



The G.E.M.

Volume 4 Edition 9

The Grace Electronic Magazine

September 2010

REMEMBER THE ONE TRUE GOD

Spring is in the air. The weather is warming up, the trees are in bloom and the birds are singing. What an awesome God we serve. He created the beauty that we see in nature, the sun and the rain to nourish the land, and the stars to rule the night sky. This spring, let us remember to worship our God as the creator and the giver of life.

This month our theme is based on the book of Jeremiah, Remembering the One True God. From this amazing book of prophecy we are given glimpses of our God, as well as warnings for our spiritual lives.

Our main article on page 3, *Idol Worship is Idle Worship*, is a challenge on how we see our God. In our hearts and minds is He who He says He is, or have we made Him out to be different.

Bible Basics on page 2 gives you some insight into the book itself, and the *Bible Sudoku Challenge* on the back page has you digging a little deeper into Jeremiah to search for the answers.

With Heritage Day being a key date in September, *This Day in History* looks at an event in church history that took place on the same day 225 years ago.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to congratulate our three winners of gift vouchers in our August birthday draw. They are Tracy Hartridge (R300), Nicole dos Santos (R200) and Shannon of Eagle Way Church (R100).

So stretch out your deck chair in the sun, in the great outdoors that God has created for us, listen to the birds singing sweetly in the trees, and enjoy this spring edition of *The G.E.M.*

Until next time,
Glyn and Linda. †

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

www.ChristianGames.co.za

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE
FOR AMAZING PRODUCTS!

SUITABLE FOR ALL AGES &
GROUPS!

SPRING INTO ACTION!

...AND PREPARE FOR 2011

JUST ARRIVED!

R55 **Our Daily Bread 2011 Annual Edition**

Large Calendars - From R50
Small Calendars - R20
24-Month Daily Planners - R20

COMING SOON

John C. Maxwell Diaries - R140
Ladies Daily Planners - From R100
Our Daily Journey Teen Devotional - R99

E&OE Prices valid while stocks last

VISIT US TODAY FOR

CHRISTMAS, SUNDAY SCHOOL

AND END OF YEAR GIFT IDEAS

PLACE YOUR ORDERS NOW!

BIBLE BASICS

Jeremiah

The Book of God's Judgement

The book of Jeremiah tells of the impending doom of Judah being taken into captivity by the Babylonians.

Date and authorship: Jeremiah was a young man from the small village of Anathoth, just outside Jerusalem. He was a priest and called by God to be a prophet.

The time in which the book is written is during the reign of the last five kings of Judah (640 – 586 BC) as portrayed in 2 Kings 22-25 and 2 Chronicles 34-36.

Theme: The main theme of the book is the judgement of Judah and her future restoration in the Messianic Kingdom.

Through the development of this theme, we are given a picture of God being just, in disciplining on the nation He loved, while at the same time being willing to spare them from total destruction. It also reminds us that God remains committed to the covenants He established with Abraham, Moses and David.

Structure: It is difficult to define an outline for Jeremiah's prophecies, and scholars disagree as to the chronological background of each of his sermons.

The outline below reflects six basic divisions that are easily seen as one reads the text. The first two are autobiographical, whereas the last three are more biographical:

Chapters

Jeremiah's Mission	1-10
The Broken Covenant	11-20
Judgement Nears	21-29
New Covenant Promises	30-39
Jerusalem Falls	40-51
Historical appendix	52

Value for Today: The book of Jeremiah presents for us some dire warnings for our own lives in the twenty-first century. Though we may not be facing any threats from nations like the Babylonians, the reasons for the captivity spelled out in the book are just as applicable today.

Did you Know?

- There are six other Jeremiahs mentioned in the Bible – 2 Kings 23:31, 1 Chronicles 5:24; 12:4, 10, 13 and Nehemiah 10:2; 12:1.

- The scroll that King Jehoiakim burned up in the fire in Jeremiah 36 would probably have taken Jeremiah and his scribe Baruch between twelve and eighteen months to write.

- Jeremiah is known as the “weeping prophet” due to his crying in 9:1, 13:17 and 14:17. †



NEW DEVOTIONALS

Our Daily Bread 2011 Annual Edition

“The Bible is too hard to understand. I can't figure it out. Plus, I don't see how anything so ancient can have any meaning today.”



These are common frustrations, and we need not be ashamed to admit them. For centuries, theologians have been trying to unravel the mysteries of the Bible.

God speaks to us individually as we read His Word, but we need checks and balances from other believers to test our convictions. *Our Daily Bread* combines the light we receive from our own reading with that of Bible teachers. By using life-changing stories, they offer insights that help you understand and apply the daily Scripture reading.

Only in eternity will we reach a complete understanding of God and His Word, but we must not abandon the pursuit now. What He has revealed of Himself enriches our lives today and prepares us for eternity.

Our Daily Bread is published by RBC Ministries who have been working since 1938 to make the life-changing wisdom of the Bible understandable and accessible to all. They currently have 35 offices, and over 1,300 workers and volunteers ministering throughout the world.

Our Daily Bread is published in nearly 50 languages and is read by people in almost every country in the world.



This year also sees the launch of a new full-colour publication for the late teen/young adult market called *Our Daily Journey*. This will be available in October and will fill the gap in this area of the market.

Our Daily Bread R55
Our Daily Journey R99



Discovery Series Bible Studies

Another series of publications by RBC Ministries is the *Discovery Series Bible Studies*.

The topics they deal with are relevant, Bible-based, convenient, easy-to-use, affordable (only R27 each), non-denominational, and in a four to six week lesson format.



Visit us today to see what titles are currently available. †

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

24 September 1785 Off Course

Sometimes our plans don't work out as hoped because God detours us, leading us elsewhere in his overruling providence. Thomas Coke, a sophisticated Oxford-educated Welshman, left his ministry in the Anglican Church in 1777 to become John Wesley's chief assistant in the new and quickly growing Methodist movement. On September 24, 1785 he packed his books and bags and sailed out of England, down the channel, and into the Atlantic, leaving for Nova Scotia where he wanted to establish the missionaries who accompanied him. But the voyage was ill-fated and grew more perilous by the day, the ship being caught in mountainous waves and mast-splitting winds. The ship's captain, determining that Coke and his missionaries were bringing misfortune on his ship like Jonah, considered throwing them overboard. He actually gathered some of Coke's papers and tossed them into the ocean. The voyage took three months rather than the expected one, and instead of landing in Nova Scotia, the damaged ship ended up in the Caribbean, limping into St. John's harbor on the island of Antigua on Christmas Day.

Coke knew that at least one Methodist lived somewhere on Antigua, a missionary named John Baxter. Hoping to find him, Coke and his three missionaries asked to be rowed ashore from their shattered ship in the pre-dawn morning. They started down the street in St. John's and stopped the first person they found, a fellow swinging a lantern in his hand, to inquire of Baxter.

It was John Baxter himself. He was on his way to special Christmas morning services he had planned for the island, and the sudden appearance of Coke and his missionaries out of the darkness—out of nowhere—seemed too good to be true. It took three services that day to accommodate the crowds. After it was over, Coke and his associates abandoned any idea of going to Nova Scotia. Instead, they planted the missionary team on Antigua and on neighboring islands; and by the time of Coke's death in 1814 there were over 17,000 believers in the Methodist churches there.

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

Robert J. Morgan. †



RECOMMENDED

The Truth War

by John MacArthur

Right now, truth is under attack. The war is raging, and there is no middle ground – no safe zone for the uncommitted war.

This book reveals the:

- Pitfalls of postmodern thinking
- Past skirmishes in this war and their effects on the church.
- Importance of truth.
- and how to identify and address the errors and false teachings.



R 145

IDOL WORSHIP IS IDLE WORSHIP

Jeremiah 10 is a sarcastic treatment of idolatry in which God describes how He sees the gods of this world. It shows us the contrast between the true and living God and the idols of the world.

Not everyone who worships idols has literally constructed an idol out of wood or metal. Instead they construct gods out of their own thinking. They describe him with phrases like "This is what my god is like," "this is what my god does," "my god would not do that," or "my god would do this."

The Emptiness of Idols

"Hear what the LORD says to you, O house of Israel. This is what the LORD says: "Do not learn the ways of the nations or be terrified by signs in the sky, though the nations are terrified by them." (v1-2).

Here God is speaking to Israel, and indeed us too, telling them to not obtain their religious instruction from the peoples of the world. They are not to look around to see what others are doing to find out how one ought to worship God or what is acceptable to Him.

Verse 2 says, "Do not... be terrified by the signs in the sky." This is a broad statement and includes things like an eclipse, shooting stars and astrology. These things were a major part of worship in the ancient world, and things have not changed. Astrology books, charts, predictions in magazines and newspapers are all over the place. People plan their lives around these signs of the heavens. But God goes on to tell us that there is nothing to them, "For the customs of the peoples are worthless" (v3). Though these things they may appear to have some truth to them or of some value they do not.

Verse 3 and 4 then go on to describe the idols that the world sets up, "they cut a tree out of the forest, and a craftsman shapes it with his chisel. They adorn it with silver and gold; they fasten it with hammer and nails so it will not totter."

No matter how grand an idol, it is still something that is made by man. Materially speaking, a golden idol would be worth more than a wooden one, but spiritually speaking, neither has any value. All you have is the work of your hands.

I love the sarcasm and the truth in the next verse, "Like a scarecrow in a melon patch, their idols cannot speak; they must be carried because they cannot walk. Do not fear them; they can do no harm nor can they do any good" (v5).

Quite simply, what God is telling us here is that man-made idols are a delusion. Like a scarecrow that is empty and lifeless, is placed in the field to fool animals by appearing real, so too do idols fool the people of the world.

The gods of the world can do no harm, nor good. They are merely the craft of human hands.

Man-made idols are a delusion

God Versus Idols

Now contrast this with verses 6-8, "No one is like You, O LORD; You are great, and Your name is mighty in power. Who should not revere You, O King of the nations? This is Your due. Among all the wise men of the nations and in all their kingdoms, there is no one like You. They are all senseless and foolish; they are taught by worthless wooden idols."

In Isaiah 40:25-26a we read "To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?" says the Holy One. Lift your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one, and calls them each by name. Because of His great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing." WOW! We cannot even number the stars, yet God has named each and every one, and keeps track of them all.

Think of the futility of man. The people of the world seek their instruction from lifeless idols. What can anyone learn from a piece of wood?

But the contrast does not end here. Jeremiah 10:9-10 continues, "Hammered silver is brought from Tarshish and gold from Uphaz. What the craftsman and goldsmith have made is then dressed in blue and purple — all made by skilled workers. But the LORD is the true God; He is the living God, the eternal King. When He is angry, the earth trembles; the nations cannot endure His wrath."

Is the contrast firmly fixed in your mind now? The gods of the world are nothing, and there is nothing to be afraid of. Nor is there any need of superstitions of any kind.

Not only are these idols worthless, God is going to destroy them all. Verse 11 tells us, "These gods, who did not make the heavens and the earth, will perish from the earth and from under the heavens." This is then followed by a description of not only the idols' destruction, but also of the idol-makers.

God's Creative Work

There is something significant here which we also see in Isaiah 40 and many other passages. The constant evidence offered for the greatness of the only true God is creation. "But God made the earth by His power; He founded the world by His wisdom and stretched out the heavens by His understanding" (Jeremiah 10:12).

The one area where God has been attacked the most is His act of creating the universe. Universities and schools the world over teach that this universe and all life in it came about by accident when nothing exploded. Evolution has replaced God and become the idol of the age. Through it the world is trying to destroy the very evidence that God has given for His own greatness and power. When you look at the starry sky, you are not to see God's handiwork, you are to see the results of billions of years of evolution.

Everything God has said is true!

It is clear then that things have not changed. The world does not want to believe there is a God who has brought everything into existence, and controls it all by His power.

Even within the church, there are people who try to marry evolution with creation and in so doing have denied the power of God spoken about in Jeremiah and Isaiah. They have fashioned an idol in their own minds of how God made it all.

We need to be careful. To deny God of this power and to make Him out to be other than what He has revealed Himself as through the Bible, we are essentially making God out to be a liar. As Christians we need to boldly stand for the testimony that God has given of Himself.

God Will Judge False Worship

As we see in the book of Jeremiah as a whole, the result of false worship is judgment. If you are not worshipping the true and living God as He has instructed, then you are destined for doom and need to repent.

So, what is your God like? Who is your God? Maybe you say, "The God of the Bible," but are you sure? Is He the all powerful God as described in Jeremiah and Isaiah? Is He the holy, just and righteous one who will judge you accordingly? Is He the One who created the world in an instant by only the words from His mouth?

Therefore, serve the true God as revealed in the Bible and you will not suffer similar consequences to the people of Judah. Anything, anyone, or any imagined god that is not the revealed God of the Bible is considered an idol and is detested by God.

Consider today, who is your true God and turn to Him, learn about Him.

For to worship an idol is idle worship. †

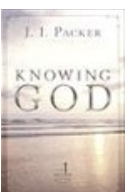


HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

Knowing God
by J.I. Packer

The conviction behind this book is that ignorance of God – ignorance both of His ways and of the practice of communion with Him – lies at the root of much of the church's weakness today.

The two trends that seem to have produced this are: Christian minds have been conformed to the modern spirit (the world), and Christian minds have been confused by modern skepticism.



This book addresses these issues head-on. **R 175**

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 from Jeremiah.

- How many men escaped from Johanan with Ishmael?
(ch. 40) (A1, E3, C4, G5, B9)
- How many cubits high was one of the bronze capitals on top of one pillar?
(ch. 52) (C1, I2, A6, G9)
- After how many years of service must a fellow Hebrew who sold himself to serve be let free?
(ch. 34) (D1, B3, A4, I5, F8)
- How many doorkeepers were taken as prisoners by the commander of the guard?
(ch. 52) (D2, E9)
- In which chapter does Jeremiah talk about boasting in God instead of in wisdom, strength and riches?
(D3, A8, F9)
- How many kinds of destroyers did the Lord say he would send against Judah?
(ch. 15) (G1, E2, C3, H6, I7)
- Which chapter tells us about the worthlessness of false religion?
(G3, I4, D5, H8, C9)
- Complete: "Cursed is the _ _ _ who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the LORD."
(ch. 17) (H1, D6, B7, E8)
- How many sins did God's people committed against Him?
(ch. 2) (H4, C6, A7, G8, D9)

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

Last Month's Solution

Trivia: 1 (6:6), 4 (11:12), 3 (20:3),
2 (22:11), 7 (4:1), 6 (6:2),
8 (8:1-10), 9 (9:1-7), 5 (19:18)

Sudoku Grid

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

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.

1 KINGS

11

Key Idea: Kingdom is Divided

Summary: David's son, Solomon, and the failure of the rest of the kings after him

Key People: Solomon, Rehoboam, Jeroboam, Ahab, Elijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat

Key Places: Jerusalem in Judah, Samaria in Israel, Dan, Bethel

Strange but True: Fire hot enough to burn up stones (18:38).

A man who walked for 40 days without eating (19:8).

A new set of clothes falling from the sky (19:19).

A man wearing iron horns (22:11)

© 2010 – Keir-Williams Christian Media cc

2 KINGS

12

Key Idea: Kingdoms Taken Captive

Summary: The ultimate fall of the divided kingdom as it is taken into captivity

Key People: Elisha, Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, Jotham, Hezekiah, Josiah

Key Places: Jerusalem in Judah, Samaria in Israel, Assyria, Babylon

Strange but True: A child coming back to life and sneezing seven times (4:32-36).

A floating iron axe head (6:5-7).

Kings of only seven and eight years old (11:21 & 22:1).

Time going backwards (20:11).

© 2010 – Keir-Williams Christian Media cc

No one is like you, O LORD;
You are great,
and Your name is mighty in power.

Jeremiah 10:6

CONTACT US

Tel.: 011-454-6045
Fax: 086-654-2996
shop@gracemedia.co.za

2 Bishopstone Ave,
Essexwold, Johannesburg
www.gracemedia.co.za

SHOP TRADING HOURS:

Monday – Friday: 9am – 5pm
Saturday: 9am – 2pm
Closed Sundays and some Public Holidays