



The G.E.M.

Volume 2 Edition 3

The Grace Electronic Magazine

March 2008

TIME FOR THE CROSS

Just as life seems to be back to normal after the Christmas season, Easter is already upon us. Join us this month as we turn our eyes to the cross. The single most important event, not only on the Christian calendar, but also in terms of world history. No person has impacted the world as much as Jesus, and no event more so than His death and resurrection.

Join us as we share in the lives of three people in the New Testament whose lives were radically changed by these two events. In our devotion we join the two men who walked with Jesus on their way home to Emmaus, while our main article on page 3 is a little different to the usual, peering into the mind of the second thief on the cross.

This month's *Word Sudoku* on page 2 is a little more challenging, while our *Missions Spotlight* this month looks at the lesser known neighbour of Israel, Jordan.

Finally, be on the look out for some exciting specials coming to you this month. Keep checking your inbox and our website for details!

Until next time,
God bless.



In This Issue

<i>Devotion</i>	1
<i>Diary of Events</i>	1
<i>Missions Spotlight</i>	2
<i>Shop Window</i>	2
<i>Word Sudoku</i>	2
<i>Top 25 Must Reads</i>	2
<i>The Second Thief</i>	3
<i>On Promotion</i>	4

THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

We all go through times of doubt in our lives. It has been said that if you tell a man that there are 6 billion stars in the universe, he will believe you. But if a sign says "wet paint," he has to investigate it for himself.

In Luke 24:13-32 we find two followers of Jesus filled with their own doubts, as they walked the road to Emmaus. They had believed that Jesus was the Messiah, but now, after the crucifixion, their minds were filled with questions and doubt. It is true that Jesus had spoken many words about his resurrection, but like all the other disciples, these two did not seem to understand or believe them.

While they were talking about the events that had just happened in Jerusalem, Jesus appeared alongside them. He asked them about the conversation they were having, and then held a Bible study for them. Beginning in the first five books of the Old Testament He worked His way through the various books showing how they spoke of the coming Messiah and how they foretold of His suffering. They found his teaching so fascinating that they later said, "*did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us?*" (v32)

As they drew near to their home, Jesus acted as if He would continue down the road. But the disciples pleaded with

Him to stay the night with them. Their minds had been opened. Now Christ was going to open their hearts.

When Jesus sat down to eat with them, the men noticed a familiar action in the breaking of bread. They had seen that before - the way he took the bread, the prayer with which he blessed it, and the way he broke it. They recognised these actions and suddenly God opened their eyes to see that the man hidden under unfamiliar clothes was indeed Jesus - the one who had been crucified on the cross was now dining with them.

Perhaps as you approach the Easter season, you also have doubts about God or about his promises. Whenever things do not go the way we think they should, it is easy for us to have doubts about God or his promises to us. The Christian walk is one of faith, often without direct tangible evidence that what we believe to be the truth is, in fact, true.

If you are ready to let go of your questions and scepticism, then invite Jesus to join you and commune with you. Jesus never forces himself on anyone, instead we are to open the door to Him as He gently knocks on the outside. Through His Word and the Holy Spirit, He will shine His light into the darkness of your heart, and you will suddenly see things that you have never seen before. He will do the same for you as the men in verse 32, "*he opened to us the scriptures,*" and you will find your doubts begin to disappear. †

DIARY OF EVENTS

Daniel Conference with Angus Buchan
14-16 March 2008 at NG Gemeente, Moreleta
For more information visit: www.moreleta.org

Josh Groban Concert
29 March 2008 at the Sun City Superbowl
Book at <http://www.computicket.com/>

Mighty Men 2008 Conference
18-20 April 2008 at Shalom Farm, Greytown
For more information visit: www.shalomtrust.co.za

Christian Business Expo
7-8 June 2008 at the Expo Centre, NASREC.
For more information visit: www.christianexpo.co.za

MISSIONS SPOTLIGHT

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Al-Mamlakah al-Urdunniyyah
al-Hāšimīyyah

Capital: Amman

Official Languages: Arabic

Currency:
Jordanian Dinar



Population:
5,924,000

Government:
Constitutional Monarchy

Jordan consists of arid desert plateau in the east irrigated by Oasis and seasonal water stream, with Highland area in the west of arable land and Mediterranean evergreen forestry. The Great Rift Valley of the Jordan River separates Jordan, the west bank and Israel. The highest point in the country is Jabal Ram (1,734m), while the lowest is the Dead Sea (-486m). Jordan is part of a region considered to be "the cradle of civilization." The climate in Jordan is dry in summer with average temperature in the mid-30c° and relatively cold in winter averaging around the 0c°.

Jordanian Christians permanently residing in Jordan form approximately 12% of the population and have 20% of the seats in parliament. Most Christians belong to the Greek Orthodox church (called *Room Urthudux* in Arabic). The rest are Roman Catholics (called *Lateen*), Eastern Catholics (called *Room Katoleek* to distinguish them from Western Catholics), and various Protestant communities including Baptists. Christians in Jordan are of many nationalities, with the Catholic mass being celebrated in Arabic, English, French, Italian, Spanish, Tagalog and Sinhala, as well as in Iraqi dialects of Arabic. However, Jordanian Christians are indigenous Arabs that share the Greater culture of Jordan and the Broader East Mediterranean Levantine Arab Identity.

Other Jordanians belonging to religious minorities include adherents to the Druze and Bahá'í Faith, which fall administratively under Islamic denomination.

Missionary Organisation to Jordan:

World Gospel Mission
Website: <http://www.wgm.org/>

SHOP WINDOW

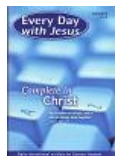
ChristianGames.co.za

**BOARD GAMES - CARD GAMES
PUZZLES - SOFTWARE
SUITABLE FOR ALL AGES & GROUPS!**

For affordable internet hosting and web design.



Contact us now at
gwalker@consult.co.za



Every Day with Jesus
Bi-monthly devotionals

Never miss a quiet time again!
Arrange a standing order with
GRACE MEDIA
TODAY!



Biblical Archaeology
Review Magazine

A fascinating read
Buy your copy today at
GRACE MEDIA

JOY!

JOY! Magazine

Real Life
Real People
Real Christianity

Available at
GRACE MEDIA

TODAY

Today Magazine

available monthly at **GRACE MEDIA**

vision

Vision Magazine

Your passion
your purpose

Available at
GRACE MEDIA

MyWorld
Living My Word in your world makes the difference

Available bi-monthly at
GRACE MEDIA

To advertise your church, ministry, business, event or product in the *Shop Window* or on the Grace Media website, contact Glyn Williams on 011-454-6045 or webmaster@gracemedia.co.za

WORD SUDOKU

This puzzle works in the same manner as normal Sudoku, except that the numbers have been replaced with letters.

When complete, revealed in the shaded area will be the word that completes the following verse: *They roasted the Passover animals over the fire as prescribed, and boiled the holy offerings in pots, _____ and pans and served them quickly to all the people. [2 Chron. 35:13]*

Last Month's Solution

U	C	I	E	M	D	S	N	O
M	O	N	I	S	U	E	C	D
S	E	D	N	C	O	U	I	M
E	U	S	M	N	C	O	D	I
N	I	C	O	D	E	M	U	S
O	D	M	S	U	I	N	E	C
C	S	E	U	I	M	D	O	N
D	N	O	C	E	S	I	M	U
I	M	U	D	O	N	C	S	E

Answer in next edition.

Letters Used

A C D L N O R S U

		O		R	D	L	A		
	D			L		S		N	
	R		S		N				C
O			U		A			R	
U		N			S				C
	L	A		D	N		U		

Top 25 Must Reads

WHO MOVED THE STONE?
by Frank Morison

Convinced that the story was not true, Frank Morison started to write about Jesus' last days, the cross and the resurrection. However, as he studied this crucial period, something happened ...

First published in 1930, this is an in-depth exploration of the events between the death and resurrection of Jesus as recorded in the Bible. It is crammed with vital detail that every Christian should know, and is a powerful tool for those questioning Christianity.

Writing this book changed Morison's life. Will you let it change yours?

R120.00



THE SECOND THIEF

I do not belong here, I really don't. Heaven is the last place I expected to be after all I have done. But let me tell you the story of how I ended up here.

I am, or should I say, I was an armed robber. I used to hang out with the rest of the bandits in the hills near the road between Jericho and Jerusalem. We made our living robbing the people who travelled along the road. We would never try to take people who travelled in big groups. In fact it was because of us that they travelled together. Families were usually easy targets, as well as anybody foolish enough to travel alone.

I sometimes carried a sword, but usually a strong staff was enough to do the trick. Just the threat of a beating would encourage them to give up without a fight. I would never hurt a person if I did not have to, and I never touched the women or children. I was known to have broken a few bones in my day, but I do not think that I actually killed anyone. Then again, I never stayed around long enough to find out.

Our caves were near those of the Zealots, those revolutionaries who were trying to overthrow the Roman government. To be honest, I even went on few missions with them. That is how I ended up with the sword in the first place.

It was through one of my Zealot friends, Achan, that I actually heard Jesus the first time. Achan knew one of the disciples, Simon - not Peter, the other Simon, the one who had been a Zealot before becoming a disciple.

We went down to Jericho one day when Jesus was passing through. I was working the crowd as usual. The rich Pharisees would linger near the edge, listening intently so as to find some teaching they could report Him for. I lifted their fat purses so easily. They never felt a thing when in a big crowd.

After Jesus finished his talk, Achan took me over to meet his friend Simon the Zealot. He wanted to introduce me to the Rabbi, but that was not for me. Why would I, a thief of ill-repute, want to meet the Rabbi?

The next day we were in the crowd again, but instead of working, we were listening this time. Jesus was talking about His Kingdom, comparing it to a mustard seed, calling it the Kingdom of Heaven. Every so often His eyes would meet mine. It felt as though He could see right into me, who I was, every dark

thing I had ever done, said or even thought. Once or twice it felt like He was speaking directly into my soul, saying "You know, forgiveness and the Kingdom are available to you too."

I so wanted to go up there and take Him up on this forgiveness thing, but I just could not bring myself to do it. I kept dropping my eyes, and eventually shuffled away before he had finished teaching, returning to my home in the hills.

It was not that much later when my friend Heber and I ended up being caught at night by a Roman patrol. The others had run off, but we were arrested, beaten, dragged to Jerusalem, and thrown into their filthy, stinking prison. There was to be no mercy for us.

It so happens that on the day that they crucify Jesus, they crucify Heber and I, one on either side of Him. But this was no normal crucifixion. There were hundreds of people there. Those self-righteous Pharisees came too, making fun of Jesus, talking so high and mighty: "If you are the Messiah, come down from that cross," one shouted. "Saviour, save yourself - if you can!" shouted another. The soldiers were even casting lots for his clothes while His mother and the closest of His friends watched.

Believe it or not, Heber also began mocking Jesus. I eventually moaned at him, "You miserable thug, do you not have any fear of God? Can you not see that we are going to die just like he is? Show a little decency. We are receiving exactly what we deserve, but he has done absolutely nothing wrong."

Heber quietened down after that and the Pharisees began to lose interest. But I could not get Jericho out of my mind. I kept remembering Jesus' eyes meeting mine, with a readiness to forgive. I kept hearing his words in my head inviting me into His Kingdom.

I called over to Jesus. "Jesus!" He turned his head towards me.

"Jesus, I was there in the crowd in Jericho. You looked straight into my eyes and spoke deep into my soul." He looked at me for a moment and then nodded his head just a little. It seemed as though He remembered.

"I never forgot what you said. I wanted to say yes, but just could not bring myself to do it. And now look at me - look at us!"

He was in bad shape - exhausted, breath labouring, in excruciating pain, bleeding, and flesh torn open from the

whipping he had received earlier. I did not think that He was going to last as long as Heber or me, but somehow I could see beyond all that. He was the Messiah, is the Messiah. No matter what the Pharisees, priests and Romans had done to him, when he died, he was going to be with God. In a few hours, maybe less, he would be vindicated. He would be reigning in His Kingdom.

"Jesus," I called, quietly now. Saying one word at a time through each difficult breath. He opened his eyes again. They were the same eyes, the same piercing, loving, honest eyes that peered deep into my soul in Jericho.

"Jesus," I said, "when you come into your Kingdom, would you remember me? Please?"

His words were laboured. He was thirsty, near death, but I can still hear his words: "Truly, I say to you, this very day you will be with me in Paradise."

His eyes drooped as his life began to fade. But I believed him. That was what pulled me through those next few hours until they broke my legs to kill me.

And then I find myself in heaven. I do not deserve to be here, but here I am. I guess that is what a man like me gets for accepting a King's pardon!

Even though this story is based on the account in Luke 23:32-43, many of the details are obviously fictional. †



Inspirational Read

Living in the Grace of God by Rob Rufus

This is an excellent and practical guide to show us that true Christian victory is simply learning to live in the grace of God – a lesson that so many of us need to hear again and again.

Read and then live out the contents of this book.

R110.00



EASTER PRODUCTS



Resurrection Eggs
Egg-cellent tool for teaching children the Easter story



The Story of Little Tree CD
An endearing Easter fable!



My Son, the Savior
A mother's story
by Melody Carlson



The Passion and the Empty Tomb
by John Ankerberg & John Weldon



The Blood of the Cross
by Andrew Murray

CHILDREN'S TITLES



Family-Time Bible in Pictures
by Kenneth N. Taylor



100 Bible Stories for Children



The Easter Swallows
by Vicki Howie



My First Easter Sticker Book



Giant Book to Color Bible Stories
Colouring Book

MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT



God Bless Africa CD
by Mari Michael
As Seen in JOY! Magazine



I Just Wanna Be a Sheep CD
by Brian M. Howard
Exclusive to Grace Media



Tell the World CD
by Hillsong Kids
DVD available at R170



Assorted Puzzles
10 designs available



Bible Blurt
The Bible Game of Word Racing

SHEKEL CARD



Loyalty Programme

Join our Shekel Card Loyalty Programme today and start to make a difference in someone's life.

Every purchase you make qualifies for Shekels (points) that will be given to you every August, while at the same time raising money for a local ministry, missionary or other worthy Christian charity.

TRADING HOURS:

Monday – Friday:

9am – 5pm

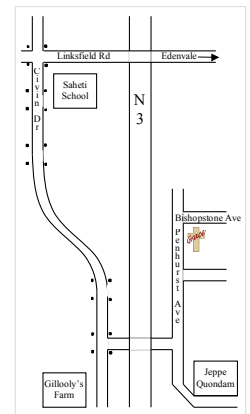
Saturday:

9am – 2pm

Closed Sundays and some Public Holidays

2 Bishopstone Ave,
Essexwold, Johannesburg
Tel.: 011-454-6045
Fax: 086-654-2996
www.gracemedia.co.za
shop@gracemedia.co.za

From the N3, take the Linksfield Rd off ramp. Turn right up hill. Stay in left lane. Turn left into Civin Dr. At 4th set of lights, turn left under bridge. At t-junction turn left. Through the boom. We are ± 200m on the right hand side. Entrance is in Penhurst Ave.



And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross!
(Philippians 2:8)