

# Katoomba Baptist Church Bulletin

41 Waratah Street, Katoomba NSW 2780.

March 2020.

Sunday service 10am.

Prayer meeting: Each Saturday, 9am.

Bible study: Second and fourth Wednesday of each month, 10-11am.

LIFT (Ladies In Fellowship Together): First Thursday of the month, 10am, in the church hall.

Prayer for Israel: Third Friday of each month, 1.30pm.

Church lunch: Fourth Sunday of each month after the service.

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## From the editor

God says "I AM" but Satan says "I will". God exists, perfect in all He is and there is nothing that He needs to be. But Satan wants something that isn't his and wants to be someone that he isn't. In Isaiah 14:12-14, Satan declares his five "I wills". Satan wants the worship that belongs to God and, even more than that, wants the throne of God. He wants God's glory, power and majesty. Satan desires the control all of creation. But there are two things he crucially doesn't want: the holiness of God and the wonderful and limitless love of God.

Satan doesn't love the people who are his — he hates them. He is a liar and a murderer who destroys and corrupts everything he touches [John 8:44]. He can deceive by appearing as "an angel of light", or he can go on a rampage like a "devouring lion" [2 Cor. 11:14; 1 Peter 5:8].

It's astonishing to realize that Satan was not always this way. He was once the highest created being, closer to God than any other. He was of the very highest order of angels, the cherubim, and he was "the anointed cherub" that covered God's throne [Ezekiel 28:14]. It was Satan who led the angelic worship of God. He was the most beautiful of all created beings and of a rank that gave him great power and authority in Heaven.

Incredibly, despite this closeness to God, Satan's will separated from God's will. Pride and arrogance filled his heart and he became obsessed with somehow taking the glory due to God for himself. So charismatic was Satan that he even persuaded a third of the angels to join him in his rebellion. With the first evil intention in his mind, Satan unleashed sin into Heaven and then into earth when he deceived Eve.

To think of all the sorrow and pain that has resulted is almost overwhelming. The world has embraced Satan and rebelled against the glorious, living God to follow the perpetrator of all that is false and dark and evil. Satan's rebellion is doomed and so are all who belong to him but that does not stop him from pursuing what he wants. "I will!" he keeps saying. Indeed, he is the instigator of all willful defiance against the holiness and goodness of God. "The lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life" are his weapons of deceit and have been ever since he corrupted Eden [1 John 2:16].

What a contrast to the Lord Jesus! We can only marvel at the Lord's willingness to humble Himself. Leaving his exalted position in Heaven to be born as a man and live as a poor, hard-working carpenter. To faithfully carry out His ministry despite so much opposition and rejection. To love all who came to Him — the products of Satan's sin, those who were broken in body, mind and spirit, these He healed tirelessly and with endless compassion. Then, in the greatest act of love of all, to suffer on the cross in the place of sinners so that they could be reconciled to God. Jesus Christ, our Saviour, our Redeemer Who suffered the wrath of a holy God, Who rose from the grave giving hope to all that would believe in Him.

The Lord Jesus, in His divine nature, had great power on earth. He could have called legions of angels to protect Him. He could have gotten down from the agony of the cross. When the soldiers and priests came to arrest Him in the garden, He said "I am" and they all fell stunned to the ground. But our Lord, as a man, faithfully obeyed His Father's will: "Not as I will but as You will." The Lord Jesus showed all men the way to honour God.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit Christians no longer live as we will but abide in Christ. By abiding in Him we too are obeying the good and perfect will of the great I AM, God our Father. Satan wanted to take God's power and glory for himself. Through Jesus Christ we can attain what Satan never wanted to take from God: His holiness and His love.

To Almighty God be the glory. May our Saviour's name be exalted.

Your brother in Christ, Bill.

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## Please pray

- for the Lord to guide us as we seek His will for a new pastor at Katoomba Baptist Church.
- that the Lord will minister to those in our fellowship who are undergoing trials and suffering.
- for Israel, for the "Peace of Jerusalem" (Ps 122:6) and for the Gospel there "To the Jew first." (Rom 1:16).
- for our persecuted brothers and sisters in nations rich and poor and for those who persecute them.
- with thanks for the rain; for the Lord in His grace and mercy.
- for the livelihoods of people in regions where the fires have severely impacted local economies.
- for revival in our community, state, nation, and throughout the world, and for our faith to increase.
- for the Church to wake up and be alert to the lateness of the hour and proclaim the Gospel to all.
- for the power of the Spirit in our lives, for discernment and wisdom as we live through these last days.
- that the Lord will help us to use our gifts for His glory and to share the Gospel with others.
- for missions, especially those we support as a church.
- for our community and nation, that many will turn to Christ, that our leaders will be led by Him.
- that we continue to grow in Christian love as a church, serving the Lord and each other.
- Maranatha! ("Come, O Lord!")

**"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks:  
for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).**

## Church announcements

- Preaching roster: Graeme Morgan (1st), Stephen Downey (8th), Terry Arnold (15th), John Buckle (22nd), Andrew Hollier (29th).
- Prayer meeting reminder: each Saturday 9am. Please come along. Let's be a church that prays together!

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**"Pray often, for prayer is a shield to the soul, a sacrifice to God, and a scourge for Satan." [John Bunyan]**

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## From the FEBC website [<https://febc.org.au/hope-from-despair>]

### **Hope from despair – God works in wonderful ways.**

*God is always at work! He is working in the hearts of the people He's calling, and those of His faithful servants who are always ready to follow what He asks them to do. In September, the region of Ubon Ratchathani in Thailand was affected by terrible flooding. Homes and services were lost and many people were left in desperate need of aid and assistance.*

*FEBC shared broadcasts to the community with a need for urgent supplies to help the displaced. Praise God, the staff were inundated with donations of everything required. As the affected region has been left without power, the executive team from Panasonic also donated 600 batteries to equip the battery powered radios packed for distribution.*

*Teung, Kei and Lek, three team members from FEBC Thailand made the 600km journey to deliver water, food rations, radios, blankets, clothing and other life sustaining supplies to the hundreds of locals left devastated. FEBC radios were essential, because in a time of desperation, they connected people with life-saving information.*

*Our radios also filled listening hearts with hopeful broadcasts. The team were able to connect with flood victims face to face, including meeting long time listener, Niyom. He was overcome with joy to finally meet his favourite broadcaster, Teung who visited Niyom at his home. They saw he was using a very old radio lent to him by his sister and gave him a new radio, some blankets and other goods. Most importantly he received prayer and was connected with a local church leader to walk with him in his spiritual journey. The following Sunday, Niyom was picked up and attended church for the first time.*

*God has also wonderfully opened doors into this region. The two partner churches who assisted with the distribution of resources are also rejoicing. On previous visits to the area they were not welcomed, but many who were given radios and aid have now shown great interest in attending church and have also asked for assistance with transport to get there.*

*Please continue to pray for the work in Thailand and surrounding countries. Indeed, God is always at work especially when we come alongside Him and reach the unreached.*

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**March birthdays:** Irene R 16th, Mae S 21st, Daniel T 31st.

May the Lord bless you abundantly on your special day and in the year ahead in your walk with Him.

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## **Spurgeon on the limits of temptation**

*... Satan will not go till he has shot the last arrow from his quiver. Such is his malice that, as long as he can tempt, he will tempt. His will desires our total destruction; but his power is not equal to his will. God does not give him power such as he would like to possess; there is always a limit set to his assaults. When Satan has tempted you throughout, and ended all his temptation, then he will leave you. You have not yet undergone all forms of temptation; so you may not expect absolutely and altogether to be left by the arch-enemy. It may be a long time, when you are suffering from his attacks, before he will hold his hand, for he will try all that he possibly can to lead you into evil, and to destroy the grace that is in you. Still, he does come to an end with his temptations sooner than he desires; for, as God has said to the mighty sea, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed," so says He to the devil. When He permitted Satan to try the graces of Job, and to prove his sincerity, He let him go just so far, but no farther; and when he asked for a further stretch of power, still there was a limit. There is always a limit to Satan's power; and when he reaches that point, he will be pulled up short, he can do no more. You are never so in the hand of Satan as to be out of the hand of God. You are never so tempted, if you are a believer, that there is not a way of escape for you. God permits you to be tried for many reasons which, perhaps, you could not altogether understand, but which His infinite wisdom understands for you; but He will not suffer the rod of the wicked to rest upon the lot of the righteous. It may fall there, but it shall not rest there. The Lord may let you be put into the fire; but the fire shall be heated no hotter than you are able to bear. "When the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him." [Charles Spurgeon, from the sermon, "Satan Departing, Angels Ministering", Luke 4:13.]*

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**Friday March 20th, 1.30pm — Prayer for Israel at Katoomba Baptist Church**

***And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. [Luke 21:24]***

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**Contributions welcome:** Our church bulletin is available on the first Sunday service of the month. Contributions of a missionary or devotional nature can be made to the editor, Bill Fewer (email: [hillbillyfewer@gmail.com](mailto:hillbillyfewer@gmail.com)). Please contact Bill if you would prefer to receive the bulletin by email. The email version is much longer!

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**Again, the devil took Jesus up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.'" [Matthew 4:8-10]**

## Katoomba Baptist Church Bulletin Online Extra

### “Sovereign Providence”

Planning out the distant future,  
Setting out the march of time,  
What befalls the rich and wealthy,  
Those who lack, and those who mind.

Laying out our paths before us,  
Placing blessings and our chores,  
Writing stories large and little  
For the end of all He saw.

To an end of boundless rapture,  
Joy beyond our mortal mind,  
We are destined, in His likeness,  
Standing as a poignant sign.

**Soli Deo Gloria.**

**a poem by Jemima Woolley**

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### “Just Deserts” by Costa Karagounas

We have entered an epoch of moral relativism. Moral relativism is the notion that my way of viewing the world is entirely as valid as your way of viewing the world.

Is this unprecedented in human history?

Arguably yes, since in every past epoch according to the Bible, the fundamentals of governing societies have been those precepts expressed in the Word of God. Whether one agreed with them or not. Thus we have the examples of Sodom, Canaan and ancient Rome. The point here is that those societies knew of the fundamentals, chose to turn their backs and suffered the consequences. Observe the history of western civilisation post-Bible, i.e. 90AD onwards. Biblical fundamentals of governance apply wholesale. Until today.

Regarding governance, let's take one of the three branches of government, the judiciary. Surely it's trite to say one will disagree with the judge but one has to accept the sentence handed down.

Let's take the issue of capital punishment. There are many countries where that still abides, including many states of the USA. Is it Biblical? It most certainly is; a murderer was stoned to death in ancient Israel and an insurgent was crucified in Jesus' time. Hanging was lawful in NSW until 1955.

One thing I find intriguing and disturbing, is the number of photos of men about to be executed. I'm sure you've seen them, men standing at the gallows about to hang, or men standing against a wall, about to be shot. I recall the many photos of the executions after the Nuremberg trials in post-war Germany. In every single photo the person about to be executed is depicted in a state of calm. I have never seen a photo of a person struggling or trying to flee. There are hundreds if not thousands of such photos. Is it akin to a lamb struggling, but eventually going quietly to the slaughter?

In this age of moral relativism, solid underpinnings have cracked and are breaking. The criminal is less a lawbreaker than a victim of his upbringing or his medical condition. He is no longer seen as sinful, as having given in to evil intention. He is seen as a victim himself. For a Christian, that rings loud alarm bells. Moral relativism hasn't suddenly befallen our society. The process has been incremental. Many were warning about this decades ago. One such man was C S Lewis. Here is an extract from an article written by him in the late 1940s and published in Australia, unable to be printed in England. To quote C S Lewis: 'I can get no hearing for it in England'.

'The Humanitarian Theory of Punishment' by C S Lewis, fellow of Magdalen College:

*'In England we have lately had a controversy about capital punishment. I do not know whether a murderer is more likely to repent... on the gallows a few weeks after his trial or in the prison infirmary thirty years later.. Those who hold it (Humanitarian Theory) think that it is mild and merciful. In this I believe that they are seriously mistaken. I believe that the 'Humanity' which it claims is a dangerous illusion and disguises the possibility of cruelty*

*and injustice without end. I urge a return to the traditional or retributive theory [of justice] not solely... in the interests of society, but in the interests of the criminal.*

*According to the Humanitarian theory, to punish a man because he deserves it... is mere revenge and therefore barbarous and immoral. It is maintained that the only legitimate motives for punishing are the desire to deter others... or to mend the criminal. When this theory is combined... with the belief that all crime is more or less pathological, the idea of mending tails off into that of healing or curing and punishment becomes therapeutic. Thus it appears... that we have passed from the harsh... notion of giving the wicked their deserts to the charitable and enlightened one of tending the psychologically sick. What could be more amiable?..*

*The Humanitarian theory removed from punishment the concept of desert. But the concept of desert is the only connecting link between punishment and justice. It is only as deserved or undeserved that a sentence can be just or unjust... We demand of a deterrent not whether it is just but whether it will deter. We demand of a cure not whether it is just but whether it succeeds. Thus when we cease to consider what the criminal deserves and consider only what will cure him or deter others, we have tacitly removed him from the sphere of justice altogether... we now have a mere object, a patient, a 'case'.*

*The distinction will become clearer if we ask who will be qualified to determine sentences when sentences are no longer held to derive their propriety from the criminal's deservings.*

*On the old view... the judge... was consciously accepting guidance from the Law of Nature and from Scripture... But... [o]nly the 'penologist' (let barbarous things have barbarous names)... can tell us what is likely to deter: only the psychotherapist can tell us what is likely to cure... The experts will reply, '...nobody was talking about deserts. No one was talking about punishment in your archaic vindictive sense of the word. Here are the statistics proving that this treatment deters. Here are the statistics proving that this other treatment cures..*

*The Humanitarian theory... removes sentences from the hands of jurists... and places them in the hands of technical experts whose special sciences do not even employ such categories as rights or justice..*

*..The first result... is ...to substitute for a definite sentence (reflecting... the community's moral judgement..) an indefinite sentence... by the word of those experts - and they are not experts in moral theology... Which of us, if he stood in the dock, would not prefer to be tried by the old system?..*

*It is... important to notice that my argument... supposes no evil intention on the part of the Humanitarian... My contention is that good men (not bad men)... acting upon that position would act as cruelly and unjustly as the greatest tyrants. They might in some respects act even worse. Of all tyrannies a tyranny sincerely exercised for the good of its victims may be the most oppressive... those who torment us for our own good will torment us without end for they do so with the approval of their own conscience... But to be punished, however severely, because we have deserved it... is to be treated as a human person made in God's image..*

The article caused a stir. But the echo of C S Lewis' voice has almost faded into silence.

His warnings have come to pass. Criminality is unhitched from Biblical moral precepts. Birth sex and gender are now matters unhitched from biological science. What area of traditional understanding is next to be redefined by the moral relativists? Surely the Bible is next in their sights. Christians will be persecuted even in Australia, Britain and the USA, because those knowing better will torment us for our own good, doing so with the approval of their own conscience. Little do they know that they are fulfilling Biblical prophecy and the promised return of our Lord.

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## **“World Gone Crazy” by Michael Woolley**

***(If the hyperlinks don't open, click on them while holding down the Control key on a PC or the Command key on a Mac)***

People are probably almost sick of hearing about the Coronavirus (I certainly am - excuse the pun) - after weeks of reading incessantly about it. In spite of this, it's important to acknowledge several points. Firstly, [like wars, “pestilences” are a sign](#) - the lead-up to the end of the age, where global travel and globalism enhances their impact - and they should be expected... Secondly, they may be part of the wars that will “continue to the end” - [several scientists](#) have volunteered that the Wu-Flu shows [signs of being “engineered”](#), and also that [it did not originate in the food markets](#). Thirdly, that [no-one is immune](#) (least of all [the elderly & frail](#)), and that [Christians may end up be “blamed”](#) in the fear and resentment for its spread. Maybe our response should be like Jesus' to those who was asked about those who had a tower unexpectedly collapse on them : “unless you too repent...”. It is a bit of a fine line, but, like the bushfires - only really God is in control of [who survives](#) - or not - even though [we should take responsibility to prepare](#) and protect ourselves. It has attributes and genetic similarity to the AIDS virus, and has been [successfully treated with the same drugs](#).

We should not be surprised that the official figures are ‘massaged’ for purpose of dispelling fear (mis-counting those deaths where a diagnosis remains Unconfirmed at death, or of [not counting Nursing Home deaths](#), or those from within Prisons ) - to reassure the populace that Government Officials have the situation “Under Control”. This is no more imperative than in The Middle Kingdom, [where Social Stability /cohesion is a mandate that the CCCP needs](#) to maintain it's rule - and that up to 750 Million have been told to “Self-Quarantine” in their homes - for weeks. Many of them are [still reluctant to “return to work”](#), even though instructed to by Beijing, as [people are still aware](#) that Covid-19 remains un-contained. The CCCP knows that Their Banks are loaded with Bad Debt

from “Capital misallocation” and speculation over the last decade (like [a Ponzi-scheme on steroids](#) – Chart- ), so have instructed their banks to [keep lending to the insolvent](#) – to prevent (Defer?) their economy from imploding.

The consequences are already beginning to reveal [the Faustian Bargain with China](#) : the Global car industry is almost at a standstill – just one component in a globalised supply-chain can bring production lines globally to a halt. People are laid-off/suspended, [everyday products are no longer available](#) on shelves, [pharmaceuticals](#) and [then antibiotics](#) become unavailable [and panic ensues](#). – as in Italy, where [the Pope is restricting his contact](#), after a scare. Even [pilgrimages to The Haj](#) have been canned. Still, the virus refuses to respect borders... the UK Govt estimates [80% of their population will be infected](#). How will their (or our!) “Health System” cope...?

But, as in most crises, there is always a financial winner/loser. Here’s [why the WHO won’t use the “P” word](#)...

Thankfully, [Israeli Scientists are “on-the-job”](#), and there may be a vaccine in only a few weeks!

Just be thankful we don’t have [a North-Korean-style Health System](#)... but then maybe it’s all just propaganda.

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## Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT

Bushfire Relief and Recovery Campaign

<https://nswactbaptists.org.au/bushfire-relief-and-recovery/?fbclid=IwAR3FYXxpaWxqlNBf9UvfTXkz4sEWawgy9snBQtckgguT1IhrfCKRN2ZFYPo>

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## The Christian Witness in the Virus Epicentre, Wuhan, China

Christians in Wuhan and its neighbouring province where the Coronavirus is raging are helping others with Christ-like love. There are several articles on the internet, but I have chosen just a few (see the links below). In the midst of this developing tragedy the Gospel is being proclaimed by word and action. Let’s pray for this ministry to flourish. And for those who are suffering from this disease not only in China but all over the world.

<http://saltandlight.sg/news/christians-in-wuhan-emerge-boldly-from-underground-to-proclaim-the-good-news-while-giving-out-free-masks/>

<https://thir.st/blog/christians-in-wuhan-boldly-share-christ-spread-love-on-streets/>

<https://www.bibliatodo.com/En/christian-news/what-christians-are-doing-in-china-amid-the-chaos-caused-by-coronavirus/>

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**From *The Real Australian*, Summer 2019/20 edition, Bush Church Aid website**  
**[<https://www.bushchurcaid.com.auebsite>]**

***James and Brittany Daymond moved to Narromine in February 2017 to commence an evangelistic ministry. Across the past 2.5 years they have visited every property in the district and every house in the town. They are now in the process of following-up people whose hearts were open to the good news of Jesus.***

***James and Brittany Daymond:***

*We have been very busy with following-up people in the Narromine district. It hasn’t just been us, but also included a team of people from the Narromine and Trangie Anglican Church.*

*We wanted to ensure that we followed-up everyone who expressed interest in Jesus during the initial stages of our visiting ministry. These included farmers and people living and working in towns in the district.*

*As we have followed-up people, we have asked about their reading of *The Aussie Bible* or *The Essential Jesus* or any other resource we had given them. We have then gone on to ask if they would like to read the Bible with us. Thankfully, some people have said “yes”! It has been particularly pleasing to hear some people say that they have read all or part of what we had handed out.*

*When we caught up with one lady, she said that she had read all of the *The Essential Jesus* during times in her work day where she could find a gap. She was very pleased when we were able to supply her with a *New Testament* to go on with her reading.*

*Another lady reported that her reading of the Bible she received from us had given her peace. This lady was very happy for us to do a brief Bible study with her and she looks forward to our next visit. Then there was the lady who we visited who said that she would really like to read the Bible with us because she would like someone to explain it to her.*

*On another occasion, we learned that one lady had taken The Essential Jesus with her regularly when she went for chemotherapy in hospital. The ministry to this lady has continued and strengthened with the Bible and other resources being shared to help her in her time of need.*

*These responses have been just as the Bible foreshadows in Acts 17:32-34 when Paul was in Athens. Some sneer, some want to hear more, and some believe. How wonderful it has been for us to give people the opportunity to make an informed decision about whether to follow Jesus.*

*Perhaps one of the most memorable stories has been meeting a young man in his twenties while he was working in a shop. When we met, he said that he had just been thinking about reading the Bible the night before. We were very pleased to give him a copy of The Essential Jesus and he has come to put his trust in Jesus. This man now attends church and Bible study. He even wants to set up his own Bible study with work colleagues and if they don't come, he plans on inviting people in his street!*

*Thank you very much for your ongoing prayerfulness for this ministry.*

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## **"Yeshua the Messiah?"**

**by Michael L. Brown**

**From One for Israel website,**

**<https://www.oneforisrael.org/bible-based-teaching-from-israel/yeshua-the-messiah/>**

*Two thousand years have come and gone, but the question remains the same: Is Jesus of Nazareth the Jewish Messiah, the Saviour of the world? If he is, then let's follow him, for we have no other way. If he's not, let's expose him, for only the truth will set us free.*

*Although the world is full of religions, the controversy surrounding the Messiahship of Jesus is unique, because both those who accept Jesus and those who reject him base their beliefs on one and the same Book. Jews who follow Jesus say: "He must be the Messiah. He fulfilled all the prophecies of the Bible." Jews who don't follow Jesus say: "He can't be the Messiah. He fulfilled none of the prophecies of the Bible."*

*Who's right?*

*From one Book, the Hebrew Scriptures, have come two faiths. One faith says: We'd rather die than confess the name of Jesus. The other faith says: We'd rather die than deny the name of Jesus. One faith says: There are two Messiahs who will only come once. The other faith says: There is one Messiah but he will come twice.*

*"So how can I know the truth?"*

*Simple. Only one of these two faiths is based on the power of God while the other has been built on the traditions of men. There really is quite a difference! And the God of the patriarchs, the God of the exodus, the God of the prophets, is the God of the Messiah, and He has made things plain in His Word. If you seek Him with all your heart, then the Scriptures will be "a light to our path and a lamp to our feet" (Psalm 119:105). His Word is sure. He cannot lie.*

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*Once I was speaking to an ultra-orthodox rabbi about the Messiahship of Jesus. He didn't want to hear my opinions (and I can't blame him for that!). He didn't care about what anybody else had to say. He just wanted to go back to the original sources. "Let's go back to the Talmud," he said. "That's where we can find the truth."*

*I think my answer surprised him. "Why should I go back to the Talmud," I said, "when I can go all the way back to the New Testament?" To my surprise, he didn't argue.*

*You see, many Jewish people today are told that Judaism alone is the real religion of the Bible, and that "Christianity" is a much later, predominantly Gentile religion. And yet statements such as these, intimidating as they may sound, are simply not true.*

*Here are the facts: Traditional Judaism as we know it today is not so much the religion of Moses and the prophets as it is the religion of the rabbis who lived and taught over 1500 years later. Instead of being the religion of sacrifice and blood atonement as prescribed by the Torah, it is a religion without sacrifice and blood atonement, in spite of*

*the Torah. It may shock you to know this, but some of Judaism's most sacred books did not even exist before the late Middle Ages. Christopher Columbus had already discovered America before the Code of Jewish Law used by Orthodox Jews today reached its final form. And the traditions keep on growing to this very day.*

*As for the Messianic Jewish faith, the Jewish faith that believes in Yeshua the Messiah, the facts are as follows: The sole authority for faith and practice is the Bible, consisting of the Old and New Covenants. Rather than the New Covenant being a late Gentile book, all its authors, save one, were Jews, Jews who lived in the days before the Second Temple was destroyed in 70 CE. Many other traditions and customs added in the following centuries by the church have had nothing to do with the Bible and therefore have absolutely no connection with the Messianic Jewish faith. Although some people may call them "biblical" or "Christian," they are totally devoid of scriptural authority.*

*The writers of the New Covenant were Jews who recognized that Messiah had come to atone for the sins of his people. They based their beliefs on the Hebrew Scriptures, and on the Hebrew Scriptures alone. And so, when Yeshua died and rose from the dead in accordance with key prophecies in those very Scriptures, they had all the confirmation they could ever want that he indeed was the promised Messiah. If he had not fulfilled those essential prophecies then they would not have followed him. They recognized him because he did the work Messiah had to do.*

*Then why didn't the other Jewish leaders of the day acknowledge that Yeshua was in fact the Messiah? The answer again is simple: They weren't looking for him. They were looking for another. The Messiah of the rabbis only partly resembled the Messiah of the Bible. And yet the thing they longed for most was the very thing they missed, for Messiah had come to save them from their sins.*

*So in 30 CE, as Yeshua "approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, 'If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace — but now it is hidden from your eyes. For you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you.'" (Luke 19:41-42) Forty years later Jerusalem was destroyed, and tens of thousands of her inhabitants were dead.*

*"But wait one second," you say. "Weren't these rabbis the very ones who studied the Torah day and night? And weren't these the men who were responsible for some of the most beautiful prayers and teachings that were ever written? How did it happen, then, that some of the most scrupulous and zealous Jews who ever lived missed the Messiah?" It is to this question that we now must turn.*

*\* \* \**

*Substitution.*

*There is no more important concept in the Hebrew Bible than this if we are to understand God's holy love for us.*

*Substitution.*

*It is the key that unlocks the door to our redemption. And it is the rock that makes men stumble. It alone can fully explain why Yeshua's own people missed him, and it alone can open their eyes again.*

*Substitution. Without this word Yeshua's death is a farce.*

*The rabbis of the Talmud discussed how to be made right with God, especially in the absence of blood sacrifices. They said, "For certain sins, the Day of Atonement alone is sufficient," while for other sins they argued, "There must be repentance as well." For more serious offenses they claimed that only the Day, plus repentance, plus suffering would do the trick, while for the worst sins of all they taught, "The only hope for forgiveness is in the Day of Atonement and death!"*

*And yet they missed the point of the Day, and they missed the point of the blood. They failed to grasp the lesson that was before their eyes.*

*Day after day, the Sadducees offered their sacrifices at the Temple. Thousands upon thousands of animals were slain, and gallons of blood were poured out on the altar. Lambs and goats and rams and calves were offered up to a holy God. Yet the people could not see.*

*The Pharisees studied the Torah day and night. They added new regulations to old laws, and they developed the most detailed system of ritual purity that the world has ever known. They taught that study of the Law was more loved by God than even the offerings themselves. Yet they failed to see the heart of the matter. They failed to grasp the fundamental meaning of it all.*

*For it was not the blood of bulls that God wanted for Himself; it was not the fat of rams that He desired. It was not a people of mere ritual purity that He sought; He did not require a new code that would keep men clean. No. He wanted a substitute, a righteous lamb who would bear His people's sins. He wanted a spotless sacrifice who would purify the people within.*

*Over and over again, a thousand times ten thousand, the offerings were brought before the altar. And over and over again, in numbers too great to count, their innocent blood was spilled. And over and over again, the message of God was crying out: "A substitute must come! A substitute must come!"*

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*The Jewish people of Yeshua's day were all looking for a Saviour. Some hoped for a mighty military Leader, while others looked for a Deliverer from the sky. Some looked for a holy Priest, while others looked for a Teacher of Righteousness. Yet no one was looking for a Crucified Messiah. And no one was looking for the Lamb of God. They had forgotten that the righteous Servant of the Lord was himself to be an 'asham — an offering for sin (Isaiah 53:10). And they had forgotten father Abraham's words that God would provide the lamb for the burnt offering (Genesis 22:8).*

*Yes, there were some rabbis who claimed that every sacrifice was accepted on the basis of Abraham's offering up of Isaac. And they claimed that in the Passover rite, when God "saw the blood" (Exodus 12), He was looking at the sacrifice of Isaac and not at the blood of the lamb.*

*Yet Isaac was not offered, and his blood was never shed. And it was God Himself Who provided the sacrifice that saved the life of Abraham's son.*

*It was Messiah who suffered and died, and it is by his wounds that we are healed (Isaiah 53:5). It was he who was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and it was he who bore our sins (Isaiah 53:7, 12 and Leviticus 16:22).*

*Oh yes, there were Jewish teachers who believed that the suffering of the righteous could bring atonement to the world. Yet when the truly Righteous One suffered and died, they said that it was for naught.*

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*Our rabbis tell us that when Messiah comes, he will establish peace on earth. When the real Saviour comes, he will even bring change to the physical world. But a Saviour who changes the physical world without first changing us is really no saviour at all. And a Messiah who establishes peace on earth without first establishing peace in our hearts is really no Messiah at all.*

*Messiah had to die. Messiah had to take our place. There was no other way. No other substitute was found. No one else could pay the price. Nothing else could heal our wounds, for sin required death.*

*Yeshua paid the price. It was his death that brought us life. He alone was the Substitute for a sinful human race, and he alone can offer us redemption.*

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*The traditional Judaism of our day has its roots in the religion of the Pharisees, a small group of dedicated Jews who banded together over two thousand years ago. These were the men who would not eat with ceremonially unwashed hands, the men so famous for their attention to detail. These were the men who even tithed on insignificant crops, and who studied every jot and tittle of God's Law.*

*Yet many of these men were the ones who missed Yeshua when he came. They did not see the forest for the trees.*

*For it is not ritual observance that makes a man clean within, and it is not attention to an outer system of laws that brings us to God. And no matter how much we try to love Him and please Him, our efforts are polluted with sin. We are members of a fallen race. Only a new heart will do.*

*Yet this is the truth these zealous men missed, since in their passion for obedience to every letter of the Law they did not fully grasp the spirit of the One Who gave it. And as the Pharisees went, so have the Jewish people gone.*

*Traditional Judaism as we know it today was formulated by the heirs of those who rejected Yeshua. It is a religion which stands against faith in him, a system which ignores his life, disregards his death, and denies his resurrection. It downplays the supernatural, life-transforming power of the Spirit of God. That's why traditional Jews throughout the ages have stumbled over the person of Yeshua. But in the beginning it was not so.*

*Most Jewish teachers before Yeshua emphasized the miraculous and believed in the power of God's testimony from heaven. But when the followers of Yeshua had so many healings and prophetic words, many said, "We don't depend on a miracle!"*

*Many of the Jews of Yeshua's day were looking for a Deliverer who would come miraculously, as with the clouds of heaven. Yet when Yeshua said, "I have come down from heaven, and I will come again in the clouds of heaven," many said, "Not so! Our Messiah will be a teacher of the Law, a rabbi like ourselves!"*

*They had the prayers, they had the laws, they had the covenant tradition — how did our forefathers miss it? The answer again is simple. They truly had a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge (Romans 10:2). They did not attain what they sought after, for they stumbled over the grace of God.*

*Messiah had come to make them well, yet they said in reply, "We're not sick!"*

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*But not all of our forefathers missed it. The writer of almost half of the New Covenant Scriptures was himself a Pharisee, born of the tribe of Benjamin. And the Book of Acts records "how many myriads of Jews" there were who believed and were zealous for the Torah (Acts 21:20). In fact, "a great many of the [Jewish] priests were obedient to the faith" (Acts 6:7), and even today in our country and throughout the world, there are multiplied scores of thousands of Jews who believe and confess, "Yeshua is the Messiah! Yeshua is Lord!"*

*This, then, is the biblical, Jewish faith, the Jewish faith that is truly Messianic. And this is the faith that will bring the world back to God, the faith that will cause the nations to believe. And Yeshua is the One who will establish justice in the earth, "and the coastlands shall [and do!] wait for His law" (Isaiah 42:4). At this very hour, in every continent on the globe, countless millions of people who used to be godless now worship the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob — through Jesus (Yeshua!) — the Messiah and Lord. He is the only Way.*

*It is true that the Messiah's mission to Israel appeared to have failed, and the Hebrew Scriptures tell us that he even said to the Lord, "I have laboured to no purpose; I have spent my strength in vain and for nothing." But the Lord responded to him: "It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth" (Isa 49:4, 6). Yes, Israel too shall believe, just as the nations of the world have put their trust in the Messiah, the Son of God.*

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*The Talmud teaches that for the last forty years before the Temple was destroyed, God did not accept the sacrifices of the Day of Atonement (Yoma 39). Year after year, for the life of one whole generation, the Lord was saying, "No."*

*You see, God had provided one Sacrifice for all, a final Atonement for the sins of mankind. God had provided the Lamb. And it was forty years before the Temple was destroyed that Yeshua offered his life. From that day to this, God has been saying "No" to His people. "No more of your sacrifices, no more of your prayers, no more of your works. I have provided the Way."*

*Yet to all who have ears to hear, God has been saying: "Yes, you may come! Yes, you can know Me! Yes, I will cleanse you from all your sin! Believe in the One I have sent. Messiah Yeshua has come."*

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*The spiritual leaders of our people who tell us that we can not know God are wrong. They are only saying, "I don't know Him personally, so how can you? I've studied for years and I'm still learning. How can you be so sure?"*

*Once again, our answer is simple and clear. Messiah Yeshua has made God known. He has revealed the Father to us. And through his blood we have been brought back to God.*

*Tradition will not save us.*

*Opinions will not set us free.*

*Messiah has ransomed our souls from the Pit.*

*Let all his Jewish people come!*

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## **“Those Who Are Perishing” a poem by Bill Fewer**

I was tidying away the scented dog bags  
in the utilities drawer,  
the place where useful things were put and then forgotten,  
when I uncovered the salvation bundle  
I'd collected for you.

A Bible, a few DVDs, a book on prophecy,  
some articles printed out from the internet.  
All to say what reticence and awkwardness  
prevented me from saying.

I had thought about witnessing to you  
in the same oblique way my mother had to me.  
She bought a 12 volume set, the Bible illustrated,  
text by Uncle Arthur, easy for a kid to follow.  
She never told me to read them.  
Never marched me off to Sunday school.  
She stacked the books on the shelf  
with the Readers Digests and my father's war books.  
She left it up to me — and God, I suppose.

When you were a boy I tried the same with you.  
The same 12 books that I had read, fascinated,  
over and over, at least as much as other books.  
But you scribbled on the Word of God,  
and doodled on the images of His Son,  
the Baby in the straw-filled manger,  
the Man walking out on the stormy sea,  
the Saviour hanging bloody on the wooden cross.  
Disfigured with a bored child's cartoons.

The collection in the drawer,  
this guilt prodded intention,  
this little life preserver never tossed  
to catch your drowning soul.  
If you find it in such a lowly place  
will it be the treasure, the key to Heaven,  
that my prayers hoped?  
Or just more of the old man's stuff to throw out,  
dusty, discoloured, and tainted  
with the faintest scent of disinfectant.

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### **A Sermon to watch on YouTube**

John Macarthur “God's Exaltation of the Humble One”  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QpetcqQHTmU>

This sermon follows on from last month's “The Unparalleled Humility of Jesus”.

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### **And a whole series of sermons to watch on YouTube**

Our sister Anne has recommended this series by Andy Woods, “Angelology”, which you can find at:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dOsol6QYdQs&list=PLJ5WZ9aWBhyi6Im9ICuMO-bH8nmetm3El>  
(Or just Google “Angelology Andy Woods YouTube”).

This has special relevance for the Christian as in sermons numbers 26-28 there is much of practical application, especially considering Ephesians 6:10-21, the believer's responsibilities in spiritual warfare and putting on the full armour of God. As Anne writes in her email to me, “It is a command, not an option”.

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## **An Inspiring Documentary to watch on YouTube**

"George Mueller: A Cloud of Witnesses"  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TQ8DKz1mpa8>

Beautifully produced and extensively researched video on the astonishing ministry of George Mueller, a man of prayer.

From the website:

*The inspiring life of George Muller, who founded schools and orphanages while serving as a missionary in Bristol, England, in the early 1800s. His humble testimony regarding God's miraculous provision for thousands of needy children under his care still inspires our faith today.*

*"My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19)*

*George Muller raised each and every penny for this wonderful ministry through unceasing, persistent, thankful prayer and an unwavering faith in God.*

*Almost two hundred years later, the George Muller Charitable Trust in Bristol still operates today and continues to adhere to George's commitment to seeking money only through prayer. Tens of thousands of souls, orphans and other needy children, families and the elderly have been helped.*

*As George reminds us, "Every child of God is not called by the Lord to establish schools and orphan houses and to trust in the Lord for means for them. Yet, there is no reason why you may not experience, far more abundantly than we do now, His willingness to answer the prayers of His children."*

*"Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful" (Colossians 4:2)*

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### **Ezekiel 28:11-19**

**Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying, "Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, "Thus says the Lord God:**

**"You were the seal of perfection,  
Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.  
You were in Eden, the garden of God;  
Every precious stone was your covering:  
The sardius, topaz, and diamond,  
Beryl, onyx, and jasper,  
Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold.  
The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes  
Was prepared for you on the day you were created.**

**"You were the anointed cherub who covers;  
I established you;  
You were on the holy mountain of God;  
You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones.  
You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created,  
Till iniquity was found in you.**

**“By the abundance of your trading  
You became filled with violence within,  
And you sinned;  
Therefore I cast you as a profane thing  
Out of the mountain of God;  
And I destroyed you, O covering cherub,  
From the midst of the fiery stones.**

**“Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty;  
You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendour;  
I cast you to the ground,  
I laid you before kings,  
That they might gaze at you.**

**“You defiled your sanctuaries  
By the multitude of your iniquities,  
By the iniquity of your trading;  
Therefore I brought fire from your midst;  
It devoured you,  
And I turned you to ashes upon the earth  
In the sight of all who saw you.  
All who knew you among the peoples are astonished at you;  
You have become a horror,  
And shall be no more forever.” ’ ’**