pains in childbirth; you'll give birth to your babies in pain. You'll want to please your husband, but he'll lord it over you." He told the Man: "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from: 'Don't eat from this tree,' the very ground will be as painful as having babies is for your wife; you'll be working in pain all your life long. The ground will sprout thorns and weeds, you'll get your food the hard way; planting and tilling and harvesting, sweating in the fields from dawn to dusk, until you return to that ground yourself, dead and buried; you started out as dirt, you'll end up dirt." The Man, known as Adam, named his wife Eve because she was the mother of all the living. God made leather clothing for Adam and his wife and dressed them. God said, "The Man has become like one of us, capable of knowing everything, ranging from good to evil. What if he now should reach out and take fruit from the Tree-of-Life and eat, and live forever? Never—this cannot happen!" So God expelled them from the Garden of Eden and sent them to work the ground, the same dirt out of which they'd been made. He threw them out of the garden and stationed angel-cherubim and a revolving sword of fire east of it, guarding the path to the Tree-of-Life.

Genesis 3:1-24 (The Message)



The serpent was clever, - more clever than any wild animal God had made. He spoke to the Woman: "Do I understand that God told you not to eat from any tree in the garden?" The Woman said to the serpent, "Not at all. We can eat from the trees in the garden. It's only about the tree in the middle of the garden that God said, 'Don't eat from it; don't even touch it or you'll die.'" The serpent told the Woman, "You won't die. God knows that the moment you eat from that tree, you'll see what's really going on. You'll be just like God, knowing everything, ranging all the way from good to evil." When the Woman saw that the tree looked like good eating and realized what she would get out of it—she'd know everything!—She took and ate the fruit and then gave some to her husband, and he ate. Immediately the two of them did "see what's really going on"—saw themselves naked! They sewed fig leaves together as makeshift clothes for themselves. When they heard the sound of God strolling in the garden in the evening breeze, the Man and his Wife hid in the trees of the garden, hid from God. God called to the Man: "Where are you?" He said, "I heard you in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid." God said, "Who told you that you were naked? Did you

## What is a Desert?

*A desert is a barren region with little or no rainfall, usually sandy and without trees or any vegetation. It is not habitable or cultivated; sometimes called a wilderness. It can be a place or environment lacking intellectual or spiritual stimulation therefore a cultural desert. It can be wild, abandoned or simple dry and barren. A desert island might well be so only because of a lack of habitation. A wilderness may be so simply because few men have passed through making trails or roads. It is wise to take note that all or most deserts can be changed or brought back to fertility by irrigation*

So how does this refer to me or in fact anyone who claims they may have been going through a desert time?



# A Desert Is Born

By Wendy Davie



Over Christmas Ewan and I had the privilege of travelling to Tasmania. Whilst there we enjoyed the fellowship and encouragement of many Christians as we ministered during our journey. However we also enjoyed a good rest and a great holiday. Tasmania fascinated us and as we travelled, we both knew the Lord's presence and His clear voice speaking to us along the way.

One place in particular where this happened, was at Queenstown. We had been travelling through rich green pastures and then forestry to suddenly turn a corner and be faced with a desert place. Like most desert places it had its own beauty, in fact, I felt as I looked at the rich colours of the rocky mountains sparkling in the sunshine, that they almost reminded me of a woman's jewel box spilling over with the different colours blended together in an untidy way. As most tourists do, we stopped at the lookout overlooking the township and there in front of us, down in the valley, lay the township like a green oasis surrounded by nothing but this wilderness. Comparing the rocky surrounds, I did not expect to find any living creature, whereas in the township with the creek running through I knew there should be many to be found. It was here that we read this information:

*"You are standing on a hillside once cloaked in dense temperate rain forests thousands of years in the making. Then as mining took hold, the thin peat soils burned and washed away and the hills were laid bare. Running beneath the hills around you are veins of mineral wealth - copper, silver and gold: the life blood of more than a century of continuous mining, yielding more than \$4 billion worth of ore. Mt. Lyell was once the richest mine in the southern hemisphere. Formed in 1893 'The Mt. Lyell Mining & Railway Company Ltd.', now 'Copper Mines of Tasmania,' is the sole survivor of 44 mining company's and syndicates that sought to exploit the rich ore bodies of the Lyell field. In the boom years of the 1890's and early 1900's, the once heavily forested hills around you met their fate. Felled to fuel the smelter furnaces, the hills were blackened by bush fires, and the top soil scoured by rain. For 73 years a pall of sulphurous smoke from the furnace stacks killed any new growth. Seeping through the sulphide rich rock of the mine workings and waste dumps, water turns acid then flows into the rivers below carrying a toxic concoction of metals. Just as the hills have been made barren by sulphurous fumes huge quantities of acid drainage from the Mt. Lyell mine lease, have devastated the Queen and King rivers. The effects are still evident as far away as Strahan's famous Macquarie Harbour."*



It was here the title of this segment heading came to mind. "A Desert Was Born"; and I began to ponder over the destruction mankind had brought upon this once pristine landscape. A few days later as we travelled the APT railway and looked upon the beautiful rivers, it was hard to understand or believe the fact that they were now totally dead, without even a micro organism to be found. My thoughts wandered over our lives and how the desert of our diseased heart was born and further still, how the deserts we pass through in life are born. Genesis Chapter 3 explains the diseased heart and how each of us is born with it because of Adam and Eve's disobedience. Romans 5:12 reminds us of this truth **"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned."**

It has troubled me a great deal when I have heard folks say that they are not sinners. What bench mark are they using to be able to dogmatically say this? Is it others that they look at, or their own pride that drives this thought pattern? Can any of us truly ignore our attitudes towards others and say that we are not driven at one time or another by our own selfish motives?

Many years ago we had close contact with a family who had originally come from Russia. We were visiting their parents at the same time as our friends and were delighted when many of their other children had returned home also. Their parents were an absolute joy and blessed us abundantly – in fact it was like going to a Christian camp run by Russians. Dad was disabled and sat most of his days reading the Scriptures, but he was also a faithful man of prayer. Over the weekend when conversations seemed to be leading in the wrong direction, he would call out "children we need to pray!" and all would go into the lounge for prayer. I could not help myself and asked my friend how many children her parents had. "Eleven" she said – "Are they all Christians?" I continued. "Yes, all with strong faith," she confidently answered. I had often heard that children of parents of strong faith sometimes wander from the Lord and so found myself asking "Why do you think this is so, what would you put in down to?"

She was quiet for a time and then said "my Dad always kept his promises good or bad." "No, that's not it!", I said "there have been many parents who kept their promises good or bad and their children have brought nothing but sorrow to their hearts." We sat in quietness for quite some minutes looking at the beautiful country around us, finally she told me her story.

"My parents had to escape from Russia during the war, at that time they had three children and they also brought my grandfather with them. However he was not a Christian and was in fact possessed." I stopped her there and questioned her about

that word; her answer struck me with horror. "He was completely controlled by the devil and would rant and rave over each one of us at times for hours; the rest of us would huddle in another corner and pray, because that is all we could do. During these times he would go for days without eating or drinking and then pick on the one person to stand over. We all grew up seeing clearly in the household the difference between good and bad; clean and unclean; holy and unholy, and we all knew we did not want what he had and so chose to follow the God of our parents. We learnt to pray and not to faint!"

To this day I have never forgotten my friends, their faith and prayerful ways and that wonderful conversation. I truly believe that the reason we fall short is that we do not see clearly the difference between true Christianity and the wickedness of the world.

Do you think that when the mining began in Mt. Lyell at Queenstown, that the people of that day would have clearly seen the damage that it would be doing or would eventually do? I don't, my belief is that they probably thought that the water would wash all their problems away and that the mountain would eventually regrow. When a piece of fruit goes bad, where does this badness begin – isn't it usually right in the core? That dear sisters, is where our sin began. A baby does not have to be taught how to be naughty – it comes in the package of birth; it is here that **"The Desert is born!!"**



# The Result of Self Will

By Margret Lepke



In the Bible we read of a nation that spent forty years in the desert, serving time for their sin. Their circumstances were tragic, and we may wonder how they could have done what they did. My circumstances are certainly different. I know that I am safe in Christ, and that positionally I am seated with Him in heavenly places; but each time I read the story of Israel's self-will; it speaks to me anew and convicts me in so many ways.

God had done so much for His people, the nation of Israel, and still they complained and rebelled against Him. He had shown His strength through miraculous interventions. He had even produced ten plagues that proved His sovereignty over the gods of Egypt - all the while keeping His own people safe; and then He had instituted the Passover for Israel; where the blood of lambs on the doorposts had saved the lives of their firstborn sons whilst those of the Egyptians had died.

Although Israel had witnessed God's power, they still did not trust Him as He led them away from Egypt. As soon as they noticed Pharaoh's army pursuing them, they became afraid and started to murmur against Moses, (and therefore against God). They complained that Moses should have left them in Egypt instead of letting them perish in the desert without a legacy of burial sites... Nevertheless, God was gracious and rescued them through a miracle. The Red Sea opened up for them, and after they had crossed it on dry ground, the Egyptians were drowned as they followed; only then the people praised God.

During their journey through the wilderness in order to reach the Promised Land, God preserved them from hunger, thirst and chaos. He even instructed them to make a special tent in which He would dwell with them personally. Unfortunately after God had called Moses to the top of Mt. Sinai to give him the Ten Commandments, another crisis developed which showed their lack of real faith.

Moses' absence took longer than the people had expected, and God's providence was quickly forgotten. Israel did not expect Moses to return, so they persuaded their high priest Aaron to make them a golden calf. When it was finished, they worshipped the statue for bringing them out of Egypt instead of God. Consequently, God became very angry with them and intended to destroy the whole nation. Instead of persisting with these rebellious people, He would make a new nation from Moses but Moses pleaded with God; and God relented. All those who openly declared their allegiance to God before Moses were spared.

Finally, the nation arrived at the border to the Promised Land. God told Moses to choose twelve men to spy out the land. This he did, and Joshua left with Caleb and other tribal representatives to explore the land, but what they saw tested their faith. Returning after forty days they reported that Canaan was truly a land flowing with milk and honey. Food was plentiful and grapes were huge; but so were the giants they had encountered on their journey.

All but two of the spies were afraid and said, "***There we saw the giants*** (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); ***and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.***"<sup>1</sup> Only Joshua and Caleb trusted God. They told the Israelites, "***If the LORD delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it***

***to us...Only do not rebel against the LORD, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the LORD is with us. Do not fear them.***"<sup>2</sup> However the congregation turned on them and wanted to stone them!

So once again God grew very angry: "***How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them?***"<sup>3</sup> This was the second time He had in mind to eradicate them. He would strike them with pestilence and disinherit them, and then make a mightier nation of Moses instead; however Moses was a humble man. In fact, the Bible says that he was the most humble man that ever lived.<sup>4</sup> A less humble person may have rejoiced at the prospect of becoming head of a nation, but Moses had compassion for his people and focused on God's glory rather than his own. He interceded for Israel and pointed out that their annihilation would damage God's reputation among heathen nations.

As a result God modified His punishment. He vowed that those people who had seen the signs He had performed in Egypt and in the wilderness, and who had nonetheless disobeyed and put Him to the test ten times since then, would not inherit the Land He had promised their fathers. None of those who rejected Him would ever see it: but their children, whom they had used as an excuse for not attacking when God had told them to do so - those children would enter the land; and so would Caleb and Joshua who had trusted God.

The eleven spies, whose lack of faith had invoked the national rebellion, were punished by God immediately, for they were struck by the plague and died. The rest of the nation would bear their guilt in the wilderness, where they would spend one year for each day their representatives had spied out the land, i.e. forty years. They would experience God's rejection and die in the desert, never entering the Promised Land. What an awful plight - and all of it due to self will.

<sup>1</sup> Numbers 13:33    <sup>2</sup> Numbers 14:8,9    <sup>3</sup> Numbers 14:11

<sup>4</sup> Numbers 12:3

## DROUGHT

Drought is ravaging the land,  
The fields are parched and brown;  
Many months have passed and gone -  
Since the rains came down!  
The driest continent on earth  
Can go from drought to flood,  
And farmers have rejoiced to see  
The dust turn into mud!  
But there's a different kind of drought  
In people's hearts today,  
And the ravages that this has caused  
Grows wider every day;  
Replacing God with empty things -  
Which can't bring peace of mind;  
They wonder why true joy and peace  
Are so hard to find!

Barbara Holmes



# What Makes A Desert Experience?

By Wendy Davie

At some point of time, we all experience a desert experience; a time of barrenness that we just can't always explain. It is always helpful to have some sort of guiding list that we can pull out and look through, for often during these times, we can't think rationally, we find it hard to pray and certainly find it hard to thank God for taking us through them. Below is such a list

**Being outside of the Kingdom of God!** Seek Him while you are still able to do so. Good life, many riches, happy parties, many friends and a well behaved and lovely family; none of these things will be enough to place you inside the Kingdom, God so wants you to leave the desert and enter the abundant life He supplies. The Bible tells us clearly *"that it is by His grace (or undeserved favour upon us) that we are saved, through faith (in the Lord Jesus Christ taking our place of punishment) and that it is not anything we can or have done – but a lovely gift from God. If it had been allowed any other way we would automatically become proud and boast about our achievements."*<sup>1</sup>



**Having sin in our lives!** Remember we are told *"that whatever is not of faith is sin"*<sup>2</sup> and again *"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."*<sup>3</sup> David discovered this when he sinned in taking Bethsheba to himself and it was not until he confessed this sin openly to God, his prophet and Bethsheba that things began to change. However the desert experience did not leave him until all the consequences of his sin were completed. Then we are told he stopped fasting, washed and dressed and went out with peace in his heart.

**Fighting spiritual attacks!** Are you under oppression? It is sometimes confused for depression, or severe fatigue. However this is very real and can be because we are right where the Lord wants us and we are working for Him in some manner: therefore Satan does not want the work to continue. Many missionaries, full-time workers and even writers of this magazine have certainly gone through this heartache. It usually goes on until we turn to the Lord fully in faith and complete trust; learn to wait on Him in prayer and then the attacks cease and the oppression lifts. There are times when the oppression is so heavy though, that it may be necessary to ask a friend to pray for you.

**Being a prayer warrior!** Jeremiah, known as the weeping prophet, and yes many other Christians have known the Lord to lead them into a desert experience. I have known it to be when there is need for prayer for others; (at those times God gives us a great compassion for the one we are praying for and more of a spiritual understanding as to what His perfect will may be). – Or when the Lord reveals to us a situation that is not of Him and must be changed, therefore prayer warriors are needed.

**A learning field!** This can be in order that we learn to trust Him more, to love Him more, to relinquish something we hold too dear to our hearts, or just to comfort another who is already there.

**Failing to have our Spiritual ears on!** At other times we enter a desert experience simply because we are not listening to the Lord's guidance. Maybe we are not reading the Word as faithfully as we should, or not practiced in prayer.

**Personality conflicts!** Unfortunately at times they come about when other misguided Christians do not understand us. Someone may have said unkind things about us. Our gifts are not being used in some way and we know the deserted feeling of loneliness. We can be surrounded by hosts and even going faithfully to a good Church, but still be lonely, simply because we neglect to pray for forgiveness both for ourselves and the other in the conflict.

**Waiting times!** It's hard to wait and to hear the Lord say "come away with me and rest" Because we all like to be busy and wanted, instead it feels like a wilderness. We need to learn to love and listen to the Lord more for this to pass. What wonderful lessons will be learned there whilst do so.

<sup>1</sup>Ephesians 2:8 (paraphrased for understanding); <sup>2</sup>Romans 14:23b; <sup>3</sup>Psalms 66:18. (KJV)



# “His Power And His Presence”



By Barbara Wilson

Many and varied pictures flash across our mind as we hear the word “desert”. It might be a picture of a dry, arid, barren place with little vegetation, yet having a stark beauty all of its own. Yes, a beauty, until you are lost and alone in such a place. Then it becomes a place of terror and fear of death.

I suppose all of us have experienced some sort of emotional desert place during our life. I had one just a couple of weeks ago. We had driven back from a funeral in Sydney and when my husband tried to get out of the car at home, it was almost impossible because of the acute back pain. In spite of medical care that extremely acute pain continued for a week; he could barely move. In fact he could barely speak and his normally bright, alert face became drawn and withdrawn.

## *The Qumran “Desert Experience”*

God’s people also had their “desert experiences”. There was that time in Egypt when God raised up Moses to be the deliverer of God’s people<sup>1</sup>. Then there was that time much later, when the Romans were in charge of Palestine. Persecution, pressure, and panic were part of the daily life of God’s people. When would it all end? Even a revolt didn’t save the situation. The central part of their life was attacked – the Temple of God. What would happen to the sacred scrolls – the Word of God, and the Writings about that Word? Would they be destroyed? For them it was a deep desert experience. Was there any hope at all?

A group of the faithful took some of the sacred scrolls to a place near the Dead Sea called Qumran where a Community had been established, seeking to preserve God’s truth. They copied the scrolls, and stored them in nearby caves where they remained until 1947. In the midst of this “desert experience” they were looking to God to save them. They knew the promises God had given them, that He would send them One who would rescue them from their persecutors: but when? How? Who was He?

From the writings they left behind we know they were looking for One who would be a prophet like Moses declaring God’s word; but also He was to be a King like David, leading God’s people to victory. He would also be a Priest like Melchizedek, praying for the people, and also a Priest like Aaron who would stand between their awesome God and His failing people. They even were looking for One who would either pierce or be pierced. (Either translation of the recovered fragment is possible); they couldn’t understand it.

This was their desert and who would take them out of it? Who was this Rescuer, this Messiah? When would He come? How would He come?

## *“In The Fullness Of Time ...”*

***“But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law”***

<sup>2</sup>. In this passage Paul is talking about Jesus who was born in a manger, and whose pure life was seen for 30 years as He taught the people and lived with them. This good Man was arrested and crucified. Was this the end? Surely this was not that promised Messiah! They couldn’t understand what was happening.

The Bible tells us that for this very reason He came. He would be crucified and die, but He would rise again on the third day. This Jesus would transform that desert because His death on the Cross meant that you and I could know forgiveness of sin and a personal relationship with God our Father, and with the Lord Jesus Christ who died in our place<sup>3</sup>. This faithful Rescuer has promised He will never leave us nor forsake us<sup>4</sup>.

I was in that desert place last week I felt so helpless. We prayed, but my husband’s pain continued unabated. In spite of those outward circumstances we knew God’s promise. He would not leave us; He was with us and sometimes that is all we have to cling to.

I am very thankful that my husband was able to have a couple of cortisone injections into the affected joints of his spine and within three hours my desert had changed. I felt I had my husband back! Even if that had not happened, I would have asked for strength to live in the light of the truth that God was walking with us, and He was still in control. There are indeed jewels in the desert.

<sup>1</sup>Hebrew 11:23-29; <sup>2</sup>Galatians 4:4; <sup>3</sup>John 3:16; <sup>4</sup>Hebrews 13:5b;





# His Called are Preserved

By Margret Lepke

There is a curious verse in the book of Hebrews, which says that angels are **"ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation"**.<sup>1</sup> The operative word here is "will" or, translated directly, "are about to". The Greek word used by the writer is (me,llw), which denotes the idea of expectation, i.e. to be about to, to be going to, or to intend or purpose.

Some people believe that everyone has a guardian angel, and there are plenty of songs and stories that speak about this hope. Others believe that guardian angels only help those who belong to Jesus Christ, their Saviour. For this to be true, the above text would have to read differently **"to minister for those who HAVE inherited [not 'will inherit'] salvation."**

Could it be possible that the above verse refers to something else? Could it be that those who will be saved at some point in the future have guardian angels to keep them alive until that day? The following may support this suggestion: when Paul preached in the city of Antioch, many Gentiles heard him, and **"as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed."**<sup>2</sup> We also read that during the time of the early church **"the Lord added to the church daily those [Jews] who were being saved"**

Many testimonies point to the fact that God has miraculously kept people alive before they placed their faith in Christ and were born again. They were preserved in the desert of spiritual death until they came to know Christ as Saviour. Here is one such example (the name has been changed to protect the person's identity).

David was travelling with some friends on a passenger ship. One of these friends turned out to be an enemy rather than friend when he 'accidentally on purpose' pushed David overboard. There had been contention between them for some time. David felt the swirling water pulling him down more and more. Despite being a strong swimmer, he could not succeed against the pull. He had never been

religious, but now God was his only hope. "If you get me out of this, I will..." David can't remember what he promised, but all of a sudden, he was back on the surface and was eventually rescued. God was soon forgotten.

Then, some years later, he was a pillion in a motorbike accident that hurtled him almost thirty metres down a cliff. He should have been dead then too, but again he pulled through. More years passed, and David was driving home one night along a country road at about 100km per hour, (that was the speed limit in those days). Everything seemed normal until, driving up a hill, he was suddenly faced with oncoming cars. Two or three, he couldn't tell how many, dashing towards him across both lanes, drag racing over the hill. Without thinking he swerved off the road and quickly swerved back again once the cars had passed. He could hardly believe that he was still alive. Because of the dark he slowly made his way home, heart pounding and legs shaking. When he arrived, he checked his car – not a scratch.

The incident gave him no peace, so the next day he returned to the scene and saw something incredible: poles flanked the road at short intervals, and only where he had left the road was there a short stretch of grass beyond the poles. Had the incident happened a moment sooner or later, there would have been no room at all to get off the road. How had he missed those poles? David was certain that a higher power had rescued him; however life went on and soon enough the incident was forgotten.

It was not until a few years later that David found Christ and trusted Him for eternal life. Only then did he realise that a guardian angel must have protected him. Three times he had been on the brink of slipping into Hell and is so grateful that this did not happen. Every time he thinks about it, he shudders – how easily a soul is lost! These days David seeks every opportunity to tell others about the good news of Christ, so that they too can escape an eternity of torment.

<sup>1</sup> Hebrews 1:14 <sup>2</sup> Acts 13:48 <sup>3</sup> Acts 2:47 (All verses from NKJV)

## Your Doctor's Insights

### Miscarriage is a sad but common event

Miscarriage (also known as abortion) is the sad outcome of a surprisingly high proportion of pregnancies. As many as one in three pregnancies will end in this way. Often the mother will not have realised she was pregnant and put her miscarriage down as a heavier than usual period. It is now clear that in many cases of miscarriage the pregnancy had some abnormality.

Losing a baby, even at such an early stage, is a very distressing experience for many families. This is especially so if it is the first pregnancy.

But those who have lost a pregnancy through miscarriage can take some comfort from knowing that the vast majority of women who have this experience go on to produce healthy babies in the future. There is often no known reason for the pregnancy to miscarry, even in those women unfortunate to suffer recurrent miscarriages. Therefore it is difficult to give advice about how to reduce the chances of this happening.

The signs of a miscarriage are bleeding, often with crampy stomach pains. This usually happens in the first few (eight to ten) weeks of pregnancy. Once bleeding starts the situation is called a 'threatened' miscarriage. No treatment has been shown to influence the outcome at this stage. Either the pregnancy will

go on to miscarry or the bleeding settles down and the pregnancy continues normally.

If bleeding occurs in later pregnancy it may be due to other things and should always have medical attention.

Recent studies have shown that miscarriages seem more common in women who drink a lot of coffee. So if you are pregnant, or thinking of it, reducing the amount of coffee you drink is a good idea.

Presented by the

**"Evans Street Surgery"**  
Inverell, NSW

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Unfortunately these Doctors will be unable to answer any questions, but if you feel after reading their items, that you need to seek medical attention, we suggest that you visit your own medical Practitioner.



## A Testimony

### The Work of

## "The Wives Support Group Ministry"

By Lorraine Addison  
www.wivessupport.org



God's heart has always been connected with the hearts of those who are poor, broken, downtrodden and afflicted. His beautiful heart reaches out to them.

Since the day she gave her heart and life to Jesus Christ, there had been a struggle in her marriage. She could still remember when the awareness of her unworthiness caused her to cry out to God to save her. When this truth was revealed, a repentant cry broke from her heart, and she gave her life wholeheartedly to God. She hungered for His Presence and poured out her love to Him. As a child of God, she could now see clearly and understand that which was previously obscure. His unconditional love caused her to trust in Him for all things. Her faith grew. However, her husband could not understand what had become of his wife. He found her disappearing into their bedroom with her Bible, and felt he would be intruding upon her if he entered. On Sundays she made a beeline for church, taking the children with her, leaving him alone. Suddenly the folk at church seemed to be more important to her than he was, and this made him fear that he was losing her. He loved her, and wanted her back - the way she used to be.

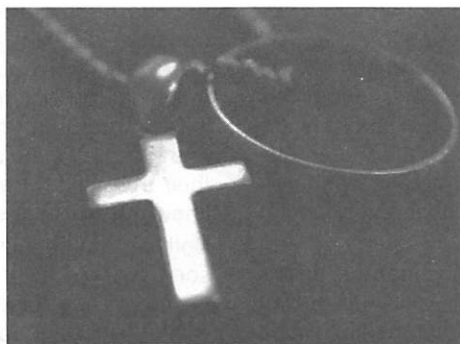
Christ had begun a radical transformation in her life, leaving her husband feeling that he was married to a stranger, an anxious stranger who wanted him to be just like her. This brought confusion, fear, and loneliness into their marriage, causing it to weaken. Icy walls appeared between them, distancing and alienating. A barrage of angry explosions became a constant threat, and stony silences meant that their vulnerability would not be exposed to cause either further hurt. Her life had become a roller coaster.

Like an athlete in a marathon race, she disciplined herself to make choices, putting God first in her life. God was teaching her to trust in Him completely. She studied His Word and prayed daily, standing in the gap for her husband. Miraculously, some of his attitudes changed. She learned to forgive him for all her unmet needs, realising that Christ is her El-Shaddai - her All-Sufficient One. However, she was still misunderstood, opposed for her faith, lonely and isolated within her marriage. Tears flowed as the loneliness engulfed her. At those times, God's Word sustained her-

**"You put my tears into your bottle; are they not in Your book?"** Psalm 56:8

She clung to God's promise for her husband's salvation, choosing to believe God when He said, **"Therefore everyone who hears these Words of Mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house upon a rock. And the rain descended and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house: and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock"**. Matthew 7:24 & 25. She knew her destiny was alongside her husband, in a loving and growing marriage, and trusted God to bring it about. Her faith grew as she continued to stand.

*God's ways are not our ways. When nothing makes sense, the faith choice is to trust in Him, surrendering hopes and dreams to Him, believing in His purposes.*



So many times she lost sight of the glory of God, and wandered into desert places where exhaustion and impatience ate away at her faith, and she began to experience indifference, bitterness and despair. Praying was difficult. The Word of God was dry, meaningless. Where was God??? She felt alone. Swarms of locusts devoured every green thing in her heart. Her children had grown and turned away from the life-giving message of faith. The responsibilities and burdens she had borne alone now weighed her down until she cried for life to end. What was God's purpose in all of this?

*When our tender hearts are so destroyed by locusts that we feel incapable of giving one more thing, how can they be revived? Perhaps nothing can soften a hardened heart like these two spiritual liquids: blood and oil. The blood of Jesus rushes in to cleanse our sinful hearts. 1John 1:9 promises, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness". God's compassionate forgiveness is poured out on His people after they repent and seek His*

*forgiveness. Getting in touch with our profound brokenness will dismantle fortresses of self, rejection, despair, and bitterness.*

*The second liquid is the oil of the Holy Spirit, our Comforter. He dwells within and offers comfort and counsel. To cut ourselves off from Him exposes us to lies of discouragement. To reconnect with Him expands our capacity to "suffer with" as He gives us His comfort and guidance 2 Corinthians 1:3 & 4.*

God is true to His Word, and began His work of restoration in her life. As she came to that place of brokenness and repentance before Him, He set her free from the strongholds of lies and discouragement that held her captive. His unconditional love for her brought peace. He had just the right people at just the right time ready to walk the journey of prayer and faith with her. These faithful friends were intent on bringing her into Jesus' Presence, so that she could be healed. She loved the way God always "showed up" when she felt she had nothing - no answers, no hope. They lifted her up in prayer and walked the extra mile with her. In time her shame and pain yielded to promise and hope, as truth became real to her heart. Faith came alive and trust was a moment-by-moment choice she made. She learned to take the hurt in her heart and share it with others, and healing gradually came.

Today, God has not only restored her faith and joy, but also restored her marriage. He had a purpose in her being an unequally yoked wife, and this purpose began to unfold in the next season of her life.

**She found women were coming to her for prayer for their own not yet believing husbands, and she began to intercede for them. Her heart was stirred, and when she heard His call to support these women, she obeyed. A small support group was formed in 1992 and the Lord blessed the work. These women saw a troubled marriage reconciled and a husband saved, and they also were encouraged to walk in faith.**

**THE WIVES SUPPORT GROUP MINISTRY HAS GROWN SINCE THAT TIME. PRAYER AND GOD'S WORD IS THE FOUNDATION, BRINGING GOD'S PERSPECTIVE TO CHRISTIAN WOMEN IN UNEQUALLY YOKED MARRIAGES. SUPPORT GROUPS ARE FORMED TO LINK WOMEN IN A CONFIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENT, WHERE THEY SHARE THEIR HEARTS, AND RECEIVE COUNSEL FOR THEIR SAD AND DIFFICULT SITUATIONS. TODAY, IT MINISTERS INTER-DENOMINATIONALLY ACROSS AUSTRALIA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM. MANY ARE THE BLESSINGS AND VICTORIES AND WONDERFUL TESTIMONIES OF SALVATION, RESTORATION OF MARRIAGES, PRAYER ANSWERED, AND SINGLE CHRISTIAN WOMEN GUIDED INTO CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIPS.**

**To God be the glory!!**





# The Most Precious of Jewels

By Mary Gayle

**"Repent! For the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."**

This was the message preached to the Jews by both Jesus and His forerunner John the Baptist. The Jewish people were awaiting the coming of Messiah, foretold by the ancient prophets, who would bring with Him the earthly kingdom – a new and better version of the prosperity enjoyed by Israel under the reign of David and his son, Solomon. However for four hundred years God's voice to His chosen people had been silent – until now. The kingdom was at hand! Many had expectations of what this kingdom would be like – but it turned out to be what few expected.

The people were in the desert waiting for the treasure to be revealed. Then suddenly here it was! Jesus, performing many signs and miracles that confirmed Him to be the long awaited One: but seeing, the people did not see; and hearing, they did not understand. So Jesus taught them about the Kingdom that had come amongst them. He taught those that had spiritual eyes and unblocked ears that there was going to be a period of time when the Kingdom would not be in a visible, physical form as expected by the Jews – that it would be hidden within the hearts of those who followed the King. For where the King is, there is the Kingdom.

We live in a world that seems to be going from bad to worse. Yet even a cursory study of history reveals that mankind has always had evil in his heart. The only difference nowadays is that this evil is manifest to more people at a time. Terror and sin are rampant on our doorstep and we seem helpless to prevent its' spread. However the King is still here. This is still His world, His creation, and He is the Supreme, Sovereign Ruler, even though He allows Satan some limited authority.

In the gospel of Matthew, and the thirteenth chapter, Jesus describes what His Kingdom – the Kingdom of God – will be like during the time between His first and second comings. That's the time in which we now live, the Latter Days, the times of the Gentiles. He illustrates through parables various aspects of the Kingdom, explaining the meanings to His chosen ones. These teachings were a mystery to the saints of old. They contained things that had not been revealed previously, but that pertained to God's Kingdom in this age.

The world of our time is a desert. It is devoid of true spiritual life, except where God has chosen to reveal Himself in this desert. There is much hidden treasure here if we but look.

**<sup>44</sup>"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field. <sup>45</sup>Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. <sup>46</sup>When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it."**

These are two of the parables about the Kingdom of Heaven that Jesus spoke to the people who had been following Him around the region of Galilee.

The first tells of a person who is not looking for the Kingdom. I know many people who have stumbled, as it were, upon the truth of the gospel message and have so entered into the family of God through the salvation provided by the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus. The man described stumbles upon a treasure hidden in a field. Whether he was working in the field or simply

walking by it and saw something sticking up out of the ground we are not told, but he came across this treasure by accident.

Palestine had been a troubled land for thousands of years before Christ walked there. They didn't have banking establishments as we know them today so it would not have been an unusual thing for a man to bury his wealth in a nearby field, to be resumed as it was needed. Sometimes the owner might die without telling anyone where his treasure was. In times of war many people were taken to far off lands never able to return to collect their hidden wealth. So when Jesus spoke to the people of treasure being buried in a field it would not have sounded as outrageous to His listeners then, as it does to us now. The man was not a thief – otherwise he would have just taken the treasure. Instead, Jesus said that in his joy he went and sold all that he had to buy the field. He was willing to give up everything he owned in order to possess this hidden treasure that he had found.

The man in the second parable did the same thing. He found a pearl of great value – so great in fact that he sold everything he had in order to possess this one pearl. The difference between the two men is that the second one was actively seeking this treasure. He was a merchant, looking for fine pearls. Pearls were the most valuable of the precious stones in Jesus time, much like diamonds are today. This merchant's job, his career, was to seek out fine and beautiful pearls. He would buy them and then sell them at a higher price to someone who recognized their true value. He was a connoisseur of pearls and obviously knew one of great value when he found it.

Both men recognized the richness of what they had found as soon as they saw it. They knew that their discoveries were worth far more than anything they already possessed, so they were willing, gladly, to part with everything to obtain something of greater value - so it is with salvation.

When we encounter the good news of the gospel, God reveals to those whom He will the true value of what they have found, so that they are willing to forsake their homes, their family, even their very lives if called to, in order to possess that most precious of jewels. What is that treasure? None other than our precious Lord Jesus, God Himself, living in our hearts through His Holy Spirit, in order that we might be living jewels in the desert of this world, expressions of His Kingdom, a light in a dark place. For where the King is...there is the Kingdom.

<sup>1</sup>Matthew 3:2

<sup>2</sup>Mathew 13: 44-46 (KJV)

## ROOM AT THE INN

Barbara Holmes

In Bethlehem's Manger, a long time ago,  
Our Saviour was born to this sad world of woe.  
The reason He came was to save us from sin,  
To keep us and take us, home to Heaven with Him.

No room at the Inn for the Babe to be born,  
Just a poor stable - midst cattle forlorn.  
Is there room in your heart for this Child, today?  
Or do you say with the world, "I have no room today?"



# From Desert to Green Pasture

By Margret Lepke

What picture does the word 'desert' evoke in your mind? I see a wide expanse of dryness and barrenness, and if I were lost in it without food and water, I would surely die. However if I lived among green pasture, there would be plenty of food and water to sustain me.

Have you ever wondered how God sees this world? When I asked this question in Scripture classes, the children usually answered, 'He sees good people and bad people.' While the words *good* and *bad* might need some defining, it is true that God sees what people do, but more importantly; He sees what they are and whom they belong to. Again there are two types of people: those who are born physically, but are dead spiritually and reside in Satan's domain; and those who are born again spiritually by the Spirit of God and are alive and in His kingdom forevermore.

Let's imagine we are watching a world that is divided into these two kingdoms: Satan's kingdom to the left – a huge expanse of desert – and God's kingdom to the right – a land of life and green pasture. As we watch these two kingdoms, we notice that for some odd reason all infants are born into the desert kingdom. This kingdom is crowded, and people live on foods that sustain them only for a short time. They seem content with chasing one mirage after the other and are oblivious to their king, who is unloving, deceitful and wicked, seeking their ultimate destruction. Their greatest problem is that they are dead (spiritually separated from God), and that they don't even know it.

Now between the two kingdoms we see an unsurmountable dividing wall with only one door, and only one way leading through it. Once in a while we notice a person moving through that door and entering God's kingdom, and so we shift our gaze to the right. God's kingdom has far fewer residents, but everyone rejoices over each person that joins them; and then we wonder why so few people enter this kingdom. After all, it offers abundant life, and the king is loving and just: He treats His people like his own and has destined them to eternal life in His presence.

As we keep watching, we also notice something shocking going on in the desert kingdom: when desert dwellers come to the end of their earthly existence, they are ordered to a dark and lonely place, full of never ending torment. Once there, they beg for someone to be allowed to go and warn their family and friends, to tell them to find the door to God's kingdom, but it is too late. They can only hope that their loved ones will listen to the message they themselves rejected.

We look over to God's kingdom again, and here two people are leaving the earth. These ones are triumphantly escorted to a place of great joy. They go to meet the person they have loved from the day they entered this kingdom: and as we move a little closer, we see that this person is the one that is proclaimed in the Bible to be Lord and Saviour. This is Jesus Christ, who said

of Himself: ***"I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture."***<sup>1</sup>

We are curious: why do some people walk through that door and others don't? As we investigate, we find that those people, who died in Satan's domain, went to that place of eternal doom because they had disregarded the good news found in the Bible. There is no shortage of Bibles. We see them on dusty bookshelves, in drawers and underneath piles of old junk. In fact, there are Bibles everywhere, but no one takes any notice of them. We are told they are old, boring books, no longer relevant to modern society. Besides, who could possibly believe those old tales?

Well, happily some people did, because they left Satan's kingdom and found eternal life in the neighbouring kingdom of God's grace. How did they do it? They believed the Bible, which teaches that Satan's kingdom is full of sinners, and that sinners cannot enter the kingdom of God. They realised that *there is no one who is righteous, not even one*, and that *all fall short of the glory of God*<sup>2</sup> – including themselves.

And so they followed Jesus, the Son of God, who said of Himself: ***"I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*** The Bible teaches that the reward for sin is death, but that the gift of God is eternal life. God demonstrated His love toward sinners in that His Son Jesus Christ died for them. They are purchased with His precious blood, so that anyone who believes in the Son has everlasting life. However those who don't believe will not see life as God's anger remains on them.<sup>3</sup>

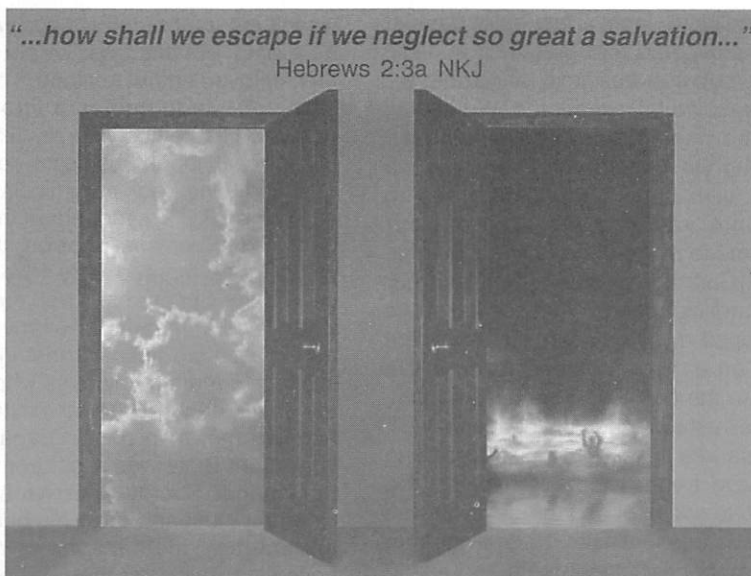
We realise that those who crossed over had found

the key! They had placed their faith in the Son of God, believing that His work on the cross was sufficient payment for their sins. They had realised that it was love that had compelled Him to die for them, because they could not save themselves. He had taken their punishment to set them free, to be able to offer them a free gift of pardon, which He had paid for with His life.

As we ponder this marvellous love, we wonder why so few of the desert dwellers receive it. Wouldn't it make sense to escape certain doom? It appears that these people are stubborn and proud, thinking that they know better and disregarding all warnings. Instead of being thankful that someone loved them enough to warn them, they dislike those who do: they even persecute them. Because they will not humble themselves before Almighty God, their pride and self-will leads to their own destruction. Our puzzle is solved. Now we know how some people found life in the Kingdom of God, and why others remained in the desert of death. Where do you find yourself?

<sup>1</sup> John 10:9; <sup>2</sup>Romans 3:10,23

<sup>3</sup>John 14:6; Romans 6:23; Romans 5:8; 1 Peter 1:18,19; John 3:36







# My Testimony

By Vail Bennett

When Wendy asked me to write my testimony I thought perhaps I would; but then I thought I should ask the Lord if it was His will and I must confess that I did not feel a really urgent desire to comply. After some little time, I sat down to write asking the Lord to guide my pen that the words might be helpful to others.

Well where to start, if I started at the very beginning I would need a book, so best to start at the point of despair. First some background; I am sixty three, an only child, the young man I married in 1963 is still with me today, (although he isn't young anymore, but neither am I); we have two adult children, a daughter-in-law and three grandchildren, all of whom I love very much: there that bit was easy! My husband and I went into business in 1980 and worked diligently to make it a success: no real holidays, only a few extra days at Easter, Christmas etc; but we prospered and grew and in 1992 our story of success was written up in a business magazine: we had definitely made it according to worldly standards. We had all the trappings of success, three homes, cars and money; we could have pretty much anything we wanted and everything we did in business prospered. We were always cautious in business, before we went into anything new, we did our homework and took plenty of time to make decisions, so imagine our shock and horror when in 1997 the wheels fell off and our lives began to unravel at an alarming speed. What had taken us twenty years to build was stripped away in approximately eight months flat. All our plans for an early retirement, to do those things we had not done because the business always came first, went out the window and our self esteem and confidence as well. Suffice is to say that our business was no longer viable: everything we tried to correct the downward trend failed, we had lost the magic touch, we had no income to speak of and the decision was made to walk away. The bank was unrelenting in it's dealings with us, determined to grind us down, but we fought tooth and nail to save what we could. I can tell you that continual unrelenting stress does terrible things to relationships and health.

In January 1997 my husband was hospitalised with heart failure – brought on by worry and stress. Subsequently the doctors declared my husband unfit to work, we were too proud to go to CentreLink for help because that was an admission of failure. I well remember one winter we lived on rice and spaghetti, bread and eggs. I will be forever grateful to those friends, (those that didn't turn away from us), who invited us to barbecues or dinner; they had no idea that those meals were a wonderful luxury and the best meals we had eaten in weeks. We salvaged our holiday home in Tasmania for our principal residence, sold off all our trappings of success and became recluses. My constant companion became a terrible cold brick in the pit of my stomach, which I began to believe would never leave me. I dreaded answering the phone or clearing the mail box! I could see no future and I became a person without hope and filled with despair. I also discovered within myself a great well of bitterness and anger; what I carried within me could have incinerated a small city and my constant thought was "why me, what had I done to deserve this". I found out that I had no control over anything, I could not change any circumstance in my life, I had no power, I was nothing, worthless and the world rolled on without a backward glance. Friends and even some family members

deserted us, this alone was catastrophic! My mother told me that it served me right; we had tried to become too big. However, little did we know that the Lord had some plans of His own, but we did not know Him then! When we first purchased our holiday home in Tasmania we thought that it was our clever idea: how ignorant, proud and naïve we were. Just a little way along from us, a long-standing Christian friend of my parents had a holiday home and we began to visit her and her husband. She began to tell us of the love of Christ, that He loved us, regardless of our opinion of ourselves; indeed He had died for our sin. Well I knew I had plenty of that (sin) in my heart, I knew that because so many memories had been coming back to, as it were, haunt me. The times I had been thoughtless, selfish and hard-hearted. Now, I wasn't ignorant of who Jesus was, I had been to Sunday school as a child, but this was like elixir to me; I was definitely unlovely, I felt unloved and very alone. There is a passage in Scripture that says **"put Thou my tears into Thy bottle:"** I would have filled many of His bottles with my tears. Our dear friend continued to ply me with books, which I devoured, reading excerpts to my husband. One book in particular made a huge impact, "The Seal of God" by F.C. Payne, about the seal that God has put on every part of His creation. I got out the little white Bible I had carried when I was married (see I was a hypocrite too) and began to search the Scriptures. I well remember the day in January 2000 when I went eagerly to tell my dear friend my news, that I had asked the Lord Jesus Christ into my heart to be my Saviour; it still brings tears to my eyes when I remember. I have never in all my days seen anyone so excited, she was literally dancing and hugging me, then dancing again and laughing for joy!! My first large print Bible was a gift from her with wonderful words in the front page. Shortly after we had some more wonderful news when my husband gave his heart to Christ also. I regard her as my spiritual mother, she is now eighty four years old and becoming frail: may the Lord bless her abundantly.

Then sorrow of sorrows she and her husband decided to sell their holiday home, which meant that I would not be able to fellowship with her. I remember sweeping down the back step with tears flowing asking the Lord – "why Lord, just when I get close to someone You take them away?" The answer came as quick as a flash, "so that you can come closer to Me." I now understand that people come in and out of our lives for a purpose and when that purpose is fulfilled, they go; all our life is a lesson. We each have different lessons to learn and the Lord will not allow us to put anyone before Him: He is a jealous God. I now accept this ebb and flow, knowing that the Lord knows what is best for me.

We began to frequent the Christian book shop in our locality and there met the daughter of a school friend of my husband, we told her we were new Christians and she enquired if we would like to attend a Bible Study at her home, which we gladly accepted. We duly attended on April 20<sup>th</sup> 2000; met the teacher who then proceeded to read from the Gospel of John 1:1-14 explaining the deity of Jesus Christ: **"that all things were made by Him, that in Him was life and the life was the light of men, that as many as received Him to them gave He authority to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God"!!!** Oh how marvellous it was to our ears, we were oh so hungry and thirsty, but there was more. We turned then to the first chapter of Ephesians 1:3-12 where we learned



more amazing truths. This brought the tears again, that God had had His hand on us from before we were born and knew all about us, it was so wonderful and amazing we scarce could take it in. We were both baptised in the sea near where we live in November 2000 before a wonderful company of believers and quite a few rubber neckers who wanted to see the show.

During this time my mother had to move from the family home to an aged care facility and without too much detail it was a trying time for us both. However I began to speak to her of what I had come to know and believe and she asked how she could be saved? So I spoke the prayer of salvation and she repeated after me the words of life; that she believed with all her heart that Jesus Christ is the risen Son of God and that He died for her sins. Curiously she then told me that she wished she had gone to Bible Study when our dear Christian friend had asked her all those years ago. In 2002 on a Friday morning she had a stroke which paralysed her from the neck down and rendered her unconscious, but the staff told us that she could still hear. So I sat with her all Friday night, reading my favourite passages from Scripture, talking to her and playing wonderful hymns. She passed peacefully away at twenty to six on the Saturday evening. As time goes on I miss her very much and understand her better. Three months later almost to the day my husband's mother died suddenly, but not before my husband had ministered to her and she accepted the Lord Jesus as her Saviour.

In the journey that we have travelled thus far, the Lord has been gracious to us and we continue to learn and grow in Him. Looking back I can see that just as God took the children of Israel through the wilderness and instituted the Law to show them what was truly in their hearts and that they could not save themselves so the Lord has to show us the very same things. We were reduced to nothing, all that we had achieved was by His grace, not of ourselves and when all was taken away we could not stop it or change it and in our desperate need He brought us alongside one of His own that we might hear the words of life, that we might accept His gracious invitation and be saved. We are still in Bible Study and find it a real joy and inspiration and our teacher and his wife have become dear friends. We do not have the trappings of worldly success or indeed money, but now we have something far better, we have Christ!!

I hope that my story may be an inspiration to those who belong to Christ already and an encouragement to those who have not yet made that leap of faith. Trust in Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Sovereign Lord, your life will never be the same again!!

<sup>1</sup>Psalm 56: 8b



## The Dove

By Margaret Roberts  
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Oh, gentle dove, today on high,  
I heard your soft and pleading cry  
Somewhere in the azure blue;  
Your haunting call keeps coming through.

In God's perfect mystery,  
You are part of history.  
The magnitude of His great love  
Is revealed to us in one small dove.

Is your call so full of joy  
For every adult, girl, and boy?  
Or are you drowning in despair  
As you view life everywhere?

Keep on calling, gentle bird;  
Tell those of us who have not heard  
How Jesus came to set us free  
By His death on Calvary.



From the Sydney Harbour Bridge, the word  
'Eternity', flashed around the earth.  
The twenty-first century had dawned at last,  
With fireworks, cheering and mirth!  
How many paused to ponder the word,  
Lit up for the whole world to see?  
An eight letter word - how important it is,  
For the likes of you and me!  
A metho-drinking vagrant, who lived  
A life of crime,  
Wandered into a meeting,  
To while away the time;  
He desired some tea and a rock-cake,  
But the 'Rock of Ages' he found!  
He knew he was a lost guilty sinner,  
And certainly not heaven bound.  
He cried to God in repentance,  
And his burden fell off on the spot;  
He knew that Jesus had died for his sins,  
And cleansed him from every blot;  
He thought of those heading down through eternity; lost,  
And he knew what he had to do.  
For thirty-three years he wrote on the pavement,  
In Sydney and Melbourne too,  
Just one little word for all to see,  
That eight letter word "Eternity",  
So people who saw it might take stock  
Of their lives, and ponder their destiny.

By Barbara Holmes







# The Jewel of Forgiveness

*"He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us."*  
Psalms 103:10-12 (KJV)

*"When you were stuck in your old sin-dead life, you were incapable of responding to God. God brought you alive—right along with Christ! Think of it! All sins forgiven, the slate wiped clean, that old arrest warrant cancelled and nailed to Christ's Cross. He stripped all the spiritual tyrants in the universe of their sham authority at the Cross and marched them naked through the streets."*  
Col 2:13-15 (MSG)

## The Jewel Of Forgiveness

By Ruth Marie

It was 2AM in the morning when Gillie found herself sitting on the side of her bed weeping uncontrollably. Her husband slept soundly beside her and as he was profoundly deaf, he did not hear her sobs. The nightmare had been so bad; she was really unsure where she even was. Wanting to go for a trip to the bathroom and being unsure where it was, she reached across and touched her beloved husband. Strange how she knew he was there to comfort and help, yet was so confused about her other surroundings.

Bill, who was a gently soul, realized that there was something wrong and very quickly came to his wife's assistance. "What's wrong love?" He said. Amid the tears she explained her predicament, so he turned the light on. Of course once she could see, it all came back and she hoped up and trotted off to the bathroom, trying desperately to stem the tears. However it had disturbed Bill so much, that when she returned, he gently comforted her and asked what the problem was. "I just had a dreadful nightmare," she said. "Can you tell me about it, would that help?" Bill asked. "Well," she sniffed, "it was with family and we were having a dreadful argument. I do not really remember what we were arguing about; I just remember the strong feeling that none of them really understood me. Of course I also had a very strong feeling that I was wrong in the way I was reacting – I mean we were all shouting in dreadful anger at each other. I saw no faces; I just knew that they were family. Bill I felt so isolated; totally isolated and alone – and that is the feeling that remains with me now. Bill do you love me?" "Of course I do," he said. "But why?" she sobbed, "I don't deserve it and I just can't understand why!"

It seemed like hours that they lay in bed talking about the love of God. Bill had prayed for Gillie; however she still found herself crying off and on. Now though it seemed to her that it was for a different reason. She was now so aware that God loved her and she could not understand why, she felt so unworthy! In fact she still could not really understand why Bill loved her. During their talking and prayer and the comforting hugs her darling gave her, she felt totally overwhelmed with God's love and grace. Eventually they both dozed off to sleep again and even though she slept peacefully for the rest of the night, she awoke the next morning strangely calm, but very tired.

As the day progressed she found herself thinking over the dream. "Funny Lord," she quietly prayed, "how did I know my husband was there when I was so confused?" That still small voice spoke into her heart – "Gillie, my child, have you not realized yet that my grace is often shown to you through your husband? Just as Bill

is always with you, there to help, comfort and protect, so I am always with you and your spirit is aware of that." "Lord," she prayed, "was that really my family in the dream?" It was then that she thought of her Church family and close friends. "I wonder if they could have represented them?" she pondered. There was no voice in her heart, but there was a deep assurance that she was on the right track. "Lord, please help me to forgive? – You have forgiven me and You ask that I should also forgive in the same way." She prayed. Numbers of folks came to mind: a harsh or unkind word here and there – crushing her soul. The isolated feeling came swiftly back into her heart and Gillie earnestly sought the Lord for His love and peace to return. She was very much aware, that often when things had been said about her and to her, she had reacted the wrong way. Not so often would she argue with them, but being so sensitive they were like knife-blades into her soul and instead of praying for the speaker immediately, she took the wound with her and carried it closely causing further scarring to her soul.

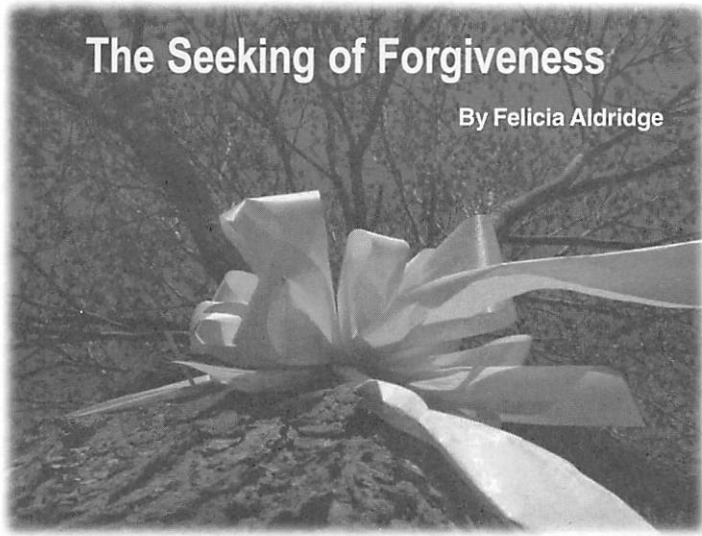
It was now weeks after the dream, but the memory of it remained with Gillie; she still knew there was work for her to do in forgiving others. Eventually she came to the conclusion that she did not want to forgive them – and that was sin. This was what was giving her the isolated feeling – not from others so much, as from her Lord. "Time to deal with this properly" she thought. Quietly she went into her bedroom, knelt by the bed and prayed. "Father, I really don't want to forgive them, but You have asked me to do so and I do want to please You. You have taught me to say 'As You wish, my Lord'. Please forgive me for my sin, rebellion and pride. Forgive me for wanting to punish them and for wanting to hold the wounds close to my soul, thus trying to justify myself. I don't think I can forgive on my own, but Lord You forgave me so much, so I am handing my life over to You and asking You to give me the right spirit in order that through You, my Lord, I will want to forgive and I will have the strength and Your deep abiding love for them and so be able to do so. In Jesus Christ's precious and Holy Name I pray. Amen"

When she rose and left the bedroom, it was with a sense of great peace and joy. However she also knew that every time the devil or her flesh brought thoughts of the past back, Gillie's responsibility was to hand them directly over to the Lord Jesus Christ. It was very evident to her that she could not forgive others on her own – no she needed that gift of the precious jewel of forgiveness. As promised in the Bible she had sought it with a humble and a contrite heart, now found, Gillie determined in her innermost, being never to loose it again.



# The Seeking of Forgiveness

By Felicia Aldridge



Do you recall the song – “Tie a Yellow Ribbon” sung by Tony Orlando? Are you familiar with it? Maybe it ages me. Read the words through; listen to the words; listen to the words and hear the story.

I'm comin' home, I've done my time  
Now I've got to know what is and  
isn't mine  
If you received my letter telin' you  
I'd soon be free  
Then you'll know just what to do if  
you still want me  
If you still want me

## CHORUS:

Tie a yellow ribbon 'round the old  
oak tree  
It's been three long years  
Do you still want me?  
If I don't see a yellow ribbon round  
the old oak tree  
I'll stay on the bus  
Forget about us  
Put the blame on me  
If I don't see a yellow ribbon round  
the old oak tree

Bus driver, please look for me  
'Cause I couldn't bear to see what  
I might see  
I'm really still in prison, and my love  
she holds the key  
A simple yellow ribbons what I need  
to set me free  
I wrote and told her please:

## REPEAT CHORUS:

Now the whole damn bus is  
cheering  
And I can't believe I see  
A hundred yellow ribbons 'round  
the old oak tree  
I'm comin' home

I remember quite clearly the first time I heard this song. How I was occupied, exactly how old I was, what my priorities were or my line of thinking at the time – are not important – besides – these things I cannot remember. What I do recall is how the song affected me.

Awareness of the uncertainty of the “singer”: the regrets and doubts, the fear of rejection and finally the desperation to know the truth – that one whom he “loved” could make or break his future. Did she still love him? He obviously loved that person to whom he wrote. Loved to the degree where it hurt – the thought of whom filled him with a longing for acceptance...for a desire for a renewed relationship...the hope of an ongoing commitment.

Like most people, I love a good story – a happily ever after story and this was one of them.

This song came to mind one morning early. I had just awoken – “bright eyed and bushy tailed” so to speak – ready to meet the day. Actually, can you believe it, I was curled up trying to ignore the fact of a cup of tea at my bedside getting progressively colder and the activities of the day becoming an increasing certainty. There I was with this song flowing through my mind...he obviously had a history – a life before this journey he was on.

He loved – he cared – cared enough to ask – to make a request, uncertain of the response and yes – he was given the desire of his heart. He was forgiven and with that forgiveness, release came – freedom for his body, mind and spirit.

After I had drunk the luke-warm tea and made a fresh cuppa, my thoughts continued. I was ready to follow them – amazed as I realized where they were heading. A comparison of the words of the song, with that of a never changing reality; a reality which is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow: even forever. Let's move on.

We too, have a history! Chapters written in our life's book that tell of where we have been. Put yourself in the position of the man on the bus! Travelling the long journey of life – so many ‘bumps’ and ‘hurdles’ on that road...Travellers moving along beside you – being carried along and yet making a different journey. Many chapters have been written in this, his, my, your life story – many chapters have yet to be written. Here, in this song, is a chapter that needed closing before another could begin.

Aware of our short comings – the decisions made and the consequences of those decisions – we try to move on...our past is always with us, but we are to progress from what we were and what we may have done – towards who we can be, who we will be and what we can do to reach the ‘goal’ of being who we were intended to be.

Our ‘traveller’ indicates that he knew what he needed to do in his situation – seek forgiveness. Our ‘friend’ sought forgiveness from one who he knew existed – he knew where to direct his request. He requested an open expression from his loved one, to indicate that forgiveness: a single yellow ribbon; but this man was given more than he asked – he was given an unexpected – overwhelming vote of approval...

Coming to the point of being able to acknowledge the need to seek forgiveness is a hurdle put before us – an opportunity to move on – to leave behind so that we can move forward. Maybe we find it difficult to make our request known – we are uncertain of the response we will get – fear starts to creep into our thinking. Don't let that fear settle – we need to listen to our heart – the challenge is to leap the hurdle – to take the opportunity...

Our Lord desires us to come to Him with our requests of forgiveness. Oh what joy and freedom there is in recognising our wrong, in acknowledging the affects of these wrongs and seeking release from the burden. The bus driver – pilot – who has been with us throughout our life's journey – doesn't need to look. His response to us when we come to him is:

“I know what the tree looks like. I can see the ribbons. I was there! I did this for you to give you the freedom in putting behind those things that hinder...”

Those red ribbons flowed to show His overwhelming love and approval of us, as we request His intervention in our lives.

Finally, realize and remember, that there are those, known and even unknown to us, who carry us in prayer. God also sends His angels to watch over us. Most precious of all, is that Christ, God's Son prayed for us when He walked on this earth and even now prays for us – intercedes on our behalf with His Father...

There is a freedom in forgiveness and forgiveness is an expression of love.

At the conclusion of this I realize that I now must go – go and meet a challenge I have been avoiding for far too long. I need to seek forgiveness. In seeking or giving forgiveness there will be freedom.





# Who Else But God

Field and Gaff

Who else but God could have thought of these things:

Dew on a petal, a tendril that clings,  
The throat of a bird and green moss on a log,  
A bee on the wing and a fern in a bog;  
The sweet smell of clover, of grass after rain,  
The flame of October and full fruited grain,  
A tree in its glory, a seed in its pod.

Who could have thought of such beauty but God!

Who could have thought of a meadow in bloom,  
An orchard in blossom, a lilac's sweet perfume,  
The egg of a robin, the sun through the trees,  
The touch of cool water, a soft summer breeze,  
Of white drifting clouds with wild geese wheeling by,  
The blaze of a sunset, a star in the sky,  
Eternity's span and a butterfly's wings;  
Who else but God could have thought of these things!

Thrilled as a child I give thanks for these things,  
Praising my God for the blessings He brings;  
So grateful for bounties that crowd every day  
And for His forgiveness when I go astray.  
Oh, how can I show all the joy in my heart,  
And humbly, devotedly do my small part?  
I know of the tears on the road that He trod;  
Who could have loved us so, who else but God!

## *The Blood of Jesus*

Author Unknown - Presented by the Ridgley Bible Church

One night in a Church service a young woman felt the tug of God at her heart. She responded to God's call and accepted Jesus as her Lord and Saviour. The young woman had a very rough past, involving alcohol, drugs, and prostitution; but the change in her was evident. As time went on she became a faithful member of the Church. She eventually became involved in the ministry, teaching young children. It was not very long until this faithful young woman had caught the eye and heart of the pastor's son. The relationship grew and they began to make wedding plans: this is when the problems began. You see, about one half of the church did not think that a woman with a past such as hers was suitable for a pastor's son. The church began to argue and fight about the matter. So they decided to have a meeting. As the people made their arguments and tensions increased, the meeting was getting completely out of hand.

The young woman became very upset about all the things being brought up about her past. As she began to cry the pastor's son stood to speak: he could not bear the pain it was causing his wife to be. He began to speak and his statement was this: "My fiancée's past is not what is on trial here. What you are questioning is the ability of the blood of Jesus to wash away sin. Today you have put the blood of Jesus on trial! So, does it wash away sin or not?" The whole church began to weep as they realized that they had been slandering the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Too often, even as Christians, we bring up the past and use it as a weapon against our brothers and sisters. Forgiveness is a very foundational part of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. If the blood of Jesus does not cleanse the other person completely then it cannot cleanse us completely. If that is the case, then we are all in a lot of trouble! What can wash away my sins, nothing but the blood of Jesus...end of case!!!

## SCOOP

We have 36 paperback New Testaments (NKJV) for our readers to use as outreach tools or to read themselves.

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# The Jewel of Praise

*"To appoint unto those who mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified."*

Isaiah 61:3 (KJV)

*"I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth."*

Psalms 34:1 (KJV)

## LIFE

Barbara Holmes

A baby's penetrating cry, at the moment of its birth,  
The tender green of a shoot springing up from the dark of the earth,  
The joyous call of a Magpie from a gum tree way up high,  
And the burning orb of the Sun as it travels across the Sky,  
Illuminating our wonderful world, alive with colour and song!  
The beautiful Butterflies, the hum of the Bees all add to the glorious throng  
And upholding it all by the Word of His Power - our Mighty Creator above!  
How can we not praise Him and give Him His due, whose one motivation is Love!

## God Knew The Best

Sometime, when all life's lessons have been learned,  
And suns and stars for evermore have set,  
The things which our weak judgments here have spurned,  
The things o'er which we grieved with lashes wet,  
Will flash before us, out of life's dark night,  
As stars shine most in deeper tints of blue,  
And we shall see how all God's plans were right,  
And how what seemed reproof was love most true.

But not today: then be content poor heart!  
God's plans, like lilies, pure and white unfold:  
We must not tear the close-set leaves apart,  
Time will reveal the calyces of gold.  
And when, though patient faith, we reach the land  
Where tired feet, with sandals loosed, may rest,  
Then we shall clearly know and understand,

Anonymous



# The Jewel of Suffering



*"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake."*

Philippians 1:29

*"What counts is that you put up with it for God's sake when you're treated badly for no good reason. There's no particular virtue in accepting punishment that you well deserve. But if you're treated badly for good behaviour and continue in spite of it to be a good servant, that is what counts with God. This is the kind of life you've been invited into, the kind of life Christ lived. He suffered everything that came His way so you would know that it could be done, and also know how to do it, step by step."*

1 Peter 2:20-21 (MSG)

## Why Am I In This Mess?

By Margret Lepke

When we're in a mess and there are things in our lives we find unpleasant (to say the least), we tend to suffer; and then comes the usual question, "Why, Lord?" When we are focused only on self, we ask, "Why ME, Lord?"

**Jenny** moved to the city a year ago to attend university. She has new friends and leads a busy social life, but most of her friends do not believe in Jesus. More and more she slips into their habits. She doesn't talk about her faith any more, because she knows they wouldn't like it, and hardly finds time to meet with other Christians. She still talks with God, but their times together become less and less frequent. At first, things seemed to go well for her, and she loved her new life: but gradually her mind became focused on worldly things, and she began to feel more and more dissatisfied. It was now that her grades began slipping, some of her 'friends' were turning against her. Her boyfriend broke up with her because she wouldn't sleep with him. Jenny feels angry and exhausted most of the time. "Why is everything going wrong for me?" she cries out to God.

**Carmen** and her husband are happily married and have three sons. Two of their sons are walking with the Lord and doing fine, but the third one has been addicted to drugs for a number of years. His parents have tried to help him; they have prayed; they even moved to stay close to him to offer support, but all to no avail. Carmen loves her son and has suffered for years. "Why are you not changing him, Lord?" she moans.

**Mary's** daughter is about to move out. Expecting a child, and doubting whether she really is a Christian, she wants to set up home with her non-believing boyfriend. Mary is distraught: hasn't she always been conscientious in teaching her daughter the way of God? She has prayed for her since she was born, encouraged godly habits, and tried to be a good role model herself as both mother and wife - and now this... She wonders whether her daughter was ever truly born again and petitions God for the welfare of her soul. Mary racks her brain - did she do

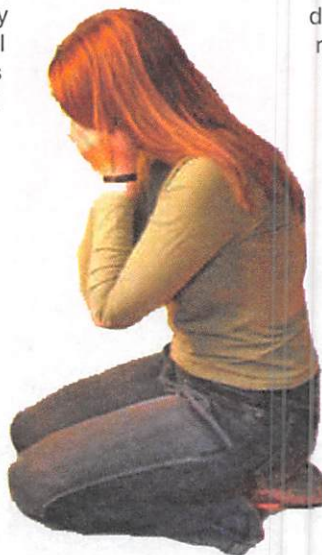
something wrong in rearing her child? Why is her daughter so distant? "Lord, why are you not stepping in here?" she cries.

**Melanie** is ecstatic. She has a wonderful husband and three small children, and just last week they moved into a brand-new house. Melanie is having fun as a homemaker, but soon she begins to feel so tired all the time, and her headaches are getting worse. She puts it all down to the stress of moving, until she starts feeling sick as well. Maybe she is pregnant again? A trip to the doctor and many tests later, a shocking revelation is made: Melanie has cancer. All she can utter is, "Why, Lord? Why?"

**Anna** is our final example. Most people like her, but her closest co-worker constantly undermines her wherever she can. What has gone wrong? Hasn't she always been nice and helpful to this woman? Anna prays about the problem and continues with her positive attitude, but the behaviour of the other woman becomes worse instead of better: and then Anna doesn't get the promotion she deserves and hears that her co-worker has influenced the decision-makers. Someone also tells her that this woman calls her 'Miss Goody Goody' behind her back, and that she hates Christians. Anna's question of "Why?" has been answered.

Most Christians encounter messy circumstances at one time or another, and it would not be wise to jump in and offer advice in the fashion of Job's misguided friends. They were miserable comforters,

and God rebuked them sharply for assuming wrongly. Job's response to suffering, on the other hand, is a marvellous example to us: When Satan attacks and his servants are murdered, his flock destroyed and his children killed, Job grieves terribly. Nonetheless, he asserts his belief in God's sovereignty: **"The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD."** Then comes along another attack: Satan strikes his body with painful boils from head to toe, and his wife suggests he should curse God and die. Job responds differently,





***"Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?"<sup>2</sup>***

when one of Job's friends tries to tell him that innocent people do not suffer (thereby suggesting that he must be guilty!), Job's anguish is heightened. He points out that no one is righteous before God and that no one is able to withstand the only sovereign God.<sup>3</sup> He also grapples with the concept of wisdom and comes to the conclusion that, ***"the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding."***<sup>4</sup> And then Job goes to great lengths to defend himself before his friends, asserting his innocence in regard to sensual sins, trusting in his wealth, and being uncaring toward his enemies. Finally, he pleads to meet God personally in order to defend himself before the highest authority. It was then God turns things around and questions Job, who finally admits his ignorance and confirms God's ability to do anything He purposes. He concludes, ***"I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."***<sup>5</sup>

Job's mess was organised by Satan and approved of God in order to demonstrate Job's faith and God's faithfulness. What about our troubles? Sometimes we suffer for the same reason, but at other times we may endure the consequences of our own foolish actions. Or we may suffer without apparent fault of our own because of the transgression of others. At times we may even be privileged to partake in the sufferings of Christ, and at other times the hand of God chastens us for the very reason that we are His children. He prunes His trees to bring forth more fruit. He cuts and refines and polishes His jewels ***"that in the ages to come He might show forth the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."***<sup>6</sup>

When we are in a mess, we need to seek God's wisdom to discern the reason for our suffering. Rather than asking a point blank "Why?" it may be more helpful to ask, "What can I learn from this situation, or what can I learn through the process of suffering? How can I honour God through it all, and how can I grow spiritually?" Since God is in control, all suffering has the potential of drawing us closer to Him and at the same time magnify His glory. Death itself is not something to be feared, but a promotion to glory.

At certain times in my Christian walk I have experienced great anguish, but looking back, each encounter has strengthened my faith and reliance on Christ. For over a year now I have been forced to live with a mess that I can neither understand nor define

or resolve. God has not answered my questions, and all I can do is trust and remain patient. God's timing is not our timing, and His thoughts are higher than ours. My favourite verse is, ***"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths."***<sup>7</sup> I am comforted by the fact that He is in control, and that He promises to work ***"all things...together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."***<sup>8</sup> I will leave you with the well-known words of two hymn writers, who also knew suffering:

O Love that wilt not let me go,  
I rest my weary soul in thee;  
I give thee back the life I owe,  
That in thine ocean depths its flow  
May richer, fuller be.

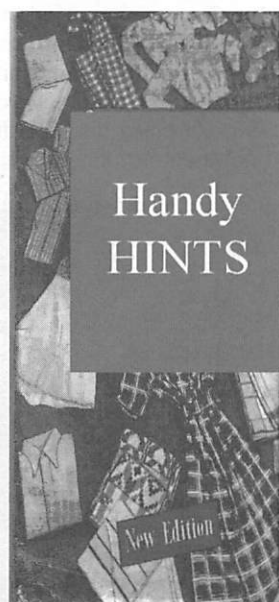
O Joy that seekest me through pain,  
I cannot close my heart to thee;  
I trace the rainbow through the rain,  
And feel the promise is not vain,  
That morn shall tearless be.  
*"O Love that wilt not let me go"*  
Written by George Matheson  
Camden Christian Fellowship No...



When peace like a river attendeth my way,  
When sorrows like sea billows roll;  
Whatever my lot, Thou has taught me to say,  
It is well, it is well, with my soul.  
Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,  
Let this blest assurance control,  
That Christ has regarded my helpless estate,  
And hath shed His own blood for my soul.  
*"It is well with my soul"*  
Written by H.G. Stafford.  
Camden Christian Fellowship No

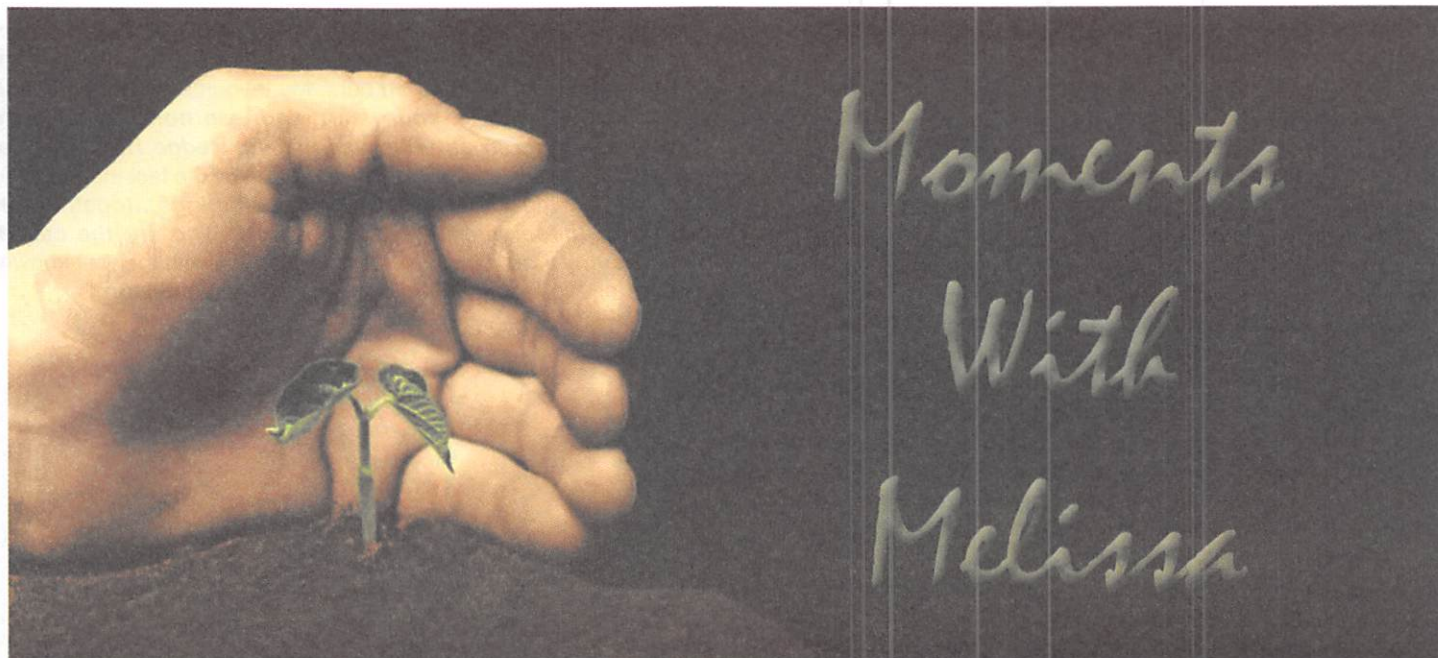
<sup>1</sup> Job 1:21   <sup>2</sup> Job 2:10   <sup>3</sup> Job 9:2-12   <sup>4</sup> Job 28:28   <sup>5</sup> Job 42:5-6

<sup>6</sup> Ephesians 2:7   <sup>7</sup> Proverbs 3:5,6   <sup>8</sup> Romans 8:28  
(All verses from NKJV)



- **Bring back the sparkle of your Diamond!** Simply place a denture tablet into a glass containing a cup of water; now drop your rings in immediately. By the time the fizzing has stopped, all mineral deposits will be gone. Use the same method to clean thermos bottles, cruets, glasses and wine decanters.
- **Clean your precious gems!** Soak your diamonds, rubies, sapphires and emeralds in soda water to give them a bright sheen. Simply place them in a glass full of soda water and let them soak overnight.
- **Jewellery!** Can be soaked in Alka-Seltzer for a couple of minutes. It will sparkle and shine when you pull it out. Or if you prefer, simply line a small bowl with aluminium foil. Now fill it with hot water and mix 1 tablespoon of bleach-free powdered laundry detergent (not liquid), such as Omo. Soak your Jewellery for a minute, before rinsing well and air-drying. This method can also be used for cleaning anything silver.
- **For gold and silver!** Soak them for 10 minutes in a mix of ½ cup of clear ammonia with 1 cup of warm water. Gently wipe clean with a soft cloth and allow to dry. NOTE –DO NOT USE THIS METHOD WHEN PEARLS ARE INVOLVED – IT WILL DULL OR DAMAGE THE NACRE, WHICH IS THE DELICATE, LUSTROUS SURFACE.
- **To repair loose stones in Jewellery!** A drop of nail polish will do the trick and be invisible at the same time when dry.





Everyone has a dream - a purpose in which God created us for. There is something He wants us to do for Him while here on this earth. The thing is we have to find it! Once you set out on this adventure of seeking and finding your God given purpose in life, you will soon find that if you seek with all your heart, that God can sometimes take you down a road that is very unpleasant. At least this is what I've learnt!!

I set out on this adventure 4 years ago, 2 years after I was diagnosed with arthritis. I wanted to know what God was doing, where this was leading and what He has in store for me. Ultimately I wanted to know my purpose in life. I am grateful to say that God has answered all of these questions and more! Not only has He shown me why I got sick, a question that is often left unanswered, but He has revealed what His plans are for me! Now, this did not all come in a flash of light overnight; for I have been through many desert experiences. Sometimes to the point where I think I can't handle it anymore. It's at those times when I cry out to God the most and He gives me hope: a verse from His Word or His word spoken to my heart. It's at those times that I know He is with me and He helps me through, never allowing me to go through more than I can bear.

One particular time while I was trying my best to clean the house a bit, I was questioning God as to why He would show me all He has in store and then not do it; (I wanted it done in my time not His!) As I was dusting, the Holy Spirit spoke a name to me over and over again. The name was Abiram. I'm like, "Who's this guy?!" So I went to my Bible and looked him up.

In numbers chapter 16, Abiram and his friend Dathan charged Moses that he had not led them into the Promised Land, but had left them stranded in the wilderness. God was showing me that I was just like Abiram; questioning God and not believing that I would ever get out of this wilderness! After many trials, the Israelites eventually did enter the Promised Land. God had kept His promise and He will keep His promise to me as well, in His time!

What I've learnt is that the wilderness is an invaluable season of preparation. It is the place where God transforms you into the person who can do His will; His purpose for your life. The wilderness is 'God's loving gift' to people with a future to please Him. God's motive and plan in the wilderness is to prepare you to become the person who can succeed at your God given dream or purpose.

And what's the result of persevering through this wilderness experience? ***"So that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."*** James 1:4b

What a promise!

Often while going through a wilderness experience we encounter giants! These are things that get in the way of our God given purpose. For example, physical difficulties, family concerns, opposition, persecution etc. In my case, God has called me to be an evangelist, but I can't speak in front of a crowd and I am a shy person. Also I have arthritis which is a major physical difficulty! These are my giants, things I can't get rid of by myself. Things I have to trust God to deal with. When He does - all the glory goes to Him. I'm sure God finds a different way everyday to ask the question, "Do you trust me?!"

I hope this has encouraged you to keep on persevering through the wilderness, if you are there at the moment. I know it's not pleasant, I've been there and am still there to some extent; but God has promised that He will not leave you in the wilderness stranded; He will see you out of there and into the Promised Land. On the other side is where God has great plans for your life! Plans you could not dream of for yourself.

A little girl was sitting on her grandfather's lap as he read her a bedtime story. From time to time, she would take her eyes off the book and reach up to touch his wrinkled cheek. She was alternately stroking her own cheek, then his again. Finally she spoke up, "Grandpa, did God make you?" "Yes, sweetheart," he answered, "God made me a long time ago." "Oh," she paused, "Grandpa, did God make me too?" "Yes, indeed, honey," he said, "God made you just a little while ago." Feeling their respective faces again, she observed, "God's getting better at it, isn't He."



# The Jewel of Loneliness



*"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."*

Matthew 6:33 (KJV)

*"And it came to pass in those days, that He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God."*

Luke 6:12 (KJV)

*"When Jesus, therefore, perceived that they would come and take Him by force, to make Him a king, He departed again into a mountain Himself alone."*

John 6:15 (KJV)

## From a Man's World

By Bruce Poulsen

So what's this segment "From a Man's World" doing here in a "girly" magazine? Well, it is a known fact (though often denied) that there are real fair dinkum Aussie blokes who, dare I say it, sneak a peek at their spouse's "Heart of a Woman" while "the other half" is occupied elsewhere. As a result, this section of secret men's business will appear regularly just to give you a viable excuse should you blokes be caught red handed with a copy of "Heart of a Woman" in your possession. As I sit to write this and "bare my soul" just a little, I find it comforting to assume that this segment is only read by red-blooded Aussie blokes and is totally blank and invisible to our female counterparts.

To the world around us, we, the hunter, provider and fortress of strength in the family find it hard to accept, let alone admit, that we sometimes have a "desert" experience. When I think of "desert" experiences, my mind races to a fine upstanding robust guy called Moses. Moses, the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, the King of Egypt, was a man in his prime with seemingly "the ball at his feet". Moses had wealth, power, influence and position. One day he killed an Egyptian who was fighting with a Hebrew. Blood is certainly thicker than water. Moses didn't think a lot about this until he came across two Hebrew men quarrelling and one said to him, "Are you going to kill one of us like you killed the Egyptian the other day?" Moses went to water and ran, not back to the palace, not down by the river Nile to reflect on life, but far away into the desert. He eventually came across some young girls shepherding sheep and as he helped them draw water from the well for the flock, he ended up with a job tending sheep.

I can visualize Moses sitting on a rock under a shady tree late one afternoon, his elbows resting on his knees and his hands cradling his jaw. Not another human being for miles and miles, absolutely no mobile phone coverage to interrupt, just all alone in a vast "endless" desert. Pharaoh's adopted grandson, alone, in this arid, harsh and unforgiving land with none of the comforts or security of Egypt. Loneliness is a reality for those, even today, who are going through a "desert" experience. You don't need to be away from all human contact to feel the burden of loneliness. There are many people today, and perhaps you are one, whom are desperately lonely despite living in a bustling world surrounded by others. Many of us find it difficult to form strong relationships

with other men; which enables us to share our deepest feelings. We tend to put on a brave face and soldier on through our desert rather than open up and in our minds, only appear weak. We, as men, are experts at appearances and sometimes are just frilled neck lizards. We are all show and bravado up front, but behind the "big frill" we are really soft and vulnerable.

God took me into a desert experience when I left my family at home on the farm and for two years I was long distance truck driving. I have never felt so lonely in my life as I spent long hours overnight driving the highways. This loneliness and solitude presented an opportunity to reflect on the past.

There is a distinct difference between reflecting on the past and living in it. Reflecting on the past is part of a process of moving on and learning from past experiences whereas living in the past tends to be an exercise in self pity and has the effect of dragging you deeper into despair. Perhaps as you go through your desert experience, a reflection on the past would enable you to admit your mistakes and maybe forgive those associated with your current position. I remember many nights washing the steering wheel of the truck with tears, not of self pity, but more of regret from priorities that had not been right in the past. I found that it was acceptable and often healthy for Aussie blokes to learn to cry.

Reflection is good, but can only last so long before resolve must take its place. God had a plan for Moses and the desert provided a training ground for humility, patience and reliance on God. It was in the desert that God showed Moses his power in the "burning bush", in the rod turned into a snake and his hand becoming covered in leprosy and then becoming whole again. God often takes us

into the desert to adjust our perspective on life and to provide an opportunity for him to show us just a little of his "jewels" and blessings for us.

One of Australia's best known wildflowers is Sturt's Desert Pea. The seed from this plant can lie dormant in the hot desert sand for years just waiting for the right conditions to germinate. Moses spent 40 years in his desert experience as God worked in his heart and the heart of the whole Israelite nation preparing them for just the right moment. God's timing is always perfect and though He may at times seem distant during this desert trial, we have His promise that he will never leave us or forsake us. How can the great and awesome Creator, who knows when a sparrow falls to the ground, not be vitally concerned and aware of our every situation?





When storm rains fall on the arid desert landscape, the seed of the Sturt's Desert Pea springs into life and shoots up a small and seemingly insignificant green leaf. The first signs of life and growth are quickly followed by rapid root growth as the plant seeks to soak up every available nutrient and drop of precious water. We can easily take a lesson from this plant that when God's time is right, we can rapidly grow despite the desert, as we soak up His word and seek to source our hope, provision and purpose from His great storehouse.

Soon the desert is covered with a carpet of green and within weeks the first flowers begin to emerge. In such a tough, inhospitable environment perhaps one could imagine a small insignificant pastel flower, but nothing could be further from the truth. The flower of Sturt's Desert Pea is a vibrant blood-red with a distinctive bulbous black centre. These spectacular flowers are approximately nine centimetres long and grow in clusters of around half a dozen on thick vertical stalks which spring up every 10 – 15 centimetres along the prostrate stems of the plant. Certainly these flowers are a stark contrast to the surrounding landscape and are both eye-catching and prolific. God can do amazing things, way beyond anything that we can ask or think. A heart that has been 'desert prepared' is right for prolific fruit bearing in God's wonderful planning and timing.

Can I encourage you to cling to God's promises, become close to his people, crave his blessing and centre your life on Him despite the circumstances of life that he has planned before the foundations of this world for you to experience.

*Remember, this is men's business, ladies can't see this and you only ever read this section of the magazine.*

Till next time, God Bless.

# The Jewel of Godly Contentment

*"A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked."*

Psalm 37:16 (KJV)

*"But godliness with contentment is great gain; for we brought nothing into this world and it is certain we can carry nothing out: and having food and raiment let us be therewith content."*

1 Timothy 6:6-8 (KJV)

## SLOW DANCE



Have you ever watched kids on a merry-go-round?  
Or listened to the rain slapping on the ground?  
Ever followed a butterfly's erratic flight?  
Or gazed at the sun into the fading night?  
You better slow down.  
Don't dance so fast.  
Time is short.  
The music won't last.  
Do you run through each day on the fly?  
When you ask how they are, do you hear their reply?  
When the day is done, do you lie in your bed;  
With the next hundred chores running through your head?  
You better slow down.  
Don't dance so fast.  
Time is short.  
The music won't last  
Ever told your child, we'll do it tomorrow?  
And in your haste did not see his sorrow?  
Ever lost touch; let a good friendship die,  
Because you never had time to call and say, "Hi"?  
You better slow down.  
Don't dance so fast.  
Time is short.  
The music won't last.  
When you run so fast to get somewhere,  
You miss half the fun of getting there.  
When you worry and hurry through your day,  
It is like an unopened gift...thrown away.  
Life is not a race.  
Do take it slower.  
Hear the music!  
Before the song is over.

(This poem was written by a teenage girl with cancer in New York Hospital)



## We Can Be Grateful To God For So Many Things

"SIXTY SECONDS IN A MINUTE"  
"SIXTY THINGS TO BE GRATEFUL FOR IN IT"

We can be grateful for the **Trees**  
And then the **Leaves**.

The **Wind** that whistles through the leaves  
The **Light** shining down for all to see.  
The **Rain** on the earth for plants to grow.

The warm **Sunshine** for growth to occur and to keep us warm on **Bright Sunny Days**.

There are also the **Birds** who fly so high relishing in the Sun's bright shiny rays  
The **Butterflies** and **Caterpillars** as well

So bright and beautiful by God's Hand.

We can be grateful for all of these things, all ten of them.

Multiply them by SIX which is how many days it took our Lord to create all.

Then to rest on our Sabbath from all His ultimate Works.

To reflect on His miracle works so wonderful for all to enjoy

So be grateful that our dear Lord has made for us a world -

So full of brightness, sunshine and love for us to enjoy.

All the trees, birds and sunshine cannot take the place of the love I feel in my heart -

For our wondrous Lord and Eternal Heavenly Father.

Village Avenue - Author Unknown

## The Cracked Pot

Author Unknown

A water bearer in India had two large pots, each hung on the ends of a pole which he carried across his neck. One of the pots had a crack in it, while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water.

At the end of the long walk from the stream to the house, the cracked pot arrived only half full. For a full two years this went on daily, with the water bearer delivering only one-and-a-half pots full of water to his house. Of course the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments, perfect for the purpose for which it was made. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection, and miserable that it was able to accomplish only half of what it had been made to do.

After two years of what it perceived to be a bitter failure, it spoke to the water bearer one day by the stream.



"I am ashamed of myself, and I want to apologise to you. I have been able to deliver only half my load because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your house. Because of my flaws, you have to do all of this work, and you don't get full value from your efforts."

The bearer said to the pot, "Did you notice that there were flowers only on your side of the path, but not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, and I planted flower seeds on your side of the path. Every day as we walk back, you've watered them. For two years I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate the table. Without you being just the way you are, there would not be this beauty to grace the house."

*"But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour and some to dishonour. If a man, therefore, purge himself from these, (sins) he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and fit for the Master's use and prepared unto every good work."*

2 Timothy 2 : 20-21

A boy was watching his father, a pastor, write a sermon." How do you know what to say?" he asked. "Why, God tells me." "Oh, then why do you keep crossing things out?"



# The Jewel of Rejoicing

*"Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice."*

Philippians 4:4 (KJV)

*"Rejoice evermore"*

1 Thessalonians 5:16 (KJV)

## Though My Fig Tree Isn't Blossoming

By Glenda D Rosser

Reflecting on the life of Habakkuk (has the words jewels in the last paragraph) Habakkuk, in Bible days, was a man of vision and faith. He saw a great burden and questions the Lord with **"O Lord, how long shall I cry, and you will not hear?"** Have you ever prayed that prayer for a loved one away from the Lord, or when you are deeply troubled about something – maybe even rejection? I am sure you have, and I have too.

The Lord encourages him with the reply **"Look among the nations...Be utterly astounded! For I will work a work in your days which you would not believe though it were told you."**

This has been an encouragement to me many times when it seems as if our prayers for Walgett seem to be going no further than the ceiling. Habakkuk had a vision, and I had a desire to write a book one day to help someone somewhere with a need. The words the Lord gave Habakkuk, I took for myself. They are found in chapter 2.

**"Write the vision and make it plain on tablets that he may run who reads it...For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; because it will surely come. It will not tarry."** I have waited, and now the book has been written. Praise the Lord! I pray it may be published and that many 'will run' who read it. Run to freedom!

The burden of loved ones outside of Christ; is I am sure the greatest burden one can bear. The burden Habakkuk had for his people comes across strongly in chapter 3:26 **"O Lord, Revive your work in the midst of the years! In the midst of the years make it known; in wrath remember mercy."** He wasn't dejected for himself but because of the sins of the people. Amidst his burden, Habakkuk sings a hymn of faith in the last three verses of his book: **"Though the fig tree may not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines...And the fields yield no food...YET I WILL REJOICE in the Lord, I WILL JOY in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is MY strength..."** As I read these verses in Habakkuk, I thought of ways in which they fitted in with my every day life. I wrote four versions of my own on this passage. *'Though people stab one another to kill, and brawl to their heart's content; Though mice run in and out of the house, and (red backs) hide in the corners; Though the heart is appalling, and zaps my strength, And 50*

*degrees sometimes is hot! YET I WILL REJOICE...I WILL JOY...The Lord is MY strength...'*

Walgett where we lived was in a state of spiritual darkness, and very little seemed to happen. It was easy to become discouraged at times. It is lonely in the outback. Some folk have been praying for thirty years for their families, and Satan can make them feel their praying is in vain. Because of these things, I penned my next version. *'Though there isn't much sign of spiritual growth out here, nor many people coming to Christ; though our efforts seem to fail, and years of praying seems in vain; though there be not much fellowship in the outback; and there be just a few in Churches; YET I WILL REJOICE...I WILL JOY...The Lord God is*

*MY strength...Though weakness takes the place of strength, and frustration seems close by; though sickness and suffering enter for awhile, and I keep the bed company all day; though exhaustion and tiredness come for a visit, and weariness engulfs me; YET I WILL REJOICE...I WILL JOY...The Lord God is MY strength...'* Though fear creeps in like a prowling lion, and my courage disappears out of the door; though depression and rejection hang low like a cloud, and gnaw at me like a rat; though discouragement knocks at my door unannounced, and self-pity arrives the same day; **YET I WILL REJOICE...I WILL JOY...The Lord God is MY strength...'** I have shared the life of Habakkuk I trust by my doing so, you may have been helped in some way to overcome your

problems too. It has been a blessing to my soul as I have studied this man in readiness for sharing this story.

A book of remembrance has been written of Habakkuk in the Holy Bible. Malachi 3:16 tells us of this when he says: **"Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another. And the Lord listened and heard them; so a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the Lord and who meditate on His name."**

**"THEY SHALL BE MINE,"** says the Lord of hosts, **"On the day that I make them my jewels. And I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him."** May we too have this assurance! May a book of remembrance be written of us in that day! May we be among the jewels that the Lord will gather for his crown! Are you ready to meet the Lord? Will He be able to spare you as a man spares his own son who serves him?



# The Jewel of Love

***"This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this; that a man lay down His life for His friends."***

John 15:12-13 (KJV)

***"Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."***

1 John 4:7-8 (KJV)

## These Are His Jewels



By Barbara Holmes

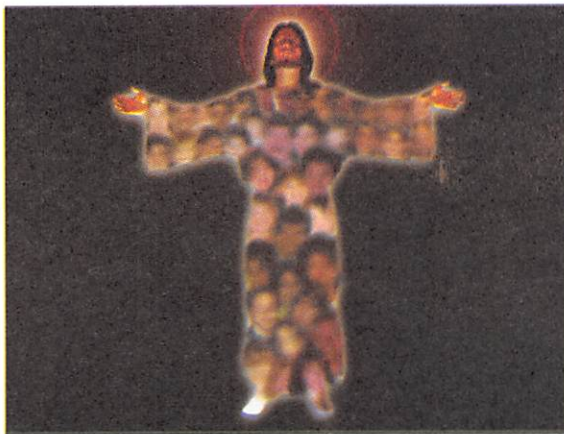
***"And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up My Jewels."***

Who are these privileged ones? We find out in the previous verse. They are the ones who feared the Lord (with a reverential fear - regarding Him as sacred or exalted), and spoke often to one another. They revered Him and exhorted one another *daily*.<sup>2</sup>

We are living in a world which can be figuratively described as a desert - dry and barren as far as spiritual things are concerned. Here and there, as in an actual desert, we find oases, i.e. groups of people, made up of individuals, who have purposed in their hearts to revere and love the Lord and seek to follow Him in their day to day walk through this desert. These are His Jewels in the desert. They form part of the Body of Christ, The glorious Church of God, and 'The Bride of Christ.' Does this describe you, (me)? Am I, are you, endeavouring to walk in this way? My own heart condemns me, for I fail in so many ways.

***"But if my heart condemns me, God is greater than my heart and knows all things."***<sup>3</sup> Those words give me hope and peace of mind to know that in 'that Day' ***I shall be like Him for I shall see Him as He is.***<sup>4</sup> We find that the ***"Lips of knowledge are a precious jewel"***<sup>5</sup>. How do we obtain this knowledge? ***"By reading and meditating on the Word of God;***

***giving ourselves wholly to them so that our progress may be seen by all.***<sup>6</sup> Let us not be 'wishy washy' and half-hearted in the things of the Lord. If we are ***"lukewarm God will spew us out of His mouth."***<sup>7</sup> A 'she'll be right, mate,' attitude will not do.



What exactly is a 'jewel', anyway?

The Australian Concise Oxford Dictionary states that it is an ornament containing precious stones. It can also mean a highly prized person.

Let's think of a prospector for a moment. He explores a region for precious stones such as gold, silver, diamonds, rubies, opals, emeralds garnets, etc. Alluvial diamonds, gold and gems may be found when they pan in sandy river beds; but rich veins, deep in the ground have to be excavated or mined.

It's the same with God's Word. There are gems to be found in a cursory reading of the Bible; but the deeper we dig the more we find. An hour spent digging in this inexhaustible Mine

guarantees a rich reward!

<sup>1</sup>Malachi 3:17a (KJV); <sup>2</sup>Hebrews 3:13; <sup>3</sup>1 John 3:20; <sup>4</sup>1 John 3:2; <sup>5</sup>Proverbs 20:15; <sup>6</sup>1 Timothy 4:15; <sup>7</sup> Revelation 3:16 KJV

(Unless otherwise stated a;; references are from the NKJV)

Terri asked her Sunday School class to draw pictures of their favourite Bible stories. She was puzzled by Kyle's picture, which showed four people on an airplane, so she asked him which story it was meant to represent. "The flight to Egypt," said Kyle. "I see...And that must be Mary, Joseph and Baby Jesus," Miss Terri said. "But who's the fourth person?" "Oh, that's Pontius - the Pilot."



# To What Purpose Is This Waste?

Matthew 26:8; John 12:3-7; Luke 7:36-50  
Matthew 26:6-13; 2 Corinthians 1:3

I had a tiny box;  
A precious box of human love –  
My spikenard of great price!  
I kept in close within my heart of hearts  
And scarce would lift the lid lest it should waste it's perfume on the air.

One day a strange deep sorrow came with crushing weight and fell upon my costly treasure,  
sweet and rare, and broke the box to atoms.  
All my heart rose in dismay and sorrow at this waste!

But as I mourned, behold a miracle of Grace Divine  
My human love was changed to Heaven's own:  
And poured in healing streams on my broken heart  
While soft and clear a voice above me whispered.

"Child of mine, with comfort, where with thou art comforted,  
From this time forth, go comfort others,  
And thou shalt know blest fellowship with Me,  
Whose broken heart of love hath healed the world."

Author unknown

## What Is Love?



A group of professional people posed this question to a group of 4 to 8 year olds. What does love mean? The answers they got were broader and deeper than anyone could have imagined.

When someone loves you, the way they say your name is different. You just know that your name is safe in their mouths. Billy - age 4

When my grandma got arthritis, she couldn't bend over and paint her toenails anymore. So my grandpa does it for her now all the time, even when his hands got arthritis too. That's love! Rebecca - age 8

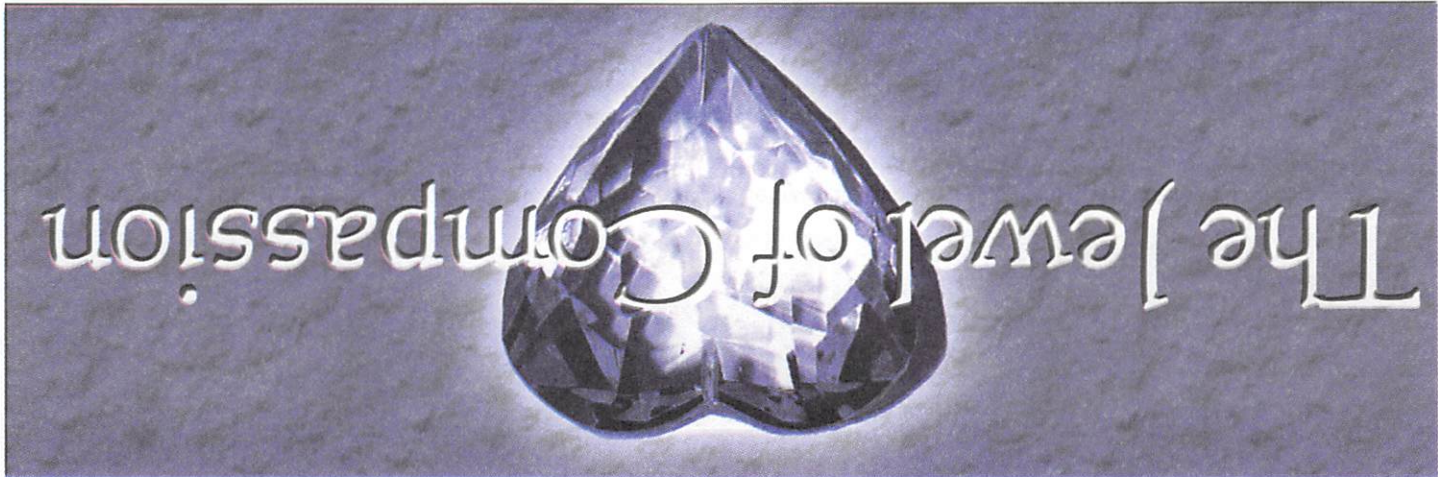
If you want to learn to love better, you should start with a friend who you hate. Nikka - age 6

During my piano recital, I was on stage and I was scared. I looked at all the people watching me and saw my daddy waving and smiling. He was the only one doing that. I wasn't scared anymore. Cindy - age 8

You really shouldn't say I LOVE YOU unless you mean it. But if you mean it, you should say it a lot. People forget. Jessica - age 8

And the winner was a 4 year old child whose next door neighbour was an elderly man who had just lost his wife. When the child saw the man cry, the little boy went over into the man's yard and climbed on top of the man's lap and just sat there. When the boy's mother asked him what he'd said to the neighbour, the little boy said, "Nothing, I just helped him cry."





"All praise to the God and Father of our Master, Jesus the Messiah! Father of all mercy! God of all healing counsel! He comes alongside us when we go through hard times, and before you know it, he brings us alongside someone else who is going through hard times so that we can be there for that person just as God was there for us. We have plenty of hard times that come from following the Messiah, but no more so than the good times of His healing comfort – we get a full measure of that, too."

2 Corinthians 1:2-5 (MSG)

# Compassion

We human beings have a streak, a gift from God above -  
One that is very like unto His greatest gift of love!  
For when we see disasters that befall the human race  
And we know that these disasters can be found in any place:  
Tsunami, or an earthquake, or a flood or other curse:  
That's when we caring people share with what is in our purse!  
We see the pain: it makes us act, so helping is the fashion,  
And that, dear folk, as we all know, is what we call compassion.  
And in the Good Book we can read of parables well told;  
Of people with compassion that was shown in days of old.  
The very Good Samaritan's a story we all know,  
And was told by our Lord Jesus, to show the way to go!  
There were lepers, blind and lame men and a man on his pallet.  
They said: "My Lord, now if you will, You could make us whole?"  
He said: "I will!" and healed them all and even saved their soul!  
Our God, the Father, showed His love on anyone He'd choose,  
And Jeremiah, in his woe, knew that he'd never lose:  
Because of God's compassion that never, never fails;  
Even when His Chosen People went completely off the rails.  
He knew that His Creation were merely fragile men:  
He'd blot their sins, destroy them not and rescue them again.  
His patience oft was tested by the evil deeds of man  
Until at last, to save them all, He came up with this plan.  
When Nicodemus realized that Jesus was God's Son -  
He went by night to visit Him because of things He'd done.  
And Jesus told him straight that God so loved mankind,  
That all who would believe in Him, were positive to find -  
Their way to Everlasting Life and live with Him on high:  
Because our faith in Jesus means that we will never die.  
For those who do God's will - His love will have no ration,  
And that, my friends, I dare to say, is truly great compassion!

By Pam Templeman





# Natural Health Awareness

## HOMEOPATHY II: Practical Suggestions



By Margaret Lepke@www.drlepke.com

In our last issue I wrote Part I covering basic homeopathic principles and am now continuing with Part II on practical suggestions. I would love to teach you everything you need to know about treating your family, but on one page that is not possible. The best alternative would be to purchase a good handbook with symptom index, from which you can learn how to choose correct remedies for common ailments. Checking with a number of health food shops, however, I found to my amazement that none of them had such a kit. So I looked on the net and found a good source for mail order supplies. I was even able to negotiate a special deal for our readers, so be sure to quote the magazine if you intend to order. At the end of this article you will find details about the kit, other combination remedies available from health food shops, and a number of helpful homeopathic books.

Below is an overview of typical first aid remedies and their possible uses. It is important to remember that remedies are prescribed according to specific symptoms, not according to the illness itself. For example, there are three different types of earaches. A sudden earache accompanied by burning pain, anxiety, irritability and restlessness requires Aconite. However when there is fever, heat and throbbing, flushed face, sensitivity to noise, and feeling worse from warmth, then Belladonna is the right choice. Finally, Pulsatilla is indicated when pain feels like pressure pushing out the eardrum, and the person is irritable and restless but prefers fresh air. It is quite easy to pick the appropriate remedy if your handbook has a good prescribing/symptom index. I hope that the following information will be of interest to you and wish you wellbeing until we meet again...

▪ Aconite	Fever & inflammation – cough/croup – earache – sudden, violent headache
▪ Apis	Insect bites – stings – itching, burning skin – sore throats
▪ Arnica	Bruises – strains – muscular aches & pains
▪ Arsenicum	Inflammation & pain with burning sensation, worse around midnight
▪ Belladonna	Fever – sore throat – earache – mumps – throbbing headache from heat
▪ Bryonia	Fever – influenza – breast discomfort worse for touch and motion
▪ Calendula	Cuts – septic wounds – general healing & tissue regeneration
▪ Cantharis	Cystitis with desire to urinate but small amounts of urine – blisters (with fluid)
▪ Chamomilla	Teething – colic – irritability – digestive upsets – insomnia
▪ Gelsemium	Influenza & sore throat developing slowly – jet lag
▪ Hepar sulph	Infections – septic wounds (helps to expel puss) – croupy cough – cold sores
▪ Hypericum	Nerve pain – puncture wounds – bleeding – diarrhoea – haemorrhoids
▪ Ledum	Puncture wounds – insect bites – stings – helps to prevent infection
▪ Mag phos	Muscular cramps – relaxes nervous system – colic
▪ Merc sol	Influenza – sore throats – mumps – burning, strong smelling secretions
▪ Nux vomica	Constipation – hangover type nausea/digestive upset – irritability – insomnia
▪ Pulsatilla	Earache – Measles – PMT – emotional upsets
▪ Rhus tox	Chickenpox – muscle pain better from motion – burning, itchy, red, swollen skin
▪ Rescue Remedy	Shock – fear – stage/exam fright – emotional crisis – excellent children & adults

### Remedy Kit in Solid Plastic Box and Handbook entitled Family Health Care with Homeopathy.

Contact Debbie Rayfield (mention magazine!)

The Fountain Centre  
6/318 Sydney Rd  
Balgowlah NSW 2093

Email: [info@fountaincentre.com.au](mailto:info@fountaincentre.com.au)

Web: [www.sydneyhomeopathy.com.au](http://www.sydneyhomeopathy.com.au)

Phone: (02) 9907 6108

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### Brauer Remedies at your local Health Food Shop:

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#### **Stomach Calm:**

Stomach upsets, overworked liver, diarrhoea etc.

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**Check out the whole range of available remedies at**

[www.brauer.com.au](http://www.brauer.com.au)

**Other good reference books** available from Angus & Robertson bookshops. (all by Andrew Lockie):

- The Family Guide to Homeopathy
- The Complete Guide to Homeopathy
- The Encyclopaedia of Homeopathy

A beautifully illustrated and professionally sound Complete Guide to Homeopathy This book is truly complete and has a fantastic reference section for most common (and not so common) ailments.

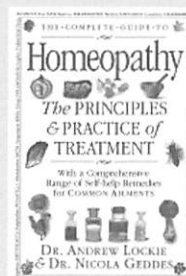
Dr. Andrew Lockie & Dr. Nicola Geddes. *Homeopathy: The Principles & Practice of Treatment (with a Comprehensive Range of Self-help Remedies for Common Ailments)*. Published in Australia in 1995 by RD Press (Reader's Digest). ISBN 0-86438-810-1

**Note:** Unfortunately this book is out of print, BUT because it is extremely valuable, I found 4 copies (\$58 - \$62) offered by Biblioquest. They are stored in the USA, but shipping is no problem and you can order on the net. Phone 1800 067 877 or go directly to [www.booksearchwizard.com.au](http://www.booksearchwizard.com.au) and do a Power Search as follows: (ONLY fill in the following fields and pay attention to the spelling of homeopathy! Leave Publisher and ISBN Number blank)

Title: Homeopathy - The Principles & Practice of Treatment

Author: Lockie Geddes (1 space between names)

Keywords: Homeopathy





# Let's Look For the Fruit of the Spirit

Circle each fruit that you can find from Galatians 5:22.

*"But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith.*

*Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."*

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



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# The Jewel of Service



***“Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God. And whatever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, and not unto men, knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.”***

Colossians 3: 22-24 (KJV)

***“...and how ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God.”***

1 Thessalonians 1:9b (KJV)

## Our Testimony

**By Missionaries in Service**

*In a country not too far away: All names have been removed for the safety of all concerned!*

He is a former 2-term Mayor and was in the President's Cabinet. I am leading a Bible study at his house. We were sharing testimonies and I had to share this part of his. Before he trusted Christ – in the early 80s, he was ambushed by several gunmen. His vehicle was hit with many bullets. On the top of the back seat of his car he kept – rolled like a long pillow – about 8 bullet proof vests. The Mayor pulled the vests over himself. The shooting stopped for a moment – then he heard someone walk up to the vehicle and fire point blank range into his car. Fortunately it was an AK47 – because a M16 would have gotten through the vest. He took four slugs – one in the leg, one in the hand, one in the arm and the other went into his chest and up through his chin and out his scalp. That scar is still very visible. He pretended he was dead and after a while he kicked out what was left of his back window. All six of his body guards were dead. Standing in the street, bleeding with his 45 automatic in his hand he flagged down a trike and asked him to take him to the hospital. About 5 miles away from the hospital the trike ran out of gas! The Mayor flagged down a Jeepney that was full. When the driver saw the gun he just stopped and jumped out of the Jeepney. All the people screamed and fled also. So although wounded he jumped into the drivers seat and drove himself to the hospital! The part that I love about this story is what my friend said next. He looked at me with tears in his eyes and said – “can you believe that I was so hard hearted, that it still took me more than 10 years to trust in Jesus as my Saviour!” “God has been so kind to me!” His wife, son, daughter and mother in-law all attend this study. This is a pretty high powered study; several owners of very successful businesses attend. I have met two congressmen and a mayor. Please lift this study up. My friend, the former Mayor is in his 70's and has cancer. He is a delight to fellowship with and has a great heart for the Lord. My wife and I really enjoy this study and spend much time after discussing the issues with the folks and fellowshiping.

Also – His cousin is a Senator. She came to a study and then attended a service at CCF. She has now requested a study at

her house. I was asked and was willing, but after I discussed this with the leadership we all agreed that we need to have a national involved from the beginning so that it will not be dependant on me. I will most likely bring a special series to get it started and then phase myself out. The problems in the political scene here, runs so deep that no person can fix it. It will take God – and that is possible. If He could turn enough hearts of those in power, great things could happen. I often look at the potential that is happening here and then with a heavy heart I view the Body of

Christ in my country. Yes there are many bright spots, but mostly from the smaller fellowships. So many of the televangelism churches and shows; claim a revival is going on, but the only revival I see is the one in their pocket book! The average American is turned off Christianity; and it's because of what they think is Christianity. I think it's because far too many believers in the USA pursue and love the American dream far more then they love the Cross and its suffering and shame. When I look into the mirror I am so amazed how complacent I am about the sacrifice of my Lord.

He thought about the Father's

desires 24/7. I spend far too much time seeking after my purpose, and my goals. Before a believer can really be driven by a life of purpose – he needs to really embrace Who he belongs to and what that means! I am still in pursuit of that and do not plan to back off my search until I stand before Him and He tells me I can rest now. I want to experience the Eternal Dream – it makes the American Dream pale in comparison, and in fact from what I am witnessing in the average American family – the American Dream looks more like a nightmare. A life of everything you could desire, the freedom to have it yet a realization at the end of the trip – this stuff is all you got! No real satisfaction, no relationships that are filled with unconditional love, no foundation of peace that brings your heart rest no matter what is happening in the world, contentment that is based on who you are instead of what you have, and most important, a sense of eternal perspective and a connection to the One that possesses eternity, instead of just a dead, dry system of beliefs – that really don't seem to work.



# The Jewel of Trust



*"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths."*

Proverbs 3: 5 & 6 (KJV)

## Can God Furnish a Table in the Wilderness?



By Pam Smith

Yes, He sure can!!

But, I must confess that I found it terribly hard accepting God's call to the Ethiopian desert some years ago. My husband, Graeme, was asked by World Vision to work with the Somali refugees there. He is an adventurous sort and was excited about it, but me, being a woman with not much courage, and 4 young children, I wasn't excited at all. In fact, I was just plain scared. But after an inner battle, the Holy Spirit enabled me to put aside my fears and my own desires, and yield to the will of God. As I did this, He began to guide me so clearly from His Word. One verse was especially meaningful – 'He protected (him) in a desert land – He shielded and cared for (him) as the apple of His eye'. God's wonderful promises gave me clear direction and a tremendous peace followed. So we went with our children, aged 5-10, to the village of Gode near the Somali border. There were no shops in Gode. In fact, there wasn't much of anything, except 2000 refugees. No doctor, no hospital, no school, no power, no telephone, no regular transport (so we couldn't ring out, or get out, if there was an emergency), no church, no other family that spoke English. Then there were many warring terrorist groups in the area. It was definitely not a place I would have chosen to go to in the natural!

Every 6 months we went to Abbis Ababa for supplies.

Can you imagine not going shopping for 6 months?

– Quite a sacrifice indeed, for a woman! We filled

up a truck with tinned and bottled food (that wouldn't deteriorate) and a large bag of flour, not available in tins. We had tinned milk, tinned cheese, tinned butter, all kinds of vegetables and fruit, tinned fish, ham, chicken, jam, and all the usual baked beans, spaghetti, etc. The flour soon became weevil infested, but as I couldn't replace it, I had to use it. So I made protein-enriched bread (with weevils and worms) three or four times a week. Psalm 23: 4 took on new meaning – 'I will fear no (we) evil'!

It was a joy to start a Christian church down there in the desert, the Moslem mosque being our only competition: and such a thrill to see some of those men totally transformed by the saving power of Christ. From being hard, aggressive, demanding men, they became lovely, gracious brothers in the Lord.

One morning before we set off for church, I looked in my storeroom trying to decide what to have for lunch. I took out the tinned potatoes, tinned peas, tinned carrots, tinned ham, tinned pineapple, and tinned cheese. I had a 'salad' in mind, but it just didn't seem right without any fresh vegetables. I said to Graeme and to the Lord, "I'd love a fresh tomato to put with this tinned food for lunch". However there was nowhere I could buy such a thing in Gode, so I knew we would have to be content with our

tinned vegetables and our tinned meat. As we drove to church in our 4WD, an Ethiopian man stepped out onto the track and signaled Graeme to stop. 'I have something here for the Memsahib' he said, as he handed me a small paper bag. Inside were four beautiful tomatoes! They seemed almost too precious to eat. We had no idea where he got them from. Maybe they were angel's food – God CAN furnish a table in the wilderness.

There were a few scrawny hens on the mission compound where we lived (the previous missionaries were on furlough in USA), and they laid very few eggs. I would save them so that about every 5-6 days we could have fried egg for lunch. They were such a welcome change from the tinned food; however the Somali ladies came asking for the eggs. At first I told them that we had no spare eggs; but, the Holy Spirit reminded me of the storeroom full of food. We never went hungry and we kept very healthy, while the Somalis were very thin and malnourished.

I must admit I gave our eggs away rather reluctantly, thinking I was making quite a sacrifice, and Graeme felt the same way. Nevertheless God was very gracious and started providing us with eggs out of the desert – eggs I'd never seen before, huge eggs, ostrich eggs; and they were very nice to eat, tasting just like hens eggs. We measured one out and found it to be the equivalent of 24 hen's

eggs! Here I was, hesitantly giving the Somalis our little hen's eggs, and the Lord was paying us back superabundantly with enormous ostrich eggs. Our God is an eggs-travagant God! Proverbs 19: 17 (LB) says, **'When you give to the poor, you are lending to the Lord, and the Lord pays wonderful interest on your loan'**. 24 times is pretty good interest in anyone's language, don't you think.

We give to Him, and He gives back to us, but He has a much bigger measure, a much bigger egg-cup than we've got, and He wants to fill our cup to overflowing and pour out such a blessing there's not room enough to receive it.<sup>2</sup> That has been my experience on the mission field – you just can't out give the Lord. Of course our motive in giving should not be to get a blessing, but to BE a blessing. However, it is a spiritual principle – give and it shall be given unto you.

I thought too, that I was making a real sacrifice leaving our lovely lifestyle in NZ (and to be honest, it wasn't easy), but I have given up so little, in comparison to the blessings I have received from the Lord since I stepped out in faith and obedience; my life has been so enriched, and so satisfying.

<sup>1</sup>Deuteronomy 32: 10; <sup>2</sup>Malachi 3: 10





# The Jewel of Maturity



***"And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk and not with solid food; for to this time ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying and strife and divisions, are ye not carnal and walk as men?"***

1 Corinthians 3:1-3 (KJV)

***"When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things."***

1 Corinthians 13:11 (KJV)

## The Jewel of Mature Thought

*"Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them."* - James Baldwin

Isn't it so interesting to watch children as they grow up? As tiny babies, onlookers detect Mum's nose, Dad's chin or Grandma's eyes – the more obvious traits. As the babies become toddlers (or before), it can be whose temperament the child has. I remember being told so many times I was like my Auntie Dot – my hair was just like hers, apparently.

At times in our lives, do we look back and wonder what events have caused us to think or act the way we do? Why do I react the way I do? Why do I bristle when a certain topic is raised? Often I hear myself saying to a younger person exactly what my mother said to me – those words must have been said many times for them to have had such an effect on me!

No parent, however well-intentioned, is perfect; nor is there any child who is perfect. Jesus, the Son of God, is the only perfect Person Who walked on this earth. Many have been evil; many have walked in God's ways, yet none have been perfect. One of the most notable examples was King David, called a "man after God's own Heart". His sin of adultery had very public results, one of which was the death of his baby son, the innocent product of that adulterous act. Yet, as we read in Psalm 51, David had a very teachable heart and he repented of his sin.

The Bible does not paint a glowing or "rosy-tinted" picture of mankind: men inspired by God wrote accurately of man's sinfulness. The book of Chronicles in the Old Testament gives examples of men who were anointed to rule over Israel and Judah and these blunt accounts say whether or not each king walked in God's ways.

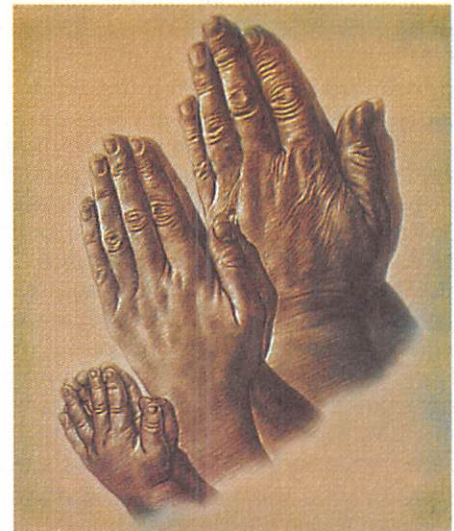
For example, ***"Jotham did what was pleasing in the Lord's sight. He did everything his father, Uzziah, had done, except that Jotham did not sin by entering the Temple of the***

***LORD. But the people continued in their corrupt ways....King Jotham became powerful because he was careful to live in obedience to the LORD his God."***

Contrast this with Ahaz, Jotham's son, who ***"did not do what was pleasing in the sight of the LORD, as his ancestor David had done. Instead, he followed the example of the kings of Israel. He cast metal images for the worship of Baal. He offered sacrifices in the valley of Ben-Hinnom, even sacrificing his own sons in the fire. In this way, he followed the detestable practices of the pagan nations the LORD had driven from the land ahead of the Israelites. He offered sacrifices and burned incense at the pagan shrines and on the hills and under every green tree. Because of all this, the LORD his God allowed the king of Aram to defeat Ahaz and to exile large numbers of his people to Damascus."***<sup>2</sup> (What a difference between father and son! Here we see evidence that God has given us free will or personal choice to make decisions which affect our lives.

Each child is unique, with different parents, siblings, extended family, values, culture, and so on. Isn't it remarkable that God, as the Great All-Knowing One, has made the gift of salvation available to each one? Somehow God is able to reach each person whatever their circumstances.

It is widely believed that the impressionable years are from birth until the age of six. Unfortunately some children experience extremes in their young lives – of wealth, poverty, abuse, deprivation and other factors. Each experience leaves its mark on an impressionable life. Does that mean that our nature cannot change after



that age? Of course not! To say that is to deny God's power.

Many of our emotions – good and bad, healthy and unhealthy – may be formed by those early years. As we grow older, perhaps when we are watching our children growing up, do we recognise that some of our emotions are unhealthy? Unhealthy because they are immature (childish) emotions that we haven't recognised as such, and because of this, we have allowed them to stunt our adult lives. For example, a child who has been abused will most likely suffer rejection, shame, guilt and be unable to trust others – all perfectly understandable. They may also blame other people or circumstances, rather than taking responsibility for not allowing bad experiences to colour their future.

Emotions influence behaviour. Our behaviour is affected by the way we respond or react emotionally to an event in our lives.



We can find these childish unbalanced emotions are affecting our lives, particularly our close relationships. Looking at those near and dear to us, we can see what may have caused the immaturities in their lives.

What about my life? As I look at myself and my immaturities and shortcomings – with my husband’s insight as he patiently lives with me and loves me – I am shown areas where I have not grown or matured in Christ. I want to be Christ-like, so how do I change?

By dealing with my emotion, I can change my behaviour. It can be done in my human strength, but for permanent and eternal change it can only be achieved through the power of the Holy Spirit working in my life as I ask His help to change my emotions and attitudes.


The Bible tells me that, as a Christian, I must seek first God’s Kingdom.<sup>3</sup> I must keep my mind and all of my life fixed on Him. Romans 12:2 says my mind must be totally renewed. Earnestly studying God’s Word renews my mind, and gives me God’s perspective on all of life’s situations. With God’s help I can replace the negative emotion with a “new” emotion which, in turn, affects my behaviour.

Adams (1973) says that “there is a proper practice, pattern, or habit to replace every improper one”.<sup>4</sup> The Bible provides the proper alternatives to replace our improper emotions and behaviours.

It is a lifelong process; my maturity will not be complete until I am in Heaven with my Lord and Saviour. I pray that I may have a teachable heart, as the Lord Jesus promises in John 14:26.

<sup>1</sup>2 Chronicles 27:2, 6 NLT; <sup>2</sup>2 Chronicles 28:1b-5a NLT; <sup>3</sup>Matthew 6:33

<sup>4</sup> Adams, J.E. (1973), *The Christian Counsellor’s Manual*, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan.



# Recipes...

to tempt your taste buds...

## Roasted Pumpkin and Spinach Bake (serves 4)

- 1.3 kg Kent pumpkin, peeled, deseeded, cubed (3cm)
  - 2 Spanish onions, peeled and cut into wedges
  - 100 g baby spinach
  - 100 g Feta cheese, crumbled
  - 8 eggs
  - ½ cup milk
  - Salt & pepper
  - Olive oil spray
  - Crusty bread (to serve)
- Preheat oven to 230°. Line a large roasting pan with baking paper. Place pumpkin and onion in roasting pan. Spray with olive oil, season with salt & pepper. Roast for 20-25 minutes or until vegetables are golden and tender.
- Microwave baby spinach in a plastic bag for 1 minute. Leave in bag until wilted.
- Grease a deep baking dish (26cm x 16cm). Spread pumpkin, onion, and spinach over base of pan. Scatter feta evenly over the top.
- Whisk eggs and milk together and pour over. Bake for 35 minutes or until set. Stand for 10 minutes. Serve with crusty bread.

## Beaded Charms

Beaded charms are the latest accessory trend – and the charm is perfect to adorn your favourite handbag. You could also hook it on a belt for a funky twist, or even use it as a handy key ring.

### You will need:

- 10cm heavy link silver-plated chain
- Silver head pins
- Silver jump rings
- Your choice of charms, beads, crystals
- 1 large parrot clasp
- (All materials available at *Spotlight* or any craft shop)
- Round nose pliers
- Wire cutters

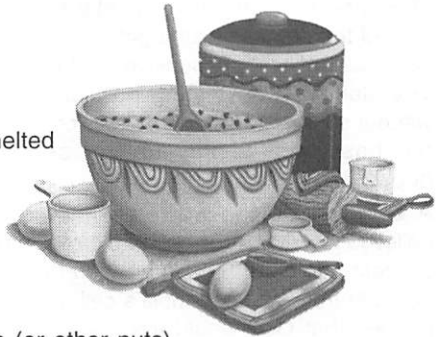
### Method

- Join the chain to the clasp by a jump ring (or two for strength).
- Thread each of the beads onto a headpin.
- Trim all the pins to about 10mm from the last bead added, turn the wire end to a right angle about 4mm above the last bead, then form a loop with the round nose-pliers.
- Open up all the jump rings and place the dangles and metal charms onto them.
- Then attach the dangles to the chain by placing the open jump ring through the chain link and closing it with the pliers.

If you would like to submit any easy craft ideas “The Heart of a Woman Inc” for publication, please forward them to Mrs Jenny Reynolds C/- P.O. Box 1176 Bundaberg, Qld 4670

## Crackle Cookies (makes about 60)

- 125 g butter
- 2 cups brown sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- 2 eggs
- 60 g dark chocolate, melted
- 1/3 cup milk
- 2 ¾ cups plain flour
- 2 tlb cocoa
- 2 tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp cinnamon
- ¾ cup chopped pecans (or other nuts)
- Icing sugar to coat



- Beat the butter, sugar and vanilla until light and creamy. Beat in the eggs, one at a time. Stir the chocolate and milk into the butter mixture.
- Sift the flour, cocoa, baking powder and cinnamon into the butter mixture and mix well. Stir the pecans through.
- Refrigerate mixture overnight (or at least 3 hrs)
- Preheat oven to 180° and line two cookie sheets with baking paper. Roll tablespoons of the mixture into balls and roll each in the icing sugar to coat.
- Place well apart on the trays. Bake for 20-25 minutes, or until lightly browned. Leave on trays for 5 minutes, then cool on a wire rack.





# BOOK REVIEW



## THE "Desert Rat"

Is the remarkable story of Aileen Coleman, written by Annette Adams.

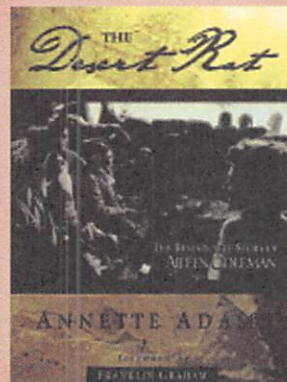
"Consider the character of this woman, a registered nurse with a master's degree in Arabic, who, with another female, a physician, enters a Moslem land in 1965. By 1973, with no visible means of financial support, she and the doctor have built a completely equipped sixty-bed hospital just outside of Mafrq, Jordan. In an environment hostile to both her sex and her Christian religion, this miracle of mercy was accomplished."

Annette Adams.

She has been celebrated by the princely and noble as well as the lowly and oppressed. She is known by many names – "The Angel of the Desert," "Blood Brother to the Bedouin," or "A'raisa," the leader. One dignitary lovingly referred to her as "one of the greatest servants God ever put on His earth."

Medical missionary Aileen Coleman humbly shuns such "pretentious and flowery titles" and answers only to the much more prosaic name – "The Desert Rat". Her long time friend Franklin Graham, president of the Christian relief and evangelism organization Samaritan's Purse, asks: "How is it possible that this lady from the outback of Australia could turn the Arab world upside down?"

This story of her faithfulness and servanthood through four decades of ministry in the Middle East could change your life forever.



## Little Annie

Before the turn of the twentieth century, an asylum in the suburbs of Boston housed severely retarded and disturbed individuals. One of the patients was a girl who was simply called Little Annie. She was totally unresponsive to others in the asylum. The staff tried everything possible to help her, yet without success. Finally she was confined to a cell in the basement of the asylum and given up as hopeless.

A Christian woman worked at the asylum and she believed that every one of God's creatures needed love, concern and care. So she decided to spend her lunch hours in front of Little Annie's cell, reading to her and praying that God would free her from her prison of silence. Day after day the Christian woman came to Little Annie's door and read, but the little girl did not respond. Months went by. The woman tried to talk with Little Annie, but it was like talking to an empty cell. She brought little tokens of food for the girl, but they were never received.

Then one day a brownie was missing from the plate the caring woman retrieved from Little Annie's cell. Encouraged, she continued to read to her and pray for her. Eventually, the little girl began to answer the woman through the bars of her cell. Soon

the woman convinced the Doctors that Little Annie needed a second chance at treatment. They brought her up from the basement and continued to work with her. Within two years Little Annie was told she could leave the asylum and enjoy a normal life.

She chose not to leave, though. She was so grateful for the love and attention she was given by the dedicated Christian woman that she decided to stay and love others as she had been loved. So Little Annie stayed on at the institution to work with other patients who were suffering as she had suffered.

Nearly half a century later, the Queen of England held a special ceremony to honour one of the most inspiring women in the United States, Helen Keller. When asked to what she would attribute her success at overcoming the dual handicap of blindness and deafness, Helen Keller replied, "If it had not been for Anne Sullivan, I wouldn't be here today".

Anne Sullivan, who tenaciously loved and believed in an incorrigible blind and deaf girl named Helen Keller, was Little Annie. Because one selfless Christian woman in the dungeon of an insane asylum believed that a hopeless little girl needed God's love, the world received the marvellous gift of Helen Keller.



*The Sunday School Teacher asks, "Now Johnny, tell me frankly do you say prayers before eating?" "No sir," little Johnny replies, "I don't have to. My Mum is a good cook."*



# Drinking From My Saucer

I've never made a fortune, and it's probably too late now.  
But I don't worry about that much, I'm happy anyhow.

And as I go along life's way, I'm reaping better than I sowed.  
I'm drinking from my saucer, 'cos my cup has overflowed.

Haven't got a lot of riches, and sometimes the going's tough.  
But I've got loving ones around me – that makes me rich enough.

I thank God for His blessings, and the mercies He's bestowed.  
I'm drinking from my saucer, 'cos my cup has overflowed.

I think of times when things went wrong, my faith wore somewhat thin.  
Then all at once the dark clouds broke, the sun peeped through again.

So Lord, just help me not to gripe, 'bout the tough rows I have hoed.  
I'm drinking from my saucer, 'cos my cup has overflowed.

If God gives me strength and courage, when the way grows steep and rough,  
I'll not ask for other blessings, I'm already blessed enough.

And may I never be too busy, to help others bear their loads.  
Then I'll keep drinking from my saucer, 'cos my cup has overflowed.

(Source unknown. Contributed by Charmaine Van der Spuy)

## For Dorothy, who was dying of cancer – By Joan Suisted

I'm leaving my sickness to go into health,  
My meagre resources, for infinite wealth  
I'm exchanging my weakness, my sorrow and pain  
For fullness of joy and unlimited gain!

I'm leaving the shadows to go into light,  
I'll be finished with faith, for I'll walk then by sight.  
I won't need to trust, when I see what He's planned  
And hope, becomes certainty, in that best land.  
I'll be finished with failure, temptation and sin.  
The doubts and the questions, the fears, deep within:  
The trials and the testings, the battles will cease  
And I shall rejoice in His victory and peace.

I've finished with earth, its toil and its care  
I'm going from time to eternity there  
To share in the glory, He promised to give  
I'll be finished with death and I'm going to live!



As we have travelled through the magazine, we have discovered that truly we do go through desert experiences. So what brings them about?

*Being outside of the Kingdom of God!* Seek Him while you are still able to do so. Good life, many riches, happy parties, many friends and a well behaved and lovely family; none of these things will be enough to place you inside the Kingdom, God so wants you to leave the desert and enter the abundant life He supplies. The Bible tells us clearly *"that it is by His grace (or undeserved favour upon us) that we are saved, through faith (in the Lord Jesus Christ taking our place of punishment) and that it is not anything we can or have done – but a lovely gift from God. If it had been allowed any other way we would automatically become proud and boast about our achievements."*

*'Having sin in our lives!* Remember we are told *"that whatever is not of faith is sin"*<sup>12</sup> and again *"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."*<sup>13</sup> David discovered this when he sinned in taking Bethsheba to himself and it was not until he confessed this sin openly to God, his prophet and Bethsheba that things began to change. However the desert experience did not leave him until all the consequences of his sin were completed. Then we are told he stopped fasting, washed and dressed and went out with peace in his heart.

*·Fighting spiritual attacks!* Are you under oppression? It is sometimes confused for depression, or severe fatigue. However this is very real and can be because we are right where the Lord wants us and we are working for Him in some manner: therefore Satan does not want the work to continue. Many missionaries, full-time workers and even writers of this magazine have certainly gone through this heartache. It usually goes on until we turn to the Lord fully in faith and complete trust; learn to wait on Him in prayer and then the attacks cease and the oppression lifts. There are times when the oppression is so heavy though, that it may be necessary to ask a friend to pray for you.

*Being a prayer warrior!* Jeremiah, known as the weeping prophet, and yes many other Christians have known the Lord to lead them into a desert experience. I have known it to be when there is need for prayer for others – or when the Lord reveals to us a situation that is not of Him and must be changed, therefore prayer warriors are needed.

*A learning field!* It can be in order that we learn to trust Him more, to love Him more, to relinquish something we hold too dear to our hearts, or just to comfort another who is already there.

*Failing to have our Spiritual ears on!* At other times we enter a desert experience simply because we are not listening to the Lord's guidance. Maybe we are not reading the Word as faithfully as we should, or not practiced in prayer.

*Personality conflicts!* Unfortunately at times they come about when other misguided Christians do not understand us. Someone may have said unkind things about us. Our gifts are not being used in some way and we know the deserted feeling of loneliness. We can be surrounded by hosts and even going faithfully to a good Church, but still be lonely.

*Waiting times!* It's hard to wait and to hear the Lord say "come away with me and rest" Because we all like to be busy and wanted, instead it feels like a wilderness. We need to learn to love and listen to the Lord more for this to pass. What wonderful lessons will be learned there whilst do so.

loves to communicate with you. Start with praise and thanks – the Holy Spirit will lead you further.

**Is there anything then we can do during our desert experience? The answer is a resounding yes, for in every cloud we will find a silver lining. Remember our list on Page 6**

***Learn to know the Lord as the lover of our Soul!***

***Never stop reading the Word of God!*** If it is becoming too hard, buy or borrow it on tape or CD. The Word of God is a soothing balm to our souls and we need to listen or read it daily.

***Train yourself to pray!*** – it is not easy to pray and at times our arch enemy the devil will put up barriers to stop us doing so. When we feel we don't want to – it's the very time we should! Do you find it hard to pray? Start to pray out loud and get used to the sound of your own voice doing so. Ask God to train you and take any barriers down, to give you an exciting experience of how He both listens and answers. Buy yourself an exercise book and write down in it your specific prayer points and the dates you prayed and then received an answer. Learn to concentrate when praying in your heart. Keep them simple and honest. Talk to God about everything and at all times, there is no greater joy than asking Him to bless your cooking, sewing, work of any kind, and especially the way you discipline your children. Above all don't make unachievable goals, just start where you are and know that the Lord loves to communicate with you. Start with praise and thanks – the Holy Spirit will lead you further.

***Confess any sin/s quickly!*** Read Psalm 32; 51 and 1 John 1:9

***Get to know yourself, your weaknesses and strengths!*** Talk to God about those weaknesses and pray that He will turn them into strengths for His glory. Ask Him to show you the gifts He has given you and then delight in serving Him in these.

***Pray under personality conflicts!*** Quickly go back to the Lord. In prayer, face yourself honestly and ask the Lord 'is this true of me?' Problem ownership is so important. As women we often take on other people's problems and we should not do so. If the Lord reveals to you that the statement/s made were indeed correct – then own the problem, confess it as sin and leave it at the cross. If on the other hand you discover through prayer that they are not true – then also leave them with the Lord, ask Him to help you forgive and put it behind you. It is God's right to change others and at times bring vengeance upon them. Our responsibility is to follow His example and to willingly suffer and walk in His presence. His peace and joy will come.

***Learn to rest in the Lord!*** True rest as we discover in Hebrews 4 is when we completely stop trying to fix the problem ourselves.

***Delight to walk in His presence!*** Learn to listen to Him and when you ask 'why the desert Lord?' He will reveal it to you. It is then and only then that you will clearly begin to see the Jewels both semi-precious and precious sparkling vividly to renew and strengthen us.

***What have I learned in my desert experience over the last two years?***

I have come to know there is a difference between faith and trust.

My prayer life is found wanting and it is my responsibility to work hard to restore it – only I can pray for myself it is not something anyone else can do for me.

Looking for friends is not the Lord's way – I need to ask Him who are the ones who will encourage me in the faith and He will bring them my way.

My work is not to overwhelm me, as good as it may be; my love for the Lord is to be more important. Don't fear men or any desert experience for the Lord is always with me as He has promised.

The gifts He has given me are not for my glory or because of my abilities, but for the Lord God Almighty – He will build the house, He will keep the magazine going if that is His desire.

I must fully trust Him, and humbly bow before my Lord and say "as You wish my Lord!"

**How about your desert experience—what do you think you have learned?**

**By Wendy Davie**

***It's not the mountain that defeats us; it's the sand in our shoes***

**Unknown Source**



# A Desert Of Our Own Making

By Julie Mayer



**“Why Lord?” “Why doesn’t anyone care?” “Why doesn’t anyone understand?” “How come they just don’t seem to see how much I am hurting?”**

How many times do we cry out to the Lord in desperation, when we feel completely isolated, completely alone, desolate and destitute? How do we get to that place? How come we get there – only to find we become more alone?

As Christian women and

sisters, we tend to take the action that is of least benefit when we are hurting. When we are fighting our dry valleys and our own bush fires, we retreat. We withdraw away from those who would support us and care for us. We exclude them from our environment, we may be in the middle of a lush rainforest with great trees of faith and prayer all around – and yet we choose to make an emotional and spiritual desert around us, and to withdraw into it alone: many times separated from all who would care, even the Lord Himself.

By the end of 2004 I had battled for 15 months from being falsely accused, betrayed and walked on by people we had ministered to and served for many years. My response when I reached the end of my endurance - was to retreat. To buy a mobile home and live in a caravan park many miles from home, far from our home, church and unknown to many of our closest friends. I thought it would give me a place of safety.

The result however was to become self-absorbed, to only see the desert, to only find that the problems grew. Thankfully the Lord placed one sister in front of me who challenged me – what I needed to do was to draw closer to God, not further away. In that time I learnt to ‘pray the Psalms’, to refocus on God’s perspective, to learn to look for and to find the lush trees all around me.

To take the time to seek out those God had put in my life to support me, to love me, to encourage me, to pray for me, I needed to choose to celebrate those jewels He had planted.

The reality is that when we can’t see God’s jewels around us, when we can’t find His jewels within us – then we need to ask Him and His Holy Spirit to start to change us. It is not that they are gone, but rather that we cannot see them or find them. The reality is that He has not gone, and His desire to bless us is not weakened, on the contrary He is showering us with blessings, just that we can’t see them.

The number of sisters in Christ who had upheld my family and myself in prayer through that time will never be known to me, the number who cried for the injustice they had witnessed, and the number who defended me without my knowledge will only be known to the Lord Himself. Yet I never thanked Him, because I could not see them, and like Thomas I was limited by my faith in Him.

The desert in which I had put myself, was still surrounded by an oasis. I didn’t need to leave the desert – I just needed to trust God to change my desert back to a place of fruit and blessing.

A beautiful sister leant over to me in church one Sunday and said “I found this verse last week and believed it was meant for you – **“from your briar will come blessings for many”**”. She knew nothing of our torment, she simply obeyed her Lord, and reached over from her oasis into my desert. I simply needed to reach out and say “thank you!”

## Laid Aside

By Doris Rulton

A pathway lies before you  
A path as yet unknown  
But rest assured dear sister  
Your way is not alone  
The Saviour treads it with you  
Each step and every hour  
His loving arms around you  
Your daily strength and power  
We also have a part to play  
A constant stream of prayer  
Assured our precious Saviour  
Will hold you in His care



Everyone has faith in something or someone – but the only safe and solid faith to have is the one planted by our Lord in His finished work on the Cross of Calvary. Any other faith will always bring disappointment; if not now in this life, then certainly in Eternity!

Faith is but the seed that is planted in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, when we turn to the Lord and ask Him into our lives. As we mature in Him the seed of faith strengthens and grows into a strong and visible tree – not only to others but also to ourselves, for it is solidly grounded in the sacrifice and love of Jesus Christ gift to us. Each time we decide to step out and believe in Him and wait upon His leading - our faith once so small and now grown spreads out the branches of trust. *Trust therefore, is faith in maturity!* Its fruit are peace that passes all understanding; abundant joy that overflows our cup; encouragement to wait upon Him further; assurance of both our salvation as well as the truth of our faith in Him and the Word of God: then finally the delightful wonder of praise and worship.

There is not a day goes by where the Lord does not say to us... "Come follow me – trust me and I will supply." Sometimes we are too busy trying to work it out ourselves or simply just not listening, but truly He calls and His very being speaks of His total trustworthiness in all things.

Wendy Davie



*"And He spoke a parable unto them to this end; that men ought always to pray, and not to faint."*

Luke 18: 1 (KJV)

*"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you, and persecute you."*

Matthew 5:44 (KJV)

"There is no royal road either to health or learning. Princes and kings, poor men and peasants, all alike must attend to the want of their own bodies and their own minds. No man can eat, drink or sleep by proxy. No man can get the alphabet learned for him by another. All these are things which everyone must do for himself, or they will not be done at all. Just as it is with the mind and the body, so it is with the soul. There are certain things absolutely needful to the soul's health and well-being. Each must attend to these things for himself. Each must repent for himself. Each must apply to Christ for himself. And for himself each must speak to God and pray. You must do it for yourself, for by nobody else can it be done. To prayerless is to be without God, without Christ, without grace, without hope, and without heaven. I ask you again whether you pray, because a habit of prayer is one of the surest marks of a true Christian."

Bishop JC Ryle in the late 1800's

#### **What Is Prayer?**

"Prayer is a sincere, sensible, affectionate pouring out of the heart or soul to God, through Christ, in the strength and assistance of the Holy Spirit, for such things as God has promised, or according to His Word, for the good of the Church, with submission in faith to the will of God"



# Prayer - God's Electricity To Enable Us To Shine!

By Wendy Davie

In Colossians 4:12, Paul tells us of a faithful servant of Christ. He was faithful in the jewel of prayer and sends his greetings to all those he has been praying for. Paul describes him as **'labouring fervently'** for those at the Colossian Church.

What does it mean to labour fervently in prayer. Firstly it tells us that the ministry of prayer is not easy, however like most jewels it is worth both finding and making and without it we are completely unable to shine like desert lights.

Let's look at some of the words that some commentators use instead; for in doing so it will give us a fuller understanding as to what is involved in prayer.

Newbury describes it as **'striving'**. To strive means to fix ones mind on a solid object and let nothing deter us from it. From the perspective of prayer it means to see the burden and pray through.

Darby uses the term **'combating'**. This gives us the concept of fighting a battle. It is important to remember that we are under attack, the devil hates us and hates us to pray—he is out to get us and prevent us from talking to the Lord in prayer. (Hasn't each one of us struggled with confusion, forgetfulness, our mind wandering and or distractions at times whilst trying to spend time in prayer.)

Dr. Weymouth reminds us that **'wrestling'** is an important part of labouring fervently. Remember Jacob, a Man wrestled with him and he exclaimed *"I will not let thee go except thou bless me."* We find this in Genesis 32:24-28 (KJV). How important it is for us to firstly get alone with God just like Jacob and then learn to listen to Him. We need to confess who we are, our weaknesses and failures and be totally honest with Him. It is only then that we are able to keep on asking, knocking and seeking with all our hearts.

The Authorised Version uses the term **'stretched out'**. This is simply recognizing that we can do nothing, however God can do all things. Therefore it is humbly bowing before Him and seeking the wisdom and guidance of His Holy Spirit in all our prayers.

It is imperative that we always remind ourselves that the power is not in prayer, but in the Almighty God who chooses to answer our prayers. It is the **'Work of Christ'** NOT for Christ or with Christ, but **THE WORK OF CHRIST**.

At the same time prayer should be a delight and easy. Is this a contradiction in terms? No—as we read through the prayers of the Old Testament saints, we find that prayer is simply talking. It can be out loud, in your heart or silent, in song, simply knowing God's wonderful presence and acknowledging it in our thoughts—thus listening to Him. However at the same time when in the thick of battle, we do not find it so easy to overcome the flesh or the devil.

As women we are known as great talkers, yet we often fail to talk to the One we should be talking to the most. All too often we simply become used to doing things in our own strength and then when

fear assails us we decide to send up a quick SOS prayer. These are important, but it is more important to pray first and allow the Holy Spirit to guide us through. The greatest joy we can have is to pray and then discover that our Lord has loved us so much that He has chosen to answer our prayer and go before us.

For some time now I have struggled as to whether I should give up the position as Editor. Much prayer has been sent up both by others and myself. Because I have been so tired and the job was becoming overwhelming, my prayer life was being affected. One night a friend and his wife asked us to go and spend a few days in their unit by the sea, just as a gift and blessing. How precious is our Lord and how precious are His saints who choose to be obedient. Whilst there I was at last able to humbly come before Him properly—God knows that looking at His Creation always draws me near.

At the same time one of our writers who has been very ill, even

close to death many times over the last seven months, was spending time praying for me. That night the Lord gave her a dream, where she was with me and another woman encouraging me to continue in the role and not to be overcome. I was totally unaware of how He was dealing with her.

One morning I awoke early and watched the sunrise over the sea. It was there I was able to stretch out fully before my Lord and honestly say—*'here am I, please use me'*.

Neither of us knew of the others experience until just yesterday, when I rang to see how things were going. What an encouragement it was to us both to know how God

loved us both, assured us of our salvation and delighted in using us to bless each other.

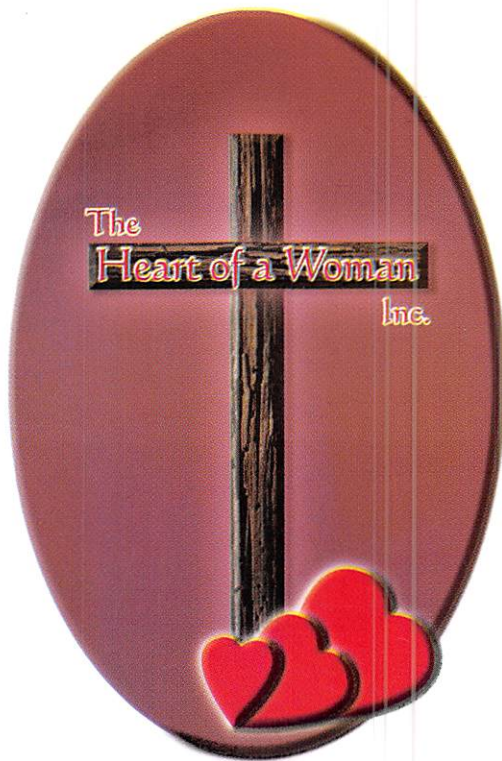
Personal experience of answered prayer not only causes us to Shine as Desert Lights, but it also drives us to continue to spend more time just simply talking to our Lord and waiting upon His providence in all things.

There is no royal road either to health or learning. Princes and kings, poor men and peasants, all alike must attend to the want of their own bodies and their own minds. No man can eat, drink or sleep by proxy. No man can get the alphabet learned for him by another. All these are things which everyone must do for himself, or they will not be done at all. Just as it is with the mind and the body, so it is with the soul. There are certain things absolutely needful to the soul's health and well-being. Each must attend to these things for himself. Each must repent for himself. Each must apply to Christ for himself. And for himself each must speak to God and pray. You must do it for yourself, for by nobody else can it be done. To be prayer-less is to be without God, without Christ, without grace, without hope, and without heaven. I ask you again whether you pray, because a habit of prayer is one of the surest marks of a true Christian."

Bishop JC Ryle in the late 18<sup>th</sup>00's







### ***Our Logo:***

1. *"The three hearts entwined symbolises the 3 components of a woman; Body, Soul and Spirit.*
2. *The wooden cross expresses to us that the simplicity of Christ's death, burial and resurrection is the only way to true healing for the whole woman.*
3. *The circle is symbolic of our sisterhood and so our need to share and care for other women in their daily lives.*
4. *The cross bar in the shape of our banner gives us a clear understanding that our magazine will be our main arm of friendship."*

### ***Our Vision:***

*"To share God's truth and encourage each other in our Christian faith."*

### ***What we believe:***

- The Bible is the inspired Word of God. We seek to follow its doctrine.
- In the Trinity of the Godhead.
- Christ, Himself as our sinless Lord.
- Filled with all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, indeed being God come in the flesh.
- The personality and Deity of the Holy Spirit.
- The creation and fall of man.
- Christ's death, burial and resurrection.
- The need for all to be born again in Him.
- That we were created in Christ unto good works.
- The resurrection of the body.
- The judgement of both the living and the dead.
- The eternal blessedness of the righteous, and the eternal punishment of the wicked.
- That Satan is real and so is hell.
- That Jesus Christ will return as He has promised.

***This magazine has been given to you by:***

If you feel the need for personal contact with any queries concerning your spiritual life, or burdens you bear, please feel free to either contact the church above or write to us as 'The Heart of a Woman Inc.'