



# The G.E.M.

Volume 4 Edition 4

The Grace Electronic Magazine

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## REMEMBER TO CHOOSE WISELY

April is upon us, and with it comes all the vibrant autumn colours. Trees displaying red, yellow and gold leaves are all around us. It is such a colourful season.

As the seasons of the earth change before our lives, so do the seasons of our lives, and how we handle those changes has a lot to do with the decisions we face on a daily basis. Therefore this month in *The G.E.M.* we have focussed on making right choices. Read our main article on page 3 for some practical steps on how to make positive and, more importantly, Godly life decisions.

The normal *Bible Basics* appears on page 2, as well as *This Day in History*. We have also included a brief write-up of the exciting new release called *The Cross*.

Along with the normal *Bible Sudoku Challenge* on the back page, we have included the second pair of *God's Library Cards*.

We would also like to take this time to remind you that if you are interested in us holding a book table at your church or special event. Also, if your church or group would like training on any products, call us today and we will gladly assist you.

Finally, be sure to visit our store for some exciting new gift products coming in directly from the USA. There will certainly be something for everyone.

Until next time,  
God bless.

Glyn and Linda. †

"Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord"  
(2 Peter 1:2)

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## BIBLE BASICS

### Psalms

#### *The Book of Praises*

**P**salms is the second book of poetry in the Old Testament. Grouped together with Job and Proverbs, they are referred to as “Books of Truth” and also fall into what is referred to in the Bible as wisdom literature.

**Date and Authors:** Unlike other books in the Bible, the Book of Psalms can not be pinpointed to a specific date within the history of Israel. Instead they were written over an extended period of time of between 1000BC and 400BC.

Also, the number of authors is varied as it contains Psalms written by Moses (1), David (73), Asaph and Korah (27), as well as some with anonymous writers (49).

**Structure:** The book of Psalms is divided into five books or collections. The first book (1-41) is largely a collection of personal Psalms of David. Book two (42-72) was probably added during the time of Solomon. Books three (73-89) and four (90-109) are collections from the time of the Babylonian exile. While book five (107-150) was organised around the time of Ezra.

**Hebrew Poetry:** Unlike English poetry relies on rhyme and rhythm for its meaning and impact, Hebrew poetry relies on a concept called parallelism, which has the following basic structure:

The first line states the theme of the poem. The second and subsequent lines then develop that theme in one of three ways: repeating the thought of the first line, showing a contrast or opposite thought of the first line, or by using similar thoughts to complete or build on the first line.

As a result of parallelism, Hebrew poetry, unlike poetry in other languages, is very easy to translate into other languages. It is therefore also important to keep this structure in mind when it comes to reading and interpreting any Hebrew poetry.

**Value of Psalms:** Even though Psalms is a collection of prayers and praise, it reflects for us today a model for our own devotional life. Though some of the Psalms are instructional, the book is intended to show us how to praise and pray to God based on example rather than through instruction.

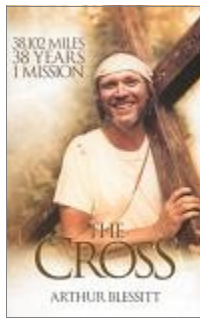
**Did you know?** The book of Psalms is positioned more-or-less in the center of the Bible. This is however not only true in terms of its physical position, but also in terms of the spiritual. They are central to our lives of devotion and praise and worship of God.

Whatever one is going through in life, one will find comfort, wisdom, forgiveness, new experiences, love, God's mercy, and a whole lot more in the words of the Psalms. †

## NEW RELEASE

### THE CROSS

by Arthur Blessitt



**O**n June 13, 2008, Arthur Blessitt walked his 38,102<sup>nd</sup> mile in Zanzibar, off the coast of Tanzania, completing a journey that began in 1969. Arthur started walking with a twelve-foot cross on December 25, 1969, and has successfully carried a large wooden cross into every nation and major island group of the world. Traversing all seven continents, his journey through 315 countries.

Follow Arthur's journey from his initial call from God to carry a cross from Hollywood, where he was known as “the minister of Sunset Strip,” across America to its capital, Washington DC.

Accompany Arthur as he hacks his way through the Darien Jungle from Panama to Columbia. You'll join Arthur and his son, Joshua, as they take the cross to South Africa in 1986. enter into the stories of how God used them to bring people spiritual, physical and relational healing during the final tumultuous days of racial apartheid. Trek with Arthur and his wife, Denise, as they cross desert sands to take the cross to Saudi Arabia when the nation was closed to tourists. Follow them as they walk with the cross in the various regions of the former USSR just weeks after its collapse. You'll be amazed by how people in all cultures respond to the cross.

As Arthur travelled around the world, he has found the cross to be a universal symbol of God's love that breaks down the barriers of language and culture. He writes, “Perhaps I'm the only person in history who has been physically shaped by the weight of the cross. But the changes the cross has brought to my physical body are not important. What is important is how the cross changed my life, and the lives of so many others, from the inside out!”

Arthur's journey around the world has also earned him a place in the Guinness Book of World Records for the “World's Longest Walk”.

This is a book and movie that will bring inspiration to all who read or watch them.

**Order your copy today!**

**Book: R 160**

**DVD: R 130**

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

10 April

### Christmas in April

**O**n December 25, 1766 a son was born to an impoverished Welsh shoemaker and his wife. They considered naming him Vasover, but chose instead to name him for the day of his birth. When Christmas Evans was nine his father died in his cobbler stall, awl in hand. His mother farmed out the children, and Christmas went to live with an alcoholic uncle. The boy ran with rough gangs, fighting and drinking and endangering his life. He was unable to read a word.

But then Christmas heard the Welsh evangelist David Davies. He soon gave his life to Christ, and Davies began teaching him by candlelight in a barn at Penyralltffawr. Within a month Christmas was able to read from his Bible, and he expressed a desire to preach. His old gang, however, was annoyed. One night they attacked him on a mountain road, beating him and gouging out his right eye.

The young man resolved nonetheless to preach, and preach he did. Wherever he went—churches, coal mines, open fields—crowds gathered and a spirit of revival swept over the listeners. Unable to afford a horse, he started across Wales by foot, preaching in towns and villages with great effect.

But Christmas Evans eventually lost the joy of ministry. His health broke, and he seemed to have used up his spiritual zeal. On April 10, 1802 he climbed into the Welsh mountains, determined to wrestle with God until his passion returned. The struggle lasted for hours, but finally tears began to flow, and Christmas felt the joy of his salvation returning. He made a covenant with God that day, writing down 13 items, initialing each one. The fourth said, “Grant that I may not be left to any foolish act that may occasion my gifts to wither. ...” And the eighth said, “Grant that I may experience the power of thy word before I deliver it.”

The burly, one-eyed preacher left the mountaintop that day with a power that shook Wales and the neighboring island of Anglesea until his death 36 years later. He is called the “Bunyan of Wales.”

Quoted from: *On this Day: 365 Amazing and Inspiring Stories About Saints, Martyrs & Heroes* (electronic edition) by Robert J. Morgan. †

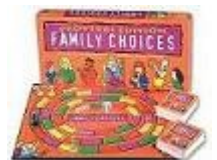
## APPLY WISDOM

### Choices

Age rated dilemmas pit your principles against tough situations.

A player draws a card and is challenged by an 'everyday' dilemma that he must solve based on Bible principles.

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**Board Game: R 200**

**Card Packs: R80 each**

## MAKE WISE DECISIONS

The Bible provides many valuable lessons for us as Christians. Even the stories and historical events in the Old Testament contain many applications to our lives in the twenty-first century (cf 1 Corinthians 10:11).

One such lesson is the need and importance of making wise decisions. Two examples immediately come to mind; Lot and David.

Lot made a decision as to where to live. As a result he experienced war and kidnapping (Gen 14), oppression and torment by the ungodly citizens of Sodom (cf 2 Peter 2:7-8), the loss of all his possessions, the death of his wife, and incest with his daughters (Genesis 19).

David's decision was worse in that he chose to commit adultery with Bathsheba. As a consequence he suffered the death of his infant son. Later his daughter was molested by her half-brother, who was killed by her vengeful brother. That son then led a rebellion, and David was publicly shamed. The death of that son brought even more grief to David (2 Samuel 12-18)

With those illustrations in mind let us consider some decisions that greatly affect our lives, suggestions for making wise decisions, as well as what we can do when we have made the wrong past decisions.

### Decisions That Affect Our Lives

The first, and indeed the most important decision we can make in our lives is whether or not we follow Jesus and become His disciple. A choice that will affect our lives more than any other as it will determine our place in eternity and will have bearing on all the other decisions we make in life.

The second most important decision is that of choosing a mate. Proverbs 12:4 reminds us that this choice will have a large affect on our happiness. It is a decision that cannot simply be reversed and is one that requires one hundred percent commitment. Even when the other party fails in certain aspects, we need to hold on no matter how we feel.

Our third big decision is that of our careers. The business and financial world is constantly changing, and a wrong decision can lead to ruin, poverty and discord. A wrong decision here can, and will, affect one's family, one's relationship with God, and indeed our interaction with those around us.

This leads to the next decision, which to a large extent is based on the previous three, and that is in deciding where to live. Lot's decision made sound business and financial sense, but it was in fact a poor moral choice (Genesis 13). Lot clearly did not consider everything before making his decision. A lesson we should take to heart even today.

Finally, the last decision we make that greatly affects us is that of our friends. Having friends is indeed a blessing, and sometimes they can be the best assets we

have in our lives when faced with problems of the previous four decisions (cf Proverbs 17:17). However, having the wrong friends will be detrimental and will cause untold trouble in our lives (cf Proverbs 12:26 and 1 Corinthians 15:33)

What we need to remember throughout these five important decisions is that for every action there is a reaction, and therefore, every choice carries a consequence.

In order to make decisions that will be of more benefit to us and therefore reduce the risk of negative consequences, let us look at a few suggestions, or steps, for making wise decisions.

### Step 1: Ask God for Wisdom

God has promised us that He will give wisdom, and give it in abundance, to those who ask for it in faith (James 1:5-8).

However, asking for this wisdom is not something that is only done once in our lives, but is something that is to be done frequently and with diligence. The book of Proverbs seems to indicate this throughout its advice.

We need to constantly keep this request for wisdom in our prayers.

### Step 2: Heed the Word

The best place to find some counsel on what decisions to make are to be found in the Bible. Even though certain issues may not be directly addressed in the Word, it does contain principles that address every situation experienced by man.

We need to make a commitment in this area that goes like this: I will make sure that my decisions agree with God's Word in every area of my life – marriage, family, health, ministry, business and finances – and if I do not know what God's Word says on a given subject, I will not make a decision until I have researched it in the Bible, then I will do what the Bible says.

### Step 3: Ask Others for Advice

As Proverbs 11:14 tells us, there is safety in having many advisers. However, having advisers is not enough, we also need to heed their counsel (Proverbs 12:15), provided that their counsel is in line with what we have already researched in the Bible. To take a person's advise when it contradicts God's Word is not making wise decisions.

We need to seek out the counsel of older, more mature, Christians. People we can trust, who have a strong walk with God.

### Step 4: Commit the Decision to God

Trusting that we have made the right decisions, we need to put that decision into God's hands (cf Psalm 37:5-6, 23-26). This includes reminding ourselves that even though we have made the decision, the outcome is the Lord's will, and not ours (cf James 4:13-15).

If the decision is not according to God's will, He might prevent the decision from being carried out by closing the doors we need to

go through to see it through, or He may even present us with a clear picture of what His will is. Either way, whether the decision is the right one or not in God's eyes, we need to trust Him completely with its outcome.

### Bad Decisions

Many times throughout our lives it will become apparent that we have made a poor or completely wrong decision in our lives. How do we respond to this? There are a number of ways:

May we learn to be receptive to the wisdom from God

Do what Lot did: On hearing what God had to say through God's messengers, Lot fled from Sodom. Knowing that this was the right thing to do, He did exactly what God told him, no matter what the outcome. Lot trusted God with what was to follow.

Do what Peter did: Having denied Christ three times, Peter realised he had sinned when the rooster crowed three times. Feeling convicted, he repented of his sin and then committed his life thereafter to serve Christ.

Do what Paul did: As a persecutor of the church shortly after Jesus ascended into heaven, he was confronted by Jesus on the road to Damascus. Paul sought forgiveness from the Lord. He tells us that he accepted that forgiveness (1 Timothy 1:12-16) and then dedicated his life to live for the Lord to the best of his ability (Philippians 3:13-14).

### Let Us Learn From Their Examples

May the examples of these and other men of the Bible teach us the importance of making wise decisions. May they also serve as warnings not to make our decisions lightly.

May we learn to be receptive to the wisdom from God through His Word and through the counsel of others. Bringing it all together as we make decisions about our faith, spouses, careers, where we should live, and even our friends.

Finally have you made the most important decision you will ever face in this life, the decision to follow Jesus as your Lord and Saviour, that will determine your eternal destiny?

If not why not decide today to follow Jesus, and become His disciple? (cf Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:36-41).

Hand over all your decisions to Him and TRUST IN HIM! †

For every action there is a reaction... every choice carries a consequence

## EXCELLENT RESOURCE

### WWJD?

Learn to do what's right!

Each card in the deck gets people thinking and talking about what Jesus would do in different situations we face in our everyday lives.

Each card includes a quote from the Bible, two thought-provoking questions and a question asking what Jesus would do in the same situation.

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# THE BACK PAGE

## BIBLE SUDOKU CHALLENGE

### How well do you know the Good Book?

Bible-Sudoku Challenge combines the logic skills to solve a normal Sudoku with Bible trivia.

Begin by answering the Bible trivia questions. Using the answers and placing them in the relevant coordinates, solve the grid on the right. The coordinates with each question indicates where in the grid that starter number is to be placed (e.g. A1, E9).

All answers are found in the book of Psalms.

1. Complete the verse: "One thing God has spoken, ... things have I heard" (A5, H8)
2. In which Psalm does David say: "But you are a shield around me, O LORD"? (B1, C6, F7)
3. How many books/collections is the book of Psalms divided into? (C1, F3, A4, E7)
4. Which verse in Psalm 107 tells us that God "satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things"? (C3, I4, A6, B7, D8, G9)
5. Which verse of the last Psalm says, "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord"? (D1, C2, G3, F5, I7, A8)
6. In what Psalm does David ponder "what is man that You are mindful of him"? (D2, I3, F4, H6, E8, C9)
7. How many times a day does the Psalter praise the Lord for His righteous laws? (E3, G4, H7, B9)
8. In which verse in Psalm 29 does David describe the Lord's Voice as majestic? (F1, A3, G5, D7, I9)
9. How many days in the Lord's courts is better than a thousand elsewhere? (G2, C4, H5)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									

**Last Month's Solution**

Trivia: 4 (42:16), 7 (1:3) 9 (9:21)  
 3 (2:11) 6 (42:12) 8 (1:8)  
 5 (5:17) 2 (11:6) 1 (1:13-19)

Sudoku Grid


5	8	1	9	4	2	7	6	3
2	4	6	3	5	7	9	8	1
7	3	9	6	1	8	5	2	4
1	5	7	2	3	4	6	9	8
8	9	4	1	6	5	2	3	7
3	6	2	7	8	9	1	4	5
4	2	3	5	7	6	8	1	9
9	1	5	8	2	3	4	7	6
6	7	8	4	9	1	3	5	2

Answers in the Next Edition

## GOD'S LIBRARY CARDS

COLLECT THEM ALL - Every month a new Library Card will be released, with facts on many amazing themes of the Bible, e.g. Books, people, places, food and events. Just cut them out and laminate them for easy reference. For additional cards and other related products, contact us.

### THE OLD TESTAMENT



Brief facts about the 39 books of the Old Testament.

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### EXODUS 2

**Key Idea:** Exit from Egypt.

**Summary:** ±3 Million Hebrew slaves are rescued from Egypt to meet God at Mt Sinai.

**Key People:** Pharaoh, Moses, Aaron.

**Key Places:** Egypt, the Red Sea, Mt Sinai.

**Strange but True:** A bush that burned without burning up (3:2).  
 Walking sticks that turned into snakes (7:10-11).  
 Frogs everywhere – in beds, ovens, even in bread dough (8:3).  
 Sunlight for God's people when the rest of the country was in darkness (10:22-23).  
 The best-dressed man (28:2-4).

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### CONTACT US

2 Bishopstone Ave,  
 Essexwold, Johannesburg  
 Tel.: 011-454-6045  
 Fax: 086-654-2996  
[www.gracemedia.co.za](http://www.gracemedia.co.za)  
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Send forth your light and your truth, let them guide me;  
 let them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place  
 where you dwell.

Psalm 43:3

