



The G.E.M.

Volume 5 Edition 3

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WALK IN WORSHIP

The sporting world is currently wrapped up in the Cricket World Cup in India and the Super 15 Rugby. Later this year, the Rugby World Cup will too be happening.

Cricket and rugby fans, and indeed many children are worshipping their sporting heroes. But as Christians, we are not meant to be worshipping any man. Though we recognise people's sporting skills and enjoy watching sport, our worship is to be reserved for God and God alone.

Therefore this month we look at worship, particularly in our main article on page 3 where we look at the reason why we go to church.

Also in this issue: *Bible Basics* on page 2 continues our journey through the Bible with the next book in the Old Testament, the book of Amos.

Heroes of the Faith looks at the formation of Protestant Scotland through the influence of John Knox and his conflict with Mary Queen of Scots.

Bible Study 101 takes you deeper into Bible study teaching you the fourth step.

And the Back Page has something to entertain both adult and children alike.

We would also like to thank all of you who completed our survey last month. Congratulations to Arlene Haylett who won the R100 gift voucher.

We are going to keep the survey going for any of you who are interested so that we can improve our service to you our valued customer.

Finally, for those of you who are involved in children's ministry, be sure to register and attend the Children's Ministry Conference in Bryanston and Pretoria this weekend.

Until next time, enjoy the cricket!

Blessings,

Glyn and Linda. †

www.ChristianGames.co.za

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Children's Ministry Conference 2011

JHB - Saturday 12 March
Bryanston Methodist Church
9:00 am - 4:30 pm
registration @ 7:30am

PTA - Saturday 19 March
Hatfield Christian Church
9:00 am - 4:30 pm
registration @ 7:30am

For more information visit www.cmcsa.org.za

Visit our stand in the Exhibition Hall

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TUESDAY IS DOUBLE POINTS DAY



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For every purchase you make you will be earning payback points (shekels) for yourself while at the same time making a contribution to a ministry in the area.

BIBLE BASICS

Amos

The Book of Just Society

Under the reign of Uzziah in Judah and Jeroboam II in Israel, the two kingdoms were very prosperous, but they were morally corrupt. God therefore sends the prophet Amos to the people of Israel to confront the idle rich with God's condemnation of their sins and distorted values.

Amos the Man: Amos was a shepherd in Tekoa, a town about ten miles north of Jerusalem. While performing his humble trade, God speaks to Amos and gives him a vision that compels him to cross the borders into Israel.

We learn much about his character as we read this short book: Amos was humble, wise, fearless and faithful. His message was not compromised in any way and he told the people the truth no matter what they would say or do to him.

Date: Like most of the Old Testament prophets, Amos' words were written after he gave his message to the people. When they were written we can not tell, but we do know that his prophecy was given sometime between 793 and 753BC, as it was only during these years that Uzziah and Jeroboam II were both on the throne.

Structure: Amos, the book third of the minor prophets, contains a collection of messages that are linked by common themes:

	<u>Chapters</u>
Judgement on Transgressors	1-2
Sermons of Indictment	3-6
Visions of Warning	7-9:10
Visions of the Kingdom	9:11-15

Did you Know? In the time-line of history of the nations of Israel and Judah, Amos came before Isaiah and Jeremiah, even though his writings are placed later in the Bible.

Value for Today: Though the book of Amos is often overlooked, it is a very important book for today.

One emphasis of the New Testament is in fact very similar to that of Amos – personal relationship with God and individual salvation does not alter God's concern for justice and holiness.

We are living in a society where personal gain in terms of wealth is very important. Much of this comes with corruption in one form or another, even within the church.

Man's desire for wealth at the demise of the poor was God's concern in the time of Amos, and still is today. God is deeply committed to, and concerned about, the welfare of the poor around us. Let us heed the message of Amos so that we too will not fall into the trap of desiring wealth too much. †

BIBLE STUDY 101

STEP 4: Compile Chapter Breakdown Chart

After having read your chosen book a few times, you will now be rather familiar with its subject and structure, it is therefore time to break down each chapter using a chart. There is no set design for this chart as it is determined by the length of the book you are reading, but use the following as a guide:

Chapter Breakdown Chart			
Chapter No.	1	2	3
Chapter Titles			
Paragraph Titles			
Key Verse			
Key Word			

• **Chapter Titles:** It is very important here to not allow yourself to be swayed by the titles that may already appear in your Bible. Better still, use a Bible that does not have any titles.

Here one needs to make up their own title (ignoring the one that might be in your Bible) by summarising the basic theme or event of the chapter. It also needs to be simple enough for you to remember.

It is also important to note that originally the Bible was not written with chapter and verse numbers, but rather as one continual stretch of sentences and paragraphs. Numbering was added much later. Although many chapter breaks do fall in natural places, some do not. If this happens, then note this in the Chapter No. row of the table.

• **Paragraph Titles:** After titling your chapters you now need to title your paragraphs.

Begin by noting the verses that form your paragraph, then give that paragraph a four to six word title that summarises its meaning or content. Again this must a title that is easy to remember.

• **Key Verse:** Find a key verse that sums up or defines the subject of the chapter.

• **Key Word:** Find a key word that is repeated throughout the chapter that is a key to its subject.

Finally, I mentioned above that your chapter and paragraph titles need to be simple and easy to remember. The reason is so that when you refer to your table again at a later stage, those titles will trigger your memory about those sections so that you can easily remember the entire content of the passage in question.

Over the next month, start compiling your chapter breakdown chart using the tips above. Next month we begin to look at the questions you need to ask in order to begin forming a comprehensive understanding of the book.

NOTE: If you would like to download a sample chart of the above, then visit:

www.gracemedia.co.za/downloads/bs101b.pdf †

HEROES OF THE FAITH

John Knox's Scotland

Knox was a restless activist who had tried earlier to point England in the direction of Calvinism. Like many others, however, he was forced to flee England overnight when, in 1553, the country returned to the Catholic faith under Henry VIII's daughter, Mary I. The queen's persecution of Protestant leaders earned her the title "Bloody Mary."

Knox escaped to the Continent, where he developed the theory that Protestants had the right to resist, by force if necessary, any Roman Catholic ruler who tried to prevent their worship and mission. That was farther than Calvin himself was willing to go, but many of the nobles in Scotland found the idea attractive.

When civil war broke out in Scotland in 1559, Knox rushed home. By the summer of 1560 the Calvinists were in control of Edinburgh. Knox drafted the articles of religion that parliament accepted for the country, thereby abolishing Roman Catholicism.

Next year, when Mary Queen of Scots, now a nineteen-year-old widow, decided to return to her kingdom, she found it in the lap of Protestant "heresy." Over the next few years Knox, the passionate preacher of Calvinism, and Mary, the young queen of Scotland, came to symbolize the Reformation conflict: Protestant against Catholic, but also the democratic claims of Calvinism against the monarchy's power to appoint bishops. Events in Scotland moved in Knox's direction. Even though Mary's descendants tried to turn back the clock, Scotland remained the most devoutly Calvinist country in the world.

Thus, when Calvin died in 1564, he left far more than a reformed Geneva. All over Europe, and soon in distant America, he had followers who were eager to continue "the game" he had entered that fateful night in Farel's rowdy and restless Geneva.

Quoted from Shelley, Bruce L. (1995). Church History in Plain Language (Updated 2nd ed.) (Page 262). Dallas, Texas: Word Publishers †

CUT OUT & COLLECT

ECCLESIASTES

21

Key Idea: Life is Empty.

Summary: Only God can satisfy.

Key People: The Preacher (Solomon)

Key Places: Jerusalem

Strange but True: There is nothing new under the sun (1:9).

Both wisdom and follow are both chasing after the wind (1:17).

Work is meaningless (2:17-23).

A Child who is better off than a king (4:13).

One can never have enough money (5:10).

Sorrow better than laughter (7:3).

An upright man found, but not an upright woman (7:28).

Slaves riding horses instead of princes (10:7).

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WHY DO YOU GO TO CHURCH?

"Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near." (Hebrews 10:19-25)

Would you think of yourself as being selfish when it comes to worship? But think for a moment about your words and thoughts when leaving a church service. Do you make comments like "I didn't get anything out of the service today," or "Wasn't that worship boring?"

The problem is this: we have been conditioned by the world to think more about what we receive than what we give. Sadly this has crept into our attitudes towards Sunday worship too. We have become judgemental of what goes on in the church and how it affects us, rather than keep our focus on the person behind the reason we are there, Jesus.

How do we return to the true heart of worship? It begins by first recognising who we are in light of who God is, and then to seek to exalt Him for who He is and what He has done. The passage from Hebrews above gives us some insight into this.

Through five important principles, he deals firstly with our attitude towards God, and then our attitude towards others.

A Divine Privilege

The statement that the writer of Hebrews makes at the beginning of the passage above in verse 19 would have been something unthinkable to a Jew. In the ancient temple in Israel a curtain or veil separated the holy place (the area where the table of shewbread and the altar of incense stood) from the Holy of Holies (the place where the ark of the covenant was and was considered God's throne room on earth). This area was so sacred that no ordinary Jew could enter it. In fact, even the high priest was only allowed to enter it once a year on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur).

But now, the writer of Hebrews tells us that individual believers are now allowed to enter the Holy of Holies with boldness and confidence because of what the Great High Priest, Jesus, has done (v19). Where the Old Testament laws served to keep man from God's holy presence, Christ's death on the cross has removed the barrier.

In an unusual figure of speech, the writer says that the curtain or veil was actually a

symbol of Jesus' body, and when His body was "torn" through suffering, so too was the way into the heavenly presence of God torn in two (This is what was being symbolised when Mark records the tearing of the temple curtain in Mark 15:38).

This access we as believers have to the very presence of God is a privilege. We can come before Him without condition or exception. Our access to Him is far better than that of the Jews (v20). Let us therefore not abuse this privilege by thinking only of ourselves when we worship.

A Divine Representative

Jesus did not only give us the privilege of being able to come before the Father, but He also serves as a Great High Priest over His household (v21). Christ is our representative before God the Father. This therefore enables us to be able to draw near to Him with the assurance that through Jesus' death we have been washed clean of our sin and are able to stand before God's throne.

But how does this apply to our worship? Well think of it this way, would you want to be a representative of a product or company that stands in opposition to what you believe. No! Yet for some reason when we are focussing on ourselves and are not worshipping God for who He is, we are in turn expecting Jesus to represent something false. Therefore, we should not disrespect His sacrifice on the cross by allowing ourselves to think selfishly when we stand before God. And when we worship, that is in effect where we are standing.

A Divine Profession

"Confession" in verse 23 above, in the context of the passage, is referring to our confession of the hope we have in Christ. In the Old Testament God promised that He would send a solution to the problem of sin, and He did. Therefore, if God has kept that promise, and indeed many others throughout the history of Israel, then we can be sure that He will keep every other promise He has made since then in the New Testament.

When we worship, we are in fact professing, or confessing, this hope. It is to be evident in our actions, in our words, and in our thoughts. Our profession is meant to be a divine one, and not a humanistic one, therefore if we are thinking of ourselves during our time of worship on Sundays, we are not confessing any hope in Him at all, but rather hope in ourselves.

A Divine Provocation

In verse 24 the writer moves on to our attitude towards others in our worship.

The phrases "let us consider" and "one another" quite simply means that our attitude is meant to be looking outward and not at ourselves. We need to be sensitive to the needs of other people. How often are we tempted to look down on other people during church rather than consider their condition? What these phrases remind us of is that we are to consider one another and not complain about them.

But this consideration goes beyond how we look at others in that we are to "stimulate one another to love and good deeds." When we look at people in our churches, we should be thinking of ways on how we can build them up. Ways to encourage them to be involved in the life of the church. Show them love and compassion that they too may be motivated to do the same towards others.

We are there for other people

Quite clearly this stands in direct conflict to our thoughts of what we receive out of the service.

A Divine Assembly

Life is tough, and it is only going to become tougher as the Day of the Lord approaches. Therefore we are urged by the writer of Hebrews to not forsake our coming together with other believers. It is clear that even when this book was written, people were abandoning going to church for some or other reason. This could have been due to persecution (as indicated in a number of places throughout the book).

It is fine to miss a service every now and then due to other responsibilities in our lives. God wants us to be responsible in all areas, so we should not forsake them.

But why is it important? The writer tells us in verse 25 that regular attendance with the body of believers is for the purpose of encouraging others. You see, the purpose of us going to church is not for our own enjoyment or encouragement, although that can and does happen regularly, but we are there for other people.

So, Why Do YOU Go to Church?

It is clear from this passage in Hebrews that the reason we go to church and assemble with other believers is not for ourselves. We are there because of what Christ has done for us and for the benefit of others.

So, next time you find yourself thinking any form of selfish thought about church, the way the service goes, how the ministries operate, or about the people that are there, stop and ask yourself why you are there in the first place. An honest answer may shock you, but do not ignore it. Rather allow it to convict and transform your heart. †

When we worship we are confessing hope

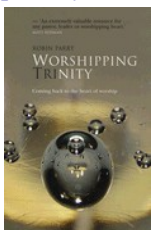
LEADERS RESOURCE

Worshipping Trinity by Robin Parry

Coming back to the Heart of Worship

Written for songwriters, church & worship leaders, and those interested in theology, Robin Parry looks at why the Trinity matters in our worship and addresses questions, such as: What is the relationship between theology and worship? Why is the Trinity central to Christian living and believing? And others.

Both practical and realistic, *Worshipping Trinity* shows how we can maintain the centrality of the Trinity in our fast-changing worship culture.



R 120

THE BACK PAGE

BIBLE TRIVIA CHALLENGE

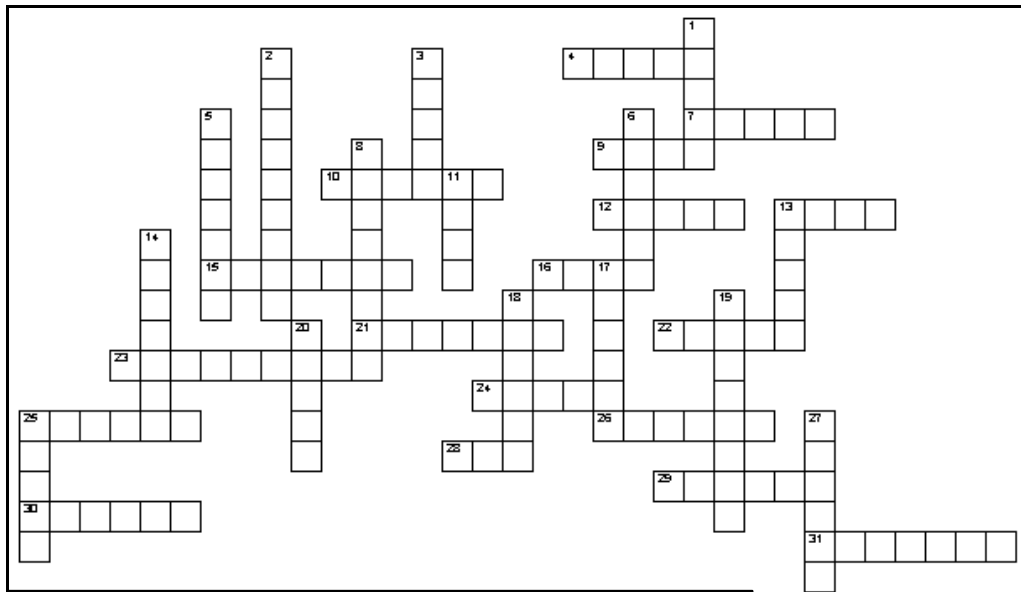
All answers found in the book of Amos.
Refer to the verses in brackets for help.

ACROSS

- 4 By what did Amos see the Lord standing? (9:1)
- 7 The fallen tent of which king will the Lord restore? (9:11)
- 9 Israel made the Nazarites drink what? (2:12)
- 10 Through which house of Israel will God sweep through like a fire? (5:6)
- 12 Houses adorned with what will be destroyed? (3:15)
- 13 Complete: "Does a ___ roar in the thicket when he has no prey?" (3:4)
- 15 The complacent of Israel use the finest what? (6:6)
- 16 For how many sins of Damascus would God not turn back His wrath? (1:3)
- 21 Fortresses of Ashdod and Egypt were to assemble where? (3:9)
- 22 What was it that the people of Israel liked to do? (4:5)
- 23 Where will there be wailing? (5:17)
- 24 Amos was a shepherd from this place (1:1)
- 25 The rich were cheating the poor with dishonest what? (8:5)
- 26 Upon which house would God send fire? (1:4)
- 28 The Lord tells Israel to prepare to meet their ___? (4:12)
- 29 God was going to destroy the altars in what town? (3:14)
- 30 Who will be overtaken by the plowman (9:13)
- 31 Who was priest of Bethel? (7:10)

DOWN

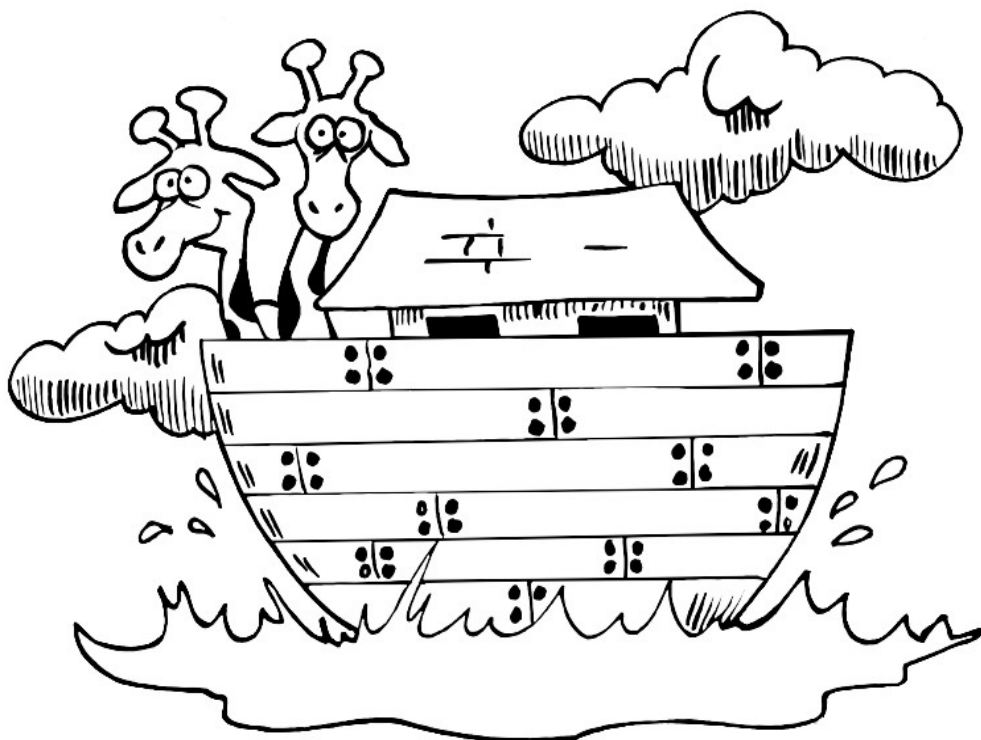
- 1 The what of Jacob does the Lord abhor? (6:8)
- 2 What was God going to make the people of Israel wear? (8:10)
- 3 Complete: "And I will ___ the house of Israel? (9:9)
- 5 What were they buying the needy with? (8:6)
- 6 Judah sold her righteous for what? (2:6)
- 8 In Amos 4:2, The Sovereign LORD swears by His what?
- 11 On who do the people of Israel trample on? (5:11)
- 13 The Day of the Lord will be without what? (5:20)
- 14 Israel has turned what into poison? (6:12)
- 17 Who was the king of Judah on the throne during the time of Amos (1:1)
- 18 The pregnant women of which place did Amnon kill? (1:13)
- 19 On what do the people lay beside the altars? (2:8)
- 20 The Lord showed Amos a basket of ripe what? (8:1)
- 25 With what will the Lord kill those who are left? (9:1)
- 27 Who will surely go into exile? (5:5)



Last Month's Answers:
 Across: 1. Judge 2. Atrial 7. Lots 10. Charities 14. Offerings 16. Fruit 20. Zion 21. Storehouses 22. Desert 24. Jehoshaphat 25. Swords 26. Locusts 28. Trumpet 30. Pasture 31. Greeks
 Down: 1. Judah 3. Fields 4. Darkness 5. Lion 6. Virgin 8. Sabeans 9. Fethuel 11. Wonders 12. Horses 13. Fast 15. Fire 17. Rejoice 18. Threshing 19. Treasures 23. Stars 27. Streams 29. Weep

Answers in next edition

COLOUR ME IN



Noah's Ark was a huge boat without sails, paddles or engine.
The ark was so big it could hold at least 569 railway cars.

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