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# Record

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SPECIAL EDITION



**GOD'S WORD**

## Aftershocks rock conference session

*Melissa Savage—Christchurch, New Zealand*

Aftershocks rocked the 63rd constituency meeting of the South New Zealand Conference in Christchurch, three weeks after a 7.1 magnitude earthquake hit the region.

Shocks were felt on Sabbath and Sunday. Some delegates from the area took the shaking in their stride, while others were visibly shaken, particularly by the magnitude 4 tremor on Sabbath evening. In jest, Conference president Craig Gillis said, "We truly are living in the time of the shaking."

Proceedings continued regardless, with Pastor Gillis sharing his vision, reinforcing the world church vision to Reach Up, Reach Out and Reach Across. He highlighted the fact that in 2009 the Conference had the largest number of baptisms and professions of faith since 1949.

Pastor Gillis was returned as president while the chief

financial officer and general secretary, being part-time positions, will be elected by the Appointments Committee in November.

Significant decisions that were made at the constituency meeting included the disbanding of the South Otago church due to declining membership. This necessitated the sale of the church building, with funds from the sale allocated to upgrading of facilities at the Pascoe Park campground.



Brigid Peddie, CFO, and Pastor Gillis, chairing the meetings.



The book was launched at the Australian Catholic University's Canberra Campus on October 8.

## Ellen White meets Mary MacKillop

*Kirsten Bolinger—Cooranbong, NSW*

Two Avondale College (NSW) lecturers have written a chapter for a book reflecting on the life and legacy of Australia's first Catholic saint.

"Ellen G White: a visionary Seventh-day Adventist" is Drs Rick Ferret (left) and John Skrzypaszek's (right) contribution to *In the Land of Larks and Heroes: Australian Reflections on St Mary MacKillop*. The anthology features 12 essays written by representatives from different religious perspectives: from Judaism to Muslim, Protestant to Anglican and Lutheran to Orthodox. Their brief: "To illustrate how holy persons and heroes are esteemed in their own tradition and how this might frame their appreciation for Mary MacKillop," said editor Dr Alan Cadwallader, an Anglican priest and a senior lecturer in biblical studies in the School of Theology at Australian Catholic University.

The essay explores Ellen White's spiritual journey. It concludes that the depth of the journey "illustrates the sincerity, integrity, sensitivity to social injustice and boldness to confront the barriers of set traditions that heroes of many faith traditions have encompassed. In this respect, both Ellen White and Mary MacKillop reveal a bond of commonality and this insight provides a lens through which Seventh-day Adventists can appreciate the heroes of the many faith traditions throughout the world".

## New website showcases important evangelism

*Tracey Bridcutt—Wahroonga New South Wales*

Church members can now look to the internet for the latest information on the work of literature evangelists (LEs).

A new website features information about how a LE works, how to become a LE and what books they sell. It also includes details of the LE team in the South Pacific, carries the latest ministry news, training materials and soul-winning stories.

"The idea is to give church members correct information about what the literature ministry is all about," South Pacific Division publishing director John Brereton said. The website includes details of the literature evangelist team in the South Pacific, which includes Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and the South Pacific Islands.



John Brereton (left) with some of the leadership team.

Mr Brereton hopes the website will also help to clear up any misconceptions about the work of LEs, and that church members may be inspired to join the team on either a full-time or part-time basis.

"It's a soul-winning ministry, that's what it's all about," he said.

For more information, go to <[www.see-le.com](http://www.see-le.com)>.

For more on these stories, go to <[www.record.net.au](http://www.record.net.au)>.



## The Word of God

Pablo Lillo

One of my favourite verses is found in Hebrews 4:12, "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."

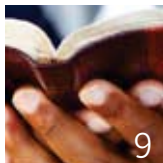
God's Word is unlike any other book. The Bible is a road map for life here on earth. As Christians we're called to study God's Holy Word—trust its promises, follow its commandments and to share the Gospel message of salvation with the world. As disciples who seek to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, we must study the Bible and reflect on its meaning for our lives. Otherwise we rob ourselves of a priceless gift. God's Holy Word can, without a doubt, completely change and transform you if you are willing to work with the truths that are contained in the actual words. Jesus says you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free. However, you first have to know what the truth is before the truth can start to set you free.

At the recent Council of Evangelism and Witness at the General Conference, it was stated that just more than 50 per cent of members consistently pray and read the Bible. It's evident that more and more Adventists are not delving into the Bible for their spiritual nourishment. Instead, they're swapping it for "feel good" books, TV and social networking—doing nothing at all for their spiritual growth.

A passing acquaintance with the Good Book is insufficient for Adventists who seek to obey God's Word and understand His will. The Word of God can work effectively in your life if you welcome it, not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God.

What's your favourite Bible verse? It's a question I asked at the North New South Wales Big Camp at Stuarts Point. You can find the responses on page 8.

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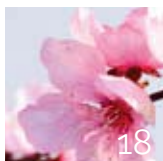
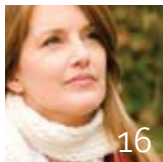
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*experiences*  
*and shares*  
our hope in Jesus Christ!

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## School raises \$A33,000 in 33 days

Pablo Lillo—North New South Wales

Students at the Manning Adventist School (MAS), North New South Wales, have raised more than \$A33,000 in 33 days for community-based facilities.

The fundraising efforts started on August 29 and ended on October 1 with a money trail along Manning Street.

"In brief, and with much excitement, I announce the students of MAS fundraised \$A35,230 in 33 days," MAS principal Shannon Quick said.

The school organised 33 fundraising events including a talent night, quiz night, movie night, games night, garage sale, sleepover at school, community-based auction, a theme dress day, a food fundraiser and a money trail. "Each of these, along with the students seeking donations, contributed to the 33-day event," Mr Quick said.

The theme for the school was: We believe with God's leading we can fundraise \$A33,000 in 33 days to develop community-based facilities at our school.

The school plans to develop facilities the community will be able to use, including a full-size tennis court and soccer oval with floodlights, netball courts, a new external toilet block and shelter, parking, playing fields and more. The facilities will complement a new function centre opened on September 24 by Pastor John Lang, North New South Wales (NNSW) president, and Ralph Luchow, NNSW education director.

The event will continue in 2011 and 2012. "In 2011, we believe with God's leading, that MAS will raise \$34,000 in 34 days, and in 2012 we believe MAS will raise \$35,000 in 35 days," Mr Quick said.

The school plans to match the funds raised dollar-for-dollar over the three years of fundraising. After three years, the school will have spent over \$A200,000 in developing facilities that the local community will benefit from.

MAS started the year with 11 students, and had grown to 23 children by August.

"This is an amazing effort by the students and staff of this small school, and those that prayed for, supported and believed in us," Mr Quick said.

The students and staff acknowledge they did not succeed by their own power, but by the Spirit of God as found in Zechariah 4:6. The 33-day event has strengthened their faith and belief in God.



Manning students prepare money tins.



## iDiscover impacts public universities

Erica Copaceanu—Melbourne, Victoria

Hundreds of university students have attended a special evangelistic series run simultaneously at three sites by the Gateway Adventist Centre in Melbourne.

The centre usually conducts a youth-led evangelistic campaign on a yearly basis. However after much prayer, it was decided to run three simultaneous series at three sites.

Titled *iDiscover: Revelation's Prophecies*, the series of presentations, held on university campuses, spanned five weekends from August 20 to September 18.

Pastor Gary Webster, director of the Institute of Public Evangelism (IPE) for the South Pacific Division, lectured at Melbourne University, local elder John Kitevski shared at Victoria University in Footscray, while Pastor Cristian Copaceanu presented at Monash University in Clayton.

Pastor Webster had recently conducted a similar successful evangelistic series at a public university in Lae, PNG. "Dr Barry Oliver, our division president, is a keen supporter of similar outreach programs to be held at universities in Australia," Pastor Webster said.

"With the funding from IPE, Australian Union Conference, Victorian Conference and Adventist Youth Conference offerings we were able to mount this multi-site evangelistic series," said Johnny Wong, elder at Gateway.

With divine leading, fervent prayers and diligent efforts, each of the teams set out to personally distribute the 90,000 invitation brochures. From doorknocking on thousands of homes to train station distribution at 7 am and street distribution on Melbourne's busy streets at 8 pm, members faithfully gave out the invitations.

Latest outreach methods on iPhone/iPad, Facebook advertising and Twitter were used. "I am so excited that three

of my university's friends came because of receiving Twitter messages," said Daryl Cheng, final year medical student at Monash University.

More than 500 people attended at least one presentation with more than 40 people making decisions to be baptised at the end of the series. Many more have committed to continue studying with youth Bible workers and members while others have begun to join the Gateway team for Sabbath morning worship services.

The presentations strengthened trust in the Bible, enabled people to discover and accept Jesus as their personal Saviour, provided valuable biblical lifestyle principles and opened minds to the future as prophesied in the books of Daniel and Revelation.

"The Lord lead me to study on my own from the Bible about the Sabbath and the anti-christ two years ago," said a university lecturer who attended a Sunday church. He added that, "when Pastor Webster preached it in public I knew this was truth and I would like to be baptised in the remnant Church".

"It is responses like this that show the Holy Spirit is working in our public universities in Australia," Pastor Copaceanu said.



Pastor Gary Webster presents at Melbourne University.

## Yacht ministry signs health agreement

Nick Brightman—Torres Strait

A memorandum of understanding was recently signed by the CEO of Pacific Yacht Ministries (PYM), Nick Brightman, and the CEO of Torres Strait-Northern Peninsular Health Service District, Christine Giles.

The agreement is for PYM to "source and provide volunteer doctors or dentists to island communities—especially those involved with border crossings of Papua New Guinea nationals seeking medical or dental care".

"We feel very privileged to be asked to undertake this responsibility. Our experience working among the islanders of Vanuatu since 2002 has helped put us in a position to do this work," said Nick Brightman. PYM first started work in the Torres Straits in March 2009 when its representative

joined Pastor Don Fehlberg of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ministries. As a result, a new church was formed on Saibai Island, a fairly large low-lying island only four kilometres from Papua New Guinea. Among the new believers were two local officials who advised PYM on procedures to follow in order to commence a health program.

In December 2009, James Ward, a registered nurse and ambulance officer, sailed the donated catamaran *Inflight* up to the Torres Straits from Busselton in West Australia. Mr Ward has been working there since then providing health education and assisting mission director Glenn Grey.



PYM is now seeking volunteer doctors and dentists. Go to <[www.pym.org.au](http://www.pym.org.au)>.

**Kevin Radford—Mangrove Mountain**

Matthew 5:16 (KJV). "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

It's my daily challenge in life.

**Edwina Henson—Parramatta**

2 Samuel 22:3 (NLT). "My God is my rock, in whom I find protection. He is my shield, the power that saves me, and my place of safety. He is my refuge, my saviour, the one who saves me."

God is my strength, rock. In difficult times God has been there. His unfailing love is a constant in my life. He brings me through when times are tough.

**Paul Fua—Kingscliff**

Jeremiah 29:13 (NIV). "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."

Over a period of three months I read my Bible every day. I enjoyed the daily communion with God. Following that time, for three and-a-half weeks I felt as though God had left me—it was a terrible time for me. He led me to this verse; He wanted me to go much deeper this time with Him.

**Kelly Quick—Taree**

Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV). "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Whatever is going on in my life, God sees the big picture. I know everything will be OK.

**Daron Pratt—Avondale Memorial**

Hebrews 4:16 (NLT). "So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most."

It sums up the Gospel. Jesus has done it all for us.

**Lisa Hanrahan—Kempsey**

Isaiah 51:30 (NIV). "But those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."

The verse visually captures the power of God and what He offers us.

**Roger Nixon—Lakeside**

1 Peter 5:7 (NLT). "Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you."

As a hospital chaplain it has become a comfort to many that I share God's Word with.

**Wendy Pratt—Gosford**

John 14:1-3 (NIV). "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."

I like the house I'm living in—but I so look forward to living with my heavenly Father in His mansion.

**Shannon Spence—Wallsend**

John 3:16 (NIV). "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

This is the simple message of Salvation for me!

**Allan Hedges—Nelson Bay**

Romans 8:38-39 (KJV). "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

I love it because nothing can separate me from the love of God. There is no condemnation or separation from Him.

# The Andrews Study Bible

by Kent Kingston

**M**AYBE IT'S JUST ME, BUT THE IDEA OF AN "Adventist Bible" conjures up disturbing parallels with Jehovah's Witnesses needing their Watchtower translations to score theological points. For this reason, I'm not among the fans of Jack Blanco's 1994 Clear Word Bible. Surely we Seventh-day Adventists shouldn't need our own Bible to back up our teachings? Our early pioneers managed to construct a compelling understanding of Scripture without the benefit of their own translation.

Thankfully, the publishers of the new Andrews Study Bible have steered away from the fraught dilemma of a "denominational" Bible translation, choosing instead the New King James Version (NKJV) for the biblical text.

"It should be clearly understood," says Andrews University president Niels-Erik Andreasen, "that the Andrews Study Bible does not offer a new or an 'Adventist' translation of the Bible text. It is popular these days to publish paraphrases of the Bible. But a paraphrase of the Bible is not a Bible. We used the NKJV because... it probably still has the widest appeal and acceptance among those who would want an Andrews Study Bible. It's possible that in the future other well-known English translations may be used for the Andrews Study Bible."

What is uniquely Adventist about the Andrews Study Bible is its study helps put together by scholars from the General Conference and various Adventist universities. Each book of the Bible is provided with an introduction covering author, date and place of writing, main themes, and other helpful information. Various maps, charts and illustrations appear throughout the Bible and more than 12,000 original study notes appear at the bottom of the page.

When I asked retired academic, Allan Lindsay, to have a look at a review copy of the Andrews Study Bible, he informed me that he'd already purchased one for himself. Dr Lindsay is an enthusiastic advocate of the study Bible's features: "The marginal references, including illuminating translation notes, and the study notes at the bottom of each page add much to the Bible's value and usefulness. I found the Annotated Theme Index listing texts under 28 themes a particularly helpful feature for preparing Bible studies."

After spending a few days browsing through the Andrews Study Bible, Ross Cole, theology course coordinator at

Avondale College, says that, "as a teenager at high school planning to study for ministry, I would have loved to have had a volume like this one to get me going."

I know what he means. At the age of 17, I received the bestselling NIV Study Bible as a baptism present from my parents. It provided a clear path into deeper Bible study and I've found it an invaluable resource ever since. But as an Adventist I've needed to be careful about the content and emphasis of the study notes, which support Sunday worship and a straight-to-heaven teaching on the state of the dead. It leaves me wondering, is it possible to produce a study Bible without bias? One that opens up the Bible to possibilities rather than bolting it down to a particular orthodoxy—even ours?

"Most study Bibles do come from one perspective or another, and that's fine," says Dr Cole. "I have no problem with us producing a study Bible with an emphasis on an Adventist perspective. I am glad that the volume is entitled 'the Andrews Study Bible' rather than 'the Adventist Study Bible'. The impression of being the final word on Adventist perspectives is thus avoided."

Dr Cole suggests, however, that involving some "big names" from the wider Christian world as consultants might have added to the credibility of the study Bible outside Adventism. It's a suggestion that Andrews University Publishing director, Ronald Knott, rejects: "It would be unusual, and perhaps irresponsible, for any Adventist publishing house to use anything other than 'only Adventist scholars'. Adventist publishing houses ought to be in the business of accomplishing the mission of the church. We believe that Adventist theology, however still incomplete, is the fullest, most accurate understanding of Biblical faith available anywhere. If we don't believe that, we ought not be in the business."

Like study Bibles generally, the Andrews Study Bible is not an exhaustive commentary but it still aims at being "academically credible, theologically sound, and practically useful". Ronald Knott predicts that the Andrews Study Bible "will have great usefulness in the church for personal Bible study, personal evangelism, guidance to students in schools and group discussion in Sabbath School classes. We expect that the Andrews Study Bible will also become the standard mass distribution Bible in Adventist public evangelism."

*Kent Kingston is assistant editor of RECORD.*



# God's Word: my intimate friend

by Faye Stothers

**I** KNOW WE SHOULDN'T SHRINK GOD DOWN TO OUR size or understanding; and I'm not trying to. But if I believe what Isaiah 57:15 says, "For this is what the high and lofty One says—he who lives forever, whose name is holy: 'I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.'" I know God, my High and lofty One, is totally comfortable with me, I can enjoy His Word—it revives my spirit and heart.

If I understand the biblical parallels between the marital relationship and our relationship with God, then His Word is a series of intimate letters, written to woo me, encourage me, give me understanding, guidance, hope and love. That's exactly what God's Word has become to me.

Before email and Facebook became such an efficient form of communication, all our personal mail came via the post. It was special. If you have ever maintained a distant relationship with your family, close friend or romantic one, you will appreciate those letters. You read them over and over and cry over them . . . sleep with them under your pillow . . . carry them on your person. They become a unique link to that person—filling the gap in their absence. You may have phone calls and visits, but they come to an end; the letters become something very tangible that won't fade or leave.

I spent four years at Lilydale Academy in Victoria, as a boarder and my mum wrote to me every couple of days. I treasured every single one of the letters. It was a vital link to home. Whenever I missed my family, was worried, had an argument with a dorm mate or ended a relationship with a boyfriend, mum's letters were always a source of comfort and peace. Every now and then—even though my mum has gone to sleep in Jesus—I still pull out an old letter. I see her handwriting and the emotions flood back.

God's Word is just like that only better. Just to think He went to so much trouble to give us something tangible that would not fade away or leave for us. He knows our insecurities and allows for us to connect with Him intimately in ways we can grasp. His beautiful words are appropriate to every human situation. To hold in our hands and gaze with our eyes. Meditate on and memorise with our minds. Consume in our hearts and proclaim with our lips. God has left us a powerful link to Him—His Word.

Throughout my Christian journey I always believed that I read God's Word—but now I believe it reads me. It seems to miraculously provide the answers to all my questions at a level I can grasp. What amazes me most is, as I get more understanding and insight into the person of God, passages I have read many times before seem to have more depth. New truth jumps out at me with vivid clarity. Sometimes, as I sit quietly in His presence, He whispers the meaning of a passage. A passage I had trouble understanding during my morning worship. As I often read from different letters and books randomly, I feel a little ashamed at my lack of direction—only to discover He lead me to the exact verse I would need to find His comfort and counsel for the day ahead. He is amazing. His Word is life-changing.

Mum's letters have stopped. But I have treasured letters from God Himself that never change or run out. They are wrapped in a red leather cover that has needed replacing several times. The worth of the worn pages inside with their margin notes and brightly coloured favoured texts are invaluable. I love my God intimately. Until He returns where I can live with Him forever and chat face to face—I will read His letters over and over. I'll cry over them, sleep with them under my pillow and carry them with me wherever I go.

---

*Faye Stothers writes from Victoria where she serves as chaplain at Heritage College, helping young people make decisions towards the Kingdom.*



# The marvellous Gospel

by Boris Dobra

I'M CONSTANTLY DRAWN TO A NUMBER OF BEAUTIFUL texts from the New Testament. They lead us back to the most outstanding text—John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

How can it be that in one text God could promise to give eternal life? To demonstrate John 3:16, when the thief on the cross made his last request, “Lord remember me when you shall come into your kingdom”, Jesus replied, “Today I say unto you, you will be with me in paradise.”

In 1 John 4:10, John tells us it is not that we first loved God but that He first loved us and gave Himself for us. God’s love is the key that opens and draws us to repentance where we are forgiven of all our sins. The Holy Spirit proceeds to bring us into a new creation and with this comes all the fruits of the Spirit; love, joy, peace, long-suffering, patience and kindness. All these heavenly gifts are bestowed upon us so that we can rejoice in our salvation and share the good news of the Gospel with others.

The Lord made salvation so simple and easy, that none who believe in Him would be denied an entrance into His Kingdom. God declares us righteous because of the finished work of Christ on the cross. No amount of human effort or performance can give us salvation or bring to us the fruits of the Spirit unless God’s Holy Spirit is working upon the human hearts. Through God’s extravagant love and because of the cross event, Paul could say we are now seated in heavenly places. It is not of any works we have done but through His great mercy and love He washed our sins away and saved us.

There is not a thread of human devising in the atonement of Calvary. It was all in the doing and dying of Christ which entitles us to His Kingdom as we are drawn to the Lord; His love constrains us to do works of mercy and deeds of love. They can never be perfect as Christ’s however; they are the evidence that we have been reborn to the family of God.

Gratitude should be our only response for such great salvation. Simon loved little because he did not fully realise

**Gratitude should be our only response for such great salvation. Simon loved little because he did not fully realise how great was Jesus’ love was for him.**

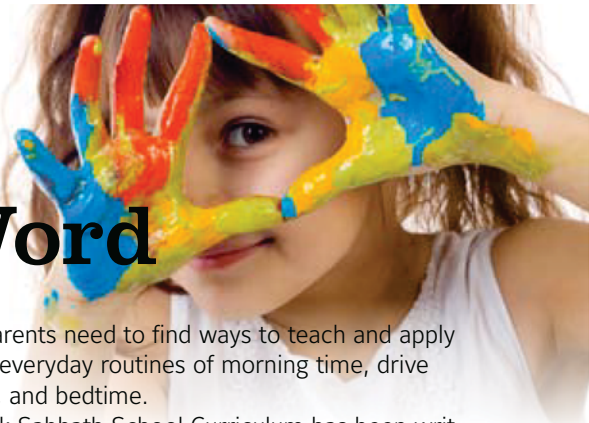
how great was Jesus’ love was for him. Mary understood how deep Jesus’ love was and she showed it by her action before His crucifixion (Luke 7:44-47). Paul also experienced Christ’s love and he could say, he that boasts let him boast in the Lord, let us boast in the doing and dying of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:17).

Millions have been brought back to God through these New Testament texts which reveal that God in love has given Himself in the person of His Son to redeem the lost human race. He couldn’t give anything greater than Himself. In the light of Calvary’s

atonement there are no deeds after conversion that can please God more than glorying in the Gospel and continually giving Him praise and thanks for such great salvation. As we continue to trust in Christ the path of salvation is a gift from the beginning to the end of our Christian journey. To believe this one needs to read the NT texts sited in this article.

Ephesians 1:7, 18, 22, 2:4-10, 12-18, 3:17-19, 5:2; Galatians 2:20, 21, 5:4, 22-24; Philippians 3:9. **R**

*Boris Dobra was born in Egypt of Croatian parents and raised a Catholic. He immigrated to Australian in 1949. He became an Adventist in 1971 and in 1972 started his career as a literature evangelist where he served the church for 28 years. He writes from Melbourne, Vic.*



# Children need the Word

God intended that children have their lives immersed in Scripture and develop a biblical world-view. A biblical world-view is an essential lens that enables people to size up a situation and respond in ways that are consistent with their faith. Research by George Barna indicates that people have developed their world-view by the age of 12. If people are to have a biblical life lens, then they need to have had many childhood experiences in understanding Scripture and applying it in their lives. Children need to know God intimately so they can discern His calling on their lives and respond with a desire to obey and follow Him.

Although children are active learners and need many sensory experiences to acquire biblical knowledge and understandings, older children in particular need to have the necessary skills to navigate the Bible for themselves, personalise Scripture and develop their own relationship with God. Children need to memorise key passages of Scripture to enable them to remember God's Word as they choose to follow Him daily.

The home provides the perfect environment for love, nurture, trust and emotional security. No-one is more significant in helping children know, understand and apply the Bible than parents. Parents need to start early by reading, telling and dramatising simple Bible stories. The Bible needs to be treasured as God's Word and authentically lived

out each day. Parents need to find ways to teach and apply Scripture in the everyday routines of morning time, drive time, meal time, and bedtime.

The GraceLink Sabbath School Curriculum has been written to help children understand, apply and share the Bible. Parents need to help children find the key Scripture and story in the Bible and read the memory verse from the Bible. Children need to know that the stories being discussed are from the Bible, not just the Bible study guide.

Kids In Discipleship is a biblically-based, life transforming ministry that helps parents understand discipleship, grow as disciples and be equipped to disciple their children. It has a set of 24 child-friendly Bible studies for parents to take with their children, called "Footprints For Kids", to ensure that every child will be a disciple of Jesus. Six studies are about building your relationship with Jesus. The next 12 studies are about knowing the truth of Jesus and cover the beliefs of the Adventist Church. The last six teach families how to share Jesus with others.

Kids In Discipleship helps families to grow closer to each other as they participate in the weekly Bible studies. Families who have used the studies report huge changes in their homes. They become closer and, as they become disciples, start to look for new ways of serving God as a family.

*Julie Weslake is children's ministries director for the South Pacific Division.*

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# The secret of prayer

by Liz Bamford

**H**OW CAN I HAVE A DEEPER RELATIONSHIP WITH Christ?" This question has been emailed to me more than any other question. The Christian journey from mediocrity to a peace-filled relationship with Christ has often seemed elusive. Fourteen years ago I became weary of living the external Christian life. I was exhausted, seeking but not finding. I began a biblical search that changed my prayer life forever. I discovered the Bible is the secret to the first step in experiencing the presence of God working in my life through prayer.

Jesus says, "Seek and you shall find". According to the Scriptures, finding involves "walking in the Spirit", having the "kingdom of God within", experiencing the "peace that passes all understanding", through prayer, and my body becomes the "temple of the Holy Spirit". Finding also means that when I pray in Christ's name my prayers will be answered. So why wasn't this happening in my life? Clearly I had not come to the place of finding; I was still seeking.

At a work field day I was introduced to a tall, handsome man. He was busy signing cricket bats. Obviously he was a well-known identity. But who was he? My mind attempted to search for some piece of information that would give me a clue. This man spent some time in conversation with me and when a photographer arrived he placed his arm around my shoulders and together we smiled at the camera.

Arriving home that night I shared with my family that I had spent the morning with a famous man. Naturally they asked excitedly, "Who was he, Mum?" Unfortunately I could not answer the question. I knew he was a cricketer, but I had never followed cricket. That evening, while viewing the news, I saw on the screen a man featured in an ad for a herbicide. I excitedly jumped off the lounge shouting, "That's him! That's the man I met!"

The entire family looked at the screen and then groaned. "Mum, don't you know who that is? That's Glenn McGrath! He's one of Australia's finest and most respected cricketers." The photo of Glenn McGrath with his arm around me is now one of my most prized possessions. I met Glenn McGrath and talked with him, but I missed the significance of the moment because I didn't have sufficient knowledge,

or a personal relationship, to realise who he was.

The first step in finding Christ, which enables our prayer life to grow, is seeking a personal relationship with God, rather than simply seeking to understand the theology of the Word of God. Too often we miss opportunities to connect with Christ because we don't know Him. We only know about Him. The Word of God is often referred to as a love letter to His people; His communication with us. Reading the Scriptures with the understanding that God's Word is His personal communication with us will radically change our approach to prayer.

The Scriptures are overflowing with stories of men and women who knew Christ and this knowing brought them into deep communion with God. Abraham knew God's voice so well that he took his son Isaac to be sacrificed, and is known as the "friend of God". David was so connected to Christ that he was known as "the apple of God's eye". The entire book of Ephesians is Paul's prayer for the Christians of Ephesus.

Joyce Meyer wrote (*The power of simple prayer*), "One of the best things about prayer is that it is progressive. It is not a skill we master; it is an unfolding relationship we enjoy." Christ desires us to find Him. Through God's Word the story of redemption unfolds like a panorama of passionate love, drawing me to repentance and a desire to know Him, but finding peace comes through the revelation of who Jesus Christ is.

Christians can experience prayer as an ascent of the mind to God rather than a continual flow of prayer requests. Our prayers can become predominately seasons of praise, giving us the peace that passes all human understanding.

If we find the Christ of the Scriptures, we will experience an inner place of serenity, peace and delight, away from the storms of life. When this experience becomes ours we will find quietude in Him, and our prayer lives will be empowered and empowering. God's admonition is, "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10).

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*Liz Bamford is prayer ministries coordinator at Glenvale church, Toowomba, Queensland.*

# Word of God in the Old Testament

by Dr Ross Cole

**W**HAT POWER IS ATTRIBUTED TO THE WORD of God in the Old Testament (OT)? “Man does not live by bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God” (Deuteronomy 8:3). “The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever” (Isaiah 40:8).

The OT is not concerned with either God or human beings in the abstract; it is concerned with God and human beings in relationship to one another. “The Word of God” characteristically refers to one of two things, either the divine promises made to humans, or the divine commands given to them to prescribe the appropriate human response. Yet even the promises have a double aspect. Deliverance for God’s people spells doom for their impenitent enemies, and doom can come their own way if they rebel. Covenant blessings can become covenant curses.

Ideally human beings would seek God’s Word all the time, but in reality they often turn to Him only in times of crisis. OT characters typically long for a divine word when they face the uncertainty of war. Zedekiah would destroy Jeremiah, yet he summons the prophet to a private audience and asks him, “Is there any word from the LORD?” (Jer 37:17). Jeremiah offers him none of the hope he seeks: “Yes,” Jeremiah replied, “you will be handed over to the king of Babylon.” Jehoshaphat urges Ahab to seek a word from the Lord before they go to war against Aram (1 Kings 22:5; 1 Chronicles 18:4). Sometimes when rulers have their trust in human allies, they do not seek the Lord’s Word, yet in His grace he still reaches out to them (Isaiah 7). King Saul’s story is a tragic tale, when the Lord refuses him a word before battle. Saul instead receives a pronouncement of doom from the Witch of Endor (1 Samuel 28).

## From Spoken to Written Word

When the OT talks of the Word of God, the focus is overwhelmingly on the spoken word delivered by a prophet addressing a specific situation. The patriarchs may keep records, but they have no Scripture as such. The Scripture we have today becomes available only step by step. Possession of the written word isn’t absolutely necessary for salvation.

Nevertheless, Moses does write down the words of the covenant (Exodus 34:4; 34:27; Deuteronomy 10:2; 31:9).

As part of the ratification process, it was customary in the Ancient Near East for the terms of international treaties to be written then stored in the temples of the deities of both parties, there to serve as a permanent testimony. In keeping with this practice, Moses instructs the Levites: “Take this Book of the Law and place it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God. There it will remain as a witness against you.” (Deuteronomy 31:26, 27).

It is significant that in the New Testament, Matthew 5:21, 27, 31, 33, 38, 43 relativises oral tradition, while vs. 18 affirms the perpetuity of “the smallest letter” and “the least stroke of the pen”. God may continue to speak to us orally, but the written word provides a test and a framework for what we hear. However, in the days before the printing press, one person would typically read Scripture while many would listen (Deuteronomy 31:1-15). Music can be either read from a page or heard by the ear. Yet the reading is not an end in itself; it merely serves as a tool for the hearing to occur (whether in the ear or the imagination). So we lose something when we forget that the OT is primarily meant to be heard rather than read.

## From Spoken and Written Word to Living Word

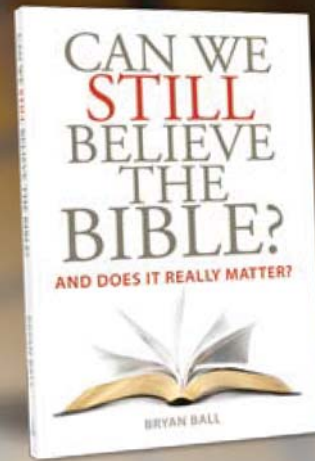
In Psalms 147:15, the divine word is personified as running “swiftly” to perform the divine command. This expression is no more than a figure of speech. However, the way is opened here for John’s teaching concerning Jesus as the eternal world made flesh and dwelling among us (John 1). That which was metaphorical is revealed as literally true after all. “In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son” (Heb 1:1, 2a). The word of the OT points forward to the Son, confirming Him as the culmination of the line of revelation begun centuries beforehand. The revelation of God in Jesus Christ speaks to us with a unity and clarity not possessed by the OT, inspired as it is. Likewise, God may continue to speak to us “at many times and in various ways”, but the glory of God revealed to us in the face of Jesus remains ultimately authoritative for the Christian. Now we are indeed moving beyond the Old Testament itself!

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# Believing the Bible

by Bryan Ball



**M**OST PEOPLE WHO READ RECORD BELIEVE THE Bible. They read it, even study it. They believe it's reliable, true and necessary. They belong to a Church that's strongly Bible-based and which spends millions annually to get its biblical message across. I'm one of them, and I wish there were more of us.

The truth is, however, we're a minority. Most people in our culture don't share our convictions. They think the Bible is out-dated, unreliable and discredited. So, who's right? Living in this increasingly secular society we need to remind ourselves that we can believe the Bible and why we can and should do so. There are at least seven important facts about the Bible that can direct us.

**1.** Take its influence. No other book has had such an impact on so many people in so many nations over so much time. It's almost impossible to exaggerate the influence of the Bible throughout history. It has shaped language, literature, art and music, political ideology, social reform, legal processes and, of course, the religious beliefs and values of countless millions. More than 10,000,000 Bibles are sold every year in more than 1700 languages.

**2.** Fulfilled prophecy is one of the strongest arguments for believing the Bible is more than a collection of human writings. Prediction of future events confirms the Bible's credibility. It contains hundreds of predictions concerning the future of people, cities, nations and empires covering centuries. One writer says "the accumulated witness" of fulfilled prophecy "is devastating" to the sceptics.<sup>1</sup> There are at least 300 predictions relating to the life and death of Christ alone, making a compelling argument for the Bible's credibility.

**3.** Critics have claimed that the Bible is unreliable because it is historically inaccurate. They said it speaks of people and events that are not mentioned in other ancient records. Abraham, Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar and the Hittites are just a few of the examples that could be cited. But archaeological discoveries have changed all that. Many sites excavated across the ancient Near East have yielded information confirming biblical records, including the existence of all the above. Werner Keller, a former sceptical journalist, tells of the effect this had on him personally. "There kept hammering on my brain this one sentence", he writes, "The Bible is right after all."<sup>2</sup>

**4.** Another reason for believing the Bible is its relevance to life. It speaks about all life's ages and experiences—youth and old age, husbands and wives, parents and children,

living and dying. It tells of joy and sorrow, poverty and riches, sickness and health, work and play, war and peace, tears and laughter, and much more. It offers some of the wisest counsel ever given for living and consistently points to a better life to come.

**5.** The Bible claims for itself the ability to change lives. We do not need an IQ of 150 to know that something is seriously wrong with society today. Murders, rapes, robberies, child abuse, gang wars, kids out of control, drug-pushers, terrorism, corruption in high places, increasing depression and suicides, especially among young people—all brought to our attention daily in the media. These are all world-wide, people problems. God says, "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you" (Ezekiel 36:26 NKJV). Through the centuries millions have proved this to be true. The Bible has helped make bad people good, sad people happy and weak people strong. It has even changed whole societies. It must have some unusual power.

**6.** More than that, the Bible is the basis of western civilisation. It's hard to believe that this civilisation might one day disappear, yet that's what the pundits are saying. So how have we come to this frightening possibility? Largely by rejecting the Bible, it seems. Until relatively recently most people in the western world believed the Bible, and lived by its values. The change in our culture's direction parallels the change in attitudes to the Bible in the west over the past century or so. If we are really serious about saving our civilisation we'd better take the Bible seriously again—if it's not already too late.

**7.** Finally, there's Jesus, the most influential Person who ever lived. His life and teachings have touched the lives of untold millions through the centuries. How did this happen? Well, it happened through the Bible, because it is the only real source of information we have about Him. History and prophecy combine to prove that He was the long-awaited Messiah and that His death and Resurrection were redeeming acts of love for a dying race. We come to an understanding of Jesus through the Bible, the Book we must believe in order to receive the eternal life He promised.

So, can we still believe it? We can indeed, because there's abundant evidence to convince us that it's reasonable, credible and relevant. So what about sharing some of those reasons with others?

<sup>1</sup> J M Boice, *Standing on the Rock*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1984, p 62.

<sup>2</sup> Werner Keller, *The Bible as History*, Book Club Associates, 1980, p 24.



by Eliezer Gonzalez

# Understanding Scripture

## The thing mo

**W**HAT AN ADVANTAGE THE DISCIPLES HAD! They had Jesus right there with them to interpret Scripture for them, didn't they? Look at the mess that Christianity has found itself in since Jesus left to go back to heaven! All these different Christian denominations and churches, all professing to follow the Bible, tell us that, by-and-large, Christians have actually had a hard time working out what the Bible actually means, on a whole range of topics.

There is nothing new here. Just look at how quickly, in the early centuries, divisions came into the church. In the early centuries we know that there were significant groups of Christians who were willing to accept the first day of the week as a better day on which to go to church and worship, instead of the seventh day of the week. Eventually, many Christians substantially abandoned the biblical teaching of "sleeping" until the Resurrection, and decided that they preferred the idea that when they died their souls would immediately fly up to heaven to be with God. Presumably all of these Christians read their Bibles, right?

Today, not only do we see many different interpretations of key teachings within Christianity, but we also see diversity in understandings of the Bible within our own

denomination, the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I am not saying that diversity of understandings is not good; in fact, diversity can be very good, when it is a function of growth. But when diversity is a function of sectarianism, it can be dangerous, because it doesn't help us to grow spiritually at all.

And so we look at the Christian world around us, we look at our Bibles, and I hear you say, "If only Jesus hadn't left!" But I would like to suggest that there is a solution. In fact, perhaps we have missed something here, that is really very important.

It is certain that Jesus gave a great deal of importance to the correct interpretation of Scripture while He was on earth. In fact, He effectively commenced His ministry in the synagogue at Nazareth, when He read from the book of Isaiah, and declared, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:21). For the people who were there, this was an astonishing, world-altering interpretation of Isaiah 61. I am sure that they had heard and thought about this passage from Isaiah many times before, but that simple statement of explanation by Jesus was one that had the potential to completely change the way they saw the world and their role in it.

# st people miss

Similarly, right at the end of Jesus' ministry on earth, we find that He walked down the road to Emmaus with two despondent disciples. The Gospel of Luke indicates that Cleopas and his friend were discussing the recent events during Passover in Jerusalem among themselves. I am sure that they talked about Scripture as they walked along, and they just couldn't understand why Jesus had allowed Himself to be crucified.

But here is Jesus now, right beside them, and Luke tells us that patiently, "beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures" (Luke 24:27). Jesus' interpretation of Scripture certainly changed the world-view of these two disciples forever. I am sure that they ran back to Jerusalem! That shows us just how exciting it was to have Jesus Himself personally explain the meaning of Scripture!

The striking fact is that this role of Jesus as the interpreter of Scripture was not to stop when He ascended back into heaven. In fact, Jesus specifically promised to continue explaining the meaning of Scripture to His followers on earth, after His ascension into heaven. He told His disciples that He would always be with them (Matthew 28:20), and that He would continue to guide His followers

into all the truth, through the "Spirit of truth" (John 16:13), which is the very Spirit of Christ Himself (Romans 8:9).

This must have important, even transformational, implications for us. You see, perhaps we can have all of the hermeneutical and Bible study methods, and have all of the commentaries at our fingertips, and all of these things are important. Perhaps we may even be convinced that we are right. But if we forget that Jesus is the best, the ultimate, Interpreter of Scripture, then our understanding is bound to be flawed.

Next time you sit down to study the Bible, may I suggest that you invite Jesus to interpret it for you. Ask Him to sit right there beside you, and to read with you, and explain what it means for your life. Don't neglect all of the other tools that you can use to help you understand. But be prepared for an understanding of the Bible that is personal, direct and radical. If you are willing to accept it, the results will be absolutely life-changing, as they were for those two disciples on the road to Emmaus. ➤

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*Eliezer Gonzalez has an MA in theology from Avondale College and an MA in Early Christian and Jewish Studies from Macquarie University. He is married to Ana and they have two children. Eliezer attends Reedy Creek church on the Gold Coast where he is active in evangelism.*

# Why I read my Bible

by Rochelle Melville





**A**LLEX STEWART CAUSED AN UPROAR LAST MONTH when he posted a clip on the internet of himself rolling a cigarette from a page of the Bible and the Koran and smoking them. He said he was performing an experiment to test whether the Islamic or Christian text is more conducive to burning. He said people offended by the experiment were taking it “too seriously”. “It’s just a %\$#@ book, who cares,” he stated. Well Alex, I care.

I care because the page you tried smoking is God breathed. Hebrews 4:12 (NIV) says: “For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.” The Bible is not just paper and ink; it’s a form of liposuction.<sup>1</sup>

In this society where everything tends to slide into shades of grey, the Bible helps me personally in distinguishing between God things, the pull towards this earth, and its trinkets, and Satan’s objectives and lies. Again and again I am drawn back to remembering the bigger picture of spiritual warfare and discerning how to live a Spirit-filled life.

In his Bible Commentary, Matthew Henry shares that “The word will show the sinner all that is in his heart. Sinful habits, that are become as it were natural to the soul, and rooted deeply in it, are separated and cut off by this sword. It will discover to men their thoughts and purposes, the vileness of many, the bad principles they are moved by, the sinful ends they act to.”

The Bible gives my life parameters, a spiritual skeleton if you like, a direction to set my life compass by. Without these internal reminders I fear I would just be another body on this earth grabbing all I could out of life and sucking others dry. To be reminded that I follow a Master who turned the world upside down by serving others, is radical. It is a Book of tried and tested wisdom. The Bible is not just an Information Manual to be read like we’re setting up an internet phone for the first time. The Bible is for wrestling with, study and discussion. As I read I need to prayerfully ask, “How is this relevant to my life?” and “How can I grow through what I know?” As Jeremiah wrote, “This is what the LORD says: “Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls” (Jeremiah 6:16).

I care about the Bible, Alex, because it has changed my life and helped mould me into a much ‘better’ person; better as in kinder, more patient, more respectful of others and more forgiving. The Bible helps me look at people through “God Goggles” where I experience people through the eyes and heart of God instead of my own human, ego-flawed eyesight. Instead of judging and getting angry or annoyed, through “God Goggles” I see hurt, abandoned, betrayed, abused people who need to sit at the feet of Jesus and receive healing and unconditional love. I am reminded that we are His hands and feet and His heart to touch the world around us. I care about the Bible because it keeps me fired

up and on-mission, as I live out my life purpose. The Bible reveals that God looks inward to see our needs. He doesn’t give us what we think we need, He seeks to satisfy the deepest longings of our heart. Following God will never take us away from satisfying our deepest longings, it will always lead us towards soul contentment. “Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart” (Psalm 37:4). The Bible keeps everything in perspective.

When I delight myself in God by saturation in the Word and being in His presence, I allow God unrestricted access. This gives me freedom to take a back seat to my own agendas and ego, and allow God to keep realigning me for my life mission where my deepest desires will be fulfilled. “‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future’” (Jeremiah 29:11). So instead of wrestling with fame and fortune and expending all my energies on ME, I have the sort of peace that comes from knowing God is ever moving me toward a magnificent life.

Along with hope for my future, the Bible keeps me humble and in my place. When I read about my sinful nature I am reminded that I am not God. “We are all infected and impure with sin. When we display our righteous deeds, they are nothing but filthy rags. Like autumn leaves, we wither and fall, and our sins sweep us away like the wind” (Isaiah 64:6 NLT).

I am reminded that my part is to let God be God and that He is sovereign and Saviour. The Bible reveals that when we surrender our whole life to God He takes our life and turns the dial on our life to maximum impact. I am reminded too that there is hope beyond the grave and that this entire life is not about:

- 1) God is good
- 2) I’m bad
- 3) Try harder<sup>2</sup>

This life is always about God in us, it’s all about Him. What Jesus has done is enough, there’s nothing we can do that will make Him love us more, and there is nothing we can do that will make Him stop loving us either.

The Bible also brings me great comfort when tears flow and difficulties attack. Just knowing that the God of the Universe weeps with me is consolation. “The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their cry; The Lord is close to the broken hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit” (Psalm 34:15, 18).

So Alex Stewart, I care a lot about the Bible and the words on its pages. My challenge to you is a try a new experiment. Try opening the Bible and reading it for one hour every day for 40 days. Start reading in the book of Mark and continue through all the other Gospels. As you read I pray that you will receive liposuction that will carve off everything that keeps you separated from God, that through the Bible you will encounter a Saviour.

<sup>1</sup> Term borrowed from Pastor David Reilly

<sup>2</sup> Burke, John. *Soul Revolution*.



# The Bible as poetry

by Phil Ward

**A**RE YOU AWARE THE NEW TESTAMENT WAS originally written in poetry? It's not the style of poetry we are used to. Not all poetry rhymes. But all poetry has some form of repetition. Our poetry repeats a sound at the end of a line and we call that repeating sound a rhyme.

William Shakespeare wrote his plays in poetry, but the lines do not rhyme. His poetry is based on a different type of repetition. Each line of his plays was the same length with every second syllable emphasised. So his poetry repeated the same line length and repeated the same rhythm. It isn't rhyme. But it is poetry. And it's poetry because it has a form of repetition.

The repetition in the New Testament's poetry is not rhyme, rhythm, or line length. New Testament poetry repeats a word or a thought. For example, lines in the following verse repeat a word.

When I was a *child*,/ I spoke like a *child*.  
I thought like a *child*. /I reasoned like a *child*.

Each line in this passage repeats the word "child".

A similar example from the same New Testament chapter is:

Love is patient,/ love is kind./ Love is never jealous.

Each of these three lines repeats the word "love". Another example from this chapter repeats the word "always". It says that love:

always protects,/ always trusts,/ always hopes  
and always endures.

These four lines poetically match each other because each has the word "always". These examples all come from First Corinthians 13, the Bible's Great Love Chapter. The chapter has some poetic lines which repeat a thought. For example,

I've become a noisy gong  
or a clanging cymbal.

There are no major words in the first line which are repeated in the second line. However, the thought in first line is repeated in the second. Both thoughts are about something which makes a loud semi-musical noise – "a noisy gong" and "a clanging cymbal".

Another example where poetic lines repeat a thought is:  
prophecies will end,  
tongues will cease,  
and knowledge will be superseded.

Each of these lines conveys a thought about a spiritual gift

coming to an end. The lines poetically match each other because they repeat similar thoughts.

Sometimes the poetic match doesn't come from repeating the same thought, but from repeating the opposite thought.

When I was a child,/ I spoke like a child.  
I thought like a child./ I reasoned like a child.  
But when I became an adult /I put away childish things.

The word "adult" here is the opposite of the words "child" and "childish" which are found in the other five lines.

This same chapter has another example of opposites used as parallels.

We partially know/ and we partially prophesy.  
But when completeness comes,/ the partial goes.

Three of these lines carry the thought of "partial". The other line has an opposite thought – "completeness".

In all the examples given so far, the poetic lines are next to each other. However, often the repeating lines are separated from each other. In the passage below, the two marked lines at the start of the passage have their parallels in two similarly-marked lines at the end of the quote.

**If I have no love/** I am nothing.  
I may donate all I possess/ and may surrender my body/ so I may boast./ **But if I have no love/** I gain nothing.

Christians have always felt that this chapter was brilliant writing. Now we see part of the reason. All of First Corinthians 13 is poetry. How many times have people read this chapter and felt it was almost poetic in its grandeur? It's not almost poetic. It is poetic.

In the *Bible as Poetry New Testament*, this chapter is printed with matching lines indented the same amount, allowing readers to see which lines match each other.

I may speak with the tongues  
of people  
and angels.  
But if I have no love  
I've become a noisy gong  
or a clanging cymbal.

I may have the ability to prophesy.  
I may understand all secrets  
and understand all knowledge.  
I may have all faith

so as to remove mountains.  
 But if I have no love  
 I am nothing.  
 I may donate all I possess  
 and may surrender my body  
 so I may boast.  
 But if I have no love  
 I gain nothing.  
 Love is patient,  
 love is kind.  
 Love is never jealous  
 and never brags.  
 It is not arrogant,  
 rude, or selfish.  
 It cannot be provoked,  
 and it does not contemplate evil.  
 It is not delighted by injustice,  
 but is delighted with the truth.  
 It always protects,  
 always trusts,  
 always hopes,  
 and always endures.  
 Such love never fails.

But prophecies will end,  
 tongues will cease,  
 and knowledge will be superseded.  
 For we partially know  
 and we partially prophesy.  
 But when completeness comes,  
 the partial goes.

When I was a child,  
 I spoke like a child,  
 I thought like a child,  
 I reasoned like a child.  
 But when I became an adult  
 I put away childish things.

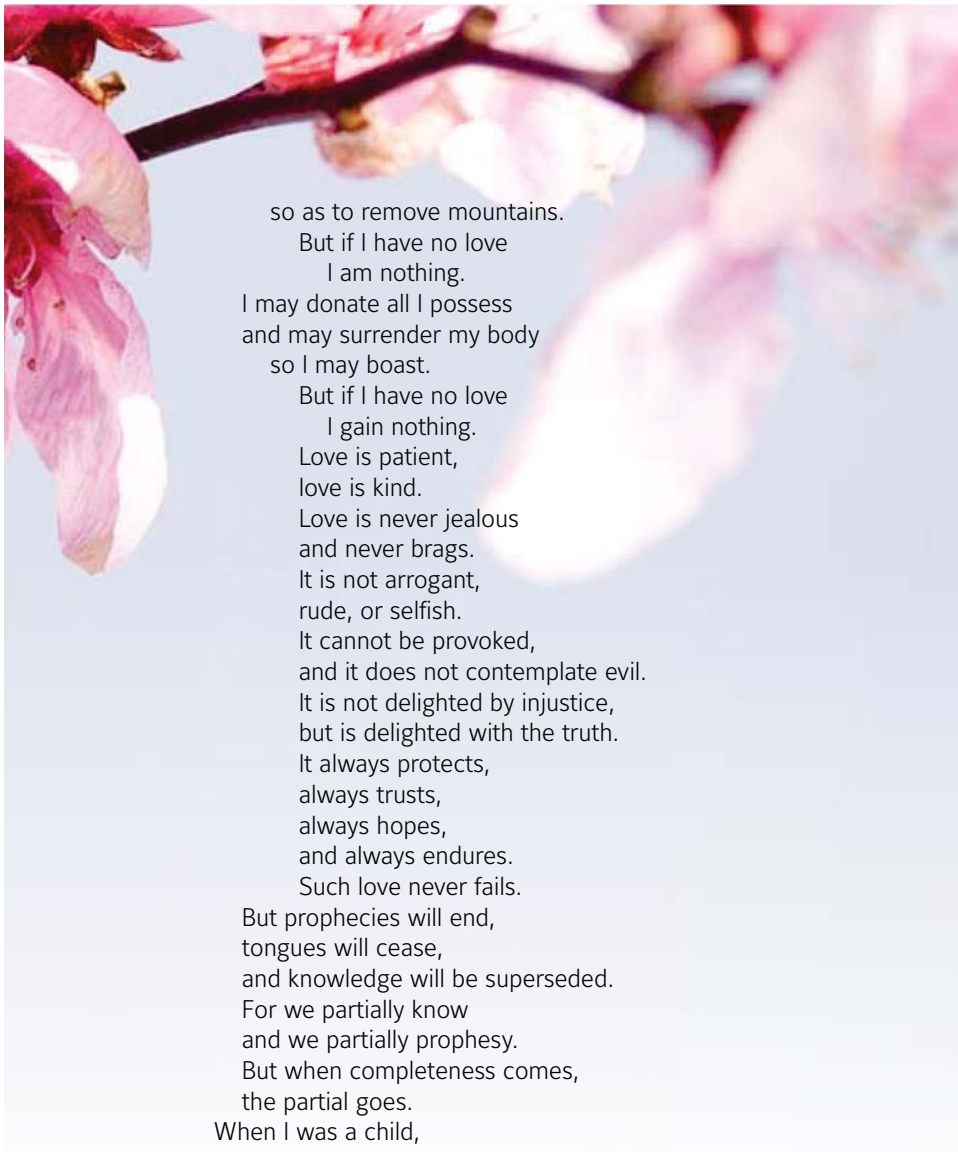
Now we see  
 a dim reflection  
 in a poor mirror,  
 but then it will be face  
 to face.

Now I partially know,  
 but then I will fully know,  
 just as I am fully known.  
 Faith, hope and love:  
 these three will last.  
 And the greatest of these is love.

"A fine poem will seize your imagination intellectually," wrote American poet Muriel Rukeyser. But, she said, the real way it seizes you "is through emotion, through what we call feeling". That is certainly true of the magnificent poetry in this great Bible chapter. It is poetry which captures both our intellect and our emotion.



*Phil Ward has been translating the Bible for more than 20 years. The Bible as Poetry New Testament is available online. It costs \$A10 and can be downloaded at <a href="http://BibleAsPoetry.com">BibleAsPoetry.com</a>.*



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# Power in Bible study

by Domenic Rosina

**ENCOURAGE YOU TO SEIZE EVERY OPPORTUNITY** to study your Bible. Why? Because there is power in studying God's Word—Holy Spirit power that will amaze you—power that completely transforms lives.

When you study the Word of God with others you will witness the power of heaven move and change the course of lives and place them heaven bound—the heritage that belongs to everyone who believes. We have the privilege of being partners with God in the plan of salvation. God has chosen us and wants us to be His disciples. It's a choice some are still struggling with.

It is not enough just to say you believe in Jesus. The Bible says that the devil also believes and trembles (James 2:19). Belief is trusting and merging your life with Him. It is moving forward despite the consequences. It is making yourself available to the degree that your life revolves around God. When your plans are centred around His will, God's plans become your plans. He is in the business of saving souls—as a consequence you are too.

In Acts, the Bible tells us the believers turned the world upside down with their message of a risen Saviour. It is interesting to note the method Jesus used on the road to Emmaus. He opened the eyes of those who were downcast and discouraged by opening the Word of God in what we would call a Bible study. The Bible tells us Jesus taught them about the Messiah quoting Scripture, "beginning at Moses and all the Prophets. He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Luke 24:27).

The Word of God is powerful. If we would just read it with people and allow the Word to be seen, read and heard—many answers would be given to the questions on the hearts of people. We need to return to the simplicity of using what God has entrusted to us. Opening God's Word and sharing it with people, sharing our Christ-centred doctrines that point to Jesus as our Saviour, is the only solution to the restlessness of people's troubled minds and hearts.

I am writing this because it's my experience. People love to see what God has to say. They are encouraged to see it for themselves. I have witnessed tears of conviction and joy. I have been blessed to watch people grow in their faith and then share their love for Jesus with others. There are times when I have seen people walk away after many hours and

months of Bible study. I believe it was time never wasted, because I know the Word of God is enduring and powerful.

God is more than able to resurrect the Word that has been planted in people's hearts. At the right time the seed in the heart will be watered—by the Lord's choosing or through circumstance. I know the Lord has perfect timing and His timing is always accomplished with precision. Although we share and have a part to play, it is God who does the convicting, not us.

I remember when I gave my heart to the Lord. I was so excited and wanted to share the Gospel with everyone. I remember telling my friends and family—some were interested but no-one was responsive.

One of my fondest memories of sharing the Gospel was with a good friend from my youth. He witnessed how the Gospel changed my life. After I became an Adventist I would share and open the Scriptures with him. Ten years passed before I was aware that the Word of God was planted and growing in his heart. I was in church one Sabbath and felt the need to look to the back of the church. To my surprise, in the pew behind me was my friend. After church he shared a dream he had—of Jesus' soon return. He realised he wasn't ready. I began to have more in-depth Bible studies with him and his partner. As the Word of God spoke to him and the Holy Spirit convicted he said to me, "Domenic I have to make things right. I will dedicate my baby boy to the Lord, I will marry my partner and I will be baptised."

Not only did he follow through, but the Holy Spirit moved on his partner's heart and she walked into the waters of baptism with him. What a privilege. What an honour to share in this great commission that Jesus has entrusted to us as found in Matthew 28:18–20.

I would love to share more stories like the one of the woman who slammed her hand on my dining table in the middle of our study saying, "I will not change my religion". Only a few months later she was baptised into Christ and became a member of the family, of this great Church, the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The blessing that is ours is a real experience that transforms not only our lives but the lives of others. ➤

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*Domenic Rosina is a Concord church (Sydney) member who is passionate about sharing his faith.*

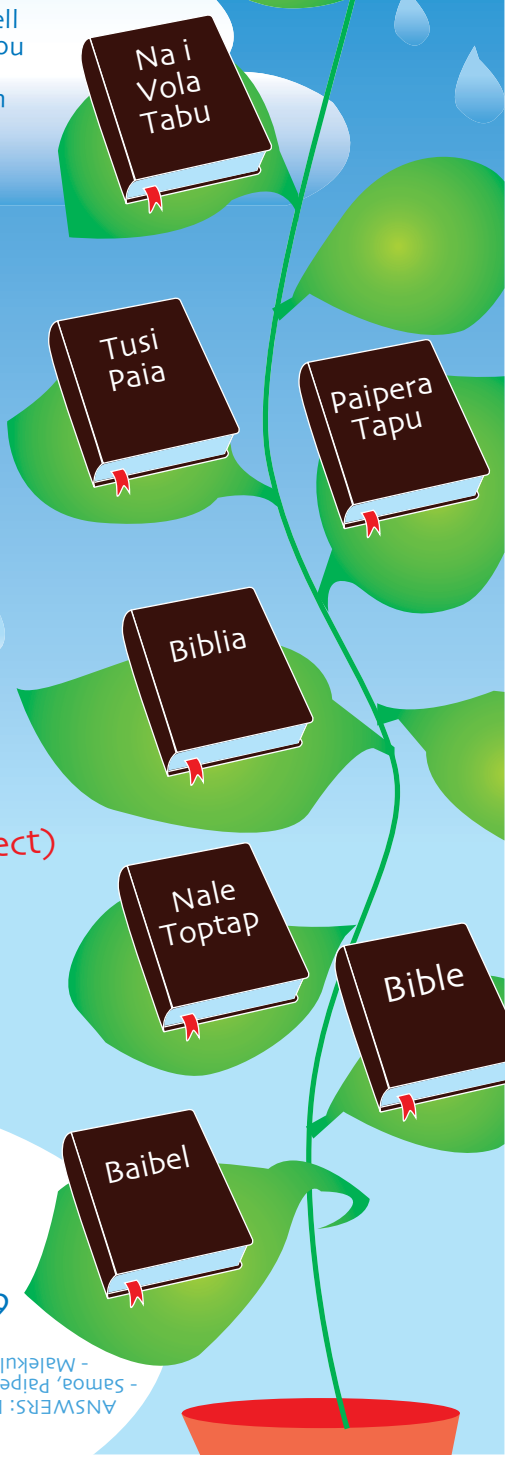
# Kids' Space

## Hola\* Kids!

Match the word for **Bible** to the different countries/islands

Do you know the song...

'Read your Bible, pray every day'? well the song continues and says that if you read your Bible daily you will grow! Jesus wants us to know all about Him and when we read our Bibles we will grow in our friendship with Him.



FIJI

SAMOA

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

AOTEAROA

AUSTRALIA

MALEKULA (Aitchin dialect)

SPAIN

## Bible Text

Your word, O LORD, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens. Psalm 119:89

ANSWERS: Bible - Australia, Na i Vola Tabu - Fiji, Tusi Paia - Samoa, Paipera Tapu - Aotearoa, Biblia - Spain, Nale Toptap - Malekula (Aitchin dialect), Baibel - Papua New Guinea

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## WEDDINGS

**Bui—Wee.** Truong Ngc Bui, son of Thi and Thanh Bui (Brisbane, Qld), and Cyndy Wee, daughter of Lip and Ting Sing Wee (Brisbane), were married 12.9.10 at Mick Shamburg Park, North Burleigh.

*Steve Cinzio*

**Kanellos—Robson.** Dimitrios Kanellos, son of Janis Kane and Pastor Graeme Loftus (Wahroonga, NSW), and Carolyn Elizabeth Grace Robson, daughter of Brian and Marion Robson (Perth, WA), were married 19.9.10 at Joondalup Resort, Connolly.

*Janis Kane, Graeme Loftus*

## OBITUARIES

**Carter,** Cathy Ann, born 18.7.1961 at Murrumburrah, NSW; died 25.7.10 in Wyong Hospital. She is survived by her brothers, Stephen (Coorabong) and Richard (Darwin, NT); and many nieces and nephews.

*David Bertelsen*

**Clarke,** Iris Jean (McCann), born 27.11.1918; died 15.9.10 at Coorabong, NSW. In 1943, she married Thomas Clarke. She is survived by Geoffrey (Foresters Beach), Stephen (Warners Bay), Robert (Lambton) and Jeanette (Brisbane, Qld). Iris was a faithful servant of God, and a lifetime member at Hamilton church, NSW. A humble, hard-working and supportive woman, she enjoyed a career of service in nursing and contributed consistently to various welfare organisations. Iris was much loved and will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

*John Denne, Kevin Amos*

**Hines,** Helen (nee Harvey), born 15.12.1919 at Geelong, Vic; died 29.8.10 at Ringwood. In 1957, she married Fred, who predeceased her. She was baptised in 1970. She is survived by her children and their families, Rosemary and Paul Waldrip and Ted; and grandchildren, Esther, Steven, Ann, Sandra and Jeff. Helen was devoted to her family and loved her garden. Helen and Fred donated the land on which the Traralgon church, Vic now stands. She was buried in the same grave as her beloved husband in the Willow Grove cemetery

not far from where they lived in earlier years.

*Gavin Rowe*

**King,** Shirley Alice, born 15.10.1928 at Kensington, NSW; died 11.9.10 at Port Macquarie. She was predeceased by Leen de Man in 1951 and Gordon King in 1994. She is survived by her daughters, Susan, Lyndall and Karen (all of Sydney). Shirley worked for many years in secretarial roles for the chaplaincy department of the Sydney Adventist Hospital.

*Joseph Maticic*

**McNamara,** Thomas Duncan, born 29.6.1930 at Narrabri, NSW; died 14.9.10. He is survived by his wife, Sonia (Eagles Rest Firefly); his stepchildren, Donna and Tony; and grandchildren, Shannyn, Luke, Jarryd and Troy; and great-grandson, Jaecyn who brings great joy in this sad time. Tom was an active and beloved member of Tuturru church, and will be sadly missed. Known for his honour, integrity, humour, kindness and lovely country singing voice, Tom supported Sonia in her ministries in churches up and down the north coast. What comfort to know this time apart will be but a short one as we look to going home to be reunited for eternity.  
*Sonia McNamara, David Kosmeier*

**Tutuo,** Ivan Walter, born 16.11.1936 at Batuna, Solomon Islands; died 12.8.10 at Ramata village, Western Solomons. On 6.12.1959, he married Esther Rore at Kambubu, PNG. He is survived by his wife; his children and their families, Julie and Kelvin Aengari, Encie and Smiley Dionie, Doctor Narko and Riri Tutuo, Pastor Linray and Raynier Tutuo, Bevan and Gwenly Tutuo; and five grandchildren, Kent, Kurt, Esther, Salma and Niumali. He served the Adventist church as treasurer in PNG, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands from 1956 until his retirement in 1998. He is greatly missed but now rests in the hope of that wonderful Resurrection morning when Jesus calls his name.

*Julie Aengari, Derrick Ngatulu*

**Webb,** Lucy Joan, born 28.8.1920 at Willaston, SA; died 21.7.10 at Adventist Aged Care, Coorabong, NSW. On 5.9.1946, she married David Webb at Mildura, Vic. She was predeceased by her husband in 1996, and her daughter, Mary Fitock, in 2001. She is survived by her children, Fred (Failford, NSW) and Ivan (Orange); eight grandchildren; and 20 great-grandchildren. Lucy was a keen gardener, a skilled dressmaker and a committed and involved church lady. She was a caring wife and mother with an unwavering faith in Jesus.

*Adrian Craig, Uriah St Juste*

## ADVERTISEMENTS

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## Finally

The secret of a good sermon is to have a good beginning and a good ending, and to have the two as close together as possible.

Next Record November 6

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