



The G.E.M.

Volume 3 Edition 8

The Grace Electronic Magazine

August 2009

REFLECT ON GOD'S BLESSINGS

August is always a special time of the year for us at Grace Media – it is our birthday month, and this year sees us celebrating our third year. In celebration of this, all Shekel Card holders can enjoy double points on all purchases from today until 31 August, before we award our loyal customers with their annual Shekel Voucher, and a local ministry with an equal donation, in September.

We will also be having some special prizes in September, along with a competition for the little ones. So be on the lookout for your next edition of *The G.E.M.* early September.

Please note that due to our attending an annual sales conference in search of finding some exciting new products, we will be closed for three days from 27 to 29 August. We will back to normal trading hours on 31 August.

On Monday 10 August, the public holiday, we will be open from 9am-2pm. So if you are at a loss of something to do, why not pay us a visit and enjoy the warm and friendly atmosphere, with a complimentary tea and cake.

As promised last month, we will be sending out a specials list to all of our loyal customers, so keep an eye on your inbox this coming week.

Until next time,

Grace and Peace,
Glyn and Linda. †

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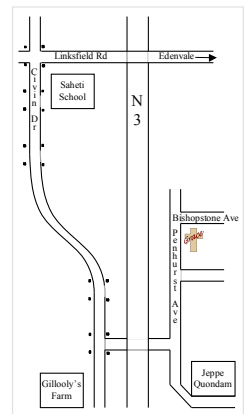
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Directions: From the N3, take the Linksfeld Rd off ramp. Turn right up hill. Stay in left lane. Turn left into Civin Dr. At the stop street at the road works, turn left under bridge. At t-junction turn left. Through the boom. We are ± 200m on the right hand side. Entrance is in Penhurst Ave.



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

BIBLE BASICS

Ruth *The Book of Faith*

After reading about the decline of the nation of Israel during the time of the judges, the book of Ruth gives a completely different picture.

In Judges 17-21 we are shown a pretty dreary picture of life in Israel, but in this short book of only four chapters, we read a story of hope that even within the sad state of affairs, there is still a remnant of people living Godly lives.

Author: The author of the book of Ruth is unknown.

Date: It is not clear as to when the book of Ruth was written, but due to the content of the story, it has been said that it could have been written during the time of David's reign.

We do however know that the events portrayed in the story took place during the times of the judges – “*In the days when the judges ruled*” (1:1). Given that Ruth was David's great grandmother, it is suggested that the events could have occurred during the time of Gideon.

Content: The book of Ruth tells a single, yet beautifully and simply written, story of Ruth and Naomi and their return to Bethlehem.

The two women have no means of support or income, so Ruth goes to the fields during the time of the harvest to glean. Boaz, the owner of the field, notices Ruth, tells her to keep on returning to the field, and promises her protection.

Naomi realises that Boaz is a relative of her family and a possible kinsman redeemer. Ruth approaches Boaz at the threshing floor and makes a request for him to fulfil the role. He is willing, but there is another who is a nearer relation. The other relation is unwilling to take Ruth as his wife, so he surrenders his claim to Boaz.

The story ends with the marriage of Ruth to Boaz, and the genealogy from Ruth through to King David.

Basic Outline:

- The choice (11-5)
- Return to Bethlehem (1:6-22)
- Meeting Boaz (2:1-19)
- Naomi's Plan (2:20-3:18)
- Marriage of Boaz and Ruth (4:1-21)

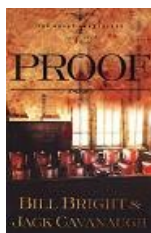
Key Verse: “*Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God*” (1:16).

Lesson: The book of Ruth is a welcome reminder that a Godly life is possible, even when we are living in a society that is saturated by sin. And if they could do it then, we can do it today.

To learn more about the relationship between Ruth's kinsman-redeemer and our redeemer, Jesus Christ, read the article *Our Redeemer* that appeared in the December 2008 edition of *The G.E.M.* †

PRODUCT REVIEWS

PROOF by Bill Bright & Jack Cavanaugh



Shortly before his death in 2003, Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade for Christ teamed up with Jack Cavanaugh, to write a series of fiction novels called The Great Awakenings Series.

This series is based in the times of revival in America. They portray the lives of Christians “who were great believers, great hoppers, great doers, and great sufferers” to use his own words.

Proof, the first in the series of four books, tells the story of a young aspiring lawyer from the lower class of New York life, named Harrison Shaw, during the revival of 1857/8. The tale opens with him winning an internship from a coveted New York attorney, J.K. Jarves, beating other more qualified candidates.

Soon he is forced to choose between success and his Christian faith. A decision that at first seems to cost him everything that he had worked for. Through a few twists and turns, Harrison begins a relationship with J.K. Jarves' daughter, Victoria, which puts even more enmity between Harrison and Jarves.

Jarves then tries to take Harrison to the cleaners to the extent that he even puts Harrison's church on trial.

Inspired by actual revival events, this is a gripping tale that keeps you guessing through many of its pages. With a few surprises along the way, this is a courtroom drama that is free from the entanglements of modern courtroom tales.

This is an excellent read for those who like to read stories about people standing up for their faith, romance and historical drama.

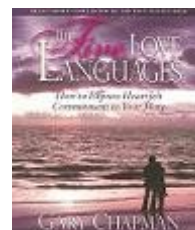
To learn more about this series, visit www.thegreatawakenings.org.

Our Price: R 130

Other titles in the Great Awakenings series:

- Book 2 - Fire
- Book 3 - Storm
- Book 4 - Fury

THE FIVE LOVE LANGUAGES DVD by Dr Gary Chapman



The Five Languages series of books by Dr Gary Chapman certainly need no introduction. They have remained top sellers throughout the world for the last decade. Reading each of the titles will not only inspire you, but change your life forever.

Do you know what your love language is? Can you even name them? And no, French is not one of them.

Through this series of books, Dr Gary Chapman presents that there are five ways that people both express and like to receive love. They are, words of affirmation, quality time, acts of service, gift giving, and physical touch. Each of these languages, in one way or another, are expressed or received by all people of all ages. Whether it be in your marriage relationship, your disciplining of your children, even interacting with your work colleagues, these books will help you to relate to people in a better way, helping them to continually fill their love tanks.

This DVD set, candidly presented by Dr Gary Chapman himself, is an excellent tool for couples as an introduction to the concept as a whole. Presented in short sessions of 10-40 minutes each, this DVD set will help you to look at your own life and relationship in a new way.

This is a great an extremely worthwhile DVD set to use within your small group or church as a study, for marriage groups, the engage, and even for those who are currently only dating.

Our Price: R 390

Some other book titles by Dr Gary Chapman:

- The Five Love Languages* - R130
- The Five Love Languages of Children* - R150
- The Five Love Languages of Teenagers* - R150
- The Five Love Languages for Singles* - R150
- The Five Languages of Apology* - R130
- Now You're Speaking my Language* - R110
- The Marriage You've Always Wanted* - R120
- Anger* - R140
- Covenant Marriage* - R130
- Desperate Marriages* - R130
- The Four Seasons of Marriage* - R100
- NEW TITLE** - *Love is a Verb* - R130

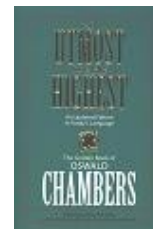
Top 25 Must Reads

My Utmost for His Highest by Oswald Chambers

This book is a must to helping you get to know Jesus Christ more intimately. Oswald Chambers really gets to the heart of what God's Word says and gets you to examine yourself in revealing anything that is keeping you from being like Jesus. It will help you grow leaps and bounds in your walk with Him!

My Utmost for His Highest, Oswald Chambers best-known book, has been continuously in print since 1935, and it remains to this day in the top ten titles of the Christian book bestseller list with millions of copies in print. It is indeed a Christian classic.

Now available in today's English.



R 160

WHY DOES GOD BLESS US?

Would you like God to bless you? Is it even right for us to ask for God's blessing, or is that selfish?

In 1 Chronicles 4:10 we read, "Jabez cried out to the God of Israel, "Oh, that you would bless me and enlarge my territory! Let your hand be with me, and keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain." And God granted his request."

Why did God grant Jabez's request, and what is the reason for God's blessing? There are many ways we can answer those questions from the Bible: God is good, He loves us, and His delight is to do good to us.

But there is one key reason why God blesses His people, and to find it, we will look at Psalm 67.

Why Does God Bless Us?

Psalm 67 begins in a way that sounds similar to the prayer of Jabez, yet goes deeper: "May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine upon us, that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations" (vv1-2).

It is important to take note here of what the psalmist is not saying – it is not saying "Bless me so that I can live comfortably", or "Bless me so that I can be successful", or "Bless me because I love you."

He is not even saying, as many of us seem to ask today, "Bless me so that I can bless others". Yes, God does indeed bless us in ways that we may be able to serve and bless others, but this is not the fundamental reason for God's blessing.

Instead we see here that the psalmist is asking for God's blessing for the reason that God's ways may be known on earth. To paraphrase he is saying: "Bless me, so that I may glorify You", or "Bless me so that I may show You, Your power, love, majesty, and goodness to the world."

God's main reason for blessing us is first and foremost so that we can bring glory to His name.

Let us look a little further into Psalm 67.

Hebrew Poetry

Hebrew poetry is generally structured with a central idea in the middle, with other ideas that parallel each other surrounding it. This structure is not always obvious, but here in Psalm 67 it is particularly so.

If you read verse 1-2 and then verse 6-7, you will see they have a similar meaning. The psalmist is asking God to bless them, and then ends by confirming that He will indeed bless, in this case partially through an abundant harvest. The Psalm begins and ends with the same reason for God's blessings, that His name may be glorified among the nations.

This idea is not limited only to Psalm 67 however, there are many passages in the Bible that one could cite. It is a fundamental Biblical truth. Unfortunately, however, it

often becomes easier for us to think of God as some kind of heavenly social worker or bellboy. He is there to serve us, provide for us, comfort us, and care for us. Our focus is more on man's needs, than on God's glory.

Over three hundred and fifty years ago, a group of ministers met in Westminster, England, to develop a common confession of faith. This came to be known as the Westminster Catechism. The first question that they answered was, "What is the chief end of man?" And the answer they came up with is: "The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever".

In short, God does not exist to meet our needs; rather, we exist to glorify and enjoy Him.

So why does God bless us? He does so that we might fulfil our chief end: to glorify Him.

Among Who?

Note that verses 3 and 5 are not only parallel in meaning, but are identical in their wording, and they tell us to whom God's name is to be glorified among.

Is it to be glorified among other believers? Those who call themselves Christians? Among those within our own congregation? No. These verses show us that God's goal is far broader than that: "May the peoples praise you, O God; may all the peoples praise you."

God does not only seek to have His name glorified with those that already know Him, but by ALL peoples.

Note the verse reads "peoples" and not "people". The point here is not just that every person as individuals will praise Him, but rather all nations, people groups, communities. God seeks not to only have His name glorified by people one-by-one as though it is a private matter, but by people collectively. It is a public affair.

It is also stressing the point that there is no people group on earth that is exempt from worshipping God. Therefore, the Great

Commission given to the disciples in Matthew 28, will not be complete until there is true worship among every people group on earth. We are to reach out not only to those in our own culture and neighbourhoods, but also cross-culturally to those who are different from us. There are thousands of people groups still unreached, and millions with no Christian witnesses from their own culture. We must focus our efforts on reaching these unreached groups, so that God's name may be glorified.

So the psalmist tells us in Psalm 67 that God blesses us so that all the peoples will praise His name.

The Impact

Taking the overall structure into account, verse 4 therefore is the middle verse of the Psalm, "May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you rule the peoples justly and guide the nations of the earth."

When we praise God, when He is glorified in our lives, what happens? God's joy fills our

hearts. When we do not praise Him, we are bound by fear and live a life without joy.

But why? Well, as verse 4 tells us, because God is ruling and guiding us. No other ruler, authority or god will ever be just and upright in our lives. None other will guide us in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake (see Psalm 23:3). If God is not at the center as the most desirable, loving, powerful of all beings, recognised for who He is, what He does, and in relationship with us, then we will never experience the true joy that comes from Him.

Blessings are about Him, not me!

Therefore, when we are glorifying Him, we will be the most satisfied in our lives. We will have that peace that passes understanding, the joy that is our strength, and the desire to glorify Him more.

Conclusion

Psalm 67 therefore has helped us to answer the question we began with; why does God bless us?

Firstly, so that His name may be glorified. Secondly, so that God may be glorified among ALL peoples. And thirdly, that He is in control and as a result, we will be completely satisfied in Him.

But note the order through the structure of the Psalm: firstly that His name be glorified, then the nations praise Him, then we are satisfied, then the nations praise Him again as a result of our satisfaction, and finally He is glorified again, as the realisation that He is Almighty God.

The blessings we receive are all about Him, not us!

When seeking God's blessing ask Him to bless you in a way that will bring glory to Him. Do not ask for a temporal blessing that does not give Him glory.

Ask Him to bless you in such a way that peoples who do not know Him might come to do so. So that you can witness boldly and lovingly to those you encounter daily.

Ask God for all this, so that He might be recognised as God and glorified in every language on this planet, to the great joy of all the peoples. Amen! †

God blesses us to bring glory to His name!

INSPIRATIONAL DVD

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by Louie Giglio and Andy Stanley

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R 200

THE BACK PAGE

THAT'S IN THE BIBLE?

How well do you know the Good Book?

All answers are found in the book of Ruth.

Use the following 16 words to complete each of the verses below:

Famine	Dead	Feet	Moabitess
Bethlehem	Mara	Bread	Perfume
Shawl	Orpah	Elimelech	Living
Bitter	Morning	Obed	Vinegar

- Now Naomi had a relative on her husband's side, from the clan of ____.
- Wash and ____ yourself, and put on your best clothes.
- At mealtime Boaz said to her, "Come over here. Have some ____ and dip it in the wine ____."
- The women living there said, "Naomi has a son." And they named him ____.
- In the days when the judges ruled, there was a ____ in the land
- So she lay at his ____ until ____
- "He has not stopped showing his kindness to the ____ and the ____."
- Bring me the ____ you are wearing
- So Naomi returned from Moab accompanied by Ruth the ____.
- So the two women went on until they came to ____.
- Then ____ kissed her mother-in-law
- Call me ____, because the Almighty has made my life very ____.

Answers in the Next Edition

Last Month's Answers: 1. Elon (1:21-12) 2. Ehad (3:12-30) 3. Jephthah (10:12-15) 4. Samson (13:3-24) 5. Barak (4) 6. Othniel (3:7-11) 7. Deborah (4-5) 8. Shagar (3:31) 9. Abdon (12:13-15) 10. Tola (10:1-2) 11. Ibzan (12:8-10) 12. Jair (10:3-5)

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Find the following words in the above grid.

Ammiadab	Bethlehem	Boaz	David	Elimelech	Ephrathah
Hezron	Jesse	Judah	Kilion	Leah	Mahlon
Mara	Moab	Nahshon	Naomi	Obed	Orpah
Perez	Rachel	Ram	Ruth	Salmon	Tamar

KIND KING SOLOMON

"King Solomon," declared a little girl in Sunday School, "is my favourite character in the Bible - because he was so kind to women and animals."

The startled teacher asked, "Who told you that?"

"Nobody told me; I read it myself in the Bible," asserted the little girl. "It says Solomon kept seven hundred wives and three hundred porcupines."

DIARY OF EVENTS

Missions Weekend with George Verwer

21-23 August 2009.
Rosebank Union Church, Johannesburg.

Parenting & Business Seminars with Rob Parsons

2-10 September 2009.
Port Elizabeth, Durban, Johannesburg, Pretoria & Zambia.

Dream a New Dream Women's Conference

18 & 19 September 2009.
Rosebank Union Church, Johannesburg.

National Teacher's Convention

24-27 September 2009.
Bloemfontein.

Visit our website for more info on these and other exciting Christian events.

"Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God"

Ruth 1:16b

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