

# Glad Tidings

*Of The Kingdom Of God*

## Featured **Articles**

Pride (p. 3)

Values and Loyalty (p. 6)

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ (p. 12)

A monthly magazine written and published by the Christadelphians (brothers and sisters in Christ) and available throughout the world.

Its objectives are to encourage the study of the Bible as God's inspired message to humankind; to call attention to the divine offer of forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ; and to warn people that soon Christ will return to earth as judge and ruler of God's worldwide Kingdom.

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# Pride

HAVE YOU HEARD of the 'seven deadly sins'? In the days when western society was more religious, it was a familiar phrase. It's actually not a list you'll find in the Bible. In fact as far as the Bible is concerned the idea is nonsensical. 'Sin' is disobedience to God. All sins are deadly, even little sins, unless God forgives them—and He is willing to forgive every sin, however big, if we repent. That's why Christ died:

*'All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus' (Romans 3:23–24).*

But the list served as a reminder of some basic vices that people should beware of. Here's the list: pride, greed, wrath, envy, sexual lust, gluttony and laziness.

It doesn't take much thought to recognise that in our modern world the items on this list are viewed with very much less severity. Some of them are positively encouraged—for example greed leads to material consumption which is a driver of economic growth, and psychologists generally view erotic fantasies as harmless and healthy. And as for pride, that is now widely seen as a virtue.



We are urged to take pride in ourselves, in our achievements, in our possessions, and in our identity—whatever that identity might be. Why is it that what used to be regarded as wrong is now regarded as right? It's sometimes the case that a sense of self-pride is seen as an antidote to the destructive human tendency to self-loathing. I suggest it's also a symptom of the spirit of our age—the elevation of ourselves.

With its usual clear insight into human nature, the Bible explains for us what pride is, and why it's not something to be proud of...

## Babel

After the Flood at the time of Noah, the human race began to multiply. *'Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth"' (Genesis 11:4).* Perhaps they were thinking they needed somewhere that would keep them safe in the event of another flood—but there was a deep human urge at work in their reasoning. This was the first skyscraper, which has had its successors in so many building projects since. There's nothing

intrinsically wrong with big buildings, but how many edifices in our cities are expressions of the pride of individuals and corporations? These people wanted to make a name for themselves, and in so doing they wanted to challenge God.

God was not pleased. *'The heavens are the LORD's heavens, but the earth he has given to the children of man'* (Psalm 115:16). He thwarted the project and scattered its builders, and it became known as the Tower of Babel.



The empire of Babylon occupied the same location, some 1500 years later. Its most famous king was Nebuchadnezzar. History records him as an arrogant despot, and that's how he's presented to us in the Bible's book of Daniel. But Daniel chapter 4 is the extraordinary account of how God taught him humility. The chapter concludes, *'Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, for all his works are right and his ways are just; and those who walk in pride he is able to humble'* (v. 37).

This is a crucial point. Human pride is essentially a challenge to God. The Bible is clear about the relationship of God to His creation: *'Be not rash with your mouth, nor let your heart be hasty to utter a word*

*before God, for God is in heaven and you are on earth. Therefore let your words be few'* (Ecclesiastes 5:2). *'The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge'* (Proverbs 1:7).

There are times when we're feeling pleased with ourselves—because of a talent, or an achievement or a compliment. The appropriate response is not pride, but thankfulness: *'Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits'* (Psalm 103:2).

## Antidote to Pride

The kings of Israel were told to write out for themselves a copy of their Bible, and read it daily. It would teach them wisdom, and also humility: *'that he may learn to fear the LORD his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them, that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers'* (Deuteronomy 17:19–20). That is what reading the Bible does—it shows us God, and ourselves, and puts our existence in perspective.

The message of the Bible is clear. We are sinners, we have no merit of our own: *'We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away'* (Isaiah 64:6). We are dependent on the grace of God. And God's grace is more abundant than we can ever need. Remember where we started: *'All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus'* (Romans 3:23–24).

It's natural that human pride should be encouraged in a society which increasingly disregards God. But human pride has no place in the Christian life. *'God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble'* (James 4:6).

# Humility

GOD IS OUR CREATOR, therefore any ability or talent we have is a gift from Him. It is natural for us to feel pleased with ourselves when we have succeeded in performing a task or on achieving a goal, but if our abilities are God-given then our praise should be to Him.

'Pride comes before a fall' is a well-known English proverb, but its origin is to be found in the Bible: '*Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall*' (Proverbs 16:18).

Jesus told a parable in which a Pharisee and a tax collector were both praying in the Temple (Luke 18:9–14). The Pharisees were the leaders of the Jewish religion, and the tax collectors were Jews who collected taxes for the Roman rulers. The Pharisees loathed and despised them.

*'The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get' (vs. 11–12).* He made no mention of his own sins and showed no remorse or humility before God. He only boasted of his virtues. But he readily listed the sins of others. On the other hand, the publican did not boast of any virtue he might have had. He was only conscious of his own sinfulness in the sight of God. *'But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, "God,*

*be merciful to me, a sinner!"'* (v. 13). Jesus' appraisal of the tax collector is in verse 14: *'I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.'*

## The Example of Jesus Christ

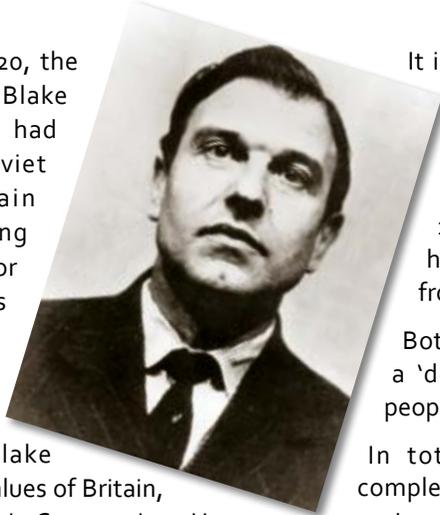


The greatest example of humility of course is to be seen in the character of the Lord Jesus himself. He devoted his whole life to serving others and sought for no worldly possessions. When he was about to give up his life on the cross, he showed his humility in washing the feet of his disciples (John 13:1–17). By doing this he set an example for all his followers. He told his disciples: *'Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet'* (vs. 12–14).

**Marion Buckler**

# Values and Loyalty

AT THE END OF 2020, the former spy George Blake died in Moscow. He had escaped to the Soviet Union from Britain in 1966, after being exposed and jailed for passing British secrets to the Soviets at the height of the Cold War.



From his youth, Blake could not share the values of Britain, but believed fervently in Communism. He believed that his actions were right, and maintained that he was acting on principle. He had said, “To betray, you must first belong. I never belonged.”

## Treachery and Loyalty

There have been many traitors in history. The most famous in the Bible was the disciple Judas Iscariot who betrayed Jesus into the hands of the religious rulers. He seemed to be a true follower of Jesus, and fooled the other disciples—although not Jesus (John 6:64). In fact, even before his betrayal he had been a thief, helping himself to money from the communal purse (John 12:6)

It was Judas who initiated the agreement to betray Jesus to the chief priests for 30 pieces of silver (Matthew 26:14–16).

It is difficult to know why he acted in this way, but it seems he was remorseful afterwards because he hanged himself (Matthew 27:5). Tragically, though, he did not seek forgiveness from God.

Both of these men had lived a ‘double life’, fooling many people.

In total contrast, Jesus was completely honest and free from any trace of deceit.

*Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly (1 Peter 2:21–23).*

It is therefore ironic that the priests accused Jesus himself of being disloyal: ‘*And they began to accuse him, saying, “We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king”*’ (Luke 23:2).

In fact, Jesus had not been disloyal to Caesar at all. He encouraged people to pay their taxes, (Matthew 22:21), and he never perverted anyone. He did, however, claim to be the Messiah and he freely admitted

to Pilate that he was destined to be a king. But not a king to replace Pilate or Caesar:

*Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world" (John 18:36).*



## Christian Loyalty

The followers of Jesus do not see themselves as 'belonging' totally to their country of birth, or indeed to this world and order of things. They are commanded to obey laws (Titus 3:1–2) except in the scenario where this would conflict with the principles laid down by God (Acts 5:28–29). But their values and loyalty are driven by the fact that they consider themselves as 'belonging' to Christ, and so to God (1 Corinthians 3:23). Consequently their 'citizenship' is with him now in principle, in order that they can actually be with him when he returns in person to set up God's kingdom here on earth (Philippians 3:20).

This is not a new way of thinking. Faithful, godly men and women in the Old Testament, thousands of years before

Jesus, considered themselves strangers in this world. They knew about God's promises, tried to serve Him, and aspired to 'heavenly' values and hopes:

*These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth... But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city (Hebrews 11:13–16).*

Many of them were ridiculed and ill-treated for their convictions, but they held firm to their faith.

It is not unusual for people to suffer for their principles, but that does not, in itself, make them right. The principles themselves must be 'right'. God's standards are not our natural, instinctive standards (1 Corinthians 2:14).

Jesus has told us what he wants of us: He said that *'You are my friends if you do what I command you'* (John 15:14).

## What of Us?

There is no middle ground. We are either Jesus' friends or not. Surely we want to be loyal friends of Jesus, not traitors. We do not want to let him down. And we need to be genuine: we cannot fool God or Jesus. Let us therefore find out what they ask of us and try to the best of our ability to do it. If we do this, then Jesus will not be 'ashamed' of us (Mark 8:38), but pleased to give us a place when he returns to establish God's Kingdom.

**Anna Hart**

# Willing Hearts

IN THE BIBLE'S BOOK of Exodus we're told how God brought His people Israel out of slavery in Egypt and led them towards the Promised Land. He made a covenant with them, and gave them a Law, and instructions on how He was to be worshipped. Their worship revolved around a special tent called the Tabernacle, which was at the centre of the nation as it travelled through the wilderness.

We're told in detail about the construction of the Tabernacle. It required a spirit of willingness from the people. The service of God requires willingness.

## Dwelling With God

Israel's leader Moses received instruction from God on Mount Sinai. When he returned to the people his face shone because he'd been in the presence of God, and they were afraid (Exodus 34:29–30). He called a meeting of the people and their leaders, to tell them what God had said to him (35:1–2).

Moses told the people that God had invited them to bring offerings (35:5–9). This was a preparation for building the tabernacle.

Through the rest of the chapter, and indeed the book, the people begin to prepare for the presence of God. They had been afraid when He first spoke to them (20:18–21), but now He was going to come and dwell among them! Moses prepared them for this privilege. The tabernacle was to be built using gifts they would bring.

*Moses said to all the congregation of the people of Israel, "This is the thing that the LORD has commanded. Take from among you a contribution to the LORD. Whoever is of a generous heart, let him bring the LORD's contribution: gold, silver, and bronze; blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen; goats' hair, tanned rams' skins, and goatskins; acacia wood, oil for the light, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense, and onyx stones and stones for setting, for the ephod and for the breastpiece. Let every skilful craftsman among you come and make all that the LORD has commanded..." (Exodus 35:4–10).*

The emphasis is on those whose hearts were stirred (vs. 21 and 26), and those with willing hearts (v. 22). What a beautiful sight their work must have been! So every



man and woman brought their offerings to God (v. 29). They gave cheerfully and with a 'willing heart'. The Hebrew word 'willing' literally means 'whose hearts were lifted up'. The people gave because they understood that God had freed them from slavery to be His people.

## Our Willing Hearts

The Apostle Paul said, '*Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver*' (2 Corinthians 9:7).

Generosity is not about what's in our bank account, it's about what's in our heart. We know that through the overflow of our heart we will act one way or the other. And if our hearts are right, that goodness will manifest itself in a generous spirit, for example in the way we treat others, expecting nothing in return.



We can imagine with all the activity in the camp of Israel, with willingness and cheerful giving, the camp was never happier. This is a common experience: when people are giving and working for a cause they believe in, there is a special atmosphere. And when that cause is the service of God it is particularly special. God loves those who give, and work, with 'willing hearts'.

Our thoughts turn to Jesus Christ, who demonstrated the spirit of willingness in all he did and provides an example for all his followers. He was willing to give his life for our sakes. Think particularly of his ordeal in the Garden of Gethsemane, as he prepared for his arrest and death (Matthew 26:36–46). How he must have agonised in prayer because of what he was to face and endure. Did his thoughts and prayers go to Psalm 40? It is a psalm of faith and perseverance in trouble. The entire Psalm could be speaking of Jesus in Gethsemane, but in particular:

*I waited patiently for the LORD; he inclined to me and heard my cry... Blessed is the man who makes the LORD his trust, who does not turn to the proud, to those who go astray after a lie!... I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart... Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me! O LORD, make haste to help me!... As for me, I am poor and needy, but the LORD takes thought for me. You are my help and my deliverer; do not delay, O my God! (Psalm 40:1, 4, 8, 13, 17).*

God gives us all our needs. He gave His Son for our salvation. He deserves our thanks, and our service with a willing heart.

Jenny Ingham

**Questions? Comments?**  
**We'd love to hear from you!**

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or write to the Editor—address inside front cover

# The Bible C

IT'S GOOD to read the Bible in a structured way. Various Bible reading calendars exist which can help you do this. This one is

known as the 'Bible Companion'. It was devised by a Christadelphian named Robert Roberts in the 1850s, and has been

January	February	March
1 Genesis 1,2	1 Exodus 5,6	1 Leviticus 5,6
2 ... 2,4	2 ... 7,8	2 ... 7
3 ... 5,6	3 ... 9	3 ... 8
4 ... 7,8	4 ... 10	4 ... 9,10
5 ... 9,10	5 ... 11,12	5 ... 11
6 ... 11,12	6 ... 13,14	6 ... 12,13
7 ... 13,14	7 ... 15	7 ... 14
8 ... 15,16	8 ... 16	8 ... 15
9 ... 17,18	9 ... 17,18	9 ... 16
10 ... 19	10 ... 19,20	10 ... 17,18
11 ... 20,21	11 ... 21	11 ... 19
12 ... 22,23	12 ... 22	12 ... 20
13 ... 24	13 ... 23	13 ... 21
14 ... 25,26	14 ... 24,25	14 ... 22
15 ... 27	15 ... 26	15 ... 23
16 ... 28,29	16 ... 27	16 ... 24
17 ... 30	17 ... 28	17 ... 25
18 ... 31	18 ... 29	18 ... 26
19 ... 32	19 ... 30	19 ... 27
20 ... 34,35	20 ... 31,32	20 Numbers 1
21 ... 36	21 ... 33,34	21 ... 2
22 ... 37	22 ... 35	22 ... 3
23 ... 38	23 ... 36	23 ... 4
24 ... 39,40	24 ... 37	24 ... 5
25 ... 41	25 ... 38	25 ... 6
26 ... 42	26 ... 39	26 ... 7
27 ... 44,45	27 Leviticus 1,2	27 ... 8,9
28 ... 46,47	28 ... 3,4	28 ... 10
29 ... 48,50	29 ... 5	29 ... 11
30 Exodus 1,2	30 ... 6	30 ... 12,13
31 ... 3,4	31 ... 7	31 ... 14

July	August	September
1 1 Samuel 13	1 2 Samuel 18	1 2 Kings 6
2 ... 14	2 ... 19	2 ... 7
3 ... 15	3 ... 20	3 ... 8
4 ... 16	4 ... 21	4 ... 9
5 ... 17	5 ... 22	5 ... 10
6 ... 18	6 ... 23	6 ... 11,12
7 ... 19	7 1 Kings 1	7 ... 13
8 ... 20	8 ... 2	8 ... 14
9 ... 21,22	9 ... 3	9 ... 15
10 ... 23	10 ... 4,5	10 ... 16
11 ... 24	11 ... 6	11 ... 17
12 ... 25	12 ... 7	12 ... 18
13 ... 26,27	13 ... 8	13 ... 19
14 ... 28	14 ... 9	14 ... 20
15 ... 29,30	15 ... 10	15 ... 21
16 ... 31	16 ... 11	16 ... 22,23
17 2 Samuel 1	17 ... 12	17 ... 24,25
18 ... 2	18 ... 13	18 1 Chronicles 1
19 ... 3	19 ... 14	19 ... 2
20 ... 4,5	20 ... 15	20 ... 3
21 ... 6	21 ... 16	21 ... 4
22 ... 7	22 ... 17	22 ... 5
23 ... 8,9	23 ... 18	23 ... 6
24 ... 10	24 ... 19	24 ... 7
25 ... 11	25 ... 20	25 ... 8
26 ... 12	26 ... 21	26 ... 9
27 ... 13	27 ... 22	27 ... 10
28 ... 14	28 2 Kings 1,2	28 ... 11
29 ... 15	29 ... 3	29 ... 12
30 ... 16	30 ... 4	30 ... 13,14
31 ... 17	31 ... 5	

January	February	March
1 Psalms 1,2	1 Psalms 58,59	1 Psalms 105
2 ... 3-5	2 ... 60,61	2 ... 106
3 ... 6-8	3 ... 62,63	3 ... 107
4 ... 9,10	4 ... 64,65	4 ... 108,109
5 ... 11-13	5 ... 66,67	5 ... 110-112
6 ... 14-16	6 ... 68	6 ... 113,114
7 ... 17	7 ... 69	7 ... 115,116
8 ... 18	8 ... 70,71	8 ... 117,118
9 ... 19-21	9 ... 72	9 ... 119 v.1-40
10 ... 22	10 ... 73	10 ... v.41-80
11 ... 23-25	11 ... 74	11 ... v.81-118
12 ... 26-28	12 ... 75,76	12 ... v.119-176
13 ... 29,30	13 ... 77	13 ... 120-124
14 ... 31	14 ... 78	14 ... 125-127
15 ... 32	15 ... 79	15 ... 128-130
16 ... 33	16 ... 80	16 ... 131-134
17 ... 34	17 ... 81,82	17 ... 135,136
18 ... 35	18 ... 83,84	18 ... 137-139
19 ... 36	19 ... 85,86	19 ... 140-142
20 ... 37	20 ... 87	20 ... 143,144
21 ... 38	21 ... 88	21 ... 145-147
22 ... 39	22 ... 89	22 ... 148-150
23 ... 40-43	23 ... 90,91	23 ... Proverbs 1
24 ... 44	24 ... 92	24 ... 2
25 ... 45	25 ... 93	25 ... 3
26 ... 46-48	26 ... 94,95	26 ... 4
27 ... 49	27 ... 96-99	27 ... 5
28 ... 50	28 ... 100,101	28 ... 6
29 ... 51,52	29 ... 102	29 ... 7
30 ... 53-55	30 ... 103	30 ... 8,9
31 ... 56,57	31 ... 104	31 ... 10

April	May	June
1 Numbers 15	1 Deut. 18	1 Joshua 18
2 ... 17,18	2 ... 19	2 ... 19
3 ... 19	3 ... 20	3 ... 20,21
4 ... 20,21	4 ... 21	4 ... 22
5 ... 22,23	5 ... 22	5 ... 23,24
6 ... 24	6 ... 23	6 Judges 1
7 ... 25	7 ... 24	7 ... 2
8 ... 26	8 ... 25	8 ... 3
9 ... 27	9 ... 26	9 ... 4
10 ... 28	10 ... 27	10 ... 5
11 ... 29	11 ... 28	11 ... 6
12 ... 30	12 ... 29	12 ... 7
13 ... 31	13 ... 30	13 ... 8
14 ... 32	14 ... 31	14 ... 9
15 ... 33	15 ... 32	15 ... 10,11
16 ... 34	16 ... 33	16 ... 12,13
17 ... 35	17 ... 34	17 ... 14,15
18 ... 36	18 ... 35	18 ... 16
19 ... 37	19 ... 36	19 ... 17,18
20 ... 38	20 ... 37	20 ... 19
21 ... 39	21 ... 38	21 ... 20
22 ... 40	22 ... 39	22 ... 21
23 ... 41	23 ... 40	23 Ruth 1
24 ... 42	24 ... 41	24 ... 2
25 ... 43	25 ... 42	25 ... 3,4
26 ... 44	26 ... 43	26 1 Samuel 1
27 ... 45	27 ... 44	27 ... 2
28 ... 46,47	28 ... 45	28 ... 3
29 ... 48	29 ... 46	29 ... 4
30 ... 49	30 ... 47	30 ... 5
31 ... 50	31 ... 48	31 ... 6

October	November	December
1 1 Chron. 15	1 2 Chron. 30	1 Esther 9,10
2 ... 16	2 ... 31	2 Job 1,2
3 ... 17	3 ... 32	3 ... 3,4
4 ... 18,19	4 ... 33	4 ... 5
5 ... 20,21	5 ... 34	5 ... 6,7
6 ... 22	6 ... 35	6 ... 8
7 ... 23	7 ... 36	7 ... 9
8 ... 24,25	8 Ezra 1,2	8 ... 10
9 ... 26	9 ... 3	9 ... 11
10 ... 27	10 ... 4	10 ... 12
11 ... 28	11 ... 5	11 ... 13
12 ... 29	12 ... 6	12 ... 14
13 2 Chron. 1	13 ... 7	13 ... 15
14 ... 2	14 ... 8	14 ... 16,17
15 ... 3,4	15 ... 9	15 ... 18,19
16 ... 5,6	16 Nehemiah 1,2	16 ... 20
17 ... 7	17 ... 3	17 ... 21
18 ... 8	18 ... 4	18 ... 22
19 ... 9	19 ... 5	19 ... 23,24
20 ... 10,11	20 ... 6	20 ... 25-27
21 ... 12,13	21 ... 7	21 ... 28
22 ... 14,15	22 ... 8	22 ... 29,30
23 ... 16,17	23 ... 9	23 ... 31,32
24 ... 18,19	24 ... 10	24 ... 33
25 ... 20,21	25 ... 11	25 ... 34
26 ... 22	26 ... 12	26 ... 35
27 ... 23	27 ... 13	27 ... 36
28 ... 24	28 ... 14	28 ... 37
29 ... 25	29 ... 15	29 ... 38
30 ... 26,27	30 ... 16	30 ... 39
31 ... 28	31 ... 17	31 ... 40,41

April	May	June
1 Proverbs 11	1 Ecclesiastes 10	1 Isaiah 24
2 ... 12	2 ... 11	2 ... 25
3 ... 13	3 ... 12	3 ... 26,27
4 ... 14	4 Song of Sol.	4 ... 28
5 ... 15	5 ... 13	5 ... 29
6 ... 16	6 ... 14	6 ... 30
7 ... 17	7 ... 15	7 ... 31
8 ... 18	8 ... 16	8 ... 32
9 ... 19	9 ... 17	9 ... 33
10 ... 20	10 ... 18	10 ... 34
11 ... 21	11 ... 19	11 ... 35
12 ... 22	12 ... 20	12 ... 36
13 ... 23	13 ... 21	13 ... 37
14 ... 24	14 ... 22	14 ... 38
15 ... 25	15 ... 23	15 ... 39
16 ... 26	16 ... 24	16 ... 40
17 ... 27	17 ... 25	17 ... 41
18 ... 28	18 ... 26	18 ... 42
19 ... 29	19 ... 27	19 ... 43
20 ... 30	20 ... 28	20 ... 44
21 ... 31	21 ... 29	21 ... 45
22 Ecclesiastes 1	22 ... 30	22 ... 46,47
23 ... 2	23 ... 31	23 ... 48
24 ... 3	24 ... 32	24 ... 49
25 ... 4	25 ... 33	25 ... 50
26 ... 5	26 ... 34	26 ... 51
27 ... 6	27 ... 35	27 ... 52
28 ... 7	28 ... 36	28 ... 53
29 ... 8	29 ... 37	29 ... 54
30 ... 9	30 ... 38	30 ... 55
31 ... 10	31 ... 39	

First portion

Second

# Companion

in widespread use ever since. There are three portions of the Bible for each day of the year, and it enables the reader to read

the entire Bible through in a year—the Old Testament once and the New Testament twice.

July		August		September	
1 Isaiah 56, 57	1 Jeremiah 22	1 Lament. 2	2	1 Lament. 2	2
2 ... 58	2 ... 23	2 ... 3	3	2 ... 3	3
3 ... 59	3 ... 24	3 ... 4	4	3 ... 4	4
4 ... 60	4 ... 25	4 ... 5	5	4 ... 5	5
5 ... 61	5 ... 26	5 Ezekiel 1	1	5 ... 5	5
6 ... 62	6 ... 27	6 ... 2	2	6 ... 6	6
7 ... 63	7 ... 28	7 ... 3	3	7 ... 7	7
8 ... 64	8 ... 29	8 ... 4	4	8 ... 8	8
9 ... 65	9 ... 30	9 ... 5	5	9 ... 9	9
10 ... 66	10 ... 31	10 ... 6	6	10 ... 10	10
11 Jeremiah 11	11 ... 32	11 ... 7	7	11 ... 11	11
12 ... 2	12 ... 12	12 ... 8	8	12 ... 12	12
13 ... 3	13 ... 13	13 ... 9	9	13 ... 13	13
14 ... 4	14 ... 14	14 ... 10	10	14 ... 14	14
15 ... 5	15 ... 15	15 ... 11	11	15 ... 15	15
16 ... 6	16 ... 16	16 ... 12	12	16 ... 16	16
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25 ... 15	25 ... 25	25 ... 21	21	25 ... 25	25
26 ... 16	26 ... 26	26 ... 22	22	26 ... 26	26
27 ... 17	27 ... 27	27 ... 23	23	27 ... 27	27
28 ... 18	28 ... 28	28 ... 24	24	28 ... 28	28
29 ... 19	29 ... 29	29 ... 25	25	29 ... 29	29
30 ... 20	30 ... 30	30 ... 26	26	30 ... 30	30
31 ... 21	31 Lament. 1	31 ... 27	27	31 ... 31	31

January		February		March	
1 Matthew 1, 2	1 Romans 10, 11	1 1 Corinth. 14	1	1 1 Corinth. 14	1
2 ... 3, 4	2 ... 12	2 ... 15	2	2 ... 15	2
3 ... 5	3 ... 13, 14	3 ... 16	3	3 ... 16	3
4 ... 6	4 ... 15, 16	4 2 Corinth. 1, 2	4	4 ... 17	4
5 ... 7	5 Mark 1	5 ... 3, 4	5	5 ... 18	5
6 ... 8	6 ... 2	6 ... 5-7	6	6 ... 19	6
7 ... 9	7 ... 3	7 ... 8, 9	7	7 ... 20	7
8 ... 10	8 ... 4	8 ... 10, 11	8	8 ... 21	8
9 ... 11	9 ... 5	9 ... 12, 13	9	9 ... 22	9
10 ... 12	10 ... 6	10 Luke 1	10	10 ... 23	10
11 ... 13	11 ... 7	11 ... 2	11	11 ... 24	11
12 ... 14	12 ... 8	12 ... 3	12	12 ... 25	12
13 ... 15	13 ... 9	13 ... 4	13	13 ... 26	13
14 ... 16	14 ... 10	14 ... 5	14	14 ... 27	14
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16 ... 18	16 ... 12	16 ... 7	16	16 ... 29	16
17 ... 19	17 ... 13	17 ... 8	17	17 ... 30	17
18 ... 20	18 ... 14	18 ... 9	18	18 ... 31	18
19 ... 21	19 ... 15, 16	19 ... 10	19	19 ... 1	19
20 ... 22	20 1 Corinth. 1, 2	20 ... 11	20	20 ... 2	20
21 ... 23	21 ... 3	21 ... 12	21	21 ... 3	21
22 ... 24	22 ... 4, 5	22 ... 13, 14	22	22 ... 4	22
23 ... 25	23 ... 6	23 ... 15	23	23 ... 5	23
24 ... 26	24 ... 7	24 ... 16	24	24 ... 6	24
25 ... 27	25 ... 8, 9	25 ... 17	25	25 ... 7	25
26 ... 28	26 ... 10	26 ... 18	26	26 ... 8	26
27 Romans 1, 2	27 ... 11	27 ... 19	27	27 ... 9	27
28 ... 3, 4	28 ... 12	28 ... 20	28	28 Romans 1, 2	28
29 ... 5, 6	29 ... 13	29 ... 21	29	29 ... 10	29
30 ... 7, 8	30 ... 14	30 ... 22	30	30 ... 11	30
31 ... 9	31 ... 15	31 ... 23	31	31 ... 12	31

July		August		September	
1 Rev. 21, 22	1 Romans 9	1 1 Corinth. 15	1	1 1 Corinth. 15	1
2 Matthew 1, 2	2 ... 10, 11	2 ... 16	2	2 ... 16	2
3 ... 3, 4	3 ... 12	3 2 Corinth. 1, 2	3	3 ... 17	3
4 ... 5	4 ... 13, 14	4 ... 5	4	4 ... 18	4
5 ... 6	5 ... 15, 16	5 ... 5-7	5	5 ... 19	5
6 ... 7	6 Mark 1	6 ... 8, 9	6	6 ... 20	6
7 ... 8	7 ... 2	7 ... 10, 11	7	7 ... 21	7
8 ... 9	8 ... 3	8 ... 12, 13	8	8 ... 22	8
9 ... 10	9 ... 4	9 Luke 1	9	9 ... 23	9
10 ... 11	10 ... 5	10 ... 2	10	10 ... 24	10
11 ... 12	11 ... 6	11 ... 3	11	11 ... 25	11
12 ... 13	12 ... 7	12 ... 4	12	12 ... 26	12
13 ... 14	13 ... 8	13 ... 5	13	13 ... 27	13
14 ... 15	14 ... 9	14 ... 6	14	14 ... 28	14
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19 ... 20	19 ... 14	19 ... 11	19	19 ... 3	19
20 ... 21	20 ... 15	20 ... 12	20	20 ... 4	20
21 ... 22	21 ... 16	21 ... 13	21	21 ... 5	21
22 ... 23	22 1 Corinth. 1, 2	22 ... 14	22	22 ... 6	22
23 ... 24	23 ... 17	23 ... 15	23	23 ... 7	23
24 ... 25	24 ... 18	24 ... 16	24	24 ... 8	24
25 ... 26	25 ... 19	25 ... 17	25	25 ... 9	25
26 ... 27	26 ... 20	26 ... 18	26	26 ... 10	26
27 ... 28	27 ... 21	27 ... 19	27	27 ... 11	27
28 Romans 1, 2	28 ... 22	28 ... 20	28	28 ... 12	28
29 ... 3, 4	29 ... 23	29 ... 21	29	29 ... 13	29
30 ... 5, 6	30 ... 24	30 ... 22	30	30 ... 14	30
31 ... 7, 8	31 ... 25	31 ... 23	31	31 ... 15	31

October		November		December	
1 Ezekiel 27	1 Daniel 10	1 Jonah 1	1	1 Hebrews 6, 7	1
2 ... 28	2 ... 11	2 ... 2, 3	2	2 ... 8, 9	2
3 ... 29	3 ... 12	3 ... 4	3	3 ... 10	3
4 ... 30	4 Hosea 1	4 Micah 1	4	4 ... 11	4
5 ... 31	5 ... 2	5 ... 2	5	5 ... 12	5
6 ... 32	6 ... 3	6 ... 3, 4	6	6 ... 13	6
7 ... 33	7 ... 4	7 ... 5	7	7 ... 14	7
8 ... 34	8 ... 5	8 ... 6	8	8 ... 15	8
9 ... 35	9 ... 6	9 ... 7	9	9 ... 16	9
10 ... 36	10 ... 7	10 Nahum 1, 2	10	10 ... 17	10
11 ... 37	11 ... 8	11 ... 3	11	11 ... 18	11
12 ... 38	12 ... 9	12 Habakkuk 1	12	12 ... 19	12
13 ... 39	13 ... 10	13 ... 2	13	13 ... 20	13
14 ... 40	14 ... 11	14 ... 1	14	14 ... 21	14
15 ... 41	15 ... 12	15 Zephaniah 1	15	15 ... 22	15
16 ... 42	16 ... 13	16 ... 2	16	16 ... 23	16
17 ... 43	17 ... 14	17 ... 1	17	17 ... 24	17
18 ... 44	18 Joel 1	18 Haggai 1, 2	18	18 ... 25	18
19 ... 45	19 ... 2	19 Zechariah 1	19	19 ... 26	19
20 ... 46	20 ... 3	20 ... 2, 3	20	20 ... 27	20
21 ... 47	21 Amos 1	21 ... 4, 5	21	21 ... 28	21
22 ... 48	22 ... 2	22 ... 6, 7	22	22 ... 29	22
23 Daniel 1	23 ... 3	23 ... 8	23	23 ... 30	23
24 ... 2	24 ... 4	24 ... 9	24	24 ... 1	24
25 ... 3	25 ... 5	25 ... 10	25	25 ... 2	25
26 ... 4	26 ... 6	26 ... 11	26	26 ... 3	26
27 ... 5	27 ... 7	27 ... 12	27	27 ... 4	27
28 ... 6	28 ... 8	28 ... 13, 14	28	28 ... 5	28
29 ... 7	29 Malachi 1	29 ... 15	29	29 ... 6	29
30 ... 8	30 Obadiah 1	30 ... 16	30	30 ... 7	30
31 ... 9	31 ... 17	31 ... 17	31	31 ... 8	31

April		May		June	
1 Luke 24	1 Acts 9	1 Hebrews 6, 7	1	1 Hebrews 6, 7	1
2 Galatians 1, 2	2 ... 10	2 ... 8, 9	2	2 ... 10	2
3 ... 3, 4	3 ... 11, 12	3 ... 10	3	3 ... 11	3
4 ... 5	4 ... 13	4 ... 11	4	4 ... 12	4
5 Ephesians 1, 2	5 ... 14, 15	5 ... 12	5	5 ... 13	5
6 ... 3, 4	6 ... 16, 17	6 ... 13	6	6 ... 14	6
7 ... 5, 6	7 ... 18, 19	7 James 1	7	7 ... 15	7
8 Philippians 1, 2	8 ... 20	8 ... 2	8	8 ... 16	8
9 ... 3, 4	9 ... 21, 22	9 ... 3, 4	9	9 ... 17	9
10 John 1	10 ... 23, 24	10 ... 5	10	10 ... 18	10
11 ... 2, 3	11 ... 25, 26	11 1 Peter 1	11	11 ... 19	11
12 ... 4	12 ... 27	12 ... 2	12	12 ... 20	12
13 ... 5	13 ... 28	13 ... 3, 5	13	13 ... 21	13
14 ... 6	14 Colossians 1, 2	14 2 Peter 1, 2	14	14 ... 22	14
15 ... 7	15 ... 3	15 ... 3	15	15 ... 23	15
16 ... 8	16 ... 4	16 1 John 1, 2	16	16 ... 24	16
17 ... 9, 10	17 1 Thess. 1, 2	17 ... 3, 4	17	17 ... 25	17
18 ... 11	18 ... 3, 4	18 2 & 3 John 1	18	18 ... 26	18
19 ... 12	19 ... 5	19 ... 2	19	19 ... 27	19
20 ... 13, 14	20 2 Thess. 1, 2	20 Jude	20	20 ... 28	20
21 ... 15, 16	21 ... 3	21 Revelation 1, 2	21	21 ... 29	21
22 ... 17, 18	22 1 Timothy 1, 3	22 ... 3, 4	22	22 ... 30	22
23 ... 19	23 ... 4, 5	23 ... 5, 6	23	23 ... 1	23
24 ... 20, 21	24 ... 6	24 ... 7, 9	24	24 ... 2	24
25 Acts 1	25 2 Timothy 1	25 ... 10, 11	25	25 ... 3	25
26 ... 2	26 ... 3	26 ... 12, 13	26	26 ... 4	26
27 ... 3, 4	27 Titus 1-3	27 ... 14	27	27 ... 5	27
28 ... 5, 6	28 Titus 1-3	28 ... 15, 16	28	28 ... 6	28
29 ... 7	29 Philemon 29	29 ... 17, 18	29	29 ... 7	29
30 ... 8	30 Hebrews 1, 2	30 ... 19, 20	30	30 ... 8	30
31 ... 9	31 ... 3-5	31 ... 21	31	31 ... 9	31

October		November		December	
1 Luke 24	1 Acts 10	1 Hebrews 6, 7	1	1 Hebrews 6, 7	1
2 Galatians 1, 2	2 ... 11, 12	2 ... 8, 9	2	2 ... 10	2
3 ... 3, 4	3 ... 13	3 ... 10	3	3 ... 11	3
4 ... 5	4 ... 14, 15	4 ... 11	4	4 ... 12	4
5 Ephesians 1, 2	5 ... 16, 17	5 ... 12	5	5 ... 13	5
6 ... 3, 4	6 ... 18, 19	6 ... 13	6	6 ... 14	6
7 ... 5, 6	7 ... 20	7 James 1	7	7 ... 15	7
8 Philippians 1, 2	8 ... 21, 22	8 ... 2	8	8 ... 16	8
9 ... 3, 4	9 ... 23, 24	9 ... 3, 4	9	9 ... 17	9
10 John 1	10 ... 25, 26	10 ... 5	10	10 ... 18	10
11 ... 2, 3	11 ... 27	11 1 Peter 1	11	11 ... 19	11
12 ... 4	12 ... 28	12 ... 2	12	12 ... 20	12
13 ... 5	13 Colossians 1	13 ... 3, 5	13	13 ... 21	13
14 ... 6	14 ... 4	14 2 Peter 1, 2	14	14 ... 22	14
15 ... 7	15 ... 5	15 ... 3	15	15 ... 23	15
16 ... 8	16 1 Thess. 1, 2	16 ... 4	16	16 ... 24	16
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18 ... 11	18 ... 4	18 2 & 3 John 1	18	18 ... 26	18
19 ... 12	19 2 Thess. 1, 2	19 ... 2	19	19 ... 27	19
20 ... 13, 14	20 ... 3	20 Jude	20	20 ... 28	20
21 ... 15, 16	21 1 Timothy 1, 3	21 Revelation 1, 2	21	21 ... 29	21
22 ... 17, 18	22 ... 4, 5	22 ... 3, 4	22	22 ... 30	22
23 ... 19	23 ... 6	23 ... 5, 6	23	23 ... 1	23
24 ... 20, 21	24 ... 7	24 ... 7, 9	24	24 ... 2	24
25 Acts 1	25 2 Timothy 1	25 ... 10, 11	25	25 ... 3	25
26 ... 2	26 ... 3	26 ... 12, 13	26	26 ... 4	26
27 ... 3, 4	27 Titus 1-3	27 ... 14	27	27 ... 5	27
28 ... 5, 6	28 Titus 1-3	28 ... 15, 16	28	28 ... 6	28
29 ... 7	29 Philemon 29	29 ... 17, 18	29	29 ... 7	29
30 ... 8	30 Hebrews 1, 2	30 ... 19, 20	30	30 ... 8	30
31 ... 9	31 ... 3-5	31 ... 21	31	31 ... 9	31

# Four Resurrections

## Jesus Christ

*A look at the four accounts in the Gospels of people who were raised from the dead.*

THIS IS THE LAST of the four resurrections we've looked at in the Gospels—and of course it is the most important of all. The other three people all died again, but Jesus now lives for ever. He will never die again.

There's an interesting sequence in the three other resurrection accounts that are presented in detail in the Gospels:

- a. **JAIRUS' DAUGHTER** had only just died, and was still lying in her bed (Mark 5:22–43)
- b. **THE WIDOW OF NAIN'S SON** was being carried to his funeral, probably having died the day before (Luke 7:11–17)
- c. **LAZARUS** had been buried for four days (John 11:1–53).

So we can readily see that God's inspiration of these Gospel writers enables us to learn that when Jesus was on earth 2000 years ago he raised dead people to life whether they had been dead for an hour or two, a day or two, or longer. Nothing was impossible. Therefore, if the Lord was able to do this while he was a mortal man, when he returns as the all-powerful king of the world he will raise dead people such

as Noah, Abraham, David, Mary, Paul and many others. What a wonderful privilege it will be to be given a place in that Kingdom! (Matthew 25:23).

There is also an account of God raising many people back to life when Jesus died and rose again (Matthew 27:51–53). This passage does not say anything specific about who were raised, except that they were godly people, or 'saints'. God sent an earthquake to show how angry He was at what they were doing to His Son, and this opened some graves. The resurrected people then appeared in Jerusalem after Jesus had risen from the dead—a symbolic way of telling us that Christ's death and resurrection applies to those who had already died, as well as to us who live after him.

## Jesus' Life and Death

Jesus grew up in Nazareth, a small town in the north of Israel, near to the Sea of Galilee. Only his mother Mary and her husband Joseph and a few others knew that he was the Son of God. He followed Joseph's trade in the carpenter's shop until he was 30 years old. I imagine he would take every opportunity to learn from the Scriptures—what we know as the Old Testament. When he was around 30 he went to the River Jordan and was baptized



by John the Baptist, who pointed him out as, *'the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!'* (John 1:29).

Jesus then started to preach and teach people about the Kingdom of God. He proved he was the Son of God by doing many miracles of healing, and raised three people from the dead. He also told his disciples at least three times that he was to be killed, but would rise again on the third day (Matthew 16:21, 17:23 and 20:19). He had to prepare himself for this dreadful ordeal, as well as warn his closest followers what was going to happen to him.

After only three and a half years of preaching and healing he was cruelly arrested by the Jewish leaders, who took him to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, and insisted that he be executed. Pilate finally gave in to their demands, and Jesus was nailed to a cross to die a terrible death. The Son of God hung there for six hours, and died in agony. Two of his followers gained permission to lay his body to rest, and so he was laid in a garden tomb which had never been used before.

God performed yet another miracle and prevented Jesus' body from starting to decompose (this was foretold in Psalm 16:10). Early on the third day an earthquake opened the tomb, and it was seen that Jesus' body was not there. He had risen from the dead—never to die again. He remained on the earth for 40 days after his resurrection, associating with and teaching his disciples, then he was taken into heaven, where he sits at God's

right hand (Psalm 110:1). The account of the Lord's death and resurrection is in the last chapters of the four Gospels.

## What This Means to Us

During those extremely sad three days while Jesus was dead, he was of course unable to raise himself back to life. He was asleep. Dead people cannot think, or speak, or do anything (Ecclesiastes 9:5). So the Lord God in heaven brought His Son back to life again.

This was the only occasion in the whole history of the world where someone was brought back from the dead, never to die again. In all the other accounts of resurrection, in both the Old and the New Testaments, the people who were raised to life all died again (of old age or illness). But Jesus was unique.

By his death and resurrection we see *'our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel'* (2 Timothy 1:10). What a wonderful expression this is! To abolish death! It means that death is no longer the master. Yes we might die or be killed—but if we have been baptized and belong to Christ, then our death will be simply a sleep.

When Jesus comes back he will open the graves and raise the dead, giving 'life and immortality' to those who have pleased him.

**David Simpson**

*Concluded.*

# Temptation

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT to note at the outset that Jesus Christ himself experienced temptation just as we all do:

*Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin (Hebrews 4:14–15).*

After Jesus was baptized, before he started his public ministry, he went out into the wilderness and there he experienced severe temptations (Matthew 4:1–11). He was starving and suffering terribly. All the time he had the power of the Holy Spirit and at a word could have miraculously provided food for himself. But he resolutely rejected the temptation to abuse God's power to meet his own needs; his hunger continued.

Another idea was presented to him:

suppose he went to Jerusalem and climbed on to the pinnacle of the temple and then threw himself down! God would not let him come to harm: *'For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone'* (Psalm 91:11–12). How the crowds would come running to see this 'superman'—it is a common human desire to have the adulation of other people.

But again, this would have been presumptuous and Jesus knew that it would have been wrong. He rejected the idea.

He was then moved to consider that he had been born to be king: to rule over the Kingdom of God. Was it necessary to suffer and die first? Could he not immediately become king? But he knew that his Father's will required that he overcome temptation and live a faultless life. He overcame the temptation and allowed his Father's will to prevail.

## Experiences of Temptation

Throughout his ministry Jesus continued to suffer temptations. On one occasion the Pharisees sneered, *'We were not born of sexual immorality'* (John 8:41)—probably a dig at the circumstances of his birth. We know it was miraculous, but there were clearly those who wanted to believe otherwise. What bitter response might such an insult

have provoked? But instead he firmly reproached his enemies, emphasising that God was his Father.

Finally on the evening before his death he took his disciples to the Garden of Gethsemane. There we see the struggle between the 'flesh' (the desire to avoid the horror of crucifixion) and the 'spirit' (the desire to fulfil his Father's will) was so strong that his sweat appeared like drops of blood (Luke 22:44). Three times he prayed to his Father and each time he added the words, *'Not my will but yours be done'*.



Always, Jesus overcame temptation. His life was utterly sinless.

The Apostle Paul knew all about temptation and he lamented that so often he was overcome by it. *'For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing... Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?'* (Romans 7:19–24). If we're honest, we can all identify with Paul's experience.

King David was a faithful man, beloved by God. But it does seem that David had a weakness—like many men, he was led

astray by his lust for women. 2 Samuel 11 recounts the story of his catastrophic sin. He was at home, idle (v. 1). He let his eyes wander where they should not (v. 2). He was captivated, and followed his desire. He seduced another man's wife (v. 4). He resorted to treachery and murder in his attempt to cover it up.

He repented, and God forgave him for his sin (12:13). Nevertheless, he and his family suffered its consequences. The child that was conceived that night died; many people lost their respect for David, and his court and his family was riven by treachery and violence for most of the rest of his life. This is a hugely salutary lesson about the peril of exposing ourselves to temptation.

## The Source of Temptation

Where does temptation come from? Jesus himself answers that question for us:

*What comes out of a person is what defiles him. For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person* (Mark 7:20–23).

In the early chapters of Genesis we find the same message: *'The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually'* (Genesis 6:5).

The prophet Jeremiah proclaimed, *'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?'* (Jeremiah 17:9).

Throughout the Bible there is a consistent message—temptations arise in the human heart.

But you might ask, 'Doesn't the Bible speak of the devil? Isn't it the devil who tempts us to do wrong? Wasn't it the devil who tempted Jesus in the wilderness?' Yes, of course. In the account of the temptations of Jesus in the wilderness which we've just considered (Matthew 4:1–11), we find the words 'devil' (v. 1), 'tempter' (v. 3) and 'Satan' (v.10), and the account is presented as a dialogue. Why?

The writer is emphasising that there was a struggle taking place in the mind of Jesus: the desire for self-gratification versus the desire to fulfil his Father's will; wrong versus right; evil versus good; the flesh versus the spirit (Romans 8:5).

Evidently this is a good way to view the struggle that goes on when we're tempted to do wrong. The devil is the Bible's way of describing our sinful nature. It's helpful to view it as a struggle with an adversary who is trying to bring us down.

Jesus overcame the devil. You can see for yourself how he did it—his mind was full of God's word, and each time a temptation came he defeated it with a quote from the Bible. So he set the example for us.

The devil struggled hard to get the mastery of Jesus throughout his life, but it never succeeded. He resisted it at every turn. Finally he defeated it, when he died. His was an unblemished life. And when he rose from the dead, the devil no longer troubled him: it had been overcome. The Bible tells us that Jesus destroyed the devil by his death:

*Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil (Hebrews 2:14).*

## The Process of Temptation

The process is described for us by the Apostle James:

*Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God", for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death (James 1:12–15).*

Notice the steps in a person's temptation. First he is 'lured and enticed by his own desire'. Desire for something is not wrong in itself. It is wrong when desire entices us to think, say or do what is wrong. When that happens, desire 'gives birth to sin'.



That was where Jesus succeeded, and we so often fail. His natural desire was to make

the stones into bread because he was very hungry (Matthew 4:3–4); but he refused to be enticed, so the desire did not conceive.

If desire gives birth to sin, the outcome is death. *'The wages of sin is death'* (Romans 6:23). We are all sinners, and we will all die. Jesus had no sin—but, as Hebrews says, he shared in our 'flesh and blood'. He struggled with his devil, just like us. Unlike us, he destroyed his devil—when he laid down his perfect and unblemished life.

He had not sinned, so divine justice demanded that he be raised from the dead. Henceforth he is for ever free from the devil.



But what of us? Such is God's mercy and love toward us that He offers to us the opportunity to share in His Son's victory.

*For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ* (Galatians 3:27).

*Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!* (Romans 7:24–25).

**David Budden**

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. 

Romans 5:6–11

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LP

***Is it true that you can't understand the Bible properly and you can't be saved unless you have the Holy Spirit?***

Ed

THIS IS WHAT the Bible says:

*The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned (1 Corinthians 2:14).*

*Those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit (Romans 8:5).*

So yes, we can't properly understand the Bible and we can't be saved unless we have the spirit of God. The question is, what is meant by having the spirit of God?

The Bible often uses the word 'spirit' to describe our mindset or mood—in a similar way to the modern use of the word. We can have high spirits and low spirits. For example, *'A glad heart makes a cheerful face, but by sorrow of heart the spirit is crushed' (Proverbs 15:13)*. Other examples are Psalm 51:10 and Matthew 5:3. To *'live according to the Spirit'* is to be spiritually minded.

Sometimes the Bible uses the term 'the Spirit of God' when it's describing the power by which we live and by which God created the world (Genesis 1:2). (When it uses the expression 'the Holy Spirit' it's referring to God's power being used

for a particular purpose, for example Acts 1:5–8, Acts 10:38, 2 Peter 1:21.)

When the Bible speaks of spirit, it generally uses two words: Hebrew 'ruach' (in the Old Testament) and Greek 'pneuma' (in the New Testament). Both words have a similar meaning—*breath, wind*. God doesn't need to breathe like us, but His spirit is spoken of as His breath: *'By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host' (Psalm 33:6)*. We are living creatures because God breathes life into us (Genesis 2:7, Job 33:4, Psalm 104:30).

God breathed into Adam in order to give him life (Genesis 2:7). He figuratively breathes into us when we're baptised and born again: *'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God' (John 3:5)*. Nothing evidently supernatural occurs when we're baptised—what it is, we start a new life with a 'spiritual mindset'. This new life is guided and governed by the spirit of God, and by God's grace it will be transformed into immortality at the return of Christ:

*If Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you (Romans 8:10–11).*

Across

Down

2 We should not put God to this (Matthew 4:7)

3 Jesus did not do this (Hebrews 4:15)

4 In the midst of (Exodus 17:7)

6 David was tempted when he was walking on this (2 Samuel 11:2)

7 In Nathan's parable, the rich man took the lamb of this man (2 Samuel 12:4)

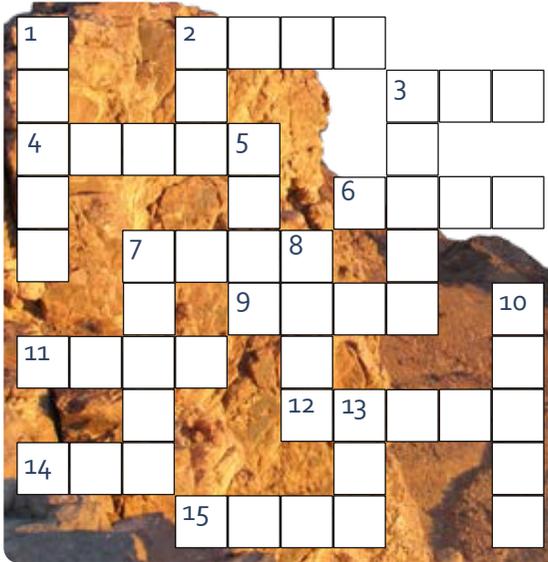
9 On David's instruction, this happened to Uriah (2 Samuel 11:17)

11 God cannot be tempted with this (James 1:13)

12 The rich man had many of these (2 Samuel 12:2)

14 God told Adam that this would happen to him if he succumbed to temptation (Genesis 2:17)

15 She was complicit in her husband's sin (Acts 5:2)



1 Desire can lead to sin, which then leads to this (James 1:15)

2 The Israelites tried to tempt God this number of times (Numbers 14:22)

3 Nathan told David that this would never depart from his house (2 Samuel 12:10)

5 The serpent told Eve that if she ate the forbidden fruit, she would know this and evil (Genesis 3:5)

7 One of the sins which comes from our heart (Mark 7:22)

8 David was likened to this man in Nathan's parable (2 Samuel 12:4)

10 He was led into the wilderness to be tempted (Matthew 4:1)

13 The lamb owned by the poor man in Nathan's parable (2 Samuel 12:3)

(These clues use the English Standard Version of the Bible. If you're using another version some words may not be quite the same.)

Colin Jannaway

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