



# The Burning Bush

---

ISSN 0219-015X

July 1999

Volume 5 Number 2

---

THREE VIEWS ON THE MILLENNIUM: WHICH? .....	65
Jeffrey Khoo	
ISRAEL'S CURRENT POSITION AND FUTURE PROSPECTS (I) .....	73
John Douglas	
A GREAT DOOR AND EFFECTUAL IS OPENED UNTO US .....	87
Timothy Tow	
PREVENTIVE MEASURES AGAINST APOSTASY .....	93
Charles Seet	
REMEMBERING THE MARTYRS OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION .....	101
Jack Sin	
HOW BIG IS YOUR GOD? .....	104
Morris McDonald	
THEOLOGICAL IGNORANCE, CONFUSION, AND ENLIGHTENMENT: A TESTIMONY .....	110
Mathews Abraham	
College News .....	116
Class Notes .....	121
24 <sup>th</sup> FEBC Graduation Exercises (May 30, 1999) .....	123



# THE BURNING BUSH

Theological Journal of the  
FAR EASTERN BIBLE COLLEGE

Edited for the Faculty

**Rev Timothy Tow**, MDiv, STM, DD

Principal, and Lecturer in Systematic Theology

**Mrs Ivy Tow**, BTh

Matron, and Lecturer in Greek

**Rev Jeffrey Khoo**, BTh, MDiv, STM, PhD

Academic Dean, and Lecturer in New Testament

**Rev Koa Keng Woo**, BTh

Lecturer in Bible Geography and Church Music

**Rev Stephen Khoo**, BTh, MDiv, PhD (c)

Lecturer in Biblical Studies

**Rev Jack Sin**, BTh, MDiv, ThM (c)

Lecturer in Church History

**Mrs Jemima Khoo**, BTh, MA, MRE

Lecturer in Christian Education

**Rev Bob Phee**, BA (Hons), BTh, MDiv, ThM, DMin  
Registrar, and Lecturer in Apologetics

**Rev Goh Seng Fong**, MA, MDiv, DMin

Dean of Students, and Lecturer in Pastoral Ministry

**Rev Quek Suan Yew**, BArch, BTh, MDiv, STM

Lecturer in Old Testament

**Rev Prabhudas Koshy**, BSc, BTh, MDiv, ThM (c)

Lecturer in Hebrew

**Rev Colin Wong**, BTh, MDiv, ThM

Lecturer in Pastoral Ministry

**Rev Charles Seet**, BTh, MDiv

Lecturer in Biblical Studies

Editor : Jeffrey Khoo

Publisher : Far Eastern Bible College

Permit : MITA (P) 398/03/99

Printer : Chung Printing

*The Burning Bush* (ISSN 0219-015X) is published bi-annually in January and July, and contains theological papers, sermons, testimonies, book reviews, College news, and alumni reports. Articles are indexed in the *Christian Periodical Index*. The journal is distributed gratis to the FEBC family and Bible-Presbyterian churches. Complimentary subscriptions are available upon request. Theological institutions are welcome to a journal exchange.

Please direct all correspondence to:



The Editor

*The Burning Bush*

9A Gilstead Road, Singapore 309063

Republic of Singapore

# THREE VIEWS ON THE MILLENNIUM: WHICH?

Jeffrey Khoo

## Introduction

The term “millennium” literally means “1,000 years.” It is a word that all Bible students, and all Christians should be familiar with. Although the term itself—“millennium”—is not found in the Bible, the concept of a 1,000-year reign of Christ certainly is. It is found in the text we have just read, in Revelation 20:1-7. Six times in this passage, the phrase “a thousand years” appears. This is an important event, and we need to pay attention to it.

What is the millennium all about? This period very clearly has to do with the worldwide reign of Christ, together with His people. In verse 6 we read, “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and *shall reign with him a thousand years.*”

There is some measure of confusion over what the millennium is all about. There are three main views on the millennium—postmillennialism, amillennialism, and premillennialism. Which view is correct? I would like us to examine all the three millennial views in the light of Scripture. I will then conclude with what is the view we, as the Bible-Presbyterian Church, have taken.

## Postmillennialism

Postmillennialism is the view which says that Christ will come *after* the millennium. Postmillennialists have an *optimistic* view of the world. They say that the world will become better and better, until it reaches perfection. Through human effort, the world will eventually be peaceful, harmonious, and prosperous. After the world has experienced these wonderful conditions of peace, harmony and prosperity, Jesus would return.

This view is held mainly by the *modernists* who deny the doctrine of sin, who believe that man is inherently good. Man is capable, intelligent, and good enough to create a heaven on earth, they say.

Another group of postmillennialists are the *reconstructionists*. They say that Christians should be active in politics in order to influence or reconstruct the laws of a country by making them more Christian or Biblical. They believe that wicked society needs to be reconstructed by Christians. Through the preaching of the Gospel, more and more people will become Christians. So when Christians dominate the world, the world will become a better place. Christ will return after the world is set right by Christians.

Is the postmillennial view correct? What does the Bible tell us about ourselves and the world we live in? Does the Bible paint for us an optimistic or a pessimistic picture of the world and of the end times? Will the world at the end times be inhabited by mostly Christians?

The Bible tells us that man is not morally good and inherently capable of transforming the world into a better place. There are many attempts by man to live in peace with one another. But each attempt has ended in failure. The world has a history of about 6,000 years. Out of these 6,000 years, the world has known only 300 years of peace. In this century alone, we already have two world wars. When we read the newspapers, do we see the world becoming kinder, gentler, and more peaceful? No, we find a whole lot of fightings, riotings, killings, cheatings, thefts, rapes, murders all the time. This is because the world is inhabited by sinful men, born in sin, and bent on sinning. Man has no ability whatsoever to make this world a good place to live in. He certainly has the ability to make the world a sophisticated place (we have cars, computers, aeroplanes etc), but not necessarily a peaceful and happy place for living.

The world is not getting better and better, but from bad to worse. Jesus Himself painted a pessimistic instead of an optimistic view of the world in the last days. In Matthew 24:6-8, Jesus predicted, "And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: . . . for nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows." The Apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 3:1-4 warned, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be

### THREE VIEWS ON THE MILLENNIUM: WHICH?

lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.” Jesus said that the last days will be like “the days of Noah” when “the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Luke 17:26 cf Gen 6:5).

Will the world be filled with Christians just before Christ returns? The Christian population in the world just before the Lord returns will be relatively small. Jesus said, “Narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matt 7:14). True believing Christians will not be in the majority but in the minority before Christ returns.

Postmillennialists have a wrong view of the world. We reject the postmillennial view of the end times.

#### **Amillennialism**

Amillennialism literally means “no millennium.” Amillennialists teach that there is *no future 1,000 year reign of Christ on earth*. The 1,000 years of Revelation 20 is not literal but *symbolical*. It is not referring to a physical but a *spiritual* reign of Christ. The reign of Christ is not an earthly but *heavenly* one. Some of them say that the millennium is right here and now. Christ is presently ruling over the whole world from heaven through the Church.

Is this correct? Are we right now living in the millennium? If so, then Satan and his demons should not be in this world. Revelation 20:2-3 tells us that Satan will be chained up during the millennium: “And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled.” Do we see this to be the case? Is Satan at this time bound? If so, then why is there so much Satanic activity today? And if Satan is now chained up, then the Apostle Peter would be wrong to say that Satan is now on the prowl. In 1 Peter 5:8, Peter warned, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.” We are clearly not in the millennium yet.

The amillennialists say that there is no *future* rule of Christ *on earth*? Is this true? Revelation 20:6 says that God's people *will* reign with Christ: "they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and *shall* reign with him a thousand years." Please note the *future tense*—"will reign" and "*shall* reign." The Apostle John was talking about a future, and not a present reign.

Will this reign be in heaven or on earth? Scripture interprets Scripture. In Revelation 5:10, we are told very clearly that Christ and His saints will reign *on earth*: "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign *on the earth*." Is this the case right now? Do we see Christ *physically* on earth ruling over the whole world right now? Clearly this has not yet happened. We are still waiting for this great event to come. And it will happen when Christ returns to judge this world, put all His enemies under His feet, and rule over this whole planet for a millennium.

Another serious error that the amillennialists have made is in their view of the nation of Israel. (This error is also made by postmillennialists and historic premillennialists.) They say that God has *cast away Israel*. Israel, for her sin of rejecting her Messiah—the Lord Jesus Christ—is now *forsaken* by God and is *replaced by a new Israel—the Church*. All the promises God made to Israel is now transferred to the Church.

Is this true? Did God cast away and forsake Israel? Did He withdraw all the promises He had originally made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? The answer is No. God has not forsaken Israel. God's hand is still upon Israel to protect and preserve her. God must keep His Word. Although Israel has sinned against God by rejecting Christ, yet God will not and cannot break His Word. God will punish Israel for her sins, but God is true to His Word, and is faithful to the Covenant He had made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God says in Psalm 89:3,34-6: "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, . . . My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me" (see also Jer 31:35-37).

Paul himself questioned those who said that God has cast Israel away. In Romans 11:1, Paul asked, "Hath God cast away his people?" Answer: "God forbid!" In Romans 11:25-27, Paul predicted that one day

### *THREE VIEWS ON THE MILLENNIUM: WHICH?*

“all Israel shall be saved.” The amillennialists say that this Israel is the Church. This is a manipulation of God’s Word. God means what He says and says what He means. If Paul was talking about the Church instead of Israel, he could and would have used the term “Church.” He did not. He was not referring to the Church but to Israel—God’s chosen nation when he said “all Israel shall be saved.”

The word “Israel” is used 70 times in the NT, and on every occasion it is used, it refers to the Jewish nation of Israel, not the Church. Israel is Israel, Church is Church. We must not confuse the two. The nation of Israel will one day be converted and will acknowledge Jesus as her Messiah. This will happen when Christ returns. Israel will be truly glorious in that day when the Lord sits on the throne of David in Jerusalem ruling over the whole world in fulfilment of all the OT prophecies concerning her. And we are seeing God’s promises being kept and prophecies being fulfilled today. Look at Israel today! She is back in her land in fulfilment of Isaiah 11:11-12. Israel must be back in her land before the Lord can return. This is one indication that the Lord is coming back very soon. The Lord will return soon to complete the restoration of Israel.

The amillennial view of Israel is problematic and questionable. If God has truly cast away Israel for her sins, then what makes the Church so sure that she will not be cast away also? Are we not as sinful as Israel? Have we not been as disobedient? How many sins have we committed already against God during this first week of the new year? Should not God cast us away? God forbid! God is true to His Word, and will save us to the very end. When we sin, He will chastise us. We are still His sons and daughters. He will not and cannot cast us away. Likewise, when Israel sins, God will punish her. But Israel remains God’s special and chosen nation. God will not cast her away.

There is another problem, and it has to do with the many Scriptural prophecies that talk about Israel. How do the amillennialists treat these prophecies? Well, they explain these prophecies away by saying that these prophecies are not to be taken literally but spiritually. They spiritualise away all the prophecies which deal with the nation of Israel and the second coming of Christ.

How do they do it? For an example, let us turn to Zechariah 8:21-23. Zechariah 8:21-23 is a prophecy that will be fulfilled in the millennium,

but the amillennialists say No, it is fulfilled by Christians and by the Church. Zechariah 8:21-23 reads, “Thus saith the LORD of hosts; It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities: And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts: I will go also. Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem (read “Church”), and to pray before the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew (read “Christian”), saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.” The amillennialists say “Jerusalem” means “Church,” and “Jew” means “Christian.”

Is this how we should understand this passage? If this is how we should spiritualise the Scriptures, then how about Zechariah 9:9 which says, “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.” This prophecy—was it not fulfilled *literally* by the Lord Jesus Christ in His triumphal entry into Jerusalem (cf Luke 19:38)? I think you see the fallacy of the amillennial interpretation of prophecy. If Zechariah 9 is literal, why should Zechariah 8 be spiritual?

How many verses will we misunderstand if we adopt this amillennial method of interpreting prophecy? Not one or two, but 4,200! There are 4,200 verses in Scripture concerning the second coming of Christ. That amounts to the whole NT minus the four Gospels. That is a whole lot of Scripture! We thus cannot allow for this spiritualising away of Scripture to make it mean what it does not mean. God requires us to understand the OT prophecies literally. We have many prophecies in the OT on the first and the second coming of Christ. The prophecies concerning the first coming of Christ were fulfilled literally. Isaiah prophesied, “Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel” (Isa 7:14). Was this not literally fulfilled? Jesus was indeed born of a virgin. Micah in chapter 5:2 prophesied that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem. Was not Jesus born in Bethlehem? Virgin means virgin, Bethlehem means Bethlehem. If the prophecies of the OT concerning Christ’s first coming were fulfilled literally, why do we then say that the prophecies concerning His second coming are fulfilled spiritually? It does



### THREE VIEWS ON THE MILLENNIUM: WHICH?

not make sense. If the first coming prophecies are literal, then the second coming prophecies must be literal as well. God means what He says, and says what He means. Israel means Israel; Zion means Zion; Jerusalem means Jerusalem.

So, we reject the amillennial view, especially its view on Israel, and its erroneous method of interpreting biblical prophecy.

#### **Premillennialism**

Premillennialism is the view which teaches that Christ will return *before* the millennium. This is the view taken by the Bible-Presbyterian Church. Christ must return to judge His enemies, restore Israel, and rule over the whole world from Jerusalem for a thousand years.

The Bible tells us that the world will become increasingly wicked culminating with the evil rule of the Antichrist who will set himself up as God, and demand worship from all. During the seven-year Tribulation period, he will persecute Israel. This seven-year Tribulation period is called “the time of Jacob’s Trouble” (Jer 30:7). Israel will suffer during this period. It is “Jacob’s” trouble. Jacob is Israel, not the Church. The Church will not be present during this time, but will be raptured, snatched up in a micro-second to be with Christ in heaven (1 Thess 4:16-17). During this Tribulation period, God will pour out His wrath upon the unbelieving inhabitants of the earth. It will end with Christ returning to earth with His saints to fight the Antichrist and his armies, destroying all of them at the battle of Armageddon (Rev 16:16, 19:11-21).

Jesus will then begin His millennial reign on earth. Survivors of the Tribulation will enter the millennium. Christ will sit on the throne of David and govern the whole world from Jerusalem. Jerusalem will be the political and religious capital of the world. The earth will be rejuvenated. The land will be peaceful and productive, and the life-span of man will increase (Isaiah 65:20 tells us that if a man dies at a hundred years old, he dies young).

The people of this world are looking for peace on earth. But they are looking for it in all the wrong places. Only God can give peace. We will have true peace on earth only when the Lord Jesus Christ—the Prince of peace—returns.

## **Conclusion**

There are three views on the millennium—postmillennial, amillennial, and premillennial. The premillennial view is the biblically correct view. We are premillennial. What is also important is that we see a clear distinction between Israel and the Church.

I urge you to study deeply into this subject by reading our pastor's (Rev Timothy Tow) books—*Prophescope on Israel*, his commentaries on Daniel (viz, *Visions of the Princely Prophet*) and Revelation (viz, *Coming World Events Unveiled*), "Israel a Great Nation," in *The Burning Bush* (Jan '98); and Rev Charles Seet's excellent essay on Premillennialism in the July '97 issue of *The Burning Bush*.

---

*A message delivered at Life Bible-Presbyterian Church on the Lord's Day, January 10, 1999.*

---

# **ISRAEL'S CURRENT POSITION AND FUTURE PROSPECTS (I)**

John Douglas

## **Israel's Current Position**

Romans 11 is a key chapter on Israel's present state. A positive fact is stated in verses 1 and 2. God has not abandoned His ancient people. First, there is the question, "Hath God cast away His people?" The people in view here are the people who come of Jacob's stock, and the question asked is, if God has cast them away, if the Lord has forgotten about them, whether He has any purpose, in days to come, respecting this people? Should final abandonment be in the mind of any, the answer of the apostle, by the Holy Spirit, is, "God forbid."

Paul referred to himself. He showed that he certainly belonged to the stock of Jacob, referring to himself as "an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin" (which, of course, he was). So he took the opportunity of talking about his national pedigree. Then he made the affirmation again, in plainest language, in verse 2, "God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew." Of course, the implication here is that the casting away is from God. We will look into that matter in a little while. Suffice to say to begin with, that twice in Romans 11:1-2, it is clear that God has not cast away His ancient people.

Years ago, in a conversation with his chaplain, the Emperor of Prussia, Frederick William I, asked what he thought was a very difficult question. He asked his chaplain for the greatest living proof of the existence of God. That chaplain certainly knew his Bible, for his answer was immediate, simple, and concise. He replied to his master, "the Jew." We too can think about that—the greatest living proof of the existence of God is the Jew, unbelieving, friendless, beleaguered, battle scarred, blinded, godless. We can take the Jew in his present state to be the greatest living proof of the existence of God.

## **The Branches Broken Off**

This chapter in Romans shows how Israel presently is cast away from God, that is, cut off from fellowship. Israel, as a people, does not now know the Lord. They cannot use the Scriptures with light and certainty, and yet, as verse 23 indicates, God is able to restore them. The illustration is used of branches being plucked off the olive tree, which we suggest is the olive tree of God's covenant. And these branches, representing the Jewish people, are being broken off. But the Bible says, "God is *able* to graff them in *again*," and He certainly is *able*, for He has all power. We emphasise that last word in the verse, "*again*," for we must surely consider the restoration to their former grace, the privilege of seeing the glory of God, and knowing His presence and power as in days of old. That word "again" certainly needs to be written into our hearts. However blind they (Israel) are, God is able to graff them in again.

This is a blessed chapter and I pray that the Lord will assist us as we look into these verses. Without a doubt, the unbelieving Jew is the subject of Romans 11, as verses 19-20 show. His present condition is not a happy one, for we read that these branches of Jewish stock have been broken off to make room for the Gentiles. The words are, "that I (*that is, a Gentile believer residing in the city of Rome*) might be graffed in." Verse 20 explains further, "Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith." These branches have been broken off because of unbelief, and Israel is not now in contact with God as once she was. The language is very strong in the chapter.

Take verse 11 for example, where the word "stumbled" appears. "Have they stumbled that they should fall?" The thought is, have they stumbled that they should fall away completely? Is there no hope for the restoration of Israel, have they lost touch with God, so that we may now abandon them to a situation of hopeless despair, must they fall away altogether, must we lose them in the purpose of God? "God forbid; but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them (*Israel*) to jealousy."

Who are the Gentiles? It is important to get the correct answer to this question in order to have one of the keys to the right interpretation of Romans 11. The Gentiles are those who do not belong to the stock of Jacob. I assume that we have here a Gentile congregation. You certainly have a Gentile preacher. God is working now among the Gentile peoples.

He is not working, on the whole, among those who belong to Israel, for as this chapter shows, Israel is blinded and cast away from God's presence.

### **Israel, Cut Off from God, Has No Prophets Now**

Once, the great prophets came from Israel, and God bestowed upon this nation of Israel the privilege of being custodians of His sacred law. The mighty men—Moses, Samuel, Isaiah, David and others—all came from the stock of Jacob. God owned them for His people. He was working almost exclusively among them and in fact, we can say He did work exclusively when it came to ministry. The ministry always came from Israel. They were custodians of the Book. They were the God appointed teachers of the law. But it is not so now.

At present, a Gentile preacher is handling the Book. He is preaching to a Gentile congregation. How did this change come about? "Because of unbelief," says verse 20. Thus, Israel, as a people, are broken off. If we stay with the analogy of the branches in the olive tree, these branches are broken off, and thus Israel as a people have lost contact with God.

It is my joy, fairly frequently, to help lead a tour to the land of Israel. I always feel it a privilege God has graciously given me. On one occasion, when I talked with a Jewish guide, he made reference to those escapades and wars in our own time. Speaking of Israel's victories, he said, "We have the land again. We have Jerusalem. Jerusalem is now the capital of this land. We have the Torah, the sacred Law. We have the synagogues. We have the Western wall, the wall of the temple area. We have all that, but we have no Prophet."

That gave me an opportunity, and I do not like to miss opportunities. He was not able to give any reason why there was no Prophet in Israel. But I had the answer, not one originating in myself; but having studied Romans 11, I could explain to him how the branches are broken off. So Israel may have the land, and she may have the Torah and also the opportunity to study it. She may be able to gather her men and women at the Western wall which marked the perimeter of the temple area in days long ago, but Israel has no Prophet. It is because Israel is not in touch with God. These branches are broken off, and in their place, Gentile peoples are brought into the covenant of God.

Verse 12 says, "Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world (*that is, the fall of Israel is the enriching of the world*), and the

diminishing of them (*that is, Israel's loss of the blessing of God, the privilege of ministry, the sight of his immediate presence in glory*) the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fullness?" That is an important question. If the diminishing of Israel has meant the enriching of the Gentile peoples, then what are we to say of Israel when the Lord brings in the fullness of that nation? Why, the best is yet to be. Undoubtedly, that is the conclusion.

The words of verse 15 must arouse a great deal of interest in every heart. "For if the casting away of them (*Israel*) be the reconciling of the world (*the Gentile world*), what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?"

### **Benefits of Revival**

Men talk about revival, and may have recollections either of being in the experience of revival or at least reading about those occurrences when obviously the hand of God was at work in the land. What is revival? In a manner of speaking, revival is life from the dead. God's people acknowledge the dearth which affects the church. A great deadness everywhere exists and then God gives a breath from heaven. It is a breath of life and suddenly God's people are blessed and strengthened, filled with joy, able to pray. They are so zealous for God's Name and His work. Prayer is answered, sinners are converted and the churches themselves are established in the witness of Christ. This is revival.

Now God is showing here, by speaking about the fullness of Israel, that, in a coming day the ingathering of Israel will be life from the dead. It is as if all across the face of the earth there is a deadness to God, to prayer, to the Bible. Even God's people feel that deadness. But the days of revival are not past. The greatest revival in the world is still future. It pertains to the regathering of Israel, to the bringing in of their fullness. And what is it, asks verse 15, "but life from the dead?" There is not only a message which develops an acute sadness in our hearts in Romans 11 (and I refer to the casting away of Israel) but there is definitely a word in Romans 11 that inspires us with hope and certainty, because in the days to come, in the elective purpose of God, there is to be life from the dead.

### **The Gentiles Grafted In—Contrary to Nature**

That is good news. The Bible is not cast away. God is not forgotten. He may be by a great majority in this nation at present. But the best is yet

to be. And the Scripture here shows, in the clearest language, that there is to be life from the dead. This is a wonderful thing!

In verse 16 it says, “if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy.” I take the firstfruit to be Christ and the lump to be Christ, because the whole of the church, whether we look at the Old Testament or the New Testament, is centred in Him. “And if the root be holy so are the branches.” Verse 17 relates to the Gentile, to the present day convert, to people who are believers now. “And if some of the branches be broken off (*some of those branches of Israel's stock are broken off*), and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them.” A Gentile is as one who does not belong, a stranger. He is described as a branch from the wild olive. And if such are to be grafted in to the parent stock, it will be contrary to nature.

Mark the words in verse 24! The Gentile, if he is joined to Jesus Christ and grafted in like a branch to this olive tree, it is by a process contrary to nature. In other words, it requires a miracle to do it. But the Lord created the olive and He Who created the olive has the power to graft in any stock, even if it is contrary to nature. Now this does not occur in the world, even though we try to do our utmost and use all the skills that scientific people now have. We cannot really succeed in doing that which is contrary to nature, because nature is ordered by God. The theory of evolution is a colossal fraud, but if it was right, we could expect to see little or no correspondence between nature as we understand it and God's work in His people and in His Word. But because nature itself has come from the creative hand of God, there is a blessed and a perfect harmony between creation and the written Word. When we look at this, and find mention being made of a branch, a wild olive, contrary to nature, a process that nature itself must reject—for this branch, this wild olive to be grafted in to the parent stock (producing a body of Gentile believers), requires a miracle.

I am talking about the miracle of redeeming grace. It took a miracle to put us into Christ.

### **Warnings About Conceit**

There are warnings in this chapter to the Gentile believer, that he should not be carried away with conceit. What does that mean? Well, he is not to think that he belongs to the only party in God's grace. He is not to imagine that believers who belong to the Gentile peoples have taken

over from Israel, and have supplanted them. No! That would be conceit. That would reveal a forgetfulness of how Gentiles were introduced to the parent stock. It was a process contrary to nature and you have no natural entitlement to belong there. It was solely the goodness, the kindness, and the mercy of God which brought them in, contrary to nature, and had them grafted in to the parent stock.

Verse 17 shows us that the Gentiles do not alone form the church as if Israel, the believers of the Old Testament, could be excluded. Notice the words carefully. The branch is merely grafted in. The branch has not become the tree. The way some modern Gentile interpreters seem to look at this leads me to imagine that they think the branch has become the whole tree. This is not so. Let us use the language of verse 17 and mark the words as we follow them. The Gentile believers are “grafted in *among them*” and are “*with them.*” The words “among them” show us that we have not formed a new society or a new entity to enable us to say, “the Gentiles are the church and we need not consider Israel as having any significance.” That is a mistake. We are grafted in among them.

It is not left to us Gentiles to imagine that we are the people now in existence and if Israel are to be regarded in any way at all, they must be something of a secondary class. There have been some who suggested that the people of God in Old Testament times were carnally minded. John Calvin very effectively refuted that. It is a slander against believers of the Old Testament to allege that they were possessors of promises that led them to look for carnal rewards. There certainly were promises of material plenty but there was also a rich spiritual heritage given to Israel.

When we are introduced to Christ, and are grafted into the parent stock, it is “among them.” We are not apart from them. And verse 17 shows that we partake of the root (*which is Christ*) and the fatness (*the oil*). Oil is the symbol of the Spirit, and when we partake of the root, which is Christ, and the fatness, which is the Holy Spirit, we are partaking among them and with them. It is the same olive tree. It is the same root—Christ. It is the same Spirit which brings us alike into the family and fold of God.

### **Blindness in Part**

The latter part of verse 25 gives the explanation of the present position of Israel. “Blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.”



## ISRAEL'S CURRENT POSITION AND FUTURE PROSPECTS (I)

Notice firstly, that Israel's present state is one of blindness. They cannot see their way to God. They do not see the meaning of redemption, for they are blind to the work that Christ performed on Calvary's tree. You may speak to a Jew. He may be very sincere. He may indeed believe in God and in the Torah, the written Word as well. But he has not just a natural blindness, which Gentiles have, but there is, in addition, a judicial blindness imposed upon him. So, a Gentile is blind to God, to the Bible, to the Gospel, but the Jew has particular difficulty for he suffers from a double blindness. He not only has that natural blindness but he also suffers from a judicial blindness. Israel presently is blind as a people. They cannot see God or their way to Him.

Notice secondly, that during this period of blindness among the people of Israel, the fullness of the Gentiles is being gathered in. So presently, God is working among the Gentiles. I do not share the views of those who believe that Britain or America or even Ireland is Israel. Sadly, many teach this notion, but we are here told that the present situation of Israel is one of blindness, where they are cut off from God. And Gentile believers, whether they are supposed to be of Israel or not are certainly not cut off from God. This nation is not cut off from God in the sense that there is opportunity given now for sinners to hear and believe. But Israel has judicial as well as natural blindness, cut off from God, while God is working among Gentiles now and one day their fullness will be complete.

And that brings me thirdly, to that little word "*until*." The blindness pertaining to Israel is to continue *until* God has finished his present work among the Gentile peoples. We are awaiting that day. Israel is broken off by unbelief. The chiefest act of unbelief is the rejection of God's dear Son. Many of you have repeated the words in John 1:11. They describe the first advent of the Lord Jesus. "He came unto His own and His own received Him not." These are among the saddest words in the Bible, that He came as the Messiah in fulfilment of that long awaited hope unto His own, Israel. He was born in Bethlehem. He was crucified outside the city wall of Jerusalem. He came unto His own and what did His own do? Remarkably, almost unaccountably, His own rejected Him. It does not make sense, for Israel believed in the coming Messiah. Israel were actually praying for the coming Messiah. They fully expected Him to come and yet, when He came, because they could not see His glory, they rejected Him. "His own received him not." The chiefest act of their unbelief was their rejection of God's dear Son.

### **An Old Testament Illustration**

There is a picture of unbelieving Israel in Genesis 4:1—that of Cain. “Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD.” Cain received his name from the statement his mother made at his birth—“I have gotten a man.” The word “gotten” gives the key to his name, for the name Cain means “to acquire,” “to possess.” Unbelieving Israel has a name for taking possession of certain things.

*Cain's occupation was “a tiller of the ground”* (verse 2). Thus, right from the very commencement of the record, he is associated with the land. He toiled on the land. If we talk about his name meaning acquisition, or what he may come to possess, his possession was in the land. It is abundantly clear if we take Cain as a type of unbelieving Israel, we are looking at one whose interest is in the land. His possessions were there. His interest was in the earth, or in the land, and not, as it should have been, in the heavenlies. Astonishingly too, Cain refused to worship on the ground of the blood of the Lamb. Abel “brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel.” God accepted Abel’s offering but he did not accept Cain’s offering. Cain brought his own works to God. Is this not suggestive of the present state of the orthodox Jew, priding himself in his tradition, associated with the land, acquiring wealth, being rich in worldly goods, but poor, very poor towards God? And at present Israel continues in unbelief, in gross darkness, because she refuses to worship God through the shed Blood of the Lamb.

Further, *Cain is the one who, in unbelief and rebellion against God, rises up in anger to smite the Shepherd.* I also see in inspired history, Israel as a people, rising up against the Lord’s Christ. And just as the blood of Abel is upon Cain’s hands, so the Blood of Christ still cries out to heaven against those who shed it. In some sense, all who reject the Lord are guilty of His Blood. The Blood of God’s dear Son cries out to heaven against them. But in particular, Abel’s blood cries out against Cain. “The voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto Me from the ground.” What a curse fell upon Cain. “And now art thou cursed from the earth” (verse 11). Israel cried in their folly, in their wilful resistance, “His Blood be upon us and upon our children.” They did not know what they said, but they said it just the same. They said it in public. They said it to God.

## ISRAEL'S CURRENT POSITION AND FUTURE PROSPECTS (I)

And those words are still reverberating down through the corridors of time. The blood of the slain Shepherd has cried out against Cain, and Israel goes on now as a nation in unbelief, trampling under foot the Blood of God's dear Son.

Look at Jeremiah 24:9 where God speaks of the casting away of Israel. We have been reading it in Romans 11, and *Cain felt himself to be cast out from God's presence and hid from the face of the Almighty*. And God says of Israel through Jeremiah, "And I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for their hurt, to be a reproach and a proverb, *a taunt and a curse*, in all places whither I shall drive them." Cain wailed, "I am cursed from the earth!"

In this present period of Israel's casting away and blindness of the Jewish people, in some sense instead of being a blessing, Israel is a curse. They do not abide in the knowledge of God as once many in that nation did, but in all the kingdoms of the earth the Jew is singled out for hurt, as a reproach, a proverb, a taunt, a curse. You might appreciate it a little if I talked about that name "the Jew." How much of a taunt it is! It is not a compliment to be given that name. For example, I might stand at the door when the meeting is over and shake you by the hand and pray that God's hand will be upon your life, but if at the same time I took your hand and looked into your eyes and said, "You look a right old Jew," you would not take that to be a compliment. And in this present period of time the Jew is not associated with blessing. His name is a reproach, and he has become a proverb, he is a taunt and a curse in all places whither he is driven.

In Hosea 9:17 we read, "My God will cast them away because they did not hearken unto Him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations." That word "wanderer" comes first of all from Genesis 4:12 where Cain says that he would be "a fugitive and a vagabond." A vagabond is a wanderer. That word occurs here in Hosea, used of Israel in unbelief. "They shall be wanderers," or, to use the word in Genesis 4:12, they shall be like fugitives or vagabonds among the nations. This has been largely true during the period of Israel's casting away and her unbelief.

And Cain said with a fearful cry in verse 14, "thou hast driven me out this day." He is as one cast away. He said further, "from Thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth." He lamented as one cast out of God's presence, and the chief point about that

lamentation is the blindness. This is what the curse entails, being cut off from God whereby His face is hid. The veil of blindness on Israel is suggested in Romans 11:10, "Let their eyes be darkened." Israel does not see the way to God. They do not behold the Messiah now, although He has already come, the Scriptures of the prophets being fulfilled. But Israel's people do not see it. "Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and bow down their back alway." A man whose back is bowed down may be like that because there is a heavy burden upon his shoulders. If his back is bowed, where are his eyes?' They are toward the ground. He cannot look up into the heavenlies. He is blind to the things of God and his back is bowed over because of the burden that is there. If he has eyes to see at all, his eyes are looking on the land. That is where his hope is. His hope is in the wrong place.

*Cain was given the promise from God that there would be a blessing for him if he did the right thing.* Some Christians imagine that Cain did not have a chance, that God had a favour for Abel and so He blessed him, but He did not have a favour for Cain and therefore He rejected him. This is a mistake. For the Lord did not arbitrarily or finally reject Cain at the beginning. He gave Cain opportunity. Look at Genesis 4:7. "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?" Then God says, "Unto thee shall be his desire." In other words, if Cain did the right thing, he would become the head in this family. Cain had the opportunity to worship the Lord at the altar by means of the shed blood. He had the opportunity to do right and God promised that if he did, there was extra incentive in that he should have the position of being head in the family.

Does this apply to Israel? Look at Deuteronomy 28:1 where God says of Israel, "If thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all His commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth." And in verse 8, God spoke of His blessing being upon them in all that they set their hand to do. The Lord would bless them "*in the land.*" I emphasise these words. The purpose of God for Israel relates to Israel in the land. When Israel are in the right place with God, God will be blessing them in all that they set their hand to do, "And all the people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be afraid of thee" (verse 10). The nations will have a reverence for Israel. Israel will no longer be a curse and a taunt and a proverb, once the blessing of God abides on Israel. But, on the

other hand, this same chapter in Deuteronomy says that if they do not obey, they will lose that exalted station.

### **Israel Have the Promise of Being Made Head Over the Nations—the Gentiles**

Look at verse 13. “And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath.” If Israel will do right, then, among the nations the LORD would make them the head. So over all the peoples of the earth, if we talk about supremacy, prominence, and spiritual things, Israel shall be “the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shall not be beneath.” These words tell us something very important. They are above only and are not going to be beneath if they are in the right place with God. But if instead they disobey (see verse 20), there will be cursing, vexation, rebuke in all that they set their hand to do, and they will perish quickly from the land. The heaven above them (see verse 23) will be brass and the earth under them like iron. Then follows passage after passage of the utmost sadness. And it will happen to any nation which disobeys God. That nation comes down and down, and the stranger, who before was of no significance, gains in stature. Look at Deuteronomy 28:43. “The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shall come down very low.”

In the school class years ago, I was fond of geography. There was a large map of the world in the class room and every place which pertained to the British Empire was coloured in red. And it was said that the sun never set on the British Empire. I sat in that class, boy that I was, and saw those countries filled in with red, that existed under the rule of the Union Jack. But Britain began to forget God. They certainly forgot that the secret of England's greatness was the Bible. This Book says, “The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shall come down.” So the British Empire disappeared. Then we had the words Great Britain, and probably already, those words no longer describe the country, for Britain is not great any longer. So we came in with a new title, “the United Kingdom,” and as you will bear witness—that kingdom is showing itself to be very friable and it is not likely to be united for very much longer. The Empire, the Great Britain, the United Kingdom, all these titles are disappearing one after another and it seems possible that there may not even be a kingdom before long.

Israel is used first of all as the specimen illustration in history and then comes, in turn, all the other countries, and our nation is among them. It is the old story—"sin is a reproach to any people." It is righteousness that exalteth a nation, and instead of blotting God out, we need to have Him back in the picture and on high above all.

Back in the old days, the Arab was not a person of much significance. He was looked on by the British soldier as one who sat with the camel by his tent out in the sands, and he was not a figure of any importance or degree. And he did not have much in the way of this world's goods. But the stranger has got up in the world, and in some sense he has got up above us very high, and we have come down very low. Now there are mosques in this country and it is the tradition that where one mosque is put up, that country becomes a Moslem country. I shudder at the thought. We have a heritage to lose and I think that we, as a nation, do not see its value any more.

Remember that we have talked about the casting away of Israel. Remember that we have spoken about the fullness of the Gentiles. We are living now in the times of the Gentiles. Israel is not the head among the nations. The Gentile powers have the initiative over Jerusalem, and over Israel. America and Britain as well as other countries can put pressure on the Israeli people, and I will not comment on that any further except to say recent developments over the past few years have shown the effects of that pressure on Israel. But the Saviour said (and this is very important), "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until (*and only until*) the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24). There is a time in the purpose of God when Gentile nations will have the supremacy no longer and Gentile people will not always be in the ascendancy over Israel. Jerusalem, which may represent Israel here shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, that is, under the feet. But in Deuteronomy we read they would be "the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath." We saw what it meant to come down very low to the point where Israel is under the heel of the oppressor, trodden down under foot. She does not now have the supremacy that saintly men look for in the purpose of God.

*God put a mark of preservation on Cain.* He said that He would deal with any who might take advantage of Cain in his casting away and blindness. And has not God put a mark of preservation on Israel? Although she has been cast out among the nations and for years has been

## ISRAEL'S CURRENT POSITION AND FUTURE PROSPECTS (I)

a homeless people, not even a nation, yet God has had His eye on them all the while. There has been a mark of preservation on Israel in all the countries whither they have wandered, and although men hated them and spurned them and used their name as a taunt and a proverb, yet still God kept His hand in mercy upon them, preserving them. And they are still here on the earth. They have become a nation again.

People have gone from Britain to America, Australia, and other parts. If I visit in the United States, I am bound to meet someone who says that if they go back far enough in their family pedigree, they will find an association with Northern Ireland. But these people are Americans now. They do not call themselves Northern Irish, no more than if you met people there who, generations ago, originated in Wales. They are not Welsh people any more. They are Americans, New Zealanders, or Australians, etc. But even before becoming a nation in 1948, when as yet there was no nation of Israel, the Jew was still a Jew and God had preserved them without a national home and, it seemed to many, without a future. But God's hand has been there in preparation for the day when they will all be grafted in again.

Some of you have read about noble men of God. I think among theological professors and commentators, Charles Hodge is one of the most eminently respected and godly of men. He was really a lovely servant of Christ, very humble and devoted. One day in his theological lectures (and this is written into his three volume edition for evidence), the question came up about Israel and the antichrist and the temple of God. Could these words of Thessalonians be taken literally that the last antichrist would sit in the temple of God? Could that be Jerusalem? Could he manifest himself in some public and notable way? Professor Hodge said "no." In fact that gentleman suggested that it would be absurd to look for a literal fulfilment of Scripture there. He said he would give three reasons why such a Scripture could not be taken literally.

*Firstly*, if that portion of Scripture in Thessalonians should be taken literally, Israel would have to become a nation again, and that, he said, would be a foolish thing. It is beyond belief. I am not using his words but that is certainly the sense of what he said.

And *secondly*, he said that not only would Israel have to be back in her own land again for this word to be true and to be taken literally, but Israel would have to be back in her own land in unbelief. It would be an

absurdity to have Israel back in her own land and for her to be there in unbelief.

And *thirdly*, he said that we could not look for a literal fulfilment of that prophetic word because that would mean that the believers in Thessalonica, so long long ago when Paul preached, would have known these things.

When I look at those three reasons, Professor Hodge was saying that it was beyond belief to see a literal fulfilment of God's Holy Word in this dimension. Well, Israel is a nation again, and those people of Jacob's stock are back in the land. They are back in the land in unbelief and it is my conviction that the people of Thessalonica did know those things.

### **Israel Restored at Our Lord's Return**

Romans 11:26-29 tells us clearly how things in Israel will take place. The Redeemer will come. And that is how Israel will come to know the Lord. In the fullness of glory they shall look on Him with the natural eye illuminated by the Holy Spirit Himself, for there is no other way to see Christ in His glory. They shall look on Him Whom they have pierced and they will find to their joy that there is life for a look at the Crucified One. Romans 11 says they are now enemies of the gospel, for your sakes, that is to say, their enmity allows the door of God's kingdom to open up a little to admit you. They are enemies of the gospel, broken off presently from the tree for your sake, but as touching the election of God, the elective purpose of God which cannot change, they are beloved for the fathers' sake. And who are the fathers? Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, to whom the promise of the land was given. It was given to them and to their seed. There are some people who do not see any future for Israel at all. But God did not make the covenant with Israel for them to break and have the covenant cast away. He made the covenant with Abraham, and Abraham never failed God, and so God will keep that covenant.

---

*Dr John Douglas is Principal of The Whitefield College of the Bible in Northern Ireland. This is the first of two messages given at an SGAT conference at Burry Port, South Wales, in October 1997. The second message will appear in the next issue. Published by permission from Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony, 1 Donald Way, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 9JB, UK.*

---



# **A GREAT DOOR AND EFFECTUAL IS OPENED UNTO US**

Timothy Tow

## **Text: Revelation 3:7-13**

I bring you greetings from Life Bible-Presbyterian Church and Far Eastern Bible College, Singapore on this glorious occasion of the dedication of Vancouver Bible-Presbyterian Church (Jan 2, '99). How beautifully is she decked like a bride to meet the Bridegroom today, even our Lord Jesus Christ. I marvel to see how this house has been totally transformed to such perfection for the Master's use. All glory be to the Lord.

When I was invited to speak at the Inauguration of this Church, the message which our Lord gave to Philadelphia, the sixth Church in Asia, came to mind. You are the sixth global B-P Church to arise after Perth, Melbourne, Toronto, London and Sydney. You are like Philadelphia.

There is a saying, "But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first" (Matt 19:30). From my involvement with these six global B-P Churches, you are first in your speedy development. Not only in development but in the strategic location God has given you on this Vancouver-Toronto Highway. Praise the Lord for your shining JESUS SAVES sign that points many a lost traveller to the only Saviour.

## **Door of Polemical Witness**

The Lord Jesus has opened you a door that no man can shut. In the words of St Paul it is "a great door and effectual" (1 Cor 16:9) and this door is the Door of Polemical Witness. To the Church of Philadelphia Jesus says, "Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee" (Rev 3:9). Evidently, there is a contest between the Church of Philadelphia, a branch of the true Church of Jesus Christ and this false

Church of Satan. So in our day there is also a contest between every true Church of God and Satan's Church.

During the 16<sup>th</sup> Century Reformation, the contest between the True Church of God and the Church of Satan gave rise to the Protestant Church. So in our days the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Reformation has given birth to the International Council of Christian Churches (ICCC) in our contention with the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Ecumenical Movement. We Bible-Presbyterians are a member of the ICCC and we bear a polemical witness against those apostate Protestant Churches that are going back to Rome. We are spiritual descendants of Martin Luther, John Calvin, Zwingli and Knox. We have no truck with the Ecumenical Movement of the WCC. The two Evangelicals and Catholics Together (ECT) documents 1994 and '97, signed between Ecumenical American Evangelical leaders and the Roman Catholics which declare Evangelicals and Catholics are the same in stand and doctrine are treatises of treason against our Protestant Faith.

We are Bible-Presbyterians to denote that we remain faithful to the Bible which the Ecumenicals have twisted to suit their own ends. We revere the Bible to be the infallible and inerrant Word of God. In accordance with His Word we take a separatist stand against the Ecumenical Movement which is to reunite not only with Rome but with all human religions. But our Lord excludes them all when He says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

We also uphold the King James Bible, the Queen of English translations against the hundred new versions but are perversions leaning on the corrupt text of Westcott and Hort. When the ICCC met in Amsterdam at its 50th Anniversary, August 1998, she passed a Resolution for the King James Bible against all the corrupt new translations. Let Vancouver Church stand together with our hundred B-P Churches and with the ICCC in 100 countries around the world to testify to the one and only Saviour and Great God, our Lord Jesus Christ. In obedience to His Word that we should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, the Lord has opened us this Door of Polemical Witness that no man can shut. And let us press on the fight not only against the Ecumenical movement but also for the King James Version against the 100 perversions into the 21st Century. We BPs are indeed vanguards of the 21st Century Reformation!

### **Door of Faithful Teaching**

Secondly, the Lord has opened to Philadelphia and Vancouver a Door of Faithful Teaching. “For thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name” (Rev 3:8). If we have the Faithful Word richly to impart, our Church will automatically grow.

But this is a day of famine for hearing of God’s Word according to Amos 8:11, “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD.” How can we remedy this situation? O that there will arise amongst us someone called of God, young or not so young. In America there is a vogue of changing jobs in middle age. There is no greater change of vocation to leave the secular for the ecclesiastical. Instead of serving the world, let us serve the Lord.

I have at Far Eastern Bible College several in their forties and fifties who have felt the call of God. One in the mid-fifties who is a pharmacist with a Master’s in Business Administration was recently retrenched. Though he found another job, he yielded rather to the study of theology with my encouragement. He testifies, “In my principal’s words, I’m no more counting pills but rather counting the souls of men.” What a glorious promotion. In less than two years he would be graduating. Is any in our midst here willing to step out and train for holy orders? “Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me” (Isa 6:8).

Our Door of Faithful Teaching must be kept open by a steady stream of trained workers for the far flung harvest fields, not the least Canada. “The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest” (Matt 9:37,38). We have few workers. Is that because we never asked God? We have prayed, but half-heartedly? O Lord, as you called the early disciples to continue your work on earth, so raise up someone from our midst to serve as pastor and teacher. The pastor is our open Door of Faithful Teaching!

### **Door of End-Time Deliverance**

Thirdly the Church of Philadelphia is one that labours in hope of the Lord’s Return and Deliverance. “Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown” (Rev 3:11). To Vancouver

B-P Church is opened a Door of End-time Deliverance as we struggle against great odds “in the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth” (v10).

We in East Asia are the first to be tried “in the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world.” The economic storm raging in the Far East, instead of subsiding in one or two years as predicted by vote-catching political leaders, has rather worsened. Singapore is just feeling the pinch. From this year we will suffer a 10% cut in our Central Provident Fund. And, instead of the annual increment there will be a decrement on top of the CPF cut. Tourism has hit an all-time low of minus 13.5%. Airlines are scrambling for passengers. United Airlines and Northwest will use smaller planes on their Asian routes from 1999. The order for new planes from East Asia has dropped drastically, so that Boeing is obliged to retrench 48,000 of her workers. Does Canada also feel a chill down the spine, like your zero degrees not to my liking?

But a more ominous situation like thunder clouds looming in the horizon is crouching upon us, not only East Asia but the whole world! And this in a matter of eleven months. I refer to the recurring jitters from what is called the Millennium Bug or the Y2K Problem. To say it's a Problem is to hide its ugliness. Rather it will be a *Pogrom*. Now, *Pogrom* is a Russian word which means devastation and is applied to the destruction of the Jews. It is more truthful to call it Y2K *Pogrom*.

When the Millennium Bug bites, computers that are not compliant will be paralysed. This will cause a chain reaction when, for example, electricity will be knocked out, producing a scenario like Auckland, totally blacked out for weeks. But the real scare is staring at air travel. The French Minister of Transport feared all planes would be grounded January 1, 2000. KLM has warned she will not fly to certain “blacklisted” airports. A Hongkong newspaper has painted the scenario of two planes colliding mid-air. BBC has warned planes may drop out of the sky. For this reason I'm leading a Holy Land Tour in March this year, 1999, and not in 2,000, to play safe. I advise you to hug Mother Earth and pray at the advent of the New Millennium.

What I've mentioned is only the tip of the Iceberg. Many computer experts are warning that the devastation brought about by the Millennium Bug will be the greatest since Noah's Flood, and I believe so.

A GREAT DOOR AND EFFECTUAL IS OPENED UNTO US

*You've all heard about the Millennium Bug,  
Also known as the Y2K problem.  
There're only eleven months before it strikes,  
E'en earlier by '99 September.  
Tangled with the computers are the chips,  
Billions upon billions scattered worldwide.  
All the king's horses and all the king's men,  
Are not able to save us when they bite.  
I have no computer, I don't care what  
Will come by this Monster Millennium Bug.  
All that I care is Christ's coming is near,  
He'll snatch me away from its grisly hug.*

In America, opportunists are selling survival kits to make a fast buck. They suggest withdrawing money from the bank and stocking up essential foods, etc, etc. In so doing the situation brought about by the rush for survival would become more threatening than the Bug itself.

While it is good to help ourselves before Doomsday, our hope is only in the Lord. We have a Blessed Hope called the Rapture of Saints (1 Thess 4:13-18). Rapture here is not talking of some ecstatic experience, but rather the forceful catching up of Christians from a burning earth to meet Jesus in the air. Christ will soon come to save us by His Resurrection and Ascension Power with a global Airlift. He will explode His A Bomb and R Bomb, to put it more succinctly.

In order to qualify for this Happy Blastoff, you must be a born again Christian. You must have the Spirit of Christ in you (Rom 8:9), or else it will not work. A giant Magnet will suck up nails and not toothpicks though toothpicks are lighter and you know why. There must be affinity of substance, iron and iron, not iron and wood. Let me ask you again, "Are you a born again Christian having the Spirit of Christ living in you?" Have you repented of your sins and asked Jesus to forgive you because only He can save you? For He the Son of God died on the cross to pay the penalty for your sins and mine. By His rising from the dead on the third day we will also rise together with Him.

### **Conclusion**

The great door and effectual God has opened for Vancouver B-P Church is a triple Door of Polemical Witness, Faithful Teaching and End-time Deliverance. The greatest of these three is the Door of End-time

*The Burning Bush 5/2 (July 1999)*

Deliverance because it concerns you, not for time but for eternity. With the situation in the world worsening each day, is your ambition for deliverance or affluence, life everlasting or eternal death? Listen to what Jeremiah the prophet said to Baruch his secretary, “And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the LORD: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest” (Jer 45:5). Amen.

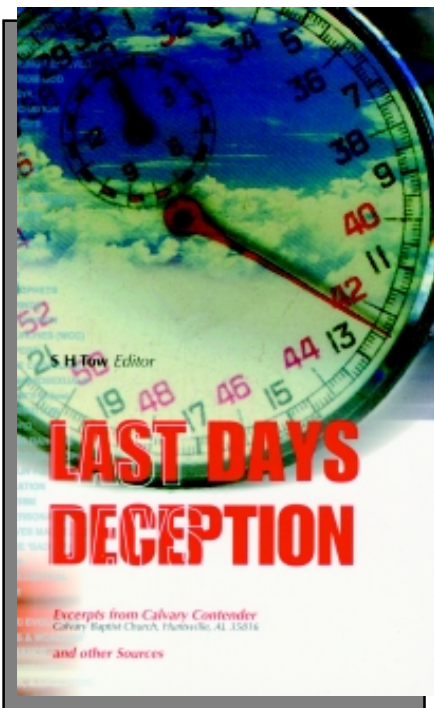
---

*Rev Dr Timothy Tow is Senior Pastor of Life Bible-Presbyterian Church, and Principal of Far Eastern Bible College. The above message was delivered at the Dedication of Vancouver Bible-Presbyterian Church, January 2, 1999.*

---

## **Last Days Deception**

**S H Tow, Editor**



*The Last Days are here! The clarion call to all Christians before Christ returns is to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3). This book equips you with evidences culled from the Calvary Contender (Calvary Baptist Church, Huntsville AL 35816, USA) and other sources.*

*Price: \$8.00.*

*Available from:*

---

**TABERNACLE BOOKS**

Tel: 65-5601111

Fax: 65-5663806

E-mail: [tabernacle.bks@usa.net](mailto:tabernacle.bks@usa.net)

---

## PREVENTIVE MEASURES AGAINST APOSTASY

Charles Seet

### **Text: 1 Timothy 4:1-16**

I thank God for the beginning of another semester at Far Eastern Bible College, and also for all the returning students and new students who have come for the Day of Prayer. It is my hope that the Lord will bless us as we commit ourselves to the training that we will be receiving this semester. Training for the Lord's ministry is not an easy task, as it requires much discipline and hard work. As our principal always says, "There is no royal road to learning." All of us have to go through the same process of learning line upon line and precept upon precept. This is especially so for those of you who are learning the biblical languages of Greek and Hebrew.

Many of us have heard it mentioned before that FEBC has become well known for two things: its emphasis on the biblical languages and of course, its food. But there is another thing that you will find here at FEBC more than in most other Bible colleges and seminaries. And it has to do with the approach that we take to theological training. Here, not only are students given all the differing views of a certain doctrine, but they are also told which view is biblically correct. There is a definite stand taken here on all issues of theology that are clearly taught in the Scriptures. And this is something very needful in theological training today.

Why is this so? This is precisely so because there is a prevailing trend in the Christian world today to accommodate and compromise on doctrine. Everywhere in the world today we are witnessing a dangerous ongoing phenomenon of Christian leaders, churches, and theological institutions *moving away from their doctrinal position*. This phenomenon is also known as departing from the faith, or apostasy. This is the major issue facing the Church today. The apostle Paul prophesied that "a falling away" will take place prior to the return of Christ. The sad part is that many pastors, missionaries and Christian workers whose theological

training did not prepare them well to face the trend of apostasy have found themselves quite unprepared to face it.

The apostasy of our present age has reached very great proportions. And this is not surprising because the Holy Spirit had already foretold that this would happen in the text of 1 Timothy 4. Today we can actually look back and see how this prophecy has been fulfilled many times over throughout the whole of church history.

There have been many leaders, churches and movements that started out well but did not stay where they were and they gradually drifted away little by little from the Truth, ending up in totally compromised positions. Brilliant, talented men have fallen into this. And even those who were at one time very strong in upholding and defending the Faith have fallen into this.

Now, please take note very carefully, that the same thing can happen to anyone of us also, if we are not careful. Some of us here may one day move away from our doctrinal position if we are not careful to guard ourselves now from this danger. I pray that everyone of us will pay careful attention to the Scriptural warnings concerning this danger.

One of the clearest warning signals about apostasy is found in the first epistle the apostle Paul wrote to Timothy. Timothy was a young pastor of the church at Ephesus at this time. He had been trained for the ministry by Paul himself. Paul loved him very much, and regarded him as his own son. For this reason, Paul was most anxious when he heard news that Timothy was facing problems in the church. He was especially concerned because he had heard that false teaching was beginning to creep into the church. And this caused him to sound out a clear warning signal to Timothy, and to instruct him on what he should do to prevent the false teaching from moving in.

I would like to suggest that in this passage of Scripture from 1 Timothy 4, we can outline three preventive measures for ourselves against falling into apostasy. The first preventive measure is to recognize the danger it poses to us, at all times. The second measure is to keep training ourselves and others in the Scriptures. And the third measure is to keep watch constantly over the direction of our spiritual life.



### **Recognise the Danger of Apostasy (vv 1-5)**

Let us consider the first preventive measure which is: Recognising the danger that apostasy poses to us. We observe this in the way that Paul warns Timothy of the danger in verses 1-5 of our text. He says “*Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron.*”

I would like us to notice that Paul really stresses the certainty of apostasy here. It will take place. The Holy Spirit Himself has declared it. The words, “*speaketh expressly,*” can also be translated as “*speak clearly,*” or “*speak specifically.*” Why did the Holy Spirit speak about this so clearly and specifically? It is because this is something all believers really need to be aware about. God wants us to take note that there will be people who will depart from the faith. The word “depart” in the Greek text of this verse is the word “apostasy” in English.

And how will this happen? What will cause this apostasy to take place? Paul says it will happen when people give heed or give their attention to the *wrong* spirits. All believers ought to be giving their attention at all times only to the Holy Spirit. His written Word must be our only source of teaching.

The problem arises when people begin to look for *other* sources of teaching. And these sources give forth teaching that may seem to be very impressive and attractive, very appealing to the mind, and even having good accreditation in the eyes of the intellectual world. False teachings *never appear to be wrong or false*. In fact they often appear to be *quite reasonable, very credible and believable*. They can be presented with very convincing and compelling arguments. That makes them so dangerous. The human mind can be deceived quite easily into believing them.

Those who teach them often appear to have *good motives* and may even appear to be very *sincere, caring and loving* believers. But we must be wary of them, because they are really communicating lies invented by the powers of darkness, with the evil purpose of deliberately misleading people away from the truth. And if we begin to entertain them and accept some of their premises, we will find ourselves being drawn irresistibly down the road of apostasy.

No one ever moves *all at once* from his doctrinal position. A person always begins by taking a *small step* away from it. As Dr Arthur Steele of Clearwater Christian College says, “*Apostasy always starts small.*” But eventually, without the person himself knowing what is happening to him, that first step leads to further steps away from the truth.

In Timothy’s church, there were false teachers who probably began by questioning the Bible bit by bit. They undermined the people’s confidence in the sufficiency of God’s Word for their spiritual growth. Once the church members doubted Scripture, these false teachers added more and more conditions for spiritual growth, until they reached the stage where they taught that a person must bind himself to many rules and laws to become more spiritual. These included rules that a person must remain unmarried, and refuse to eat certain types of food. Today, we call this teaching asceticism.

Asceticism still exists now in various forms. But in the church today, there are many more issues we need to deal with. There are so many different directions in which a person may move away from the truth. But one cardinal doctrine that needs to be highlighted to all of us, is the doctrine of the *inerrancy of the Scriptures*. No matter what others may think or say about us, we must never ever move away from the position that the Scriptures are totally inerrant. There are no inaccuracies, mistakes or errors in any part of it. Today some institutions teach a limited inerrancy—that God’s Word is inerrant only in matters of faith and doctrine, but not on other points like science and history.

Let us all be very careful to recognise the danger of apostasy which is facing us today. Let none of us say, “*Ah, that will never happen to me.*” For if we fail to take some preventive measures now, we may find ourselves one day drifting from our doctrinal position, when we begin to face pressures in the ministry.

These pressures may come in many forms. For example, after your graduation from here, some very big church or organisation may recognise your abilities, and offer you a very good position, with an extremely high salary. But you find out that they are working very closely with those who have moved away from the truth, denying the inerrancy of the Scriptures, working with the Roman Catholics, and tolerating compromise. And if you take this position, you will be required to work

together with these people. How would you respond to such an offer? Will you have the moral courage to say “no” to them?

You need to think carefully about these things now, and form convictions about what you will do in situations like that. You need to take preventive measures. And the first preventive measure, as we have just seen, is to recognise that *there is a danger to be faced out there*. Let us see what other preventive measures there are in our study of the text.

### **Maintain a Ministry That is Centered on the Scriptures (vv 6-11)**

Let us read verse 6: “*If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou has attained.*”

Here we see how the apostle Paul defines what a *good minister* is. He is a person who *has learned* the truths of Scripture so well that he is able to teach these truths to believers. And to teach them well enough to keep them from being misled by false teaching. In order to be able to do that, such a person must have devoted much effort and time to the study of the Scriptures.

His training for the ministry has been centered wholly upon the Scriptures. He has not spent all his time trying to learn about new methods and church growth programmes. But his main objective has been to master the books of the Bible, and every Scriptural doctrine it teaches. He has devoted himself to attaining a full understanding of every truth that is found in God’s Word, in preparation for using it in the ministry.

And even when he begins his ministry, he still continues to make the Scriptures the *center* of attention. The Scriptures are the means by which he does everything. It becomes the basis of godliness in his whole life and ministry. And therefore, he continues to keep himself fit in the use of the Scriptures.

At this point, Paul uses an analogy which I think is familiar to most of us, and that is the analogy of *physical exercise*. We all know that if we want to compete in sports we need to keep ourselves in good form by disciplined, daily exercise. And Paul used this analogy when he wrote to Timothy in order to emphasise to him the *diligent nature* of the effort a person needs in order to keep himself fit in the use of the Scriptures. He says in verses 7 and 8, “*But refuse profane and old wives fables, and*

*exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profitable little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.”*

Timothy is being urged not to spend his time in discussing and studying things which are of no value to the ministry. In the early church, one of the things which bothered ministers were the many *extra-biblical stories* and writings that were circulating among church members. These were actually Jewish myths and legends which were riddled with all kinds of fantastic but false accounts.

These were the kind of stories that elderly women loved to tell children in order to amuse them. Some of these stories are known today through *apocryphal* literature. They have been rejected by the church. And they include some incredible stories about Christ's life as a child. In one story, Christ supposedly made some clay ducks, and then transformed them into real live ducks!

A person could actually spend a whole lifetime investigating and studying these godless myths and old-wives tales, as Paul calls them, but what use would that be to the ministry? None at all. The only kind of knowledge which is useful to the ministry, is the full knowledge of the Scriptures and how to apply it to daily living. And that is therefore what we need to devote much time to, exercising and training ourselves to use the Scriptures well.

One of the goals each of us should have while we are still being trained for the ministry in FEBC, is to ensure that we devote our time toward gaining a *full working knowledge* of the Scriptures for the ministry ahead. You need to make full use of the opportunity you have now to get all the teaching you can. These four years you have here are going to be over before you know it. You need to regard this time as being very precious. Do not waste too much time dwelling upon things and issues which are not related to Scriptural knowledge.

There may be some who feel that they should devote a lot of time to discussing and learning about *new methods and church programmes*. But these things are really not of much value without the knowledge of the Scriptures, and you can get them very easily later on by reading books and magazines. Churches are not built with methods or programmes. In Ephesians 2:20, God's Word says that they are built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, and this means the Scriptures.

## PREVENTIVE MEASURES AGAINST APOSTASY

Therefore what you need is to get a really solid, well-integrated working knowledge of the Scriptures now while you have the opportunity. Find out all that you can about what God says in His Word, and consolidate them into convictions. Clear up every doubt you may have; ask every question you can possibly ask, but just be sure that by the time you go into the ministry you will have a *solid knowledge* of the Scriptures.

If you do this, you are actually taking a most effective measure against apostasy both for yourself as well as for those you minister to. You will be able to teach the Word well enough to provide the stability and the moral courage they need to withstand the influences which lead into apostasy. And then you will be, according to what Paul says in verse 6, a good minister.

### **Keep Watch Over the Direction of Your Spiritual Life (vv 12-16)**

Now we come to the third preventive measure against apostasy, and that is: to keep a constant watch over the direction of our spiritual life. This is best summed up by the apostle Paul in verse 16 of our text, where he writes to Timothy, “*Take heed unto thyself, and unto doctrine; continue in them: for by doing this thou shalt save both thyself, and them that hear thee.*”

Let us consider the meaning of the words, “*Take heed unto thyself.*” What does this mean? Other ways to translate this are, “*Give close attention to yourself,*” and “*Keep a close watch on yourself.*” What this means is that a good minister should watch his own life, continually examining his own conduct, his own motives, his own attitudes, inner thoughts and feelings, and perhaps most importantly, the quality of his personal relationship with God. What should he watch out for? He should be watching for any *movement away from* the Doctrine of the Scriptures. He should be observing if there are signs of *diminishing* interest in the things of God. He should be looking out for any symptoms of growing indifference or coldness.

Why is it so important for us to do this? Because no matter how well we may understand the danger of apostasy, and no matter how well we may know the Scriptures, it is the *heart* that finally determines which direction we will take. A person may be given the most convincing

arguments against apostasy, but that will be to no avail if his heart is already moving in that direction. In the book of Hebrews, the writer gives this warning: *“Take heed, brethren lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.”*

This explains how it can be possible for a well-known brilliant theologian to be defending biblical doctrines vigorously for a time, and then to everyone’s amazement turn around and deny them all later on. Apostasy begins in the heart. It germinates when we neglect our spiritual life. And if we are not careful to keep a close watch on the direction of our spiritual life, we may not be able to prevent apostasy from taking root in our hearts.

We all need to keep watch on ourselves, not for our own sake only, but also for the sake of those we minister to. It is a sad thing but true, that when a pastor or a Bible teacher moves away from his doctrinal position, he tends to bring along many others with him. People are watching us and following us. We bear the awesome responsibility of leading them by our example. If we set a bad example and cause others to move away from God’s Truth, we will have to answer for that before God one day.

In verse 12 we see the apostle Paul giving Timothy specific instructions in setting a *good example*. He says, *“Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”* If people are watching our lives for an example to follow, how much more must we watch our own lives to ensure that they will have a good example to follow.

May the Lord give us the conviction this morning, to take every preventive measure against apostasy while we are being trained here in FEBC, both for ourselves as well as for others.

---

*Rev Charles Seet is Assistant Pastor of Life Bible-Presbyterian Church, and Lecturer in Biblical Studies at Far Eastern Bible College. The above sermon was delivered on FEBC’s Day of Prayer, January 4, 1999.*

---

## **REMEMBERING THE MARTYRS OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION**

Jack Sin

Church History is as important as Theology, and we do well to know and remember it. There are certain facts in history which the world tries hard to forget or ignore. These facts may not be favourite themes because they get in the way of things, and are highly inconvenient. Yet as believers, we must never deny or forget our historic past. We ought to know the roots of our rich religious heritage. During the commemoration of the Reformation, we would normally speak of Luther and other magisterial reformers. But we must also remember those who worthily contended for the faith with their lives, particularly the English reformers to whom we owe our English Bible.

The English Reformation was somewhat different from the German revival under Martin Luther who ignited the Protestant cause with his 95 theses on the Wittenberg Castle door just before All Saints' Day. It was a great day for Christendom and it transformed Europe to a large extent for the better.

As for England's Reformation, it began providentially with the marital woes of Henry VIII, which led to Thomas Cranmer being appointed the first Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury. He began sweeping ecclesiastical reforms in the Church of England. The mass was abolished and ties severed with Rome; and the king appointed himself as the head of the Church of England. The crown was no more under the Romish yoke, as it was for the past 1,000 years.

Most of England's reforming work was done during the reign of young Edward VI with the help of Cranmer, Latimer and Ridley. But things took a turn for the worse when Edward VI died and he was succeeded by Mary, the daughter of Henry VIII and his first Queen, Catherine of Aragon, notorious in history as Bloody Mary. Mary was a bigoted Catholic who hated the Protestants, and her opportunity had come

to rid the kingdom of these “pestilent heretics.” She wasted no time to do that. Cardinal Pole was invited to England, and Gardiner and Bonner were made Bishops. This infamous trio later played a pivotal role in the excruciating deaths of some of the finest and most godly men England ever had.

It is an established historical fact that during the four years of Queen Mary’s reign, about 300 people were burnt at the stake for their Protestant conviction and practices. It is an accepted fact that these sufferers were not put to death for any offence against property or persons. They were not rebels tried for sedition, insurrection or heinous criminal acts. On the contrary, they were some of the holiest and purest Englishmen of the day, and several of them were the most learned men at that time. They were treated ignominiously to gross injustice before and during the trials, and were severely tried and burnt at the whims and fancies of the persecutors, without just cause.

There were heinous things that we will not speak about. However, there is something that we must know and that is, the burning of the Marian martyrs. It was an act the perpetrators have never repudiated, apologised for or regretted up to this present day. From these gruesome murders of the 15<sup>th</sup> century Spanish Inquisition to the infamous Massacre of St Bartholomew’s Day in 1572, to the grotesque Irish massacre of 1641; and the ruthless persecution of the Waldenses in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, to the burning of the English reformers in the 16<sup>th</sup> century; these have never been renounced or retracted.

Why were the reformers burnt? It was because of their biblical convictions which contradicted the established medieval church at that time. It was because they believed the truth the Bible taught concerning the Lord’s Supper—that it was a commemoration of the death of Christ and not a sacrifice; because they stood alone on the authority, sufficiency and perspicuity of the Scriptures above that of man, church or synod; because they believed salvation is all of grace and faith through Jesus Christ alone, and not of works; and for these they were liquidated. These were the non-negotiable convictions of William Tyndale, John Rogers, Thomas Cranmer, Nicholas Ridley, Hugh Latimer, John Hooper, Thomas Bilney, John Bradford, John Philpot, Rowland Taylor and others who served their God even to the point of death.



REMEMBERING THE MARTYRS OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION

We must not forget John Hus, the Bohemian pre-reformer who blazed the trail for the reformers in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century. He was burned at the stake in Constance in 1415 for his Protestant convictions. Another one—William Tyndale—was burned at the stake for his work in translating the English Bible. He died victoriously, having his prayer answered two years later, when the king commanded that every parish in England should have an English Bible.

Many died singing, praying, and submitting themselves to the will of God. Their spirit lives on today even though they be dead, and we must not forget this. It will do us good to read *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* and the latest—*By Their Blood*—by James and Marti Hefley to refresh our frail memories of what happened to these faithful soldiers of Christ. Far too often, the spirit of worldly lethargy and indifference has done great harm to the cause of truth, for truth is lost not just by wickedness, but by weakness too. We need to be inspired and challenged again by the illustrious lives and deaths of these glorious saints of old.

We are living in momentous times. The ecclesiastical horizon on every side is dark and bleak. The steady progress of the forces of darkness reminds us of the soon return of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The ecumenical movement, fanned by New Age and Charismatic influence, is on the ascendancy. The days are almost ripe for world dominion by the man of perdition. We have to set up our banners. If ever we meet the Lord in another world without shame, we must continue in the zeal for the truth which the reformers stood for. Let us continue stedfastly in the most holy faith, preaching, teaching, confirming, admonishing, watching, waiting, evangelising, and defending it with godly zeal as the Lord enables us. The Reformation continues today in the true spirit of the Reformation martyrs. Amen.

---

*Rev Jack Sin is Pastor of Maranatha Bible-Presbyterian Church,  
and Lecturer in Church History at Far Eastern Bible College.*

---

## **HOW BIG IS YOUR GOD?**

Morris McDonald

Congratulations to the graduating class of 1999. Well done, good and faithful servants of Christ. May God take you and use you for His glory. My plea to you who are presently working toward graduation, keep at it, do not give up: Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do with thy might. My question to the '99 graduates of the Far Eastern Bible College is this: How BIG is your God? Let's read together Isaiah 6:1-8.

### **The Prophet's Vision of a Mighty God: "I saw the Lord!"**

There stood on the platform of the University of Glasgow an odd sort of man invited there to receive an honorary degree. Being a university given over to secularism, the students usually booed and hissed the guest coming for this purpose. On this occasion, however, they were silent and respectful as the gaunt man took his place at the lectern. His left arm hung uselessly at his side for it had been mangled in the jaws of a lion in Africa. The jungle fever that had wrecked the man's body dozens of times aged him far beyond his years. The platform guest told that university audience how he had opened up the entire centre of the continent of Africa for the gospel work and how his beloved wife—Mary—had died in the dark jungle of that place. He told of the terrible degradation among the natives of that dark continent. Then he informed them, "But I am going back!" He asked, "Do you know what sustained me in my years out there? And what will give me strength to return to continue on?" There was long silence. Then David Livingstone said, "Long ago I heard the whisper in my ear, 'Lo, David, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age.'"

The vision there before Isaiah was beyond words! The Seraphim worshipping in God's presence modestly cover their feet and their faces as they cry out, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory." The posts of the temple door moved, the house is filled

## HOW BIG IS YOUR GOD?

with glory. Calvin notes, “That exhibition was no deceitful representation of the presence of God.” No, Isaiah was not in some kind of silly, charismatic trance, this was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob whose glory was presented before him.

Friends, do you pray big prayers to a big God? The Bible tells us to “ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you; for every one that asketh receiveth” (Matt 7:7-8). In fact, we are told to “come boldly unto the throne of grace” (Heb 4:16).

John Hyde—faithful missionary in India in the last century—laboured among a people resistant to the gospel. He became burdened for the lost and asked the Lord for one soul each day. Now, Mr Hyde was a praying missionary who believed his Presbyterian doctrine of the sovereignty of God. He also believed a servant of the Lord must labour faithfully in the Lord’s vineyard; therefore, he traveled far and wide to spread the gospel. What do you think happened at the end of that year? Did Praying Hyde serve a little God? No, for you see, 400 souls had confessed Christ as Lord and Saviour. Hyde believed in asking God for big things, for impossible things. His prayer life was legendary and for that reason he was called “Praying” Hyde.

The Far East Bible College opened in 1962. Those who asked God to give this Bible Presbyterian College life were trusting God to do something so big that no man could possibly take credit for it. Your leaders believed in Almighty God. William Carey—father of modern missions—had a motto we all know, “Attempt great things for God, expect great things from God.” In an address at the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary graduation in 1978, Dr Tow Siang Hwa, appealed to those 13 graduates: “We commend you to God with the prayer that you may be valiant for truth and that you will serve the Lord faithfully till He come. During your years at college you have received the training and the tools to help you conquer the evil one. May you fight the good fight of faith, in the almighty name of our Lord Jesus Christ, until the final victory.” Do you catch the spirit of those few lines? Valiant for truth, conquer the evil one, fight the good fight of faith, until the final victory!

Class of 1999, you are called upon to serve a big God, a God of victory. Will you say with Paul, “I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me?” Do you want to change someone? Change his perception of God! The baby Christian wants to know, “What can God do

for me?" The mature Christian wants to know, "How can I serve God and be faithful to Him?" Paul shook a poisonous viper off his hand and those watching marvelled at his God. The king of Babylon called into the lion's den for Daniel and saw him alive but he could not explain a power that could keep Daniel from the jaws of hungry lions. Moses held his rod over the Red Sea and the water divided, allowing the children of Israel an escape from certain death. Paul, Daniel, and Moses served a big God and did extraordinary things in the power of God. If God wants, He can build walls of water by a mere word or He can bring down walls of stone by simply having His people march around them. Maximum theology requires only minimum technology!

When Israel sinned in erecting the golden calf, Moses asked one question—that was to see God: "Show me Thy glory" (Exod 33:18-19). Have you seen the glory of God in your life? Have you asked God to make you courageous in your witness for Him? Do you pray boldly to the Lord, seeking His will for your life? As you go from this hallowed place, do not act as though your God is very little, that the miracles you see in this place could never be part of your life or ministry? In all your hard work, your hours of intense study, your research, even your class work in the Bible, have you let yourself grow indifferent to the reality of the presence of God in your life? Your personal, daily walk with the Lord must not have second place. Be warned! Take account that you have not lost your first love. You serve a big God.

On July 31, 1992, a plane crash in Nepal took the life of Joe and Tannan Collins and their five children—faithful missionaries returning for another term of service. If you have a little God, that is an unparalleled tragedy. If your God is sovereign over all things, you believe with assurance that God has brought something of this that will bring glory to Himself. When five missionaries were martyred by the Auca Indians of Ecuador on January 8, 1956, the world was horrified, but Christians saw Almighty God bring victory out of tragedy. In the ensuing years, literally scores of young men and women gave themselves for missionary service.

**The Prophet's Resolve before a Mighty God:  
"Here am I, send me"**

J A Alexander (stalwart defender of the faith at Princeton Seminary 150 years ago and a son of its founder—Archibald Alexander) notes on Isaiah 6:

## HOW BIG IS YOUR GOD?

This chapter contains a vision and prophecy of awful import.... The prophet sees the Lord enthroned... at Whose voice the house is shaken, and the Prophet, smitten with a sense of his own corruption and unworthiness to speak for God,... is relieved by the application of fire from the altar to his lips, and an assurance of forgiveness, after which... he offers himself.

King Uzziah had died, having ruled Judah for 52 years. His nation had seen the mighty armies with king Uzziah leading them in royal splendour. Now they see their lifeless king.

People are often moved in midst of great events, such as we see as we approach the feared Y2K problem. But God has served notice to his faithful servant: there is something far greater upon which to dwell than mere events in the life of a nation. Isaiah sees the Lord and is humbled before Him. That vision turns into deep conviction, "I am undone ... I am a man of unclean lips!" What is the man of God to do? When Moses stood before the burning bush, he knew he was there before the presence of God (Exod 3:2). When Elijah prayed on Mount Carmel, he saw the fire fall from above (1 Kgs 18:38). When the three Hebrews were seen walking about in the furnace, they were in the fire with God (Dan 3:25). They all served a BIG God.

Young people! Plead with God Almighty to set your holy calling on fire! Notice once again in Isaiah 6, a seraph takes a coal and touches it to the prophet's lips. What did that represent? Isaiah said, "I am a man of unclean lips and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." He was saying, "We are a nation that has forgotten God; We are a people who have left off proper worship of God." This is true of the world in which we live today. So the cleansing fire is applied directly to the offending part, his lips. This is to reveal not only God's cleansing, but God's inspiration for the prophetic message that Isaiah will proclaim to the nation. Jeremiah said, "The Lord put forth His hand and touched my mouth ... behold, I have put My words in thy mouth" (Jer 1:9). And Daniel said, "One like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips, then I opened my mouth and spake" (Dan 10:16-19; note ensuing verses). God calls and His servant readily answers. "Who will go ... Here am I, send me!"

William Borden, a young man from a wealthy family, wanted more than anything to become a missionary. His motto was: "No reserve, no retreat, no regrets." He would ask doubting college classmates when

speaking about submission to the Lord, “Are you willing to be made willing?”

### **Application**

Your College Anthem, from the pen of Timothy Tow, has these words in stanza’s one and three,

*O Father, Thou Almighty art,  
Who made the heav’ns and earth and seas.  
And deign to dwell in contrite hearts  
And visit with Thy grace and peace.  
Today hear us who call on Thee,  
And bless us still with Thine increase.  
O Father, Thou Almighty art!  
Forever bless with Thine increase!*

*O Holy Spirit from on high,  
Whom God the Father, Son, did send,  
To touch our lips and tongues with fire,  
That we might speak and men repent:  
Today descend and breathe anew  
A zeal to preach our Saviour’s name.  
O Holy Spirit from on High!  
Revive our zeal for Jesus Name!*

Note the references to our God who is proclaimed as Almighty. “Revive our zeal for Jesus name” ends the third stanza. The battle is hot, the foe is determined, and many have fallen in the struggle. In Isaiah 40, God reminds the prophet, “Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?” Continuing from that verse 28 on to verse 31, here is a familiar, soul-satisfying promise, “But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.”

God reminds us, “Ye have not, because ye ask not.” David stood before Goliath and cried, “I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.” Could David have had second thoughts about what he was doing? Of course he could have. Elijah asked for fire and the fire fell. Could he have been fearful of the hundreds of prophets of Baal arrayed against him? The answer is

## HOW BIG IS YOUR GOD?

obvious. Paul and Silas sat in jail at midnight perhaps wondering why God would put them there. “We can’t go about and witness to the lost in here,” might have been their thought. But before morning light a man and his family have trusted Christ for salvation.

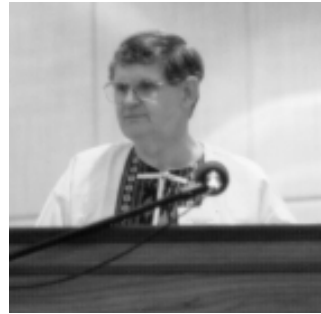
How big is your God? Is He big enough to calm a raging sea? Powerful enough to create all things in six literal 24-hour days? Big enough to fling the stars across the midnight sky like diamonds? Great enough to announce, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life?”

Here is a line from John Newton, a man who ran from God, until God took hold of him and shook him awake: “Thou art coming to a King, large petitions with thee bring; for His grace and power are such, none can ask too much.” Young people, you serve a big God. Put your trust in Him. Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ (Phil 1:6).

---

*Dr Morris McDonald, Field Representative of the Presbyterian Missionary Union, USA, delivered the above message at the 24<sup>th</sup> Graduation Exercises of the Far Eastern Bible College, Singapore, May 30, 1999.*

---



## **THEOLOGICAL IGNORANCE, CONFUSION, AND ENLIGHTENMENT: A TESTIMONY**

Mathews Abraham

Warm greetings to all of you in the name of Jesus.

My name is Mathews Abraham. I come from India which is a land of beauty, and of poverty, a land of many gods, and now also a land possessing nuclear power. But this evening, by the grace of the Lord, I would like to testify about a far greater power which transforms life. My testimony is not dramatic, yet it is very powerful because God is working in my life. And when God works it is special. It is a miracle. So before I begin, I would like to thank the Author of my life, our God and Lord Jesus Christ for choosing me to know His wonderful truth. I also want to thank God for giving me this opportunity to testify of His goodness and love. I would like to share my testimony in the following three parts: theological ignorance, theological confusion, and theological enlightenment.

### **Theological Ignorance**

I was born into a Christian family. I have three brothers and I am the youngest. Being the youngest saw me getting more privileges and extra attention. As a child born to a Christian family, I attended Sunday school and church regularly. Besides, our family had prayer meetings every morning and evening, and we all took part in it. It was indeed good to hear of Jesus every day, but it did not profit me in my life. Sunday school was a time to play and have fun.

One of the most refreshing things in my childhood was the Vacation Bible school. At the end of every vacation Bible school, the conductor would give an altar call. He would exhort us to repent of our sins. I really felt the guilt, and with great struggle in my heart I accepted the Lord as my Saviour.



## *THEOLOGICAL IGNORANCE, CONFUSION, AND ENLIGHTENMENT*

But I had one problem, and that problem was my theology. When I accepted Christ I used to make a decision, “Lord from now on I will never sin. If I am your true son I will never sin again.” Every time I would guard myself for a few days, but soon I would fall into temptation. Having sinned, my understanding would be that God no longer wants me and I have lost my salvation. And since I have lost my salvation it is better now to enjoy my sins. So I continued in my old ways.

At the next vacation Bible school the same process would be repeated: I confess, I make a decision, I fall, I go back to my old ways. My spiritual life was a big struggle and life just passed by in my theological ignorance.

In the prime of my teenage years, just to satisfy my parents and the church members, I called myself a Christian and was active in church activities. Yet in my heart I knew I was wrong somewhere, and that I was not a Christian. In church I made myself pious-looking, but in school I did all kinds of wrong things.

It was during this time of my life that I came in touch with a parachurch youth organisation. By attending their meetings I started studying the Word of God. Soon I was able to see my sin in its totality. But by this time, my mind was already convinced that I was Christian and that I no longer needed to repent since I was brought up nicely in a Christian family. On the one hand I did all kinds of sin, and on the other hand I refused to call myself a sinner, and even claimed to be a Christian.

The god of this world has blinded my eyes but the God who is Light shined His face upon me by His grace. During one of the youth camps, I felt a huge vacuum in my life, and I soon saw my sin in its totality. “O what a wretched man I am. Who shall deliver me from my wicked sins and its punishment?” I was able to see my sinfulness and I knew that I needed to come to Christ to be forgiven of all my sins. That very night I gave my life to Jesus and asked Him to forgive me of all my sins. “Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool.” “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” God, on that day, gave me new life and peace—a peace which passes all understanding. Now I am no longer theologically ignorant, but I soon entered the second phase—a phase of theological confusion.

## **Theological Confusion**

Soon I became more attached to this neo-evangelical organisation, and was deeply involved in it. Our key aim was to share the gospel to the college students. So we started Bible study cells inside the colleges. Many came to know the Lord.

It was during this time of service as a college student that I felt the burden to serve the Lord. I waited on the Lord for two years and in my final year of graduate studies, I decided to serve the Lord. I had total peace in my heart, and I knew God would take care of me. All power in heaven and earth was given to Him, and He has promised to be with us always even to the end of the earth.

The church I attended was traditional, liberal and Arminian. I found it unnecessary to study theology at that point of my life. So I chose to serve in the neo-evangelical organisation as a staff-worker. For two and half years I helped in the ministry of this organization as a full-time worker. According to the organisation, I had to attend my own church which I did not want to because of its liberal stand. My pastor regarded the miracles of Jesus as myths, and taught that the Bible contains errors.

Just to win souls I compromised in my doctrines by keeping quiet. Soon there were many problems. New believers were told to attend liberal churches and charismatic churches. There were many theological clashes but we chose not to mind them for the gospel's sake. In the leaders' meetings we would discuss and argue for hours over these issues. These discussions made the situation more chaotic.

This period of theological confusion made me think of my future. I entered into the third phase of my life, and that is theological enlightenment.

## **Theological Enlightenment**

During those times of confusion, I lacked theological satisfaction, and decided to learn more theology. The Apostle Paul said, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim 2:15). I applied for admission to one of the best colleges in India, which too was neo-evangelical, and also to FEBC. For the former, I passed the written exam and got a scholarship. Everything was fine. But at the last moment

*THEOLOGICAL IGNORANCE, CONFUSION, AND ENLIGHTENMENT*

everything went wrong, and my organisation told me to wait for another year.

I just prayed to the Lord. I did not know what to do, but had decided to study. I told the Lord to lead me to the place He wanted me to be.

Coming to Singapore was not easy. My visa was refused and I lost all hopes of coming to Singapore. I prayed and sought for God's guidance. I applied again for a visa. It was not easy. The FEBC classes had already started. I had to go to the Singapore embassy which was one day's journey from my hometown. But it was God's will that I should go to FEBC. I finally managed to come to Singapore within a week's time.

I came to FEBC with very dim hopes of receiving anything good. But after tasting God's goodness, I can see God's wonderful hand in leading me here, and teaching me His truth from His holy Word. Now I rejoice in the College's stand against charismatism, neo-evangelicalism, and ecumenism. I do appreciate the doctrine of biblical separation.

I have a lot of attachments with my neo-evangelical friends. I often get letters. They love me, and it is very hard for me to say "no" to them. But I do not want to compromise. We have to stand for the whole counsel of God.

I thank God for His leading in my life. Thank God He saved me by His grace. By His mercy, He called me to serve Him. But when I look back I feel sorry for having the wrong understanding in theology. The problems we face in our spiritual life are mostly due to our wrong understanding of the whole counsel of God.

I do not know what is your understanding of theology. Maybe you are theologically ignorant, or theologically confused, or you may already be theologically enlightened. My desire for all of you is that you may do your best to understand the whole counsel of God.

I do understand that we all have our own desires, appointments, and it is hard to spend time for the Lord, to keep our quiet time, have family devotions, or attend FEBC night classes. Let me just close with a poem written by a missionary martyred in the Congo entitled, "A Suffering Saviour:"

*I want my breakfast served at eight,  
With ham and eggs upon the plate.  
A well-broiled steak I eat at one,  
And dine again when day is done,*

*The Burning Bush 5/2 (July 1999)*

*I want an ultra-modern home,  
And in each room a telephone.  
Soft carpets strewn upon the floors,  
And pretty drapes to grace the doors.*

*A cozy place of lovely things,  
Like easy-chairs with inner springs.  
And then I'll have a small TV,  
Of course I'm careful what I see.*

*I want my wardrobe too to be,  
Of neatest, finest quality.  
With latest style in suit and vest,  
Why shouldn't the Christian have the best.*

*But then the Master I can hear,  
In no uncertain voice so clear,  
"I bid you come and follow Me,  
The lowly man of Galilee.*

*Birds of the air have made their nest,  
And foxes in their holes find rest.  
I can offer you no bed,  
No place have I to lay my head."*

*In shame I hung my head and cried,  
How could I spurn the Crucified?  
For lo He fasted day and night,  
For forty days without a bite.*

*A man of sorrows and of grief,  
No earthly friend to bring relief.  
Smitten of God the prophet said,  
Mocked, beaten, bruised, His blood ran red,*

*If He be God, and died for me,  
No sacrifice too great can be,  
For me, a mortal man to make,  
I'll do it for Jesus' sake.*

This missionary who was martyred had great desires and dreams too. But when he looked to the great sacrifice and love of the Lord, he saw his nothingness, and he saw no other choice but to offer his life even to the point of death. May these words of God encourage us and bless our lives.

“The love of Christ constraineth us” (2 Cor 5:14). “Lay up not for yourselves treasures upon earth where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven” (Matt 6:19-20). “Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the father sealed” (John 6:27).

May Christ increase, and I decrease. May God help us to be occupied with eternal things till He comes. To God be the glory. Amen.

---

*Mathews Abraham is a Master of Divinity student at FEBC. He shared this testimony on January 17, 1999 at the Sunset Gospel Hour, Calvary Bible-Presbyterian Church, Singapore.*

---

## **Old & New Hymns & Spiritual Songs To God Be The Glory!**

---



CD: \$19.90 • Tape: \$6.70

1. My Tribute (To God Be The Glory).
2. O Glorious Day!
3. Barley Fields.
4. O Come Back to the Lord.
5. The Wonderful Story.
6. Have You Any Room for Jesus.
7. Into My Heart.
8. I Gave My Life for Thee.
9. Give Me Thy Heart.
10. Does Jesus Care?
11. I Wish You Knew My Jesus/I'll Be a Sunbeam (Medley).
12. Saviour Like a Shepherd Lead Us.
13. I'd Rather Have Jesus.
14. The Wonder of It All.
15. If I Come to Jesus.
16. For God So Loved the Word/ I Have Decided to Follow Jesus/Joy in My Heart (Medley).

# **FEBC Bookroom**

Tel: 65-2549188 • Fax: 65-2506955 • Internet: <http://www.lifefebc.com>

## College News

The **new semester** opened on Jan 4, '99 with an entering class of 18 new students. These hail from Singapore (4), Korea (5), Cambodia (2), Ethiopia (2), Kenya (1), Thailand (2), Myanmar (1), and Indonesia (1). Total number of old and new students: 101. Total number of evening students: 162. Total number of external certificate students: 25. Total number of countries represented: 18—Australia, Cambodia, Canada, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Palau, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, USA, Vietnam.

The Principal—**Dr Timothy Tow**—led 50 Lifers and FEBCIans on a journey through the Biblical lands—Egypt-Jordan-Israel—from Mar 9-23, '99. On Mar 28, he delivered the message—“Fighting for the Faith against an Undercover Enemy”—at the graduation exercises of the Centre for Biblical Studies, Philippines. May 14-18 saw him leading a missions team to Cambodia to visit the Bible-Presbyterian churches, Bible schools, and orphanages planted by FEBC graduates/Life BPC missionaries—**Rev Jonathan Lee** (BTh '94), **Rev Moses Hahn** (MDiv '97), **Rev David Koo** (BRE '98) and **Mr D Surish** (BTh '99)—in Phnom Penh and Kampong Som. He then spent 6 weeks (Jun 5- Jul 18) in Perth ministering to the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Western Australia.

**Dr Morris McDonald** of the Presbyterian Missionary Union, USA, taught a Daily Vacation Bible College course—“A Brief Survey of Missions”—from May 24-29, '99 at the FEBC. His book on the same subject is published by FEBC Press, and obtainable from the FEBC Bookroom. His lectures on “Studies of the Church at Ephesus” at the Life BPC Camp at Sol Elite, Bintan, will also be published.

The Far Eastern Bible College held its **24<sup>th</sup> Graduation Exercises** at Calvary Bible-Presbyterian Church, Pandan Gardens, on the Lord's Day, May 30, '99. There were 24 graduands:

**Certificate of Religious Knowledge (CertRK):** Kim-Jung Mi Kyung, Kwek Boon Cheng, Lim Poh Choo.

**Certificate of Biblical Studies (CertBS):** Edwin Hee Yoke Choon, Mona Thumewa, Woo Chong Yew.

**Diploma in Theology (DipTh):** Chai Muei Huying, Ho Geok Fong, Hwang Jong Sun.

**Bachelor of Religious Education (BRE):** Bae Kyung Sik, Bai Eun Mi, Lazer Sam Lovelyson, Seo Jeong Hwan.

**Bachelor of Theology (BTh):** Surainarayanan Rajagopal Dharmalingam, Samson Hutagalung, Kim Hak Soo, Kim Won Hyo, Lee Ji Hey, Sim Yeow Meng, Alex Nasong'o Wugu.

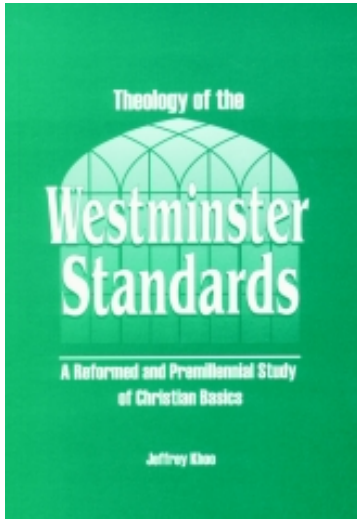
**Master of Religious Education (MRE):** Eduardo Villaceran Morante (BRE, Far Eastern Bible College).

**Master of Divinity (MDiv):** Robert Tan Hok Tjai (BA, Paulus Foreign Language Academy; MDiv, Trinity Theological College), Andrew Tan Kim Seng (BEng, Nanyang Technological University).

**Master of Theology (ThM):** Shin Yeong Gil (BBA, Korea Air & Correspondence University; MEng, Chosun University; MDiv, Far Eastern Bible College).

The following **Basic Theology for Everyone** evening courses are offered in the Jul-Nov '99 semester: (1) **The Doctrine of God** by Dr Timothy Tow (begins Mon, Jul 26). (2) **Modern Hebrew II** by Mrs Batsheva Talyer (begins Wed, Jul 21). (3) **Dispensationalism & Covenant Theology** by Dr Jeffrey Khoo; and (4) **New Evangelicalism** by Rev Quek Suan Yew (both on Thu, beginning Jul 22).

The following are recent publications of the **Far Eastern Bible College Press**. All books are obtainable from the FEBC Bookroom, 9A Gilstead Road, Singapore 309063. Tel: (65) 2549188, Fax: (65) 2506955.

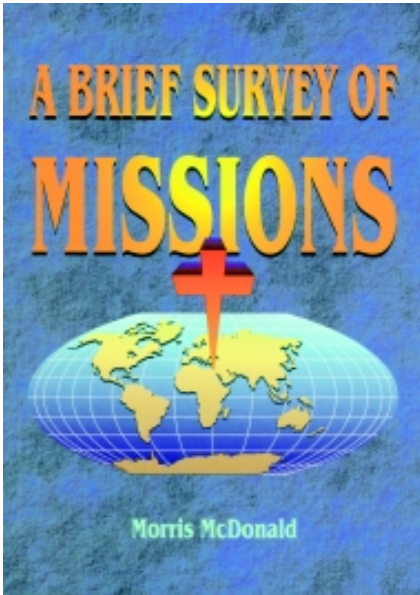


*Theology of the Westminster Standards*, by Jeffrey Khoo.

This doctrinal book on basic doctrines incorporates selected portions of the Westminster Confession of Faith with its Larger and Shorter Catechisms, and introduces the study of the Standards from a reformed and premillennial perspective.

ISBN 981-00-8461-7

Price: \$8.00

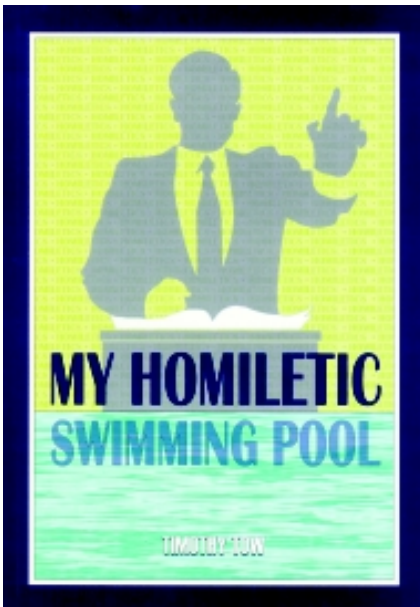


***A Brief Survey of Missions***, by Morris McDonald.

This book on missions examines the founding, extension, and continuing work of telling the Good News, nurturing converts, and planting churches from the apostolic period till the present day. Emphasis is placed on Bible-Presbyterian missions.

ISBN 981-04-1458-7

Price: \$5.00



***My Homiletic Swimming Pool***, by Timothy Tow.

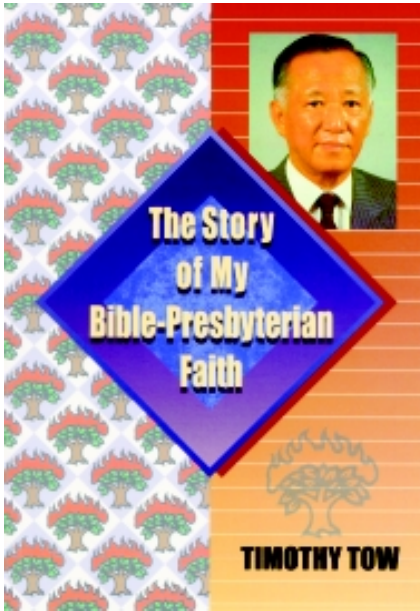
A concise book on the art of preaching with a local flavour from the principal of Far Eastern Bible College after 36 years of teaching homiletics.

ISBN 981-04-0886-2

Price: \$6.00

Obtainable from FEBC Bookroom, 9A Gilstead Road, Singapore 309063.  
Tel: 65-2549188, Fax: 65-2506955, E-mail: febc@pacific.net.sg.



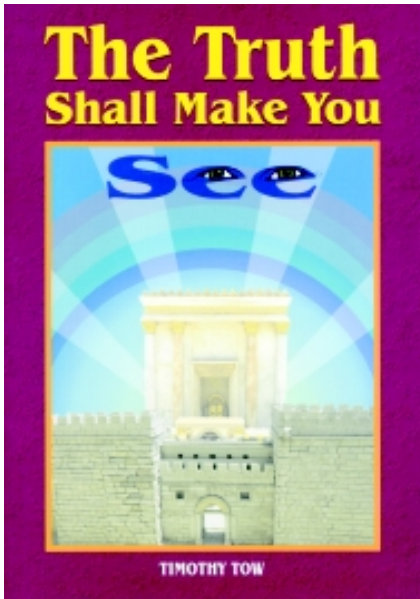


***The Story of My Bible-Presbyterian Faith***, by Timothy Tow.

This important historical and theological work presents the doctrinal-practical distinctives of the Bible-Presbyterian Church. Deals with many issues like premillennialism, hyper-Calvinism, charismaticism, Bible versions, role of women in the church, etc.

ISBN 981-04-1071-9

Price: \$5.00



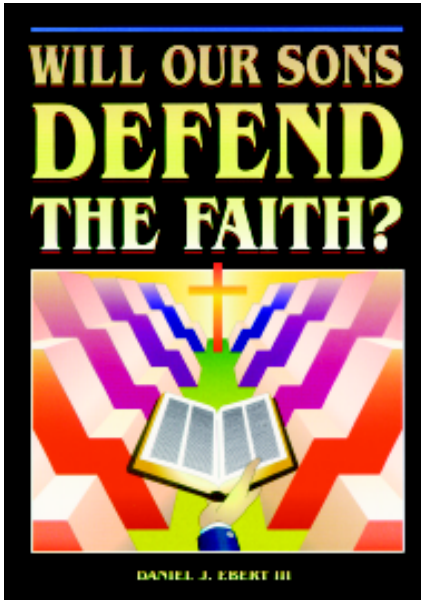
***The Truth Shall Make You See***, by Timothy Tow.

This booklet is a follow-up to Chapter II of the author's book—*The Story of My Bible-Presbyterian Faith*. Presents a solid biblical case for the premillennial doctrine of Israel and of the end-times.

ISBN 981-04-1457-9

Price: \$3.00

Obtainable from FEBC Bookroom, 9A Gilstead Road, Singapore 309063.  
Tel: 65-2549188, Fax: 65-2506955, E-mail: febc@pacific.net.sg.



***Will Our Sons Defend the Faith?***,  
by Daniel J Ebert III.

This timely treatise warns of the the danger of heresy and apostasy within the Christian Church. Highlights the increasingly dark dangers of compromise in the ecclesiastical world, especially in evangelical overtures towards Rome, ecumenical evangelism, and widespread departure from sound doctrine.

ISBN 981-04-1301-7

Price: \$6.00



***McIntire Maxims***, edited by  
Timothy Tow.

This book is a compilation of Dr Carl McIntire's insightful sayings on the Bible, on the Church, on Home and Nation, and on the Philosophy of Life. Dr McIntire is the founder of the Bible Presbyterian Church in USA, and President of the International Council of Christian Churches (ICCC).

ISBN 981-04-1286-X

Price: \$4.00

Obtainable from FEBC Bookroom, 9A Gilstead Road, Singapore 309063.  
Tel: 65-2549188, Fax: 65-2506955, E-mail: febc@pacific.net.sg.

## Class Notes

**Rev Tan Eng Boo** (BTh '78), pastor of Grace Bible-Presbyterian Church, wrote in the *Grace Weekly* of Nov 15, '98, this testimony of his time in FEBC:

“I studied in FEBC in 1975-78. Those were precious years of learning God’s Word. This College has never failed to impress upon the students the importance of God’s Word. The Bible has always been held high. I have learned to treasure the Bible in my own life as I got to know the Word better.

“College days can be very theoretical and academic. What we have been taught must be put into practice. You will be surprised that this can be done. I was determined to do my devotional time regularly every day, without fail. This is most crucial for my own spiritual life. I know of students who struggle in this area. I know some students do not even do their quiet time. I know that my student life was greatly blessed of the Lord because I was determined to seek Him first every day.

“Getting along with everyone in the College wasn’t that easy. I remember I almost got into a fight with one brother. Thank God that today, we are the best of friends in the ministry together. Living together teaches us to be tolerant towards one another. Some of my best friends today were from those days. Most of them are now pastors. I learned to be humble and to help others. We learned to help those who did not have enough money. We learned to share and pray for one another. I had a group of faithful prayer partners in the College who would meet every day for sharing and prayer. Such a group was an encouragement to me.

“In those days, I also remember going out for evangelism every Wednesday afternoon. It can be a struggle to do this work, as the temptation to stay back and complete an assignment or to study for a quiz etc is so strong. Although this task wasn’t so popular, yet we could see students taking time off to go out and share the Gospel. The Lord rewarded them with souls.

“College days can be very practical too. All it takes is for the student to apply God’s Word diligently in his/her own life.

“The Far Eastern Bible College has been the bulwark of the B-P Church since it started in 1962. We, who have been trained in this College, are

always grateful to God for the Principal and lecturers who loved the Word of God and taught it faithfully and fervently.”

**Catherine Ng** (DipTh '84) missionary of Grace Bible-Presbyterian Church is now studying at Columbia International University, USA.

**Dr Jeffrey Khoo** (BTh '89) went on sabbatical last semester. During his sabbatical, he taught two Master of Ministry courses at the Far Eastern Fundamental School of Theology (FEFST), Yangon, Myanmar, from Feb 1-13, '99, and spoke at its 7<sup>th</sup> Graduation Exercises. He also preached, and baptised 19 at the Yangon Bible-Presbyterian Church, pastored by **Rev Andrew Kam** (DipTh '94). The rest of his sabbatical was spent in Canada ministering to the new Vancouver Bible-Presbyterian Church from Feb 20-May 20.

**Rev Quek Suan Yew** (BTh '89) was the speaker at the FEBC Gospel Meeting on Mar 28, '99.

**Rev Charles Seet** (BTh '90, MDiv '97) was visiting lecturer of Far Eastern Fundamental School of Theology (Yangon, Myanmar) from Jun 21-Jul 3, '99, and conducted two courses—The Pentateuch, and OT Historical Books—for Master of Ministry students.

**Rev Pang Kok Hiong** (BTh '92) is now pastor of the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Western Australia, 867-869 Canning Highway, Mount Pleasant, WA 6153, Australia. His e-mail: pang@mailcity.com.

**Rev Geoffrey Indiazi Lidodo** (BTh '93), and **Rev Alex Nasong'o Wugu** (BTh '99) are lecturers at the Bible College of East Africa, Kenya, headed by **Rev Mark Kim Kyung Soo** who is also an FEBC graduate. **Rev Stephen Masila** (BTh '83) a senior lecturer of BCEA has returned for further studies towards an MDiv. Four recent BCEA graduates are also in FEBC for more training.

**Rev Jack Sin** (MDiv '96) spoke on “Committed Christian Service: Studies from Nehemiah,” at the Bible camp of Life BPC (Chiangmai, Thailand), Jun 18-22, '99.

**Bai Eun Mi** (BRE '99) is pursuing a Master's degree in Christian Journalism at Bob Jones University, Greenville, South Carolina, USA.

**Rev Seo Jeong Hwan** (BRE '99) is pastoring Dong Cheon Presbyterian Church, (150-054) 4903-20, Shin Gil 4 Dong, Yong Dung Po Gu, Seoul, Korea. E-mail: sjeongh@hanmail.net.

## 24<sup>th</sup> FEBC Graduation Exercises (May 30, 1999)



Clockwise from top left: Principal with Dr S H Tow; faculty & graduands; FEBC choir; Oath-taking; Diplomas; ThM graduate—Shin Yeong Gil—with Academic Dean; Lee Ji Hey with Matron; Bae Kyung Sik with Principal.

*The Burning Bush 5/2 (July 1999)*



Clockwise from top left: Chai Muei Huying (DipTh); Woo Chong Yew (CertBS); Mona Thumewa (CertBS); Lee Ji Hey (BTh); Kim Hak Soo (BTh); Bai Eun Mi (BRE); Sim Yeong Meng (BTh); Shin Yeong Gil (ThM).

24<sup>th</sup> FEBC Graduation Exercises (May 30, 1999)



Clockwise from top left: Edwin Hee (CertBS); Sam Lovelyson (BRE);  
Kim Won Hyo (BTh); Seo Jeong Hwan (BRE).

*The Burning Bush 5/2 (July 1999)*



Clockwise from top left: Samson Hutagalung (BTh); Eduardo Morante (MRE); Andrew Tan (MDiv); Robert Tan (MDiv).



*24<sup>th</sup> FEBC Graduation Exercises (May 30, 1999)*



FEBC graduands and students with the Matron—Mrs Ivy Tow



BRE graduate—Seo Jeong Hwan—with Dr S H Tow (centre),  
Deborah Mae & Judith D'Silva.



BTh graduate—Kim Won Hyo—with family and friends



BRE graduate—Bai Eun Mi—with family, and Matron Ivy Tow (centre)

**Far Eastern Bible College  
24<sup>th</sup> Graduation Exercises  
May 30, 1999**



**Faculty and Graduates**

Far Eastern Bible College  
24<sup>th</sup> Graduation Exercises  
May 30, 1999

