



January 2021 • Vol 53 No 1



*Happy New Year*

**Congregations in East Kilbride  
prepare to merge**

**Philippines update**

**Book review: dating the kings**

## CONTENTS

- 3 MY PERSPECTIVE**  
**A year of opportunities**
- 4 FAMILY NEWS**
  - Northampton welcome Andrew Morphet into fellowship
  - Liverpool offers online activities for children
  - Wembley supports local families
  - East Kilbride and West Mains merge into one congregation
- 6 BRITISH BIBLE SCHOOL NOTES**  
**Looking for friends?**
- 7 BOOK REVIEW**  
**"Rogues in Royal Robes" by Monty White (reviewed by Graham Fisher)**
- 9 APPEALS UPDATES**
  - Philippines update
  - Thank you from Ghana
- 11 DIARY OF EVENTS IN UK & EUROPE AND NOTICES**
- 12 THE FINAL WORD**  
**Hope**



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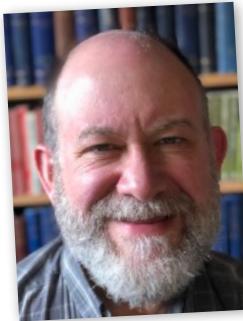
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Front cover: image by Jeff Jacobs from pixabay.com; above: a white beginning to 2021 in Scotland



# MY PERSPECTIVE



## Welcome 2021

### A year of opportunities

**A**nother new year. With each new year my mind looks at a time of new beginnings, new plans, new opportunities. The old year is over, and most of us will be rejoicing as we look forward to a new year.

How was your year last year? Yes, I know we all have had to make changes to our lives – changes we really don't like – but, putting the coronavirus aside, how was your year? Have you grown in your faith? Have you grown in your service to Jesus? Have you accomplished the goals you set for yourself at the beginning of 2020?

Being in lockdown, working from home, and living with restrictions I am sure were not part of our plan for last year. As much as we may not have welcomed these, they have provided time to slow down and concentrate on what is really important.

With working from home has come the elimination of the time needed to commute. Did we take advantage of this extra time to concentrate more on God's word? Bible reading and study should define the life of a disciple of Jesus. If we are not learning, can we truly call ourselves a disciple (realising that the Greek word means 'a pupil or student')? Spending time with God's word each day helps us to think about what is really important as we learn the life that God wants of his people.

Many of us are longing to return to worship in person with God's people. Some of us are already able to meet together but long for the time we can

once again embrace when we see each other – or even shake hands – without fear of spreading a very contagious virus. We look forward to our joining our voices together in praise of our God. Perhaps what we experienced in 2020 will help us to appreciate what we have when we come together to worship and just to spend time with other Christians.

How are you doing physically? Many set goals for themselves at the beginning of a year, usually to lose weight. By working from home and living with restrictions we have had time to concentrate on exercise and what we eat. The lockdown provided me with the opportunity to lose around three stone of my weight – I feel better and can now do more (although I need to lose a couple more stone this year).

Although we have been able to study with people online or on the phone – and new studies have been set up – most have seen their outreach somewhat curtailed this year. As we look to a new year be thinking of how we can once again reach those who live near us. Look for opportunities to speak a good word for Jesus.

What will 2021 hold in store for us? We pray that for each of us it will be a year of growing stronger in our faith, increasing our knowledge of God's word, and that congregations throughout the land will see growth as they teach others about Jesus. Look for the opportunities that will come in 2021.

Jon



# FAMILY NEWS

## NORTHAMPTON

It is with great joy we inform you through the *Christian Worker* of the return to the faith of **Andrew Morphet**.

Andrew will be known to many readers and will have been in their prayers often no doubt. Having watched and listened to messages on YouTube Sunday mornings by the British Bible School, Andrew had already realised his need to return to the Lord. Due to living near Northampton, and that being the place where he first gave his life to Christ, he emailed of his need to have his relationship with our Lord restored. We are delighted and privileged to accept Andrew to be part of this local congregation, but most of all he has returned to the Lord.

Mark Hill

## LIVERPOOL

### Online Youth Meetings

When Covid-19 struck our shores and the whole country went into 'lockdown', there were lots of Zoom programmes for the adults but nothing for the kids. A month or so into the pandemic we quickly realised that our children had no

classes and no time together. We soon discovered there was demand for something, anything, for our kids, but not just for our kids, but for the kids of other congregations.

We began hosting zoom youth meetings on Monday evenings and despite only having a few joining us, from ages six to sixteen, it's clear they really appreciate what we do with them. We usually sing songs, play games and have short devotional studies, along with some guest speakers from different congregations throughout the UK and the USA. They really enjoy meeting those from other congregations and have built good friendships with each other.

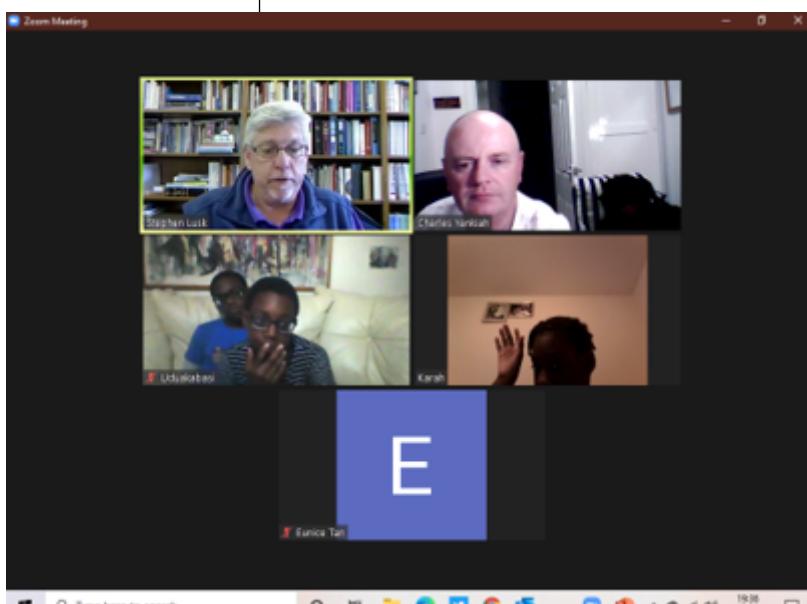
I know a few other congregations have special meetings just for children and young people but we would like to encourage other congregations to do the same. All too often our children get overlooked but their spiritual growth is just as important as the adults.

If you have any children who may be interested in joining us or if you would like to be a guest speaker, please get in touch with us by emailing Mike on [mike97@talktalk.net](mailto:mike97@talktalk.net) or phone 07879444267.

If you need teaching material for children and young people please visit <https://the-scriptures.co.uk/youth-studies/>.

I've also put together a series of short videos called 'In Lockdown with...' for any adults who may be interested in some encouragement from the Scriptures. You can view them by searching, 'The Scriptures UK' on YouTube, then click on playlist, 'In Lockdown With'.

Mike Glover



# FAMILY NEWS

## WEMBLEY

The Christians at Wembley have been able to support local families who were identified by our local primary school. Inspired by the work of Marcus Rashford, we decided to purchase grocery items for families in need.

Children who receive free school meals are only some of those who are in need. There are families who do not qualify for free school meals because their household income may be a few pounds too much or because they do not qualify for public funds (this is usually because the family have not been in the country long enough).



For the October half term 15 families received grocery items from the congregation. As a result of this, one family has been attending our worship time on Zoom and the children have been logging in to our weekly Children's Sunday School. Due to the success of the October deliveries, we were able to purchase items to give to 23 families on 22<sup>nd</sup> December.

It was a joy to be able to talk to local families and to see the appreciation they had for the parcels. Please keep these families in your prayers as we try to build relationships with our local community.

Bethan Mentore

## EAST KILBRIDE

After a year like 2020 it is wonderful to be able to share some good news.

For almost twenty years there have been two congregations in East Kilbride. Neither congregation has experienced great growth in the past few years. In looking toward the future some from both congregations arrived at the same conclusion: the two congregations would be better working together as one.

Alex Gear, evangelist with the West Mains congregation, approached Jon Galloway, evangelist with the East Kilbride congregation, in March to begin talking about the possibility of the two congregations merging before the end of the year. They agreed that this was the best way forward for both congregations.

The lockdown, which prevented worship in person in Scotland, also delayed Jon being able to talk in person with those at East Kilbride. Once worship was resumed and most were back at worship in the summer, meetings were organised at East Kilbride initially with the men and then with the entire congregation. There were issues to resolve and we are pleased that these are no longer a barrier to the congregations coming together. Those from both congregations are excited about the opportunities this brings for the future in this town on the edge of Glasgow.

We plan to officially merge as soon as South Lanarkshire is out of Tier 4 restrictions (which restricts worship to a maximum of 20 people) so that we can all worship together. Currently the target date for the merger is Sunday, 17<sup>th</sup> January, but that will depend on getting into Tier 3. If not, it will happen as soon as our area is in Tier 3.

Rejoice with us as these two congregations become one congregation for the Lord. Remember us in your prayers, both to thank the Lord for what is happening and for patience and understanding as we go forward to work together. We look forward to reporting further on the merger and our work together in the coming months.

Jon Galloway & Alex Gear



# BRITISH BIBLE SCHOOL NOTES

## Looking for friends?

One of the blessings of this past year has been the opportunity to engage with a wider audience, both at home and abroad. It is somewhat ironic that this has been the result of lockdowns and social distancing, but such has been the extraordinary effect of online conferencing. So as we look ahead there are now so many more opportunities to serve, even beyond this current crisis, and we look forward to meeting the challenges they present.

Just under a year ago we launched a new initiative to better enable others to help with this work through a monthly donation. Called “Friends of the Bible School”, we are initially looking for a hundred ‘friends’ to contribute £10 each month (or more, if you prefer). This will help provide us with a useful monthly working budget, and provide funding for regular expenses, online classes, additional travel costs, video production costs, website development as well as help towards funding teachers.

Since we are now registered with the Charity Commission, not only is your donation eligible for Gift Aid, but as a ‘Friend of the Bible School’ you will also be a member of the British Bible School

charity and so be able to be involved in the workings of the School. As a Friend of the Bible School:

- you will be helping to support the work of the British Bible School as we continue to serve through teaching and training in the Word.
- you will receive regular news updates of events and activities – including goings on behind the scenes.
- you will become a member of the British Bible School charity, thereby having opportunity to be involved at General Meetings.
- you will receive a personal copy of our Annual Report.

If you would like to be a ‘Friend of the Bible School’ then please visit our web site or get in touch (<http://britishbibleschool.com/community/supporting-the-school2/friends-of-the-bible-school>). You will find there a simple registration form, and also the means to sign up for Gift Aid if you are eligible (<http://britishbibleschool.com/community/supporting-the-school2/gift-aid-declaration-form>). If you are wanting to donate from overseas, then there is a simple way to do that too and we can send you relevant banking details.

What better way could there be to start the new year?

We thank you for your continued interest and support of this work, and we look forward to serving together in all sorts of ways in 2021. Every blessing to you,

Patrick Boyns

[britishbibleschool.com](http://britishbibleschool.com)

- 
- The initial goal is to find 100 friends who would each contribute £10 per month
  - This would provide us with a monthly working budget of £1000
  - This will help provide funding for regular expenses, online classes, additional travel costs, video production costs, as well as help towards funding teachers
  - This will not cover all our costs, but it will provide a regular monthly income for the School

## Friends of the Bible School

With a regular monthly donation, you will be helping to support the work of the British Bible School as we continue to serve through teaching and training in the Word. Please visit our website for further details.



# Book Review

## Rogues in Royal Robes

By: A.J. Monty White

Day One Publications / 2020 / 127 pages / ISBN: 978-1-84625-677-6 (paperback) / £7.00

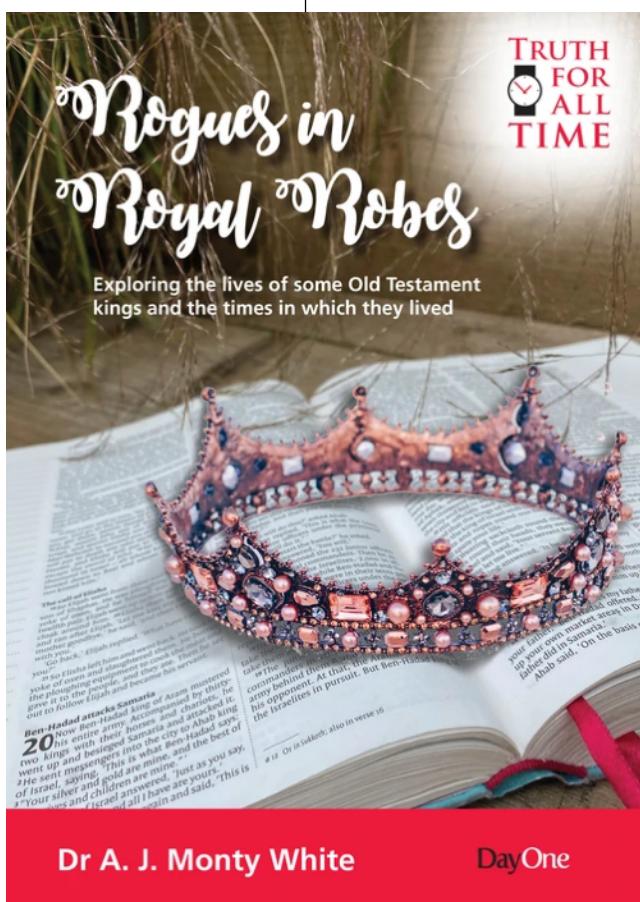
Dr Monty White is well-known amongst British Creationists as an atheist who converted to Christianity and who has published books and articles from a Young-Earth, Six-Day Creationist position. This means that he takes the biblical record very seriously indeed and that the Bible accurately reports true history when the content is of historical importance.

This latter point is significant, for this book is not a defence of Creationism at all but deals with the accounts of some of the kings of Israel and Judah in the divided kingdom situation. These accounts occur mainly in the books of both Chronicles and Kings and have

often been criticised by liberal scholars as mythological and untrue. They have also largely been ignored by many Christians because the accounts can be convoluted and difficult to follow since the chroniclers do not write as we would today.

This is particularly so as far as dating reigns and naming the people involved are concerned. Thus some characters appear in the narratives under two or even three names, relatives are often named after their fathers or uncles and it is frequently not made clear always just which person with the same name is being referred to. Consequently, though we know the story-lines of certain events, such as the contest Elijah had with the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel, we do not take the time to sort out what is what and who is who, and therefore this is somewhat of a blank area in the Christian's knowledge. As such this leaves the gate wide open into the field of criticising the reliability and accuracy of the Word of God, thereby undermining faith at such points.

Monty sets out to put the record straight and guide us through the interconnecting maze of passages to lead us to realise that far from being untrue myths, these are true and accurate accounts we can rely on with complete confidence. He frankly and openly acknowledges his debt to the late Professor Edwin R. Thiele who, though he was a Seventh Day Adventist, was also an eminent archaeologist whose seminal work was called *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* in which he demonstrated that the Northern chroniclers used a different system to calculate the length of the reigns of their kings as opposed to the kings of the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Once this was realised and acknowledged the



## BOOK REVIEW: ROGUES IN ROYAL ROBES

records began to make sense. The accuracy of these records has been further strengthened by archaeological discoveries towards the latter half of the Twentieth Century which confirm the truth and accuracy of the Bible.

This kind of a book is an open invitation to blind the ignorant with boring and tedious details useful only to those suffering from chronic insomnia in the hope that they can get a good night's sleep for a change. Monty has avoided that and written a fairly succinct, yet clear account which will guide anybody interested through the tangle contained in the details. He is excited about this study because he confesses that it was when he discovered that these books were indeed true history that he left atheism and put his whole weight into defending the Bible as the true Word of God. In other words it confirmed him in the truth and every Christian can bear witness to this in greater detail and depth once they have understood just what is going on.

In this book he focuses on the lives of Kings Omri, Ahab (and Jezebel), and Jehu from the North, and Joash from the South, but the net is cast wide enough to give a good working understanding of what is/was going on. I must admit that I'd no idea just how many murders took place during this time. They almost make Attila the Hun seem like Prince Charming – almost!

I found the book to be interesting, easy to read and follow and faith enhancing. It has helped me understand the Bible that much better. If I had a problem it has nothing to do with the 'How?', 'Who?' or 'What?' of the situation but the 'Why?' 'Why did the kings and people of those times so readily turn to the worship of Baal, and associated 'gods'?' There's absolutely no attempt to answer this question since Creationists still won't consider the evidence for an astro-catastrophical solution to it which helps us make much more realistic sense out of these accounts. But then I only know of one book which does: *Speak Through The Earthquake, Wind And Fire* (1982) by, I can't quite remember who wrote it but I can find out for you if you are interested!

Graham Fisher

## THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE

A British Bible School Applied Biblical Studies Module

*This introductory module examines the processes by which the Scriptures came to be written, from their composition to their compilation, and explores the reasons for there being 66 books in our Bible, with an emphasis on their authoritative role in our lives.*



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# APPEALS UPDATES

## PHILIPPINES

2020 will always be remembered as the best and worst of times.

At the beginning of the year, Taal Volcano erupted and caused major damage to lives and properties in my home province of Cavite and its neighbouring province of Batangas. That also brought about an opportunity to serve hundreds of families. For a whole month, we prepared home-cooked food for refugees in six different refugee shelters in nearby Mendez. Hundreds of families from Laurel and Agoncillo in the Batangas province sought shelter in Cavite.

Just as we were recovering from this horrific disaster, Filipinos were unknowingly being attacked by a deadly enemy called coronavirus. Before we knew what hit us, the entire world was already affected too. And thus a pandemic ensued.

By mid-March a lockdown was announced. It was a day before I was to fly to Helsinki to visit with my brother Ricardo and his family in Finland.



Life, as we know it, became tougher than usual. Curfew by six o'clock in the evening. Food was rationed. No vehicles allowed. Offices and schools were closed. You know how tough it was. It was the worst of times!

Still, when lockdown rules became less strict, we were able to serve again those close by. We gave out rice and food packs to neighbours and the church family.

Seven months into lockdown, my country was struck anew by typhoon after typhoon after typhoon. Actually, we were hit by six typhoons within four weeks. Super typhoon Rolly and typhoon Ulysses caused the most major damage to both lives and properties within a 400-mile radius (from north to south Luzon). We saw the worst flooding in Metropolitan Manila since 2009. Towns surrounding the Taal Volcano were yet again affected, this time by rampaging mud flow (lahar) and severe flooding.

Thankfully, brethren were quick to send help. Again, we were able to serve thousands with emergency aid – rice, food packs, hygiene kits, towels, sleeping mats, mosquito nets, and fleece blankets. It was the best of times.

Now as 2020 is about to end, I think of how the Lord has been faithful to his beloved. Despite the difficulties related to this pandemic, we continue to enjoy his love, mercy and grace. He alone is God. He alone is in control. I am blessed only because of His unconditional love. And for that I am most grateful.

I pray the coming new year ushers in unspeakable blessings to you and those you love.

Gigie Carranza

*£4,840 from British congregations and individuals has been sent to help. – Trevor*

## APPEALS UPDATES

### GHANA

I write to express our heartfelt gratitude to all who responded and contributed to our appeal for help to alleviate the suffering of the staff at the Tema Christian Centre School as a result of the extremely negative effect of Covid-19.

We take note of the fact that despite the challenges you face, the economic hardships, etc, resulting from the pandemic you were able and willing to consider our appeal! A great demonstration of love.

We have received with gratitude your sacrificial gift. This reminded us of what Jesus said: "Greater love has no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13).

Thanks and may God richly bless and keep you safe.

John Tamakloe

*(Support can be sent to John c/o Mrs. E Wickenden, 9 Peel Court, Longwick Road, Princes Risborough HP27 9EZ)*

Peter's First Letter

[http://britishbibleschool.com/  
news-and-events/online-events](http://britishbibleschool.com/news-and-events/online-events)

Mondays at 8.00 pm  
from 4<sup>th</sup> January ...  
for 12 weeks





PACT is an independent adoption charity, rated Outstanding by Ofsted for the last two inspections, with a long history of providing expert adoption services and award-winning adoption support. In 2020 we placed 89 children with loving and permanent homes. We offer adoption services to couples and single people who live within a 50-mile radius of one of our three offices in Reading, Brighton and London.

PACT Charity works with Home for Good who seek to find homes for every child who needs one through fostering or adoption. Working throughout the UK, they inspire and equip individuals and families to open their homes to vulnerable children and resource churches to be a welcoming and supportive community for fostering and adoptive families.

Home for Good work to mobilise the Church in the UK to respond to the needs of vulnerable children through families stepping forward to foster or adopt and churches wrapping around families with support, and to influence wider society through advocacy and engagement to create systemic change.

PACT welcomes couples or single people of all ages, ethnicities and backgrounds as adopters.

To find out more see [www.pactcharity.org](http://www.pactcharity.org) or get in touch by calling 0300 456 4800 or see [https://www.homeforgood.org.uk/](http://www.homeforgood.org.uk/)



# DIARY

## January

23<sup>rd</sup> – **Shepshed**: Online Youth Day – “What does it take to be a superhero?” Contact: [info@shepshedchurchofchrist.co.uk](mailto:info@shepshedchurchofchrist.co.uk) or 07728 028636.

## July

31<sup>st</sup> – **Edmonton (London)**: Singles’ Enrichment Programme, 3.00-10.00 pm, ages 18 and over. Theme: “Crossing Over From Single Life to Married Life – Get it Right”. Registration is required – contact: [churchofchristedmset@gmail.com](mailto:churchofchristedmset@gmail.com), Lloyd Agyemang (07833 296396), John ‘Nana Akwasi’ Asiamah (07908 725427), or Yaw Duodu (07462 080692).

## *European Events Calendar*

### February 2021

15<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> – **Gemünden, Germany**: Advanced Bible Study Series – online this year. Contact: Paul Brazle ([brazle.paul@gmail.com](mailto:brazle.paul@gmail.com)).

26<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> – **European Ladies’ Retreat**: Online International Ladies’ Fellowship. Theme: “The Pearl of Great Price” (Matthew 13:45-46). For further details please contact: [elrorganizers@gmail.com](mailto:elrorganizers@gmail.com) or see our Website: <http://elr.yolasite.com>.

## Singles’ Enrichment Programme

- ▶ Date: 31 July 2021
- ▶ Venue: Edmonton Church of Christ Worship Premises
- ▶ Time: 3.00 pm-10.00 pm
- ▶ Target Group: 18 years or above. Those who will turn 18 before/on 31 July 2021 are also eligible to register.
- ▶ There will be speakers from two sets of couples: a younger couple and an older couple
- ▶ THEME: CROSSING OVER FROM SINGLE LIFE TO MARRIED LIFE - GET IT RIGHT
- ▶ REGISTRATION
  - ▶ All who are interested in attending the programme are required to register their interest. Registration and attendance are free. To register, contact one of the following:
  - ▶ Email: [churchofchristedmset@gmail.com](mailto:churchofchristedmset@gmail.com)
  - ▶ Lloyd Agyemang - 07833296396
  - ▶ John ‘Nana Akwasi’ Asiamah - 07908725427
  - ▶ Yaw Duodu - 07462080692
- ▶ Closing date for registration: 31 May 2021

<http://britishbibleschool.com/news-and-events/online-events>

Thursdays at 8.00 pm  
from 7<sup>th</sup> January ...  
for 12 weeks

## What does it take to be a superhero?



Find out at our **MARVELOUS** Youth day on January 23rd as we study what it means to put on the armour of God!  
Join us on zoom!  
For more info contact Shepshed Church of Christ:  
[info@shepshedchurchofchrist.co.uk](mailto:info@shepshedchurchofchrist.co.uk)  
07728028636



# THE FINAL WORD



Hope

**H**appy New Year, Happy Valentine's Day, Happy Easter, Happy Birthday, Merry Christmas, and Happy every day. This is my hope for you.

Twice over the years that we were involved in cooking for camps we had the theme of 'A year in a week'. The reason was simple: the young people loved being with each other and wanted to spend their special days with each other but they usually had to spend them with their families. This did not mean that they did not love their families but life was just not big enough to spend every special occasion with every special person that they knew. We tried our best at camp to fulfil a little of their hopes. How well I remember making birthday cake or chocolate log for 100 people!

Most of our readers could quote 1 Corinthians 13:13 – "...these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." We have tried to grasp hold of the love of God through faith in the sacrifice of Jesus but what of hope?

Hope for one person may not be the same hope of another. Certainly we can be thrilled by the thoughts of Jeremiah 29:11 – "...plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." But in reality these words were spoken to the people of Israel and we wonder if God has plans for every individual person across the world and down through the ages.



As Christians we have taken hold of the hope offered to us in the gospel; a hope that is an anchor for the soul, firm and secure (Hebrews 6:18-19). The theology is all there about hope, if we take a few more minutes to look up the right verses, but what are you really hoping for?

When we are children we hope for certain presents for our birthday or Christmas and we may or may not get them. As teens we hope that we will pass exams, find love, or a job or both. Life goes on and we are hoping for something.

We pray to God for healing, for health for others and for self. We know only too well that life can be short or long, prosperous or penniless. We know that Jesus taught us to ask for our daily bread but we want, hope, long for something more certain and we reach out knowing that we cannot touch the future. We can do our best to try to prepare for the future by being financially careful or we look after our bodies so we try to avoid self-imposed illnesses. At the end of the day we know we grasp at straws, hoping that when it is time to leave this life we might go gently into the arms of Jesus.

But what of today – what is your hope, what do you look forward to? There is nothing wrong with hope: it links faith to love, it is one of the great three. Hope for great blessings, hope for greater faith, hope for great love, hope.

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Romans 15:13)

Trevor