



# The Burning Bush

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# THE BURNING BUSH

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## Editorial

We thank the Lord for a warm reception of *The Burning Bush* in its new format. We pray that it will have lasting value to those who have subscribed to it. *The Burning Bush* has a circulation of 4000. We thank the Lord for the positive response to *The Burning Bush* from the many Bible Schools that have received it. Thus far, not only local Bible Colleges and Seminaries have written to express interest, but also those from Australia, Hong Kong, Kenya, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Vietnam, and USA. We hope that these Schools will also send their newsletters or journals to the FEBC library.

In this issue, we have published papers which would be of particular interest to the theological education fraternity. Rev Dr Timothy Tow, principal of FEBC, offers five reasons why the Church needs the Bible College in “Why Bible College?” Dr John Whitcomb, who had taught a number of our faculty members when at Grace Seminary, addresses the question on “What is Clear Biblical Teaching?” Does the Bible contain many meanings or just one? How do we know what the Bible is actually saying? Read Dr Whitcomb’s essay for the answers. We want to thank Elder Daniel Chew of Calvary B-P Church (Canada), a special student of FEBC, for bringing to our attention an excellent article written by Dr D R Breed on “The Limitations of Scholarship.” Dr Breed decries the arrogance displayed by modern scholarship which is essentially destructive.

There are several contributions from our students. “Leading By Example” was a sermon preached by Rev Thawng Nei Bil from Myanmar in the homiletics class. He has an interesting story of the crab family. I am sure you will also enjoy Mr Lim Jyh Jang’s testimony of his call into full-time ministry, and Miss Nancie Koo’s report on the recent pilgrimage to the Holy Land with photos.

FEBC wishes to announce the off-campus Certificate of Religious Knowledge (CertRK) programme for special students. If you wish to study at FEBC but have been prevented from coming for one reason or other, you may want to take advantage of this programme. Interested parties are encouraged to write in to request for application.

## **WHY BIBLE COLLEGE?**

Timothy Tow

### **Text: 2 Timothy 2:1-16**

The Far Eastern Bible College was founded 1962 and I was called to head the school from the beginning. We have now an enrolment fluctuating between 60 and 70 students from 12 to 15 countries, while over 250 have graduated during the years. We provide a standard three-year course leading to the MDiv, a two-year MRE, a four-year BTh, BRE, and a three-year Diploma course. We also give a one-and-a-half year course awarding a Certificate of Religious Knowledge. The aim of Far Eastern Bible College is to train a new generation of pastors, teachers, missionaries for the Church of Jesus Christ in the Far East, but God has widened our horizon to take in students from Africa and Australia, and a few from India and Pakistan.

### **I. By Divine Mandate for the Transmission of the Faith**

Why Bible College? It is by Divine mandate for the transmission of the faith from generation to generation. Rev Paul Contento my old friend of China Inland Mission once said, "Without the Bible College the Church would die." Insofar as Far Eastern Bible College is concerned, the mandate from Paul to Timothy, "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim 2:2), had come to us soon after I graduated from Faith Seminary, USA, and was called to start an English Service for my Chinese-speaking home church. Though my mother had dedicated me to be a pastor, the love of theology in me was so great that when Dr Buswell, moderator of the ordination council, asked what my vocation was, I replied I was called equally to pastor and to teach. This

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dual holy desire was from the Lord, who has confirmed it by sustaining me by His grace through 45 years as pastor of Life Bible-Presbyterian Church and 33 years as principal of Far Eastern Bible College.

What I am trying to say from experience in the light of Holy Scripture is that for anyone to start a Bible College, he must have not only the general mandate from Paul but a personal one as received by Timothy. For one to enter this sacred ministry without a personal call from the Lord, without that divine encounter as in Isaiah's call (Isa 6) will end in failure. I know a Chinese Pentecostal pastor who founded a Bible College in Malaysia with heavy American dollar support from blatant advertising of his work. After eight years, however, the College he founded folded up. To shepherd a flock is hard work. To run a Bible College is hardest work.

### **II. For the Training of Hardy Warriors of the Cross**

The Bible College is like a military school; so Paul says to Timothy, "therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Tim 2:3-4). In the words of Winston Churchill, the work and service of a minister is one of "blood, sweat and tears." You who have found enrolment here should not regard this as a refuge from some frustrating secular job. An Indian student told me how he lost one job after another through his quick temper. So he turned to Bible training, as advised by his mother, that he might have a better chance working in a Church. He joined Far Eastern Bible College for two months. One day he had an argument in the College. Immediately after this he left with not even the flicker of a shadow. Neither is there place in this College like a monastery for the culture of lazy monks. This is a spiritual Sandhurst, training warriors of the Cross.

There is a personal mandate from the Lord to teach. There must be a personal mandate from the Lord to study, and with all the extra-mural assignments such as kitchen duties and street-preaching. If the Lord has not called you to Bible College, it is far better to pack up, go earn a decent living, and be an active member in your Church. This was what I heard from my teacher Dr Chia Yu Ming when I joined his school in

Nanking, China, 1946. Those who were not called to study, yea, to suffer for the Lord, eventually dropped out. “Then said Jesus to His disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Mat 16:24-26).

### **III. For the Perpetuation of a Faithful Faculty**

A Bible College must produce its own faculty. You who are students today should one day become teachers, for we, even the Apostle Paul, cannot go on forever. But how can the good tradition persevere on, from one generation to another? As the Apostle says, “The same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also” (2 Tim 2:2).

While the attainment of knowledge is the principal thing in a College curriculum, faith and faithfulness are even more important! Take note of the kind of students that are to be selected for further training. Not so much the clever and intelligent, but rather the faithful and devoted. So our emphasis of training is not mere scribal knowledge, but that wisdom from above and a heart true to the Lord and loyal to the Master. This is a very difficult problem facing every Fundamental Bible College. There’s a Chinese saying, “It takes ten years to plant a tree, yea, a hundred years to nurture a man.”

From my experience, we have brilliant students who go abroad for further training. Some of these returned with swelled heads but no deepening of heart. Eager rather to display their scholarship, they mouth those shibboleths they had learnt without further examination. Some teach rather out of envy and strife, some out of contention, not sincerely; while others show off their own stuff saying, our exegesis is the only sound one. Students see their square hats with self-decorated golden tassel, but not Jesus Christ their Lord. Such young upstarts have not learned Calvin’s three rules of theological study, viz. Humility, Humility, Humility. These conduct themselves not like the Apostle who says to the Corinthians, “For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake” (2 Cor 4:5).

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Here is another rule of humility (in preaching) which your professors miss. They seem to teach, but they have never learned. Let us borrow an analogy from Hebrew grammar. Now, the Hebrew verb has seven stems. There is the normal stem, the intensive stem, the causative stem, etc. The normal stem for **Learn** is **Learn**. The intensive stem for **Learn** is **Teach**. To the Hebrew mind a teacher must learn intensively. More learning of Greek and Hebrew and giving its sense only according to grammatical rules, like the dry interpretation of scribes, but without the unction of the Spirit, can be lethal. John says, "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things . . . . But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him" (2 Jn 2:20,27).

In Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar there is an account of two professors arguing over a *shewa*, a Hebrew pointing that looks like a colon. Now, this colon sign can be a silent *shewa* or a vocal *shewa*. According to ancient grammatical rule, it is silent. According to modern pronunciation, it is vocal. Which professor is right? For further enlightenment let me tell you the story of two Arabs travelling in the desert. One is the camel boy, the other the passenger. When the two come to a halt in the afternoon in an open country, each wants the shadow of the camel for a shade. The camel boy claims the shadow because he says the camel belongs to him. The passenger claims the shadow because he pays for the camel's ride. As they fight over the camel's shadow the animal bolts into the desert!

Like those in Jesus' day who tithed mint and rue but passed over the judgment and the love of God, theological education under such teaching can lead only to pedantic arguments and pride. But is not a Bible College to train men to save souls, to preach the Gospel that lives will be changed and moulded to the image of Christ? Pray that we have faithful men to be trained so as to train others, not high-minded and high-sounding scholars. While pointing out the pitfalls of scholasticism, we at Far Eastern Bible College have a vigorous Greek and Hebrew programme that includes modern Hebrew to make the sacred language live! It is only logical that a Bible College that defends the Bible to be the infallible and inerrant Word

of God would emphasise Greek and Hebrew the languages God used to reveal Himself.

#### **IV. For Guardianship of the Church against Treachery from Within**

Another problem about Bible Colleges today is the constantly changing tide of human philosophy masquerading as theology. Our peril is not so much from outside, as treachery from within. Warning the Ephesian elders of such a situation the Apostle Paul said, “Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.” Commenting on this verse Dr Tow Siang Hwa my brother, who was president of Far Eastern Bible College, says, “I give you the example of Fuller Seminary. . . .

“In 1947 it was started as a fundamental institution by Charles Fuller, a great preacher of the Word of God. Within ten years, this institution began to erode by men of unsound faith, amongst whom was his own son. They brought in the craving of intellectual attainment and academic excellence. What does that mean? They wanted to have an institution as good as the best in the secular world. ‘Therefore we must have scholarship, men of degrees, research, publication, and bring it up to the highest level.’ This was Satan’s trap, and they fell in.

“Recall what Paul said, ‘I came not to you with excellency of speech or of wisdom.’ They forsook this and they said, ‘We will come to you with excellency of speech and wisdom.’ When you pursue that, the devil comes in with enticing words of men’s wisdom and things begin to erode. Within a decade the foundations of Fuller were shaking. In fifteen years it crumbled altogether. Daniel Fuller was instrumental in destroying the institution started by his father. Today, Fuller is the centre of ecumenical and Catholic-evangelical cooperation . . . .” Fuller, let me reiterate, has fallen from within. Fuller is betrayed by his own son.

Oftentimes we hear of carnal sin creeping into the Church, and a College principal, dean or lecturer is mown down by the temptation of sex or money. (Let us not look at Bakker or Swaggart, but those within our own ranks.) So Paul warns not only of “Profane and vain babblings” and of Hymenaeus and Philetus who deny such fundamental doctrine as the Resurrection, but also against “youthful lusts” (2 Tim 2:16-26) and



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against “the love of money which is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows” (1 Tim 6:10). “For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple” (Rom 16:18). The religion of those who serve their own belly, says Calvin, is their kitchen!

### **V. Integrity of Principal and Faculty of Paramount Importance to Succession**

A Bible College must devote itself to the inculcation of holy living and good character. “But in a great house there are only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man, therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use and prepared unto every good work” (2 Tim 2:20-21). This cannot be attained but by the example of the principal first of all, and after him, the dean and the lecturers. Paul exhorts Timothy further, “A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous. One that ruleth his own house, having his children in gravity. . . . Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil” (1 Tim 3:2-6).

Reputation is also of paramount importance. There is a Chinese saying, “A man’s reputation is his second life.” Indeed, a ruler of men must himself be blameless. King David says, “He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God” (2 Sam 23:3). Can you say also with Sir Gallahad, “My strength is as the strength of ten, because my heart is pure”?

“If we walk in the light as He is in the light,” (1 Jn 1:7) and “In Him is no darkness at all,” (1 Jn 1:5) all the infernal powers of hell cannot prevail against us. But we cannot walk in our own strength. We must put on the whole armour of God and advance with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints (Eph 6:13,18). Do you, faculty or student, miss the daily Chapel which is prescribed for the cultivation of your own soul? Do you steal from your hour of meeting with God to learn Greek or

do other assignments? Some try to do this during the Chapel hour. One fellow-student of mine in Seminary even wrote letters under the preacher's nose. "Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor 10:12).

*Christian seek not yet repose,  
Hear thy guardian angel say,  
'Thou art in the midst of foes;  
Watch and pray.'*

*Gird thy heavenly armour on;  
Wear it ever, night and day;  
Ambushed lies the evil one;  
Watch and pray.*

### **Conclusion**

There is a crisis in every Bible College and that is the problem of succession. This we had earlier discussed in Section III. Paul found his Timothy and through Timothy the Word was transmitted to the following generations. According to tradition, Timothy was the first bishop of Ephesus and remained true to his Lord until his martyrdom under the reign of Domitian. And is it not from Ephesus, from Paul's Bible school with one Tyrannus that was held for two full years "that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus both Jews and Greeks" (Acts 19:9-10)? As a result the seven churches of Asia in Revelation were established. If our Bible College is to remain effective for the Lord, we must look for the faithful, not the fitful, and nurture them that they in turn may do the same for those coming after. "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim 2:2). Amen.

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*Rev Dr Timothy Tow is Principal of FEBC, and Pastor of Life Bible-Presbyterian Church. The above message, edited for this journal, was delivered at the Graduation Service of Bharat Bible College, Secunderabad, India, on March 17, 1989. It was originally published in the Reformation Banner (Jan-Mar '89).*

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# THE LIMITATIONS OF SCHOLARSHIP

D R Breed

I write this article for the sake of certain timid Christians who are well aware of the fact that they have little scholarship of their own and are consequently quite apprehensive with regard to the outcome of the scholarship of others. They are alarmed at what appears to be the trend of religious thought at the present time, and fear lest the foundations of their Christian faith be shaken. I would attempt to quiet their alarms.

Before proceeding, let me make this introductory remark: Scholarship is of two kinds, constructive and destructive. Christianity owes much to constructive scholarship. Its service of recent years has been great and conspicuous, and nothing which appears in this article is intended to belittle it or disparage it. Neither is it intended to reflect upon scholarship which is pursued for its own sake—the simple advancement of learning in various fields of thought.

Let this be carefully noted to begin with, that scholarship never discovered any great spiritual truth, accompanying salvation, least of all any of the fundamental truths of the Christian system.

There were many profound thinkers in classic and other lands, who gave careful and prolonged thought to religious subjects, but apart from the knowledge which they derived from the Scriptures, they remained in great uncertainty regarding spiritual truth. “The world by wisdom knew not God.” Whatever may be one’s notion concerning the divine inspiration of the Bible, it remains that all we hold of religious conviction that is worth holding is derived from it. And if we were today to be deprived of the Bible and our knowledge of its contents were to be forgotten, scholarship would be absolutely impotent to restore it, and satisfy the hunger of our souls.

The Apostle Paul himself was a great scholar, but he testified concerning the gospel which he preached, “That the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

Such being the case, it is not possible for scholarship to discredit any revealed truth except to those who do not themselves embrace it. Those who have embraced it will continue to retain it, because it is received and retained by the soul in just the same manner as in the case of the Apostle Paul. It is the product of experience—a real, deep, convincing experience, promoted by the supernatural, and it cannot be set aside, therefore, by any process of reasoning whatsoever.

Those who have enjoyed such an experience have a knowledge of the truth beyond all that scholarship can convey to them and which scholarship cannot dislodge. And it is genuine knowledge. Yes, I may even say genuine scholarship, for scholarship is of two kinds, that of learning—books, research, investigation, and the like, and that of experience, intuition, meditation and converse with the divine.

So, then, those whose text-book scholarship is deficient may often confidently say, “I know.” Unbelieving scholarship may attempt to convince them that they do not know and persuade them to recant, as it did with the man born blind, but the believer will continue to answer as did the blind man, “One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.”

Note again, that a certain so-called scholarship, instead of discovering and promoting truth, often prevents its discovery and stands in the way of promotion. “Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.” So the apostle explains the loss of the knowledge of God. And he says, “We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, . . . which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory.”

Jesus was grateful that his disciples had not the wisdom on which their rulers prided themselves. He thanked His Father for this. “I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes.” Note the same distinction that St Paul made, “These things,” of which Jesus spoke, were not taught his disciples, but were “revealed” to them.

## THE LIMITATIONS OF SCHOLARSHIP

I have heard it maintained that “heretics” deserve our sympathy rather than our condemnation, because they are generally “seekers after truth.”

But the Bible does not say so. Indeed, it says the very reverse. No doubt some who have been led astray and who may be called “heretics” are honestly seeking the truth. But the great majority of such are seeking rather to evade the truth, particularly that truth which condemns them as sinners with no hope but in the blood of the Crucified.

Paul says of the heathen world that “they did not like to retain God in their knowledge,” and that they “became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.” The whole trend of Scripture is in the same line. Infidelity is first of all wilful perversity.

We cannot expect, therefore, that such scholarship will do anything to help the cause of truth. It never has. It does not wish to do so. It desires rather to establish the truth of the unproven and erroneous. Paul says they “changed the truth of God into a lie.”

Note again, that we need not be at all disturbed by the aspersions of a certain scholarship which derides the ignorance of many who maintain their faith. So it has always been. “Dost thou teach us?” they cry, as the rulers did to the blind man. So, also the officers who were sent to arrest Jesus, returned without him, giving as their reason, “Never man spake like this man.” But that was no reason to the members of their high court, and they ridiculed them. “Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.” Nicodemus, however, seemed to think differently, apparently believing that the officers who had heard Jesus were nearer the truth than the judges who had not heard Him, and who had not given Him the chance to speak for Himself.

It was the same later on, when the rulers held an informal meeting to try Peter and John. They “perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men,” and they “marvelled.” But that was all. They would have convicted them had not the lame man, whom they had healed, been standing by. He was their unanswerable argument. And so it is today. The healed men and women—cured of their sin and their sorrow—are our witnesses.

It is to the everlasting shame of these same rulers that they even discredited Jesus Himself, saying, “How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?” Jesus Himself was not a “scholar,” according to their standards, and He did not claim to be. No one, then, need hesitate to stand with the returning officers, with Peter and John, with Jesus Himself.

Note again, that those who have not much scholarship are yet fully competent to sit in judgment on that which scholarship offers. There are some scholars who vehemently deny this. They maintain that unless people have studied their books and mastered their learning and, in short, coincide with their opinions, they are not scholars. Little weight is to be attached to their notions. The conclusions of these “unlearned and ignorant men,” are without value, and their criticism of scholarship is absurd.

Nevertheless, the jury in all those matters that concern religion has always been largely composed of the “unlearned and ignorant,” and their verdict always has been and always will be final. The case is submitted to them; they hear the evidence; they are informed with regard to the law, they become intelligent and competent, and with them rests the issue.

Jesus said as much as this when he told the Jews, “My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself.” It is not scholarship, then, which renders one competent to decide whether a doctrine is from God or not, but honest devotion to the will of God.

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*The above essay by Dr D R Breed adapted for The Burning Bush is taken from the weekly bulletin of Calvary-Canada edited by Elder Daniel Chew who is an off-campus student of Far Eastern Bible College. We thank Dr Breed for his kind permission to print his very timely article.*

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## WHAT IS CLEAR BIBLICAL TEACHING?

John C Whitcomb

A major hindrance to effective communication and understanding among God's people today, especially between those who belong to different "denominations," is the question of the clarity or perspicuity of biblical revelation concerning doctrine and practice.

The basic question each one of us must face (and some day answer to God for) is this: "How can I really know what God is teaching me in His Word?" In the first place, it must be honestly recognized that **FOR SOME PEOPLE NOTHING IN THE BIBLE EVER BECOMES "CLEAR."** Throughout church history many who have claimed to be "biblical Christians" have drastically distorted or openly denied such basic doctrines as the trinity of God, the inerrancy of the Bible, a literal creation week, the absolute deity of Christ, His virgin birth, miraculous works, bodily resurrection, literal second coming and millennial kingdom, and an eternal hell. Are such denials really excusable? May such persons blame God for being obscure in His written revelation?

Peter referred to the deadly danger which "untaught and unstable" people face when they "distort" things which Paul taught in his letters, even though they contain "**SOME THINGS HARD TO UNDERSTAND**" (2 Pet 3:16). Our Lord denounced some of His own disciples as "foolish men and slow of heart to believe in **ALL THAT THE PROPHETS HAVE SPOKEN**" (Lk 24:25). Such biblical warnings can be greatly multiplied.

Heretical and even unregenerate persons may hide under the challenge: "I don't see that in the Bible!" But where do we draw the line on this delicate but infinitely important question of **THE CLARITY OF SCRIPTURE?** Actually, there is no such thing as an absolute "line" of theological discernment which finite minds can draw. Instead, **THERE IS A CONTINUUM WHICH GOD HIMSELF PROVIDES:** the closer we walk with our Lord the clearer will be our understanding of His will (Jn

7:17, “if any man is willing to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God”). Berean Christians, for example, were “**MORE NOBLE-MINDED**” than those of Thessalonica because “they received the word with great eagerness, **EXAMINING THE SCRIPTURES DAILY, TO SEE WHETHER THESE THINGS WERE SO**” (Acts 17:11).

Now, of what does this continuum of theological discernment and maturity consist? It begins with the “anointing from the Holy One” which gives us such a potential for God’s truth that we “have no need for anyone to teach” us that Christ is our Lord and that the Bible and the Bible alone is divinely authoritative (1 Jn 2:20, 27). Then, there is that “great eagerness” for divine truth which the Berean Christians manifested. Along with this is the command to “be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, **HANDLING ACCURATELY THE WORD OF TRUTH**” (2 Tim 2:15). Handling the Scriptures “accurately” must be an extremely important (and relatively rare) characteristic of pastor/teachers, for “those who work hard at preaching and teaching” are “worthy of double honour” (1 Tim 5:17). This involves prayer (Psa 119:18, “Open my eyes that I may behold wonderful things from Thy law”), patience, self-discipline, and the spiritual humility and courage to change our theological convictions when necessary. New insights to revealed truth may come through the perspectives of other men of God (Prov 27:17, “iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another”).

Once theological truth is discovered, we have the obligation before God to obey it, for “one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, **AND ABIDES BY IT . . .** this man shall be blessed in what he does” (Jas 1:25). Or, negatively, “the one who knows the right thing to do, and does not do it, **TO HIM IT IS SIN**” (Jas 4:17 cf Jn 13:16). “All Scripture is inspired by God” and is profitable, not only for “teaching,” but also “**FOR REPROOF, FOR CORRECTION,**” in order that “the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work” (2 Tim 3:16-17). “**IF WE GO ON SINNING WILFULLY AFTER RECEIVING THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH,**” there remains “a certain terrifying expectation of judgment” (Heb 12:26-27). Thus, God’s people must “consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds . . . encouraging one another” (Heb 12:24-25).



## WHAT IS CLEAR BIBLICAL TEACHING?

But who can really tell whether one interpreter of the Bible is more accurate than another?

In the long run, our Lord said, “you will know them by their fruits” (Mat 7:16, 20). The apostle John wrote that teachers of error “went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, in order that it might be shown that they all are not of us” (1 Jn 2:19). The fruits of false or inadequate biblical instruction will be seen by God’s people sooner or later, for sound teaching leads to maturity in our lives as we obey Him. Note the tragic condition of the first readers of the Book of Hebrews: “you have become dull of hearing . . . you ought to be teachers . . . you have come to need milk and not solid food . . . not accustomed to the word of righteousness . . . solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil” (Heb 5:11-14). “Solid food” doctrines (such as the Melchizedekian priesthood of Christ in the Hebrews context) must be studied and taught, not just the so-called “clear biblical teachings.”

God expects His people to dig deeply into the infinitely precious Word He has entrusted to us **AND THUS DISCOVER CLEAR BIBLICAL TEACHING WE DID NOT PREVIOUSLY SEE**. It will be at the Bema (judgment seat) of Christ that our true motives and attitudes in handling His Word will be exposed (1 Cor 3:10-15, 4:1-5; 2 Cor 5:10, Rom 2:16, 14:10; Lk 8:17, 12:47). At first glance, some biblical doctrines may seem to be more clear than others. But they are all important. For example, the Sadducees denied the resurrection of the body because they could not “see” it taught in the Scriptures. But our Lord “astonished” the Jewish multitudes and “put the Sadducees to silence” by showing (through the precise use of theological inferences) that they should have seen bodily resurrection taught in Exodus 3:6. He held them completely accountable: “You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures, or the power of God” (Mat 22:19).

Thus, to the person who demands: “**SHOW ME WHERE THE BIBLE CLEARLY TEACHES THAT!**” God’s servants may well reply: “**JOIN US IN SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES TO DISCOVER GOD’S PRECIOUS TRUTH!**” May God equip us in His love, patience, and wisdom to encourage His people in that search and discovery!

*Dr John Whitcomb was professor of theology and director of doctoral studies at Grace Theological Seminary. He is a friend of FEBC and spoke at the Bible Camp of Calvary B-P Church and Life B-P Church in June this year. The editor thanks Dr Whitcomb for permission to publish the above essay.*

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## CLASS NOTES

Rev Dr **Peter Tow Siang Kwang** (DipTh, '69) is presently a missionary to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). He teaches at several Bible Colleges in Ukraine.

Rev **Bob Phee** (BTh, '77) leaves June '95 to study at Temple Baptist Seminary, USA, for the DMin degree.



**Kim Kah Teck** (DipTh, '79, BTh, '94) and **Nirand Tamee** (DipTh, '91) were ordained into the Gospel Ministry on April 2, 1995 at Life Bible-Presbyterian Church under the moderatorship of Rev Dr Timothy Tow. Rev Kim Kah Teck is pastor of Rawang Bible-Presbyterian Church, Malaysia. Rev Tamee pastors Life Bible-Presbyterian Church in Chiangmai, Thailand, with his wife **Jess Lim** (BTh, '84).

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**Continued on page 87**

## SALTED WITH FIRE AND SALTED WITH SALT (MARK 9:49)

Jeffrey Khoo

What did Jesus mean when He said these difficult words, “For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt,” in Mark 9:49? Is the word “salt” here used in the *destructive* or *constructive* sense? Weston Fields suggested that the meaning is not found in the Greek text but in its Hebrew/Aramaic translation.<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew/Aramaic word for “salt” is <sup>^</sup> a,<sup>2</sup> which can also mean “to destroy” (cf Judg 9:45). Hence, to be salted means to be destroyed. Since the context speaks of punishment in hell, Fields preferred translating Mark 9:49 thus, “‘everyone [who is sent to hell] will be completely destroyed’ (destroyed by fire).”<sup>3</sup>

Although the above translation fits its antecedent context, it militates against its subsequent context. If salt is to be understood in its destructive sense here, how is it that Jesus in verse 50 said that salt is good, and that it promotes peace?

Perhaps the word “salt” is used in two ways here; having a destructive as well as constructive sense. The text itself seems to suggest this. Consider the literary structure of Mark 9:48-50,

v.48b hcJ di f ci t gVYbbi hU]  
v.49a dUT [ Uf di f ]J U' ]ge\gYhU]  
\_UJ]  
v.49b dUgU ei gJJ U' ]J U' ]ge\gYhU]  
v.50a \_U cJb hcJ U4U" (

Verses 48b and 49a constitute one parallel, and 49b and 50a constitute the other, the common denominator being the words “fire” (di f) and “salt” (U4U”). In the first parallel, we have, “The *fire* is not being quenched, for every one shall be salted *with fire*” (vv 48b-49a).

The word “fire” refers to the tormenting flames of hell (vv 43-48). Hence the verb “shall be salted” (𐤅 𐤒𐤍𐤁𐤏𐤕𐤓) should be taken in its *destructive* sense, ie “every one will be destroyed by fire” as suggested by Fields. In the second parallel, we have, “Every sacrifice with salt shall be salted. Salt is good.” It is unfortunate that Fields did not go on to explain the meaning of the second occurrence of 𐤅 𐤒𐤍𐤁𐤏𐤕𐤓 in verse 49b, or to reconcile his interpretation of verse 49a with verse 50.

The difficulty lies with taking 𐤅 𐤒𐤍𐤁𐤏𐤕𐤓 to mean the same thing on both occasions. The structure of the text allows verses 49b and 50a to be seen as a separate clause, introducing a new idea. In order to set them apart as separate ideas, it was necessary to write them down in two distinct clauses: (1) 𐤃𐤀𐤓𐤃𐤏𐤕𐤓 𐤅 𐤒𐤍𐤁𐤏𐤕𐤓 (“everyone with fire shall be salted”), and (2) 𐤃𐤀𐤓𐤃𐤏𐤕𐤓 𐤅 𐤒𐤍𐤁𐤏𐤕𐤓 (“everyone with salt shall be salted”), using 𐤃𐤀𐤓 and 𐤅 𐤒𐤍𐤁𐤏𐤕𐤓 twice. It is significant to note that the word 𐤁𐤒𐤁𐤏 (“sacrifice”) in verse 49b is used 29 times in the New Testament and not once with reference to an unbeliever. As a matter of fact, in Romans 12:1, the word is used of the believer who is a “living sacrifice.” This sense is also found in Mark 9:50 which speaks of the salted believer.

Furthermore, the salt of verse 49b is said to be “good” (v 50a). Salt has healing qualities. Jesus was reminding His disciples what He had taught them in the sermon on the mount, “Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men” (Mat 5:13). The disciples had been quarrelling among themselves on who should be the top disciple (Mk 9:34). Envy and strife were evident in their conduct. Moreover, they had forbidden others who were not among them to heal in the name of Jesus (Mk 9:38). There was a party-spirit. On the mount, Jesus had taught, “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God” (Mat 5:9). That is why Jesus said, “Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another” (Mk 9:50).

The disciples were to be “salted with salt.” In the Old Testament, the meat offering was seasoned with salt (Lev 2:13). Salt is a cleansing agent, and symbolises purity. Thus, “be *salted* with salt,” means “be *purified* with salt.” Every salted sacrifice goes through the fire (Lev 2:14-16). There is a fire which punishes, namely, the fires of hell. But there is

## SALTED WITH FIRE AND SALTED WITH SALT (MARK 9:49)

a fire which purifies, namely, the fire of the Holy Spirit (Lk 3:16). Jesus would rather they experience this sanctifying fire of the Spirit than the tormenting flames of hell.

Mark 9:49 may thus be understood in this way, “every one (ie the reprobate) shall be salted (ie destroyed) with fire, and every sacrifice (ie the Christian) shall be salted (ie purified) with salt.”

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Weston W Fields, “‘Everyone will be Salted with Fire’ (Mark 9:49),” *Grace Theological Journal* 6 (1985): 302.

<sup>2</sup> *The New Testament in Hebrew and English* (London: The Society for Distributing the Holy Scriptures to the Jews, nd), 88.

<sup>3</sup> Fields, “Salted,” 302.

<sup>4</sup> The New Testament < ` ? 5 -B < ` 8 =5 E < ? < , the Greek Text underlying the English Authorised Version of 1611 (London: Trinitarian Bible Society, nd), 84.

## **LEADING BY EXAMPLE**

### Thawng Nei Bil

First Timothy was written by Paul from Macedonia and sent to Timothy who was left in Ephesus to take care of the Church. At that time Timothy was very young. Paul knew beforehand that Timothy would face the problem of false teachers. Timothy was told to persevere in the ministry. Paul encouraged him with these words, “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (1 Tim 4:12).

I believe all of us here came to FEBC by the call of God, and not by chance. So we are going to be God’s full-time ministers. When we serve the Lord we may face a lot of difficulties and problems. So, this letter is not only sent to Timothy but also to all of us, and to all ministers.

How is the leader important? We have a story of the crab family. The story is like this: One day the mother crab sees all her children walking the wrong way (ie sideways). So she called all her children and told them, “You should walk straightforward.” And they tried two times, but could not walk straightforwardly. So they replied her, “Mother, we follow the way you walk. If you walk straightforwardly, we will follow you.” Likewise, the walk of a leader is very important. Our walk must agree with our talk.

Paul told Timothy to be an example to the believers “in word.” As we are to be God’s ministers, the manner of our daily speech is very important. Our speech should show we are the servants of God. This is revealed in how we speak to people whether they be high or low, rich or poor. A Chin proverb says, *Na tongkamin na si nak a langter*, which means, “Your words show your character or personality.” It is true, what we speak reveals what we think in our heart. Jesus says, “for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh” (Mat 12:34b). Thus, every man will judge us by our daily conversation. Some years ago, when I

## LEADING BY EXAMPLE

wrote letters to my friends or my relatives, I always said something like, “I prayed for you,” “I always prayed hard for you,” or “I will pray for you,” but actually I was not praying for them. Later on, I realised that I had told a lie. Prayer is talking with God. I have thus used the Lord’s name in vain in my prayers. If I tell a lie, then it means the truth is not in me.

Timothy was told to be exemplary “in conduct;” that is in custom, habit, manner, or ways of dealing with people. What we preach, we must also practise. There is a wrong expression, “Don’t do as I do, do as I say.” We should not follow this wrong advice. Once upon a time, there was a preacher in a certain village. One day, a neighbour’s hen wandered into his house, and he caught it, and kept it alive. He intended to cook it for dinner, and his wife also agreed. So they were very happy. Many times they did the same thing. That day was Sunday morning. It was time for the worship service, and he went to the church to preach. The topic of his sermon was taken from Exodus 20:15, “Thou shalt not steal.” He expounded the Scripture inspiringly, and the congregation was moved by his preaching including his wife. His wife realised that they had broken this commandment. So, she immediately went home and released the hen which they had kept for dinner. When the service was over, her husband, the preacher, came home desiring curry chicken for dinner. When he reached home, he wanted to cook the hen and asked his wife where it was. His wife replied him, “I released it because of your message.” When her husband heard it, he furiously scolded her, “You are foolish! My sermon is not for us, but only for others.” What I want to say is that we must not be like this preacher. We must do as we say. Our words should be, “Do as I do, and as I say.” Paul says in 1 Timothy 4:16, “Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine, continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.”

If we behave well only in the presence of our church members, but in their absence we show our true colours, living as we like, and doing whatever we want to do, how can we be an example to others? We must realise that we are serving God who is omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient. He knows and sees everything. No one can hide from Him (Psa 139). Our ministry must not be in the flesh, but in the Spirit. In conduct, we should be exemplary.

Paul also teaches here that we should be an example to others “in love” and “in faith.” The Bible says in Luke 6:32-36, “For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? For sinners also love those that love them. For if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? For sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.”

All we believers, even if different in nationality, country or colour, are one body and one family in Jesus Christ. There is no difference. We should not practise favouritism, or have a caste system. Jesus loves every one equally. It may be quite difficult for us to do this by our own ability. But love is one of the commandments we must obey. Love is the result of faith. Only by faith can we be an example in charity to everyone without discrimination. Loving God and loving man is the motivating power of the Christian life.

We must also be an example “in purity.” Purity here means complete conformity both in thought and action to the holy demands of the Word of God. Man is not perfect, but by the Word of God, our daily life must increase in godliness. In other words, progressive sanctification must be evident in our daily life. We should keep ourselves away from all kinds of worldly things which are not of God.

Our Bible school—FEBC—is a fundamental Bible College as well as a Reformed School. So all we students should be an example to other students of other Bible Colleges, as well as to believers. That is in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity. Dr Edmond Hiebert says, “It is the first duty of a minister to display in his own life that which he wishes his people to be.” This morning, let us ask ourselves, “What kind of example have we set for others?” Titus 2:7-8 says, “In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.” Amen.



*Thawng Nei Bil is an ordained minister from Myanmar. He is a BTh graduate of the Far Eastern Fundamental School of Theology in Yangon, and is now in his second year at FEBC, in the MRE programme. The above sermon was preached in the Homiletics "swimming pool."*

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**Continued from page 80**

**Freddy Yong** (BTh, '80) has been seconded to the Malaysian Christian Evangelistic League and will serve as Preacher at Endau, Hubong, and Rompin.

**Setsuko Takashima's** (DipTh '84) new address is: 3-15 Takao-Dai, 3 Chome, Suma-Ku, Kobe 654, Japan. We thank the Lord for protecting her in the recent Kobe earthquake.

**Kimiko Goto** (BTh, '85) has completed her MA in New Testament at Biblical Theological Seminary. She is presently working towards her MDiv (exegetical concentration) and will graduate in May, 1995. After graduation, she hopes to teach at *Institut Theologia Aletheia* in Lawang, East Java, Indonesia.

Rev **Lional Joseph** (DipTh, '90) is pastor of Zion Bible-Presbyterian Church in Coimbatore, South India. His congregation consists of 25 families with a regular attendance of 50-60 each week. His address is: 21 Marutham Nagar Extension, Vadavalli (PO), Coimbatore 641-041, India.

**Vincent Silvarajoo** (CertRK, '90) has been appointed Assistant to the Pastor at Zion Bible-Presbyterian Church (Bishan), Tamil Service. He is also a staff-worker of the Military Christian Fellowship.

**Jeong Un Gyo** (BTh, '92) has been appointed preacher at Chang Won Han Bit Presbyterian Church. He is also a MDiv student at Korea Theological Seminary.

Rev **Prabhudas Koshy** (BTh, '92, MDiv, '94) was invited to speak at the 7th Family Bible Camp of Hope Bible-Presbyterian Church (Adelaide) from April 13-17, 1995. Hope B-P Church is pastored by Rev Edward Paauwe who was a lecturer at FEBC in the '70s and early '80s.

**Pauline Lee** (DipTh, '94) has terminated her studies at Chin Lien Seminary to serve as administrator of Shalom Bible-Presbyterian Church.

## **CONSTRAINED BY THE LOVE OF GOD**

Lim Jyh Jang

In 1987, at the end of my first year in the National University of Singapore (NUS), I attended a Campus Crusade training camp at Nanyang Technological University (NTU). During the final meeting, a challenge was given to everyone present, to commit their life to full-time Christian service. Almost everyone around me stood up; the appeal was emotionally charged. But I resisted the peer pressure, and remained seated. However, I did ask the Lord to use me in whatever way He would.

Sometime later, I was in NUS outside the lecture theatre reading my Bible when Matthew 10:38, “And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth me, is not worthy of me,” caught my attention, and I came under the conviction of the Holy Spirit that the verse meant for me nothing less than full-time service for the Lord. I struggled with the Lord over the matter. I told the Lord that I must at least fulfil my obligations to my parents for their many years of sacrifice for my upbringing and education. But the Lord brought my attention to Matthew 10:37, the preceding verse, “He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me,” and Matthew 8:22, “But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.” I was driven to tears by this very personal call. But at that time, I was unwilling to give up my life to serve Him.

In some sense, I tried to ignore the call, but by September when I started courting Swee Hong, my wife-to-be, I knew I had to tell her that one day I would have to serve the Lord full-time. If she was not agreeable, or did not have the same love for the Lord, we would not have continued with the relationship. When she told me that she too had a

## CONSTRAINED BY THE LOVE OF GOD

desire to serve the Lord, I was filled with joy. Surely, our coming together was by Divine Providence.

I was then worshipping at Mount Carmel Bible-Presbyterian Church, and Swee Hong was in Wesley Methodist Church. Due to a number of factors, we eventually uprooted ourselves from our respective Churches and went to Life Bible-Presbyterian Church. We prayed for opportunities to serve the Lord, and were soon invited to teach in the Young Teens department of the Sunday School by brother Ng Beng Kiong.

In 1989, after my third year examinations, a well respected friend who used to be my Bible study leader when I was still in Campus Crusade, not knowing the struggles within me, asked me to consider serving the Lord full-time. I shared with him my struggles, but told him that it was unlikely that I would serve with Campus Crusade if I were to go into full-time ministry. By then, I was already aware of the ecumenical compromises of Campus Crusade.

In 1990, immediately after completing my honours in Computer Science in the NUS, I was sent to San Jose, USA, by my company for a one-year attachment. I was not exactly thrilled by this, and it appeared that I did not have the option to say no. I was to see later that the Lord had His purpose in sending me there.

Once I reached San Jose, I prayed and asked the Lord to open an avenue of service for me in the church there. That same week I met Dave Landis (now a good friend of mine) during a fellowship meeting. Dave had just relocated from Kansas, and he shared during the meeting that he had a burden for the Chinese immigrants and students, and that he was planning to start an evangelistic English Bible Study. This was to be tailored for the Chinese immigrants so that they could learn English, and at the same time study a Gospel. But Dave needed a helper! The Lord answered both our prayers that night.

Later in the course of our conversation, I mentioned that I had read Rev Timothy Tow's abridgment of Calvin's Institutes. Dave was overjoyed. He told me about his own conversion from Arminianism to Calvinism, and we became the best of friends. Dave was the Lord's instrument to introduce me to the Reformed Faith. He also recommended to me many good books. Since I was away from home and most of my

friends, I could find much time to read and to grow in the faith. It was the year that I began to really love and appreciate theology.

The Lord gave Dave and me many opportunities to work together. In addition to the Evangelistic Bible Studies, we had the opportunity to co-teach a series on the fundamental doctrines to the adults' Sunday School class. The feedback from the class was very positive and encouraging. I was encouraged further in my desire to serve the Lord full-time. Knowing the seriousness of entering the full-time ministry, I decided to wait for the Lord's timing, and began to ask Him to indicate His call very clearly.

I returned to Singapore in 1991, and Swee Hong and I got married. Since then Swee Hong and I would spend much time seeking the Lord concerning the right year to begin my studies in Far Eastern Bible College (FEBC). Each year we felt that there was a good and valid reason why we should still wait. The conviction to serve the Lord however deepened with each passing month.

In 1994, the Lord paved the way for us to enter full-time ministry. At work, I was about to complete the three-year project I was assigned to, and was able to train someone else to replace me. My interest at work was also waning over the years, and it was beginning to be difficult because my heart was no longer there.

At home, Jonathan was already a year old, and Swee Hong and I were getting used to parenthood. With the load of the ministry in church getting heavier, it was becoming quite difficult for me to balance my time between work, home, and church. This was despite many late nights.

The Lord also sent confirmation of His call through numerous people. A number of Lifers unsuspectingly asked me if I was a student at FEBC or whether I was planning in the future to enter the full-time ministry. Even my colleagues at work asked me if I was a part-time pastor or priest.

Another confirmation from the Lord was an answered prayer. Through a backdated bonus, I was able to repay a loan we had taken from my mother when we bought our flat.

I have been asked on numerous occasions, by a number of people how I know the Lord had called. I know that circumstances can be

## CONSTRAINED BY THE LOVE OF GOD

deceiving, but one thing I do know for sure—the love of Christ constraineth me (2 Cor 5:14). If Christ loved us so much as to die for us, what is too much for me to give up? “And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.”



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*Jyh Jang who has a BSc (Hons) from the National University of Singapore is placed on the MDiv programme of FEBC. He is a member of Life Bible-Presbyterian Church, and is President of its Young Adults' Fellowship.*

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## **FEBC-LIFE 6TH HOLY LAND PILGRIMAGE Egypt, Israel, Jordan — March 8 to 22, 1995**

Nancie Koo

I thank God for the privilege to go on the 6th Pilgrimage to the Holy Land. By the grace of God, 50 pilgrims under the leadership of Rev Dr Timothy Tow, set off for the Holy Land on the evening of March 8, 1995. For many of us, especially the first-timers to the Holy Land, it was an exciting moment as we boarded the plane. Our first stop was Cairo, Egypt. From there we would travel through the Sinai route of Exodus to Israel before crossing over to Jordan.

### **Cairo, Egypt**

In Cairo we visited the St Sargius Church where, according to tradition, the holy family lived during their flight to Egypt (Mat 2:13ff). We also visited the nearby Beni-Azar Synagogue, where the Nile flowed through during Moses' time. Tradition says that this was the place where Moses was left in a basket when he was a baby (Exod 2:1-10).

The great Egyptian Museum and the Pyramids were two other attractions. In the Egyptian Museum we were thrilled to see artifacts of one of the world's earliest civilizations on display, especially the magnificent Tutankhamon collection. The Pyramids of Giza, namely, Cheops, Chephren and Micerinus, are among the Seven Wonders of the ancient world. The Sphinx (head of a man with a lion's body) stands majestically about 350 metres from Cheops. These were tombs of the ancient Egyptian royalties.

Before saying goodbye to Egypt, we visited "Nout Papyrus," and learned how the ancient Egyptians made writing paper out of the papyrus plant. On our way to the Sinai peninsular, we crossed the Suez Canal via an underground tunnel.

## FEBC-LIFE 6TH HOLY LAND PILGRIMAGE

We followed the route the children of Israel had taken in their Exodus journey. In Sinai, we saw miles after miles of desert on both sides of the road. The desert conditions were very harsh. It was in such extreme conditions that the Israelites experienced the grace of God in His miraculous supply of food and shelter. Like the children of Israel we Christians are at times full of complaints. Yet God is very patient with us, and still takes care of us. We are also solemnly reminded that those who murmur and complain against God in unbelief will not enter the Promised Land.

The highlight of our Exodus journey was the climb up Mount Sinai. At 1.30 in the morning, on March 12, 1995, 32 pilgrims set off for the mountain where Moses received the Ten Commandments (Deut 9:9). One of the pilgrims suffered from breathlessness but the Lord preserved him. I thank the Lord for the opportunity to climb this mountain and the blessing I had received through it. Early in the climb I suffered leg-cramps. But the Lord sustained me and provided two other pilgrims to help me. We took many rests along the way and prayed silently to the Lord for help. By the grace of God we made it to the summit, and saw the beautiful sunrise despite the cold temperature.

The climb up Mount Sinai reminded me of the difficult journey of the Christian life. The path the Lord commanded us to take is the steep and narrow one. Like the climb up Sinai, the Christian walk is not easy, and oftentimes we fall. But God sustains us and provides the help we need. Indeed, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth" (Psa 121:1, 2). By His grace, we will reach our destination.

Later, all the pilgrims gathered together to worship at the foot of the mountain as it was the Lord's day. A thanksgiving offering was collected for our Palestinian brethren.

As we bid Sinai farewell, our guide shared the touching testimony of her conversion. It warmed our hearts to hear how a crisis in her life has led to her finding salvation in Christ. Now she has the joy of the Lord. We had enjoyed our time with her.

Leaving Sinai, we entered the Promised Land. There was a 2½ hour delay at the Israeli checkpoint. We thank God that all the pilgrims cleared

*The Burning Bush 1/2 (July 1995)*



Clockwise from top left: In prayer for journeying mercies at Changi Airport; In Egypt with the pyramids; Conquerors of Mt Sinai; Open air lecture on Masada.



Pilgrims in the Synagogue at Capernaum



FEBC-LIFE 6TH HOLY LAND PILGRIMAGE



With the Arab Christians at Baraka B-P Church, Bethlehem



Clockwise from top left: Rev and Mrs Tow with Leslie our tour guide; Nancie Koo; Model of the Jerusalem Temple; Gary Seah on the Dead Sea.

Photos by Yiew Pong Sen

the checkpoint and our dear driver Uncle Jamil and beloved guide Leslie gave us a warm welcome to Israel.

## **Israel**

I was overjoyed when we entered Israel, for it is the Promised Land, a land flowing with milk and honey. The greenery of Israel was in stark contrast to the dryness of Sinai.

Our first stop in Israel was Masada. We took the cable car up to the cliff fortress which was the last stronghold of Jewish resistance to the Romans during the Great Revolt (AD 66-72).

We then went to Jericho where the Spring of Elisha is located. Water from this Spring brought life to the land. It has become an agricultural oasis of bananas, oranges, dates etc.

In Galilee we saw many trees which produced the tiny mustard seed. The mustard tree is a very common plant in Israel. The people there collect the seeds and grind them into powder for sale. The Lord used the mustard seed to teach the people concerning faith, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder places and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Mat 17:20).

On our way to Capernaum, we crossed the Jordan River. I used to imagine the Jordan River to be a huge river but was surprised to discover that it is not much more than a stream. Yet it played such a significant role in Christian history! It was here that our Lord Jesus Christ was baptised (Mat 3:13-17). John the Baptist baptised the people by the river Jordan (Mat 3:5-6). In the days of Elisha, Naaman was cured of leprosy by washing in the Jordan (2 Kgs 5:10-14). The Jordan River descends from Mount Hermon, and flows in a direct north-south course to the Sea of Galilee and continues southward to the Dead Sea.

The Sea of Galilee, a very beautiful harp-shaped lake, is also called Kinneret (Hebrew for harp). Here Jesus spent most of his public life, did most of his teaching, and worked most of his miracles. It was here that the Lord spoke to the crowd from Peter's boat (Mk 3:7-12), commanded the violent storm to be still (Mat 8:23-27), walked on water (Mat 14:22-27), and healed great multitudes (Mat 15:29-31).

## FEBC-LIFE 6TH HOLY LAND PILGRIMAGE

Today, the Sea of Galilee is the main water reservoir of Israel. Water is pumped from the lake and conveyed to the central and southern region of the country. We ate St Peter's fish which thrives in the waters of Galilee. Indeed, the Sea of Galilee freely receives from the Jordan and freely gives. In contrast, the Dead Sea which we later visited, only receives and does not give. Rev Tow taught us that our Christian lives should resemble the Sea of Galilee—as we have freely received from the Lord we ought to freely give lest we become like the Dead Sea.

Capernaum is located 2½ miles from where the Jordan enters the Sea of Galilee. Like the humble Jordan River, this town though small played a major role in the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. Matthew tells of Jesus who “departed into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum” (4:12-13). This was the hometown of Peter. It was here that Jesus called his first disciples from among the poor fishermen—Simon who was called Peter and his brother Andrew, as well as James and his brother John (Mat 4:18-22). Jesus taught here in the synagogue (Mk 1:21), delivered a man from an unclean spirit, healed Peter's mother-in-law (Mat 8:14-17), healed the centurion's servant (Mat 8:5-13), raised the palsied man who was let down through the roof (Mat 9:1-8), resurrected Jarius' daughter (Mat 9:18-26), and restored the woman with an issue of blood (Mat 9:20-22).

There is a magnificent synagogue in Capernaum made of white limestone built in about AD 300. From Capernaum we proceeded to Megiddo, overlooking the Jezreel valley—the site of the final battle of Armageddon (Rev 16:16).

One of the highlights of the trip was our visit to the home of Mrs Ben Asher, the Hebrew teacher of Rev Timothy Tow, who lives in Haifa. She was most delighted to see us and received us warmly with many delicacies. It was a very touching moment when all the pilgrims sang a song penned by Rev Tow to Mrs Ben Asher entitled, “To an Old-Time Friend.”

The hospitality of our Arab brethren made our stay in Israel a very pleasant one. For five days we stayed at Beit El Baraka Christian Conference Centre, 10 miles south of Bethlehem. This Christian hostel was once a mission hospital. It is now under the management of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, USA. We thank

God for the loving hands which laboured at the Conference Centre. For the next four evenings, we had worship services which allowed for personal testimonies and thanksgivings.

On the Lord's day, we worshipped at Baraka Bible-Presbyterian Church, and enjoyed a blessed time of fellowship with the Palestinians. We also visited the piece of land at the Shepherd's Field which Life B-P Church bought for the Arab brethren.

Other places in Israel which we had visited included the Mount of Beatitudes, Caesarea, Gethsemane, the old city of Jerusalem, the Wailing Wall, the Dome of the Rock, the Al-Aksa Mosque, and a stroll along the Via Dolorosa. We also visited the Garden Tomb. Some believe that this was the place of the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord. Though we may not be certain of the exact spot where Jesus was crucified and buried, the empty tomb certainly is a reminder that "He is not here, for He is risen," and we are serving a Saviour who is alive!

On the evening before leaving Israel, as we were returning to Beit El Baraka, we saw some ambulances rushing to Hebron, and there was a road-block by the military. We later learned that some Arabs had opened fire on a Jewish bus. Two Jews died and five others were injured. We were spared and protected by the Lord! This incident reminded us not to take safety for granted. We thank God for preserving us!

Our dear driver Uncle Jamil, and our guide Leslie, had given us a most meaningful time in Israel, and we thank God for them. Leslie is indeed very knowledgeable in the history of the Bible. Rev Tow called him a "walking encyclopedia of the Bible." We are grateful to him for his thorough commentaries on the places we had visited in the Holy Land.

On the Monday morning of March 20, we left Baraka for Jordan. We cleared the Allenby bridge checkpoint, and in Jordan we were received by a Spanish-Italian guide.

## **Jordan**

In Jordan, we visited the well preserved Roman city of Jerash—one of the cities of the Decapolis. In Matthew 4:25, it is mentioned that multitudes of people from the Decapolis followed Jesus. As our plan to visit Petra was cancelled, we went for a swim at the Dead Sea. Here

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many of us enjoyed the experience of simply floating on the water without any effort whatsoever on our part. The high density of the water kept us afloat. Before we left for the airport, we went to Mount Nebo where Moses was allowed a glimpse of the Promised Land.

Though our flight home was delayed for five hours on the day of departure, we thank God for all the necessary arrangements made for us. We reached Singapore safely on the night of March 22 . We had experienced God's very special care and protection throughout the journey. "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about his people from henceforth even forever" (Psa 125:2).

Praise God for a wonderful time of learning and fellowship.

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*Nancie is a member of Berean Bible-Presbyterian Church. She and ten other FEBC students went on this 6th pilgrimage. God-willing, there will be a 7th in May next year. Let us pray for it.*

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**CERTIFICATE OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE  
(CertRK)  
Off-Campus Programme for Special Students**

**1. What is the off-campus CertRK programme all about?**

The off-campus CertRK programme of FEBC is offered in response to the demand of theological education by ministerial candidates who are unable to take up residential studies in Singapore due to factors beyond their control (eg immigration laws, Church duties etc). It is specially designed for students who wish to begin formal theological studies in a Bible College context. As such the programme will consist of the four basic departments of theological education, namely, (1) Bible, (2) Theology, (3) Church History, and (4) Pastoral Ministry.

Since FEBC is a denominational School affiliated to the Bible-Presbyterian Church (Singapore), courses offered will reflect the reformed-premillennial-fundamentalist perspective of theology. The purpose of the programme is to prepare a candidate towards ministry in the Bible-Presbyterian Church whether in a lay or clerical capacity.

**2. What must be achieved in order to earn the CertRK?**

The candidate must satisfactorily complete 40 credit hours of study. This programme normally requires eighteen months of full-time study. Although there is no time limit for completing the programme, the candidate is advised to take no longer than three years.

**3. What are the courses offered in the CertRK?**

The courses offered are divided into four departments:

English Bible (16 credits)	
Old Testament History .....	6
The Gospel Prophets .....	2

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New Testament Survey .....	3
Life of Christ .....	3
The Gospel of Life .....	2
Theology (16 credits)	
Systematic Theology I-IV .....	8
Calvin's Institutes .....	2
Westminster Confession of Faith .....	2
Hermeneutics .....	2
Biblical Separation .....	1
Charismatism .....	1
Church History (4 credits)	
Pre-Reformation .....	2
Post-Reformation .....	2
Pastoral Ministry (4 credits)	
Homiletics .....	2
Biblical Counselling .....	1
Church Growth .....	1

#### 4. What must I do if I want to be enrolled as an off-campus CertRK student?

The student must write in to request for the official application form. Write to: The Director, FEBC Off-Campus Programme, 9A Gilstead Road, Singapore 1130. Applications may be submitted at any time of the year since the off-campus programme does not follow the schedule of the regular semesters of FEBC. As soon as the College accepts the application, and all necessary fees are paid, the student may begin work.

#### 5. What are the fees for the CertRK programme?

The total amount for tuition is S\$1000 for the whole programme. The fee does not include textbooks or supporting materials which the student must get on his own. There are two payment options: (1) Pay the whole amount at the outset and receive a 10% discount, or (2) Pay as you register for each module, S\$250 per module (a total of 4 modules). **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Foreign students are required to remit by **bank draft in Singapore dollars**, made payable to **Far Eastern Bible College**. Please **do not send cash**.

**6. Which courses should I take first?**

The programme is divided into four modules. The programme starts with Module I. When the student completes all the courses of the first module, he then goes on to the second and so on. Each module is worth 10 credits, and the minimum amount of time taken to complete one module is 160 hours.

Module I

Course I	OT History I
Course II	NT Survey
Course III	Systematic Theology I
Course IV	Church History I

Module II

Course I	OT History II
Course II	Life of Christ
Course III	Systematic Theology II
Course IV	Church History II

Module III

Course I	The Gospel Prophets
Course II	The Gospel of Life
Course III	Systematic Theology III
Course IV	Calvin's Institutes
Course V	Homiletics I
Course VI	Biblical Counselling

Module IV

Course I	Systematic Theology IV
Course II	Hermeneutics
Course III	Westminster Confession of Faith
Course IV	Biblical Separation
Course V	Charismaticism
Course VI	Homiletics II
Course VII	Church Growth

**7. What are the duties required of the student in the CertRK programme?**

The student is required to adhere to the following general study and submission rules:



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- a. It is the duty of each student not only to study the Bible academically but also devotionally. The student should begin his study each time with prayer, seek to apply what he has learned in his own life, and attempt to share what he has learned to others.
- b. Follow the instructions on the Study Guide for each course. Please note that specific instructions under each course take precedence over the general instructions if a conflict exists.
- c. The Study Guide lists all the reading and writing assignments for the respective courses. Read the books carefully and underline important statements. Type all your papers. Handwritten answers are not acceptable. Single spacing in your papers is advisable to save on paper and postage, but use only one side of the paper.
- d. Use the King James Version of the Holy Bible as your textbook. All Bible quotations must be from the KJV.
- e. Remember that this is College level work. As a student you are thus required to do the work yourself. You may seek advice from others, but the final product must be your work. Do not plagiarise. Use your own words or create your own sentences to express your thoughts. Make sure you acknowledge the sources you have used or quoted from. The documentation should include the name of the author, title of the book, place published, name of publisher, year published, and page number(s). Check for spelling, grammar, or construction errors. Use the dictionary!
- f. You are required to locate a theological library near your area and sign up as a member. You need the books and resources available in such a library to help you in your research and study. Bible Colleges or Theological Seminaries usually have a well-

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stocked library of books, journals, and magazines. Students in Singapore may use the FEBC library.

- g. Purchase the required textbooks. In Singapore, you may buy your books from **Tabernacle Books**, 201 Pandan Gardens, Singapore 2260 (Tel: 5603885), or **Life Book Shop**, 9A Gilstead Road, Singapore 1130 (Tel: 2541223). Overseas students may order the books directly from Tabernacle Books. The books for Module I, Course I will be sent by air so that the student can start work immediately, while the rest will be sent by surface mail to save on postage. Write to Tabernacle Books for the order form.
- h. A one credit hour course requires a minimum of 16 hours of work. A two credit hour course requires twice that amount (ie 32 hours). Make sure you fulfil this minimum requirement for each course. Create a **Course Log Sheet** with the following details: (1) Date, (2) Description of Work Done, (3) Time (eg 9-10am), (4) Hours Taken (eg 1 hr). Create also a **Reading Log Sheet** with the following details: (1) Date, (2) Name of Book/Chapter, (3) Page Numbers, (4) Number of Pages Read, (5) Time, (6) Hours Taken. Make sure you total the number of hours taken at the end of the Log Sheets.
- i. When you have completed your paper, always staple the pages together at the top left hand corner. Do not professionally bind your papers or submit them in plastic folders.
- j. A **cover page** must be attached to each submission. Your cover page should contain the following details: (1) Name, (2) Student ID Number, (3) Address, (4) Module Number, (5) Course Title, (6) Date of Submission.
- k. When submitting your completed assignments, ensure that the envelope used to contain your papers is sufficiently large to hold your work. Papers

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should not be folded more than once. Do not fax in your assignments. Use the postal system.

- l. Make sure you make copies of all your submissions just in case they get lost in the mail.
  - m. Your papers will be graded accordingly and your lecturer or course assessor will discuss your performance in the evaluation sheet. All submitted papers will not be returned. FEBC reserves the right to require a student to redo an assignment if the initial work is unsatisfactory.
  - n. If you have questions arising from your programme, you may contact Dr Jeffrey Khoo at the College office (65) 2569256, Fax (65) 2506955, or write to FEBC, 9A Gilstead Road, Singapore 1130.
- 8. Can the credits earned through the off-campus CertRK programme be transferred to the other programmes (DipTh, BRE, BTh) of FEBC?**

Yes, if a student wishes to continue his studies in FEBC as an on-campus student after completing the off-campus CertRK, he may receive advanced standing of up to 32 credits. Only grades of B and above will be accepted or counted.

## STUDY GUIDE

### Module I

#### Course I: Old Testament History I (3 credits)

##### Course Description

This course offers a survey of the history of Israel. This first part covers the call of Abraham to the days of the Judges (ie Genesis to Judges).

## **Course Literature**

Leon J Wood, *A Survey of Israel's History*, revised and enlarged edition, revised by David O'Brien (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986).

Timothy Tow, *Prophescope on Israel* (Singapore: Christian Life Publishers, 1992).

## **Course Assignments**

1. Read Genesis to Judges at least once through. Underline or highlight the verses you consider important to memorise. On a separate sheet of paper, list the references of these golden texts (ie give book, chapter, and verse[s]), eg Gen 1:1).
2. Read Wood's *A Survey of Israel's History*, pp 3-196; and Tow's *Prophescope on Israel*, pp 1-93. Log in the time you have spent reading in a Reading Log Sheet.
3. In your own words, write a summary of the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Deborah, and Samson in no less than 500 words each. Include the practical lessons you have learned from a study of their lives.
4. Did the Exodus of the Israelites out of Egypt occur in the 15th century BC (about 1450 BC) or in the 13th century BC (about 1250 BC)? Discuss in no less than 2000 words.
5. Log in the time you have spent on this course in the Course Log Sheet. Clock in at least 48 hours of work.

## **Course Submission**

After you have completed the above assignments, staple them separately, and submit them with the cover sheet for grading. Do not forget to submit your Course Log Sheet. You may proceed to Course II: New Testament Survey.

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### **Course II: New Testament Survey (3 credits)**

#### **Course Description**

This course on NT Survey gives a general overview of the contents of the NT books. A general familiarity with the NT is foundational for other NT courses.

#### **Course Literature**

J Gresham Machen, *The New Testament: An Introduction to its Literature and History* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1976).

#### **Course Requirements**

1. Read the entire NT. List the verses that ought to be memorised. For example, Mat 4:19 where Jesus said, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men,” is one important verse. Another one is Jn 1:1. Underline or highlight these golden texts in your Bible, and on a separate sheet of paper, write the reference (ie book, chapter, verse[s], eg Jn 3:16 [you don’t have to type the words, “For God so loved . . . etc]). Begin with Matthew and end with Revelation.
2. Read Machen’s *The New Testament* and choose one of the questions under “Topics For Study” behind each chapter and attempt to answer it. There are a total of 52 chapters, so you should answer at least 52 questions, one from each chapter.
3. Write on the main theme of each book of the NT. For example, if you think that Matthew’s main theme is the Kingship of Christ, then discuss this theme in no less than 500 words. After this, go on to Mark which according to some emphasises the Servanthood of Christ; in 500 words explain why Christ is Servant in Mark etc.
4. Log in the time you have spent on this course in the Course Log Sheet. Clock in at least 48 hours of work.

#### **Course Submission**

After you have completed the above assignments, staple them separately, and submit them with the cover sheet for grading. Do not forget to submit your Course Log Sheet. You may proceed to Course III: Systematic Theology I.

## **Course III: Systematic Theology I (2 credits)**

### **Course Description**

This course studies the nature and attributes of God, the evidences for the existence of God, the doctrine of the Trinity, the works of God, the decrees of God, and the meaning of revelation and inspiration of the Bible.

### **Course Literature**

J Oliver Buswell, *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962). Reprinted by Christian Life Publishers in Singapore.

Timothy Tow, *The Clock of the Sevenfold Will of God* (Singapore: Christian Life Publishers, 1991).

Timothy Tow, *Has God a Plan for your Life?* (Singapore: Christian Life Publishers, 1994).

### **Course Requirements**

1. Read Buswell's *Systematic Theology*, pp 13-220. Record your reading in the Reading Log Sheet.
2. Read Tow's *The Clock of the Sevenfold Will of God* and *Has God a Plan for your Life?*. Summarise the contents of both books and discuss how a knowledge and understanding of the Sevenfold Will of God can clarify the complexities of human affairs and world events (minimum 1000 words).
3. Write a paper on how you would explain to an atheist that God exists in the light of the Bible (minimum 1000 words).
4. Write a paper on how you would refute the Jehovah's Witnesses who teach that Jesus Christ is not God, and that the Holy Spirit is but an impersonal force or influence (minimum 1000 words).
5. Write a paper to prove that the world did not evolve but was created by God (minimum 1000 words).
6. Write a paper in support of the fact that the Bible is absolutely and totally without error in all that it records over and against the view that the Bible is only inspired when it deals with salvation (e.g. Jn

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3:16) but contains mistakes when it touches on history, science, and geography (minimum 1000 words).

7. Log in the time you have spent on this course in the Course Log Sheet. Clock in at least 32 hours of work.

### **Course Submission**

After you have completed the above assignments, staple them separately, and submit them with the cover sheet for grading. Do not forget to submit your Course Log Sheet. You may proceed to Course IV: Church History I.

## **Course IV: Church History I (2 credits)**

### **Course Description**

A study on the history of the Church from the close of the Apostolic Age to the Reformation (AD 100-1517).

### **Course Literature**

S M Houghton, *Sketches from Church History* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1980).

Lorraine Boettner, *Roman Catholicism* (Phillipsburg NJ: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1962).

### **Course Requirements**

1. Read Houghton's *Church History*, pp 9-98. Record reading in Reading Log Sheet.
2. Write short biographies (about 500 words each) on the following famous men of Church history: (1) St. Augustine, (2) Peter Waldo, (3) John Wycliffe, (4) John Huss, (5) Savonarola, (6) Erasmus, and (7) Martin Luther.
3. Is the Roman Catholic Church a true or biblical Church? Use Boettner's classic book on Roman Catholicism to answer this question in an essay of no less than 2000 words.
4. Log in your study time in the Course Log Sheet. Minimum of 32 hours required.

## **Course Submission**

After you have completed the above assignments, staple them separately, and submit them with the cover sheet for grading. Do not forget to submit your Course Log Sheet. You have completed Module I. Proceed to Module II, Course I: Old Testament History II.

## **Module II**

### **Course I: Old Testament History II (3 credits)**

#### **Course Description**

A survey of the history of Israel continuing from the life of King Saul to the return from Babylonian Captivity (1 Samuel to Esther).

#### **Course Literature**

John J Davis, and John C. Whitcomb, *A History of Israel: From Conquest to Exile* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980).

Leon J Wood, *A Survey of Israel's History*, revised and enlarged edition, revised by David O'Brien (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986).

Timothy Tow, *Prophescope on Israel* (Singapore: Christian Life Publishers, 1992).

Timothy Tow, editor, *Prophets of Fire and Water* (Singapore: Christian Life Publishers, 1989).

#### **Course Requirements**

1. Read 1 Samuel to Esther at least once through. Underline or highlight the verses you consider important to memorise. On a separate sheet of paper, list the references of these golden texts (ie give book, chapter, and verse[s], eg 1 Sam 2:2-3).
2. Read Davis' and Whitcomb's *A History of Israel*, pp 175-494; Wood's *A Survey of Israel's History*, pp 330-349; and Tow's *Prophescope on Israel*, pp 94-138. Log in the time you have spent reading in the Reading Log Sheet.



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3. Write a paper comparing the lives of Saul and David. What practical lessons can we learn from their lives (minimum 1000 words).
4. Read the book, *Prophets of Fire and Water*, and write a paper comparing the ministries of Elijah and Elisha. What practical lessons can we learn from their lives (minimum 1000 words).
5. List all the kings of Ephraim and of Judah during the divided monarchy and the years of their respective reigns. Indicate whether they were good kings or bad kings citing appropriate proof-texts.
6. Write an essay relating how Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther were used by God to protect and restore the nation of Israel (minimum 1500 words).
7. Log in the time you have spent on this course in the Course Log Sheet. Minimum of 48 hours required.

### **Course Submission**

After you have completed the above assignments, staple them separately, and submit them with the cover sheet for grading. Do not forget to submit your Course Log Sheet. You may proceed to Course II: Life of Christ.

## **Course II: Life of Christ (3 credits)**

### **Course Description**

A study of the life and times of the Lord Jesus Christ as recorded in the four gospels.

### **Course Literature**

H. L. Willmington, *Willmington's Guide to the Bible* (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, 1981). Special edition published by Christian Life Publishers, Singapore.

Loraine Boettner, *A Harmony of the Gospels* (Phillipsburg NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1979).

### **Course Requirements**

1. Read the Four Gospels at least once through. Underline or highlight the important Bible verses that ought to be memorised. On a

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separate sheet of paper, list the references (ie book, chapter, and verse) of these golden texts.

2. Read Boettner's *A Harmony of the Gospels*. Record the time spent reading in the Reading Log Sheet.
3. Go through Jesus' 72 steps from glory to glory in Willmington's Guide, pp 263-365. Make sure you read the respective Bible passages before you read the commentary. Indicate the time spent reading in the Log Sheet.
4. Write short essays on the following highlights of Jesus' life: Incarnation, Baptism, Temptation, Ministry (parables and miracles), Transfiguration, Crucifixion, and Resurrection (minimum of 500 words each).
5. Draw a map of Palestine in the days of Jesus and locate all the places Jesus visited (give the Bible reference).
6. Log in the time you have spent on this course in the Course Log Sheet. Minimum of 48 hours required.

### **Course Submission**

After you have completed the above assignments, staple them separately, and submit them with the cover sheet for grading. Do not forget to submit your Course Log Sheet. You may proceed to Course III: Systematic Theology II.

## **Course III: Systematic Theology II (2 credits)**

### **Course Description**

This course is a study of man in the image of God, of man the sinner through the Fall, of the results and implications of the Fall, of the origin and the antiquity of man, and of human life in this age.

### **Course Literature**

J Oliver Buswell, *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion* (Singapore: Christian Life Publishers, 1962). Reprinted by Christian Life Publishers, Singapore.

Timothy Tow, *The Law of Moses and of Jesus* (Singapore: Christian Life Publishers, 1986).

## CERTIFICATE OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE

### Course Requirements

1. Read Buswell's *Systematic Theology*, pp 223-430. Record your reading in the Reading Log Sheet.
2. Read Tow's *The Law of Moses and of Jesus*. Summarise the book in about 1000 words.
3. Write a paper explaining what the image of God in man is (minimum 1000 words).
4. Write a paper comparing the covenant of works and the covenant of grace. What are the similarities and differences between the two covenants? (minimum 1000 words).
5. Write a paper on the biblical view on divorce and remarriage. What does the Bible teach concerning marriage and family? (minimum 1000 words).
6. Is this statement, "Money is the root of all evil," true? Write a paper commenting on this and discuss the Christian doctrine of stewardship (minimum 1000 words).
7. Log in the time you have spent on this course in the Course Log Sheet. Minimum of 32 hours required.

### Course Submission

After you have completed the above assignments, staple them separately, and submit them with the cover sheet for grading. Do not forget to submit your Course Log Sheet. You may proceed to Course IV: Church History II.

## Course IV: Church History II (2 credits)

### Course Description

A study on the history of the Church from the Reformation to the present day. Some emphasis is placed on the history of the Chinese Church under the ministry of John Sung.

### Course Literature

S M Houghton, *Sketches from Church History* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1980).

Timothy Tow, *Asian Awakening* (Singapore: Christian Life Publishers, 1988).

### **Course Requirements**

1. Read Houghton's *Church History*, pp 99-246. Record your reading in the Reading Log Sheet.
2. Write short biographies (about 500 words each) of the following famous men of Church history: (1) Ulrich Zwingli, (2) John Calvin, (3) John Knox, (4) William Tyndale, (5) John Bunyan, (6) John Wesley, (7) Charles Spurgeon.
3. Read Tow's *Asian Awakening* and write a summary of the contents of the book in each of the three parts—(1) John Sung, (2) Testimonies, and (3) Ting Li Mei (minimum of 500 words each).
4. Log in the number of hours spent on this course in Course Log Sheet. Minimum of 32 hours required.

### **Course Submission**

After you have completed the above assignments, staple them separately, and submit them with the cover sheet for grading. Do not forget to submit your Course Log Sheet. You have completed Module II. Proceed to Module III, Course I: The Gospel Prophets.

## **Module III**

### **Course I: The Gospel Prophets (2 credits)**

#### **Course Description**

A study of the historical background and prophetic perspective of Isaiah and Micah to obtain a clearer picture of God's salvation plan through Jesus Christ.

#### **Course Literature**

Timothy Tow, *The Gospel Prophets: An Applied Commentary on Isaiah and Micah* (Singapore: Christian Life Publishers, nd).

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Edward E Hindson, *Isaiah's Immanuel* (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1979).

### Course Requirements

1. Read Isaiah and Micah at least once through, and highlight the important verses in your Bible. Type the references (ie book, chapter, verse[s]) of those golden texts on a separate sheet to be handed up.
2. Read Tow's *Gospel Prophets* and log in the amount of time spent reading in your log sheet.
3. Write a paper on the historical background of Isaiah (minimum 1000 words)
4. There are those who attack the doctrine of the Virgin Birth of Christ by saying that Jesus did not directly fulfil the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14, that there was an initial fulfilment in the time of Isaiah (8th century BC). Write a paper to refute this double fulfilment view and to defend that there was only one Virgin Birth fulfilled only in Christ (minimum 1000 words). Use Hindson's *Isaiah's Immanuel*.
5. Write a paper explaining who Lucifer is in Isaiah 14:12-14 (minimum 1000 words).
6. Write a sermon on the Suffering Saviour of Isaiah 53 (minimum 1000 words).
7. Log in the number of hours spent on this course in Course Log Sheet. Minimum of 32 hours required.

### Course Submission

After you have completed the above assignments, staple them separately, and submit them with the cover sheet for grading. Do not forget to submit your Course Log Sheet. You may proceed to Course II: The Gospel of Life.

## Course II: The Gospel of Life (2 credits)

### Course Description

A study of the Gospel and Epistles of John with an emphasis on person of Christ, and the doctrines of eternal life.

## **Course Literature**

Timothy Tow, *The Gospel of Life: An Applied Commentary on the Gospel of John and on the Three Epistles* (Singapore: Christian Life Publishers, 1983).

## **Course Requirements**

1. Read the Gospel of John and the Three Epistles of John at least once through, and highlight the important verses in your Bible. Type the references (ie book, chapter, verse[s]) of those golden texts on a separate sheet to be handed up.
2. Read Tow's *Gospel of Life* and log in the amount of time spent reading in your log sheet.
3. Write a synopsis of each chapter of John's Gospel (about 200 words per chapter) using Rev Tow's "Pictures of Jesus Christ from the Gospel of Life" as an outline. For eg, under the theme, "To seekers of the eternal Logos, Jesus Christ is the Word of Life," explain in the light of John 1, how Jesus is the Word of Life.
4. Write a sermon on John 3:16 (minimum 1000 words).
5. Log in the number of hours spent on this course in a Course Log Sheet. Minimum of 32 hours required.

## **Course Submission**

After you have completed the above assignments, staple them separately, and submit them with the cover sheet for grading. Do not forget to submit your Course Log Sheet. You may proceed to Course III: Systematic Theology III.

## **Course III: Systematic Theology III (2 credits)**

### **Course Description**

This course is a study of the person of Christ, His deity, and His humanity, the doctrine and application of the atonement, and a study of the Church and the sacraments.

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### Course Literature

J Oliver Buswell, *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion* (Singapore: Christian Life Publishers, 1962). Reprinted by Christian Life Publishers, Singapore.

John P Sartelle, *Infant Baptism* (Phillipsburg: Reformed and Presbyterian Publishing Company, 1985).

### Course Requirements

1. Read Buswell's *Systematic Theology*, Vol II, pp 7-280. Record your reading in the Reading Log Sheet.
2. Write a paper on "The Kenosis of Christ (Phil 2:5-11): What did Christ Empty Himself of when He became Man?" Research into the topic and discuss in no less than 2000 words.
3. Write a paper on "Limited Atonement: Did Christ Die Only for the Elect?" Research into the topic and discuss in no less than 2000 words.
4. Read Sartelle's *Infant Baptism*, and write an essay explaining why Christian parents ought to send their infants for baptism (minimum 1000 words).
5. Write a paper on "The Calvinistic View of the Lord's Supper" (minimum 1000 words).
6. Log in the time you have spent on this course in the Course Log Sheet. Minimum of 32 hours required.

### Course Submission

After you have completed the above assignments, staple them separately, and submit them with the cover sheet for grading. Do not forget to submit your Course Log Sheet. You may proceed to Course IV: Calvin's Institutes.

## Course IV: Calvin's Institutes (2 credits)

### Course Description

This course offers a complete study of John Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Books I and II.

### **Course Literature**

Timothy Tow, editor, *Calvin's Institutes Abridged* (Singapore: Far Eastern Bible College Press, nd).

Timothy Tow, *A Glimpse of the Life and Works of John Calvin* (Singapore: Christian Life Publishers, 1993).

### **Course Requirements**

1. Read Tow's *Life and Works of John Calvin*, and write a paper on what we can learn from Calvin's example as a reformer, pastor, and theologian (minimum 1000 words).
2. Read *Calvin's Institutes Abridged* and record the amount of time spent in your Reading Log Sheet.
3. Write a paper on "The Five Points of Calvinism" (minimum 2000 words).
4. Write a paper on "The Similarities and Differences of the Old and New Testaments" (minimum 1000 words).
5. Log in the time you have spent on this course in the Course Log Sheet. Minimum of 32 hours required.

### **Course Submission**

After you have completed the above assignments, staple them separately, and submit them with the cover sheet for grading. Do not forget to submit your Course Log Sheet. You may proceed to Course V: Homiletics I.

## **Course V: Homiletics I (1 credit)**

### **Course Description**

This course is an introductory study of the principles of effective preaching.

### **Course Literature**

Timothy Tow, *John Sung My Teacher* (Singapore: Christian Life Publishers, 1985).



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### Course Requirements

1. Read *John Sung My Teacher*, and write a paper on what made John Sung such an effective preacher and servant of God (minimum 1000 words)
2. Write a sermon on Mark 8:36. Preach it to your congregation, Sunday School, or fellowship group. Audio tape the message preached.
3. Log in the time you have spent on this course in the Course Log Sheet. Minimum of 16 hours required.

### Course Submission

After you have completed the above assignments, submit your paper on John Sung, written sermon on Mk 8:36, and your preaching of that sermon on tape, with the cover sheet for grading. Do not forget to submit your Course Log Sheet also. You may proceed to Course VI: Biblical Counselling.

## Course VI: Biblical Counselling (1 credit)

### Course Description

Who is the qualified counsellor? Only one who has earned a degree in counselling and psychology? Dr William Phelps of Columbia University observed that the best textbook on psychology is the Bible. The course emphasises the need to know the Bible well in order to be proficient in counselling.

### Course Literature

Timothy Tow, *Counselling Recipes* (Singapore: Christian Life Publishers, 1994).

Timothy Tow, *Recipes for Living a Happy Life* (Singapore: Christian Life Publishers, 1993).

### Course Requirements

1. Read *Counselling Recipes*, and *Recipes for Living a Happy Life*, and clock the hours spent on the Reading Log Sheet.

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2. Read Psalms 1-150 at least once through. Record the time spent in a Reading Log Sheet.
3. Write a sermon on Psalm 23 (minimum 2000 words).
4. Log in the time you have spent on this course in the Course Log Sheet. Minimum of 16 hours required.

### **Course Submission**

After you have completed the above assignments, staple them separately, and submit them with the cover sheet for grading. Do not forget to submit your Course Log Sheet. You have completed Module III. Proceed to Module IV, Course I: Systematic Theology IV.

## **Module IV**

### **Course I: Systematic Theology IV (2 credits)**

#### **Course Description**

This course is a study of the term “eschatology,” the intermediate state, the resurrection of the body, the future kingdom of Christ, the Olivet discourse, and the eschatology of the Apocalypse.

#### **Course Literature**

J Oliver Buswell, *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion* (Singapore: Christian Life Publishers, 1962). Reprinted by Christian Life Publishers, Singapore.

H L Willmington, *The King is Coming* (Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1981). Special edition by Christian Life Publishers.

#### **Course Requirements**

1. Read Buswell’s *Systematic Theology*, Vol II, pp 281-541. Record your reading in the Reading Log Sheet.
2. Read Willmington’s *The King is Coming*, and log in the time spent in the Reading Log Sheet.
3. Write short papers on the following topics: (1) The Signs of Christ’s Return in Mat 24, (2) The Rapture, (3) The Judgment Seat of Christ,

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(4) The Great Tribulation, (5) The Harlot of Rev 17, (6) The Return of Christ, (7) The Millennium, (8) The Great White Throne Judgement, (9) Hell, (10) The New Jerusalem. Minimum of 500 words each.

4. Log in the time you have spent on this course in the Course Log Sheet. Minimum of 32 hours required.

### **Course Submission**

After you have completed the above assignments, staple them separately, and submit them with the cover sheet for grading. Do not forget to submit your Course Log Sheet. You may proceed to Course II: Hermeneutics.

## **Course II: Hermeneutics (2 credits)**

### **Course Description**

This course is designed to introduce the student to the various tools for Bible study, and to the basic principles of Biblical interpretation. The historical-grammatical-canonical method of interpretation is adopted.

### **Course Literature**

Henry Virkler, *Hermeneutics: Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981).

### **Course Requirements**

1. Read Virkler's *Hermeneutics* and record the time spent in a Reading Log Sheet.
2. Write a paper on "The History of Biblical Interpretation" (minimum 1000 words).
3. Using Virkler's book, complete the following assignments: (1) Define the following terms: (a) Historical-Cultural analysis, (b) Contextual analysis, (c) Lexical-syntactical analysis, (d) Theological analysis, and (e) Literary analysis; (2) Describe a six-step model that can be used to interpret any biblical text; (3) List and describe three basic steps involved in historical-cultural and contextual analysis; (4) Identify three ways of discerning an author's intention

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for writing a specific book; (5) List six important secondary steps involved in contextual analysis; (6) Apply the above principles in identifying misinterpretations of selected biblical texts and advancing more accurate interpretations of them. Minimum 500 words each.

4. Log in the time you have spent on this course in the Course Log Sheet. Minimum of 32 hours required.

### **Course Submission**

After you have completed the above assignments, staple them separately, and submit them with the cover sheet for grading. Do not forget to submit your Course Log Sheet. You may proceed to Course III: Westminster Confession of Faith.

## **Course III: Westminster Confession of Faith (2 credits)**

### **Course Description**

This course offers a study of the background and content of the Westminster Confession of Faith.

### **Course Literature**

G I Williamson, *The Westminster Confession of Faith for Study Classes* (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1964).

### **Course Requirements**

1. Read Williamson's exposition of the Westminster Confession. Answer all questions found in his book (eg in pp 3, 9, 12 etc). Most of the questions may be answered in 2-3 sentences. So be succinct.
2. Log in the time spent reading and writing in your Course Log Sheet. Minimum of 32 hours required.

### **Course Submission**

After you have completed the above assignments, staple them separately, and submit them with the cover sheet for grading. Do not

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forget to submit your Course Log Sheet. You may proceed to Course IV: Biblical Separation.

### **Course IV: Biblical Separation (1 credit)**

#### **Course Description**

This course discusses the neglected doctrine of separation from a Biblical perspective by studying the texts propounding it from Genesis to Revelation.

#### **Course Literature**

Ernest Pickering, *Biblical Separation: The Struggle for a Pure Church* (Schaumburg ILL: Regular Baptist Press, 1979).

Fred Moritz, *“Be Ye Holy”: The Call to Christian Separation* (Greenville SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1994).

#### **Course Requirements**

1. Read Pickering’s *Biblical Separation*, and Moritz’s *“Be Ye Holy.”* Record your reading time in a Reading Log Sheet.
2. Write a sermon on 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1, and another one on 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15 (minimum of 1000 words each). Log in the time you have spent writing the sermons on a Course Log Sheet.
3. Fulfil a minimum of 16 hours of work for this course.

#### **Course Submission**

After you have completed the above assignments, staple them separately, and submit them with the cover sheet for grading. Do not forget to submit your Course Log Sheet. You may proceed to Course V: Charismatism.

### **Course V: Charismatism (1 credit)**

#### **Course Description**

This course examines the modern-day signs and wonders movement in the light of Holy Scriptures.

### **Course Literature**

Robert G Gromacki, *The Modern Tongues Movement* (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1967).

Timothy Tow, *Wang Ming Tao and Charismatism* (Singapore: Christian Life Publishers, 1989).

### **Course Requirements**

1. Read Gromacki's *Modern Tongues Movement*, and Tow's *Wang Ming Tao and Charismatism*. Record the time spent on this in a Reading Log Sheet.
2. Is the Charismatic Movement of God or not? Write an essay in answer to this question in no less than 2000 words.
3. Log in the time you have spent on this course in the Course Log Sheet. Minimum of 16 hours required.

### **Course Submission**

After you have completed the above assignments, staple them separately, and submit them with the cover sheet for grading. Do not forget to submit your Course Log Sheet. You may proceed to Course VI: Homiletics II.

## **Course VI: Homiletics II (1 credit)**

### **Course Description**

This course is an introductory study of the principles of effective preaching.

### **Course Literature**

Charles H Spurgeon, *Lectures to My Students* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1954).

### **Course Requirements**

1. Read Spurgeon's *Lectures to My Students*, and write a summary of no less than 1000 words.

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2. Write a sermon on the Parable of the Sower (Mat 13:3-23). Preach it to your congregation, Sunday School, or fellowship group. Audio tape the message preached.
3. Log in the time you have spent on this course in the Course Log Sheet. Minimum of 16 hours required.

### **Course Submission**

After you have completed the above assignments, submit your summary of Spurgeon's book, written sermon on Mat 13:3-23, and your preaching of that sermon on tape, with the cover sheet for grading. Do not forget to submit your Course Log Sheet also. You may proceed to Course VI: Church Growth.

### **Course VI: Church Growth (1 credit)**

#### **Course Description**

A study of missions and church growth principles in the light of the Bible-Presbyterian Movement. An introduction to systems, methods, and practical geniuses for immediate use in the local church.

#### **Course Literature**

Timothy Tow, *Forty Years on the Road to Church Growth* (Singapore: Christian Life Publishers, 1993).

Timothy Tow, *Chronicles of Conquest* (Singapore: Christian Life Publishers, 1990).

#### **Course Requirements**

1. Read *Forty Years to Church Growth*, and *Chronicles of Conquest*. Log in the hours spent reading in a Reading Log Sheet.
2. Write an essay discussing the principles of missions and church growth you have gathered from the above books, and relate how you intend to apply them in your own Church situation (minimum 2000 words).
3. Log in the time you have spent on this course in the Course Log Sheet. Minimum of 16 hours required.

## **Course Submission**

After you have completed the above assignments, staple them separately, and submit them with the cover sheet for grading. Do not forget to submit your Course Log Sheet. Congratulations! You have completed the CertRK programme. Your certificate will be awarded during the College graduation after all your grades have been verified, and fees paid.

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(Books required for the off-campus CertRK programme)

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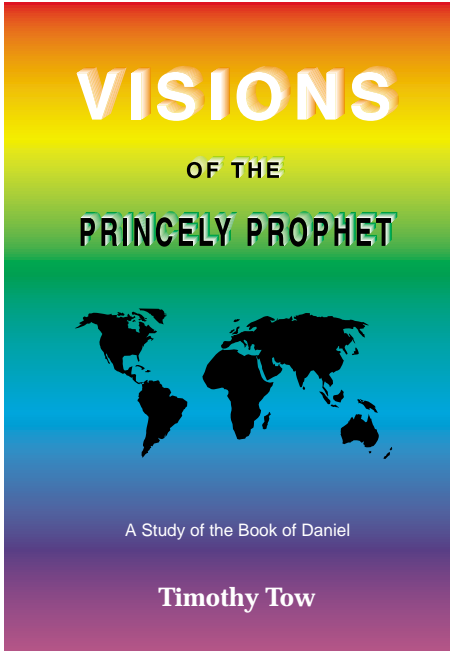
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- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Gospel Prophets: An Applied Commentary on Isaiah and Micah*. Singapore: Christian Life Publishers, nd.
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# Latest Release!

From the Pen of the Principal



While it is everybody's wish that this world will get better and bring a happier livelihood, the fact is we are faced with setbacks all the time. Setbacks in the physical realm, setbacks in the economic realm, setbacks in the political realm, setbacks in the ecclesiastical realm. This is foretold by Jesus Christ in Matthew 24:5-8, "For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars... For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows."

As this book goes to press, we are still reading about the Kobe Earthquake. Earthquakes in the Economic realm are just as serious when Mexico's Financial Collapse,

being barely bailed out, is followed by the plunge of the U.S. dollar. The case of an English executive of England's oldest bank involving the loss of \$1 billion through fraudulent trading in Singapore is another atom bomb that rocks the banking world. In the light of Jesus' prophecy, more and more setbacks are in the offing. Is there a way out of the whole mess?

The Bible is God's Word to us. While its primary message is to show us Jesus is God's Son sent into the world to save us from sin and hell by His death on the Cross and Resurrection for our justification, it has a special message for these end-times to deliver us out of the terrible destructions just ahead. Daniel's Prophecy has much to say about this, and so does Revelation. These two prophetic books of the Bible predict so many events that are being fulfilled one by one today.

This study on Daniel under the title, *Visions of the Princely Prophet*, is for Christians. But it is made easy that a non-Christian with sincere searching heart may also see light and be delivered from the Judgment to come. Our only hope is in the Return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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