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The Mt. Cathedral Baptist church in Victoria (Australia) is looking for a senior pastor. For any information or application forms contact Pastor Daniel Kriss. daniel.kriss@countrytech.com.au Ph.(03)57723165

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Diakrisis (Australia) has now been in print for over 26 years. Articles have been written on a large range of topics. Readers can search these topics through a pdf Reader program. This is a useful aid to study or research on numerous topics. For further advice contact this ministry by e-mail.

Thoughts For The Month

It is impossible to please and be non confrontational with the world and its religious, when both increasingly hate Christ, shun His Word and well maintain the broad road to Hell (Jn.7:7,13; 16:33). We need awakened preachers preaching an awakening, as they hear the footsteps of the soon coming King. (Editor)

'The greatest miracle that God can do today is to take an unholy man out of an unholy world, and make that man holy and put him back into that unholy world and keep him holy in it'. (Leonard Ravenhill)

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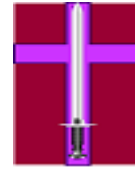
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Diakrisis (Australia)

'But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern [diakrisis] both good and evil', (Heb.5:14)

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TA Ministries is a non-denominational faith ministry,
teaching, informing and equipping the church.
Editor: Terry Arnold (Dr.Th; MABS; Dip.Bib.&Min.)

The editor may not necessarily agree with all the views expressed by subscribers in this newsletter.

We welcome comments or items contributed by readers. Unless otherwise requested, these may be included in following newsletters at the discretion of the editor.

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This newsletter is distributed bi-monthly *free* of charge. The cost to this ministry is approximately \$20.00 per subscriber annually. Any donation to help with these expenses is received with gratitude.

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Editor's Comment

Before Pilate handed Jesus over to be crucified, he said to Jesus *'what is truth?'* Previously Jesus had answered that question when he said to His disciples, *'I am the way the truth and the life'* and that God's Word *'is truth'* (Jn.14:6;17:14-17).

We are living in a fast changing world that is now full of 'fake' reporting in news, science, academics, medicine, history...*truth* is a diminishing commodity.

Two recent examples suffice. Firstly, despite what we think of the evil of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the reporting has been blatantly biased. Ukraine has been described as an innocent 'democracy' when it is actually more a dictatorship with the media controlled by the government and opposition banned. It also has a level of corruption and immorality few countries match, including a leading pornography industry, the third largest in child pornography. The reporting of the Ukrainian military successes was also not entirely what was seen by military analysts, who state that Russian forces were overcoming large masses of Ukrainian forces with successes on the ground, air and sea. Much of the equipment sent by countries supporting Ukraine, (such as the 'Bushmaster' vehicles supplied by Australia), was quickly destroyed. America also denied having supported biochemical labs in Ukraine, yet now have been forced to admit their lie.

Secondly, the health 'experts' through the willing media told us Covid vaccination would prevent people dying or being hospitalised. Yet Covid deaths in the vaccinated are now the majority as well as rising injury/death rates from the vaccination itself, all rewritten or unreported. These are the 'experts' who recently were not even able to answer 'what is a woman?!' They have refused to listen to a growing number of eminent physicians and disease experts who are warning of the lack of truth presented concerning the virus and the vaccines.

(<https://www.covidmedicalnetwork.com/open-letters/open-letter-to-atagi.aspx>)

The recent Australian elections have highlighted a swing among younger voters to choose climate change and gender issues, issues with which a new generation has been subtly indoctrinated in schools, education and the media. Much of this is anti God and anti truth. We expect this in the world, yet the church is increasingly aping the same. In the west we are living in a post Christian world where much of 'Christianity' has discarded the Bible as objective *truth*. Most denominations have apostatised on moral issues such as homosexuality, the new 'LGBTQ' and gender issues. Christians in the west now increasingly support abortion. The speed with which values are changing is breathtaking!

The *subjectivism of human thought has replaced the objectivism of the Word of God and WE become the divine arbitrator of what is truth*. Christians turn more to humanistic and integrated systems for wisdom which God calls *'foolishness'* (1Cor.3:19). But in a world where truth is scarce, there is a place where truth is *unchanging and eternal* - we have that truth in the written scriptures.

The lack of truth in this chaotic world should drive us to the saving refuge of the Lord and His Word. *'Your word is true from the beginning: and every one of your righteous judgments endures forever'* (Ps.119:160).

Terry Arnold

Your Comments and Questions

(Views expressed here are not necessarily those of the editor)

Dear sir, I wish to buy the book 'Free Will or Free Agency'. I am interested in where this term came from...Our unsaved will is to go against God...Only when the Lord came into my life and saved me, did I turn to him. Adam and Eve had 'free will' but sadly lost that freedom when they went against God and sinned...

(R.W., NSW)



Latest Books

'Free Will or Free Agency - Killing Sacred Cows'

This book *'will give you a full biblical, theological, and historical background to the necessity of conversion and the new birth...Knowing the difference between free will and free agency will be a matter of whether you are interested in doing God's business God's way'* (Todd Stanton, Pastor-teacher St. Johns Park Baptist church, Sydney)

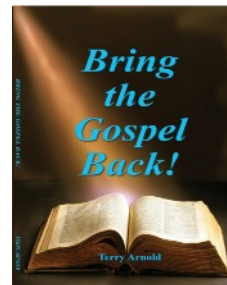
The issues documented in these pages will affect how the Gospel is understood and then how this is played out in methods of evangelism.

Does man have complete freedom of his will? Where did the term 'free will' originate? Why did church leaders use another term, 'free agency'? What is the difference? *What can man do and what can he not do with his will toward salvation?*

The book tests the terms 'free will' and 'free agency' with scripture and the testimony of historic orthodoxy (Charles Spurgeon is given special mention).

The book is available now for \$9.90 (postage included).

Bring The Gospel Back!



'Clarity on the Gospel perhaps is the greatest need at the moment. With the Church being assaulted every day with lies and errors, clarity on the Gospel needs many voices...This book is a must read by every Christian and every Christian minister.'

(Todd Stanton, Pastor-teacher St. Johns Park Baptist church, Sydney)

This book is a passionate and urgent call for churches to *come back to the true Gospel and preach it accurately*. It will challenge even many conservative churches as to what has been added to the content and the delivery of the Gospel, and especially the response to it.

This book is available now for \$15.90 (postage included)

Your Comments and Questions

(Views expressed here are not necessarily those of the editor)

Hi Terry...I would like your advice on preaching the Gospel to my nine year old grandson...I have mentioned God and Jesus to him but find it difficult to go further. One thing he understands is that all effects have a cause...God. Can you direct me to any helps...websites, or whatever to help me out. There is not much authentic material on youtube...I know prayer is number one but I need some help.

(Name withheld at editor's discretion)

Editor's Reply:

I am not an 'evangelist' and it is to me a difficult age to evangelise. At age nine they are smart enough to use logic, their education more advanced and the world's agendas have instilled in them evolution as a proven fact. The story of a God/man coming to earth and willingly submitting to a gruesome death and then rising from the dead, today increasingly might seem ridiculous compared to the current standards of the world.

I suggest unfolding history as described in scripture, beginning with the creation account, then Abraham, the Israelites, their kings, battles, exile, their prophets...Speak even also of predictions of worldwide endtime events and prophecies...It takes time, and a grounding is needed for the Gospel...Try to speak the Gospel from Bible history stories *with God the main character and salvation from sin His purpose*. Faith is not firm and secure unless it can be backed up by facts...Christianity embraces that, especially in history? When presenting the Gospel, keep it simple to explaining what is sin, the breaking of God's Law, the penalty for it and Christ crucified to satisfy God for our sin.

Teach them to pray simple short prayers; pray for them, and with them if possible.

We have also heard of results when, if it is possible, to use a 'Catechism for children' based on the Westminster shorter Catechism. The Puritans were renowned for catechising their children (often a follow-up to sermons). John Cotton, titled his catechism 'Milk for Babes' and others were 'First Principles' of religion, and 'The ABC of Christianity'. The Puritans taught from both the Bible and their catechisms with much success in making the faith *understandable* but also *defensible*. (One of the sad consequences of the lack of this is seen in the multitudes of young people who leave the Christian home and church environment to study or work, and fall away from the faith. Often they simply did not *understand* the convictions they adopted and have no knowledge in *defending* the faith).

There is also a 'Firm Foundations' program for Children we have used which has lessons with pictures. Crossview Australia sell it...it may be online?

The psalmist declared: '*...incline your ears to the words of my mouth...We will not hide them from their children, showing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he has done*' (Ps.78:2-4).

Timeline To Apostasy - The Church of England

The History

The apostate history of the denominations shows they have completely backflipped on previously held beliefs which were based on what they once believed was the inspired all sufficient Word of God. Following is some of the documented history of the Church of England and its Anglican and Episcopal counterparts in the west.

1953 - Archbishop of Canterbury William Temple, in his book '*Nature and God*', stated '*... there is no such thing as revealed truth*'.

1960 - Episcopalian Bishop James Pike stated the doctrine of the Trinity is '*outdated, incomprehensible and nonessential*' (*Christian Century*, Dec. 21, 1960)

Billy Graham was a guest at Pike's ordination on May 15, 1958 and praised the bishop in glowing terms. Graham invited Pike to his crusade in San Francisco and to lead in prayer. Later Graham spoke in Pike's church.

1961 - Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael Ramsey, stated, '*... Heaven is not a place for Christians only...I expect to see many present day atheists there*' (*London Daily Mail*, Oct.2, 1961).

Bishop James Pike called the virgin birth of Christ a '*primitive myth*' and said Joseph was probably Jesus' real father (*Redbook Magazine*, Aug.1961); and Adam and Eve, the Garden of Eden, Heaven and Hell are myths. Billy Graham invited Ramsey to his 1975 crusade in Brazil and to speak. (*Fundamental Evangelistic Association News & Views*, May/June 1975).

1963 - Episcopal Paul van Buren started a *God-is-Dead movement* in his book '*The Secular Meaning of the Gospel*'.

1967 - Heresy charges were brought against Bishop James Pike. However, the Episcopal Church adopted a resolution declaring that all heresy was out of date.

Canon Hugh Montifiore of Cambridge University's main church stated, '*Jesus might have been a homosexual*' (*Christianity Today*, Aug. 18, 1967). (Montifiore was the advisor for the Cambridge Billy Graham Television Crusade.)

1968 - Church of England's Lambeth Conference voted that Anglican clergy are no longer required to agree to the denomination's *39 Articles of Faith*.

1976 - John Spong was ordained as bishop of the Newark Episcopal diocese, New Jersey, even though he denied most doctrines of the Christian faith.

1977 - Bishop Paul Moore of the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City ordained lesbian Ellen Barrett as a priest, stating that '*her lesbian love affairs gave her the strength to serve God*' (*Time magazine*).

1978 - South African Anglican Bishop Desmond Tutu stated the Holy Spirit shone through Hindu Mahatma Gandhi (St. Alban's Cathedral, Pretoria, Nov.23).

1980 - Tutu stated '*It may be Jesus was an illegitimate son*' (*Cape Times*, Oct.24)

1982 - Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie stated he was an agnostic as to why Jesus suffered on the cross (*Sunday Times Weekly Review*, London, April 11, 1982). (Billy Graham was one of the honoured guests at Runcie's ordination in 1980 and spoke highly of him during his crusades in England in 1984,89).

Bishop John Spong condemned traditional evangelistic and missionary work and stated that biblical absolutism is 'a vice' (*Christian Century*, Jan. 6-13, 1982).

1984 - David Jenkins, Anglican Bishop of Durham, described Christ's resurrection as 'a conjuring trick with bones' and 'you don't have to believe in the virgin birth' (*AP, St. Louis Post Dispatch*, Oct.28).

1984 - The *Associated Press* reported that only 20 of 31 Church of England bishops polled insisted that Christians must accept Jesus as both God and man.

1985 - The *Jesus Seminar* was founded with the help of Episcopalians. The Seminar claimed Jesus spoke about 20% of the things attributed to Him in the New Testament and that the Jesus described in the Bible is largely fictitious; that He was not born of a virgin, did not walk on the water, did not rise bodily from the dead, and had no intention of starting a new Christian religion, that there was no Jewish trial of Jesus before the crucifixion, and the Jews did not participate in His condemnation.

Twenty Episcopal churches in Memphis, Tennessee ran an advertisement which stated, 'In an atmosphere of absolute right and wrongs, here's a little room to breathe...the Episcopal Church is totally committed to the preservation of open dialogue and undogmatic faith. We exist to tell the world about a God who loves us regardless of what we've done or what we believe...if we do not believe in Him, He believes in us. We do not suffocate with absolutes'.

Edmond Lee Browning was elected 'Presiding Bishop' and 'disagreed with the church's official opposition to the ordination of practicing homosexuals' (*Religious News Service*, Sept.11). He was one of 20 bishops who signed a 1979 statement calling the church's position 'a cruel denial of the sexual being of homosexual persons' and a 'condemnatory judgment' that made them 'second-class citizens in the church'.

1986 - Anglican Bishop David Jenkins got a standing ovation from the general synod of the Church of England when he defended his doubts about the virgin birth and bodily resurrection of Christ (*Associated Press*, July 7, 1986). Jenkins called the God of the Bible 'a cultic idol' (*Ecumenical Press Service*, July 16-21, 1986).

1987 - Seven Episcopal bishops dismissed heresy charges against Bishop Spong.

1988 - Spong published his book 'Living in Sin: A Bishop Rethinks Human Sexuality'. 'The time has surely come not just to tolerate, or even to accept, but to celebrate and welcome the presence among us of our gay and lesbian fellow human beings' (P.199). Spong visited a Buddhist temple and said 'As the smell of incense filled the air, I knelt before three images of the Buddha, feeling the smoke could carry my prayers heavenward. It was for me a holy moment, I was certain that I was kneeling on holy ground' ('A Dialogue in a Buddhist Temple', *The Voice*, Jan).

1989 - Five Episcopal bishops unanimously dismissed a second set of heresy charges against Bishop Spong. Spong later ordained the first openly practicing homosexual (Robert Williams) to the Episcopal priesthood. At least 50 practicing homosexuals were ordained by 1991 (*Integrity*, a pro-homosexual Episcopal group)

1991 - John Spong in his book 'Rescuing the Bible from Fundamentalism', stated the apostle Paul was 'a self hating, repressed homosexual'. Spong ordained another homosexual priest, Barry Stopfel. Lesbian Episcopal priest Carter



Salvation Army Apostasy

Terry...attached is a letter I recently sent to...(Territorial Commander of The Salvation Army in Australia)...Before the videos were removed on You Tube by a person within the Salvation Army I copied them...My letter is addressing my absolute disgust over a weekend event at Pakenham. The 'Commissioner' spoke and three Salvation Army Officers declared their 'sexuality'. It was absorbent and blasphemous.

I have the pleasure to teach three groups the Bible here...covering 17 people....The pockets of the faithful still stand on the Word of God. The perilous times have well and truly come. Any time we will be gone to see Jesus face to face.

Mate, keep proclaiming the Gospel, keep preserving it and keep living it. It's not easy. The attacks are coming from within...This is very, very serious. The evil of these last days has descended upon us. The Bible tells us about it. It is very clear and always has been. Yours in Christ's service.

(N.R. NSW)

Editor's Comments:

The 'attachment' detailed the Salvation Army acceptance of 'LGBTQ' manner of life and allowing testimonies of gay people who have 'come out', etc. When complaints arrived, the posts were removed.

What would the founder of the Salvation Army, the evangelist William Booth, think of this apostasy? ...The days of Noah and Lot could well be here.

Dearest Terry & Beth, we have received copies of 'Diakrisis' for 20 years! [Editor: 'Diakrisis' is 26 years old] How do I know? We just moved house...I was looking at back issues. For years you have faithfully taught the whole counsel of God, encouraging us by 'rightly dividing the word of truth' (2Tim.2:15). Thank you so much. It delights my heart.

I have been reading 'Letters of John Newton', letters to others encouraging, exhorting...He was born in 1725. I want to share a portion of one...it made me think of you. Newton writes to one he hopes to meet...'As it is I endeavour to be with you in spirit. There certainly is a real though secret, a sweet though mysterious, communion of saints by virtue of their common union with Jesus. Feeding upon the same bread, drinking of the same fountain, waiting at the same mercy-seat, aiming at the same ends, they have fellowship one with another though at a distance. Who can tell how often the Holy Spirit, who is equally present with them all, touches the hearts of two or more of his children at the same instant, so as to excite a sympathy of pleasure, prayer, or praise on each other's account ...'

May the Lord bless you abundantly as you walk in His ways, and honour our Lord, to His glory. As we await...With much love in Christ.

(K.L. Qld)

Your Comments and Questions

(Views expressed here are not necessarily those of the editor)

The Identity of Babylon

Dear Terry,...I wanted to comment on the article on Chapter 18 of Revelation and the identity of Babylon by looking at the phrase 'the great city' and asking the question - how many great cities are there in Revelation? The phrase 'the great city' in Revelation has the following scriptures: Rev.11:8; 16:19; 17:18; 18:10,16,18-19, 21 (cp.Matt.18:6 & Matt.21:21); 21:10. Is it possible that the mystery of the woman and MYSTERY BABYLON can be solved by accepting that John has a consistent referent, actually book-ending his use of the phrase 'the great city'. Note that in his first reference to the great city, John strongly implies that he is referencing the earthly Jerusalem...Compare Rev 3:12 (the new Jerusalem)...Up till this, God's city had always been earthly Jerusalem 'Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King' (Ps 48:1-2).

Editor's Reply:

This has been a difficulty for me and I am still not hard and fast about Rev.17 and 18. It appears to me Revelation ch.11 is Jerusalem, and Babylon in chapter 18 is a commercial Babylon in the last days. Chapter 17 is also difficult for me although I lean towards Rome (with the description of martyrs, colours and seven hills, etc.); but that could also be Rome in John's time...Some would argue for Jerusalem? Ch.21 is the New Jerusalem. I have learned I cannot be dogmatic about Revelation. The Lord bless you for your study.

Psychology

Hi Terry, what articles do you have on psychology?
(CK, Qld)

Editor's reply:

In the 'Articles' section on the TA Ministries website under 'Psychology' there are two articles on 'Self Esteem'. In the newsletters section we have 'Counselling - Psychology, Christian or Biblical' (Nov/Dec 2018) and 'Christianity Today' and Psychology' (Sept/Oct 1999).

The other reference I have used is John MacArthur's book 'Our sufficiency in Christ' which has much concerning psychology. (This is a first book, a primer I recommend to students at colleges as it sets the foundation for the doctrine of the Inspiration and Sufficiency of Scripture). In 'Diakrisis' May/June, 2007, P.9 we listed quotes on psychology from this book.

Heyward delivered the ordination sermon. (When Stopfel's male 'lover' was introduced, the audience applauded).

1993 - A survey of nearly 20,000 Episcopalians showed that 70% believed 'faithful Christians can be sexually active gays and lesbians' (*Christian News*, Nov.1). 75% approved of living with someone of the opposite sex without marriage.

1994 - It was reported in London that at least 100 Anglican priests were atheists who do not believe in 'an external, supernatural God' (*Sunday Times*, July 31).

1996 - The doctrinal commission of the Church of England stated Hell is not a place of fire and eternal torment. Bishop John Spong wrote that the image of God in the Bible is 'no longer operative' (*ENI*, Dec. 6, 1996).

1997 - A survey found 31% of Anglican vicars in England did not believe in the virgin birth (*Alliance Life*, March 12, 1997). (Many more than this figure believed in the virgin birth but in a figurative manner only).

1998 - John Spong stated, 'I would choose to loathe rather than to worship a deity who required the sacrifice of his son' (*Christianity Today*, June 15, 1998). Retiring Episcopal Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning stated, 'It is time to move past using literalistic readings of the Bible to create prejudices against our gay and lesbian brothers and sisters' (*Calvary Contender*, May 1, 1998).

2001 - Russell Stanndard, an Anglican professor of physics denied the creation account and cited 'The Big Bang' theory; that there was no God before the 'Big Bang'; and no real Adam and Eve (Salvation Army publication *War Cry*).

2002 - Richard Harries, Bishop of Oxford, stated Christians should pray to 'God the Mother' (*The Times*, Nov.3). Retired Bishop Spong proposed a 'new Christianity' to 'incorporate all of our reality. It must be able to allow God and Satan to come together in each of us...It must unite Christ with Antichrist, Jesus with Judas, male with female, heterosexual with homosexual' (*World*, July 8, 2002).

2003 - Episcopalian bishop Charles Bennisson stated that Jesus Christ was a sinner, (*Worthy News*, April 14).

The Diocese of New Hampshire elected V. Gene Robinson as the first openly homosexual bishop in the history of the Episcopal Church USA. In 2000, the day before a homosexual march he stated 'We are worthy to hold our heads high as gay folk, not because we've merely decided we are worthy, but because God has proclaimed it so...We too read our Bibles and through the voices of its many witnesses, we hear God's voice not saying 'You are an abomination,' but rather, 'You are my beloved'. We lay equal claim to a savior who loves us as we are and who died to save us from our 'manifold sins and wickedness,' which does not include our being gay...we lay claim to our full membership...in the Body of Christ'.

2006 - The American Episcopal Church national convention voted seven tenths against a resolution stating 'an unchanging commitment to Jesus Christ as the son of God, the only name by which any person may be saved'. A Rev. McDowell stated: 'how one lives his life is the more important issue than whether one affirms Jesus as Lord...all men are already children of God'. This convention elected liberal Katharine Jefferts Schori to be presiding bishop. In her first sermon she referred to 'our mother Jesus'. She told Washington Post that those who believe the words of the Bible have only one possible interpretation, are guilty of idolatry.

The convention also referred to the Holy Spirit as 'she'.

The homosexual bishop Gene Robinson said the Holy Spirit *'is that part of God that refuses to be confined and contained in the little boxes we have for God... We don't worship a God who is all locked up in the Scripture of 2,000 years ago'*. He quoted John Fortunato, a homosexual author who claimed God visited him confirming homosexuality is fine if it is *'loving'... 'God smiled and said quietly, 'How can loving be wrong? All love comes from me'*. (*Christian Research Journal*, vol.29, no.5, 2006)

2008 - On September 14 the Church of England officially apologized to Charles Darwin for rejecting his theory of evolution: *'Charles Darwin, 200 years from your birth, the Church of England owes you an apology for misunderstanding you and, by getting our first reaction wrong, encouraging others to misunderstand you still'* (*'Church Makes 'Ludicrous' Apology'*, *Daily Mail*, Sept.13, 2008).

2009 - On May 16 the bells of the Anglican Cathedral of Liverpool pealed out John Lennon's atheistic song *'Imagine'* three times. A spokesperson said, *'We feel this performance has inspired many people to think about their relationship with God in their lives'* (*'Imagine That'*, *The Daily Mail*, May 17, 2009). (Lennon was anti Christ, an atheist and occultist who in his writings and songs blasphemed the three members of the Trinity, and stated Jesus was not coming back).

2012 - At its annual convention the Episcopal Church in America endorsed 'same-sex unions' and voted in favour of 'transgender clergy' (Rob Kerby, *'Why Is the Episcopal Church Near Collapse?'* *Beliefnet.com*, July 13, 2012).

2013 - The Church of England dropped its ban on gay clergy becoming bishops and proposed that the Church *'be able to recognize and celebrate same-sex marriages and partnerships in church services'* (*'Church of England Proposes Celebrating Gay Marriage'*, *Newsmax.com*, Nov. 28, 2013).

Assessment...What Does the Word of God Teach?

There is much to learn from history! A similar timeline can be shown for other denominations. The author in past issues of *'Diakrisis'* has commented on such with the *Uniting Church* in Australia as well as the *Churches of Christ*. The *Uniting Church* forsook what they had generally once believed on the issues of homosexuality and women in ministry. They increasingly *dialogued* and attempted an *inclusive* approach with such groups advocating these issues. Similarly the *Churches of Christ* produced articles 'rethinking' male eldership and also endorsing the ecumenical movement and the completely apostate World Council of Churches.

Charles Spurgeon once summed up the apostasy he saw in his own Baptist denomination: *'It is clear to everyone who is willing to see it that laxity of doctrine is either the parent of worldliness, or is in some other way very near akin to it. The men who give up the old faith are the same persons who plead for latitude as to general conduct'* (Charles Spurgeon, *'The Sword and Trowel'*, Dec.1887).

The timelines of apostasy in the mainline denominational churches of the world show at first a *gradual* diminishing of doctrine and then acceptance of the fashions

the same as 'Hell' but appears to be a temporary *prison* for the worst of the demons (Lk.8:31; 1Pet.3:19,20; Jude 6).

This *'bottomless pit'* is opened and Satan is shut up and a *'seal put upon him'* so as to prevent him from deceiving the nations *'till the thousand years should be fulfilled'*. He would then be *'loosed a little season'* to lead a final quick rebellion (vs.7,8).

Postmillennialists and Amillennialists believe Satan was already bound at the cross. But if so then one must ask why Satan could afterwards still *'fill hearts to lie to the Holy Spirit'* (Acts 5:3), *'get an advantage of us'* through *'his devices'* (2Cor.2:11), *'blind the minds of unbelievers'* (2Cor.4:4); and why the believer is urged to defend against the *'wiles of the devil...spiritual wickedness in high places...the fiery darts of the wicked'* (Eph.6:11-16), *'resist the devil'* (James 4:7), and that we not *'turn aside after Satan'* (1Tim.5:15). The phrase *'he should deceive the nations no more'* surely shows an *ending* to his deceptions, not at the cross but during the millennial reign of Christ at the end of which Satan is *'loosed a little season'* for one last insurrection, (detailed further in the chapter - vs.7-9).

Vs.4 ***'And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years'***.

The *'thrones'* and *judgement* here appear to be what Daniel spoke of: *'the thrones were cast down and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, the hair of his head like pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered to him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set and the books were opened'* (Dan.7:9,10).

It does appear too that the apostles and the saints will be involved in, and present at, this judgement (Matt.19:28; 1Cor.6:2).

John *'sees'* the tribulation *'souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God'*. They had not *'worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark...they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years'*.

The ultimate culmination of the victory we have in Jesus and His cross is that the enemy of our souls, the father of lies, is bound, and Christ and the saints will rule. To live and reign with Christ in the millennium is surely a glorious event Christians should look forward to. The One who gave His life to give us life; the One who bore our sins and fulfilled the law we could never keep; the One who was punished by the Father for our deserved eternal punishment; the One who satisfied the Father with a propitiatory sacrificial offering when we could offer nothing; the sinless One who was raised for our justification - this is the Christ who will reign gloriously in 'the thousand years' with his beloved!

Terry Arnold

interested in eschatology when busy fighting an apostate Roman system.

Several of the Puritans who followed the Reformers were also Millennialists. Others like Jonathan Edwards and Charles Spurgeon believed in a literal return of the Jews to their land and a national conversion. (1) The later Bonar, JC Ryle and Charles Spurgeon were all literal in their interpretation of the Millennium. Charles Spurgeon in 1865 stated: *'The day will come, when the Lord Jesus will descend from Heaven...Some think that this descent of the Lord will be post-Millennial - that is, after the thousand years of His reign. I cannot think so. I conceive that the advent will be pre-Millennial; that He will come first; and then will come the Millennium as the result of His personal reign upon earth'* (Justification & Glory MTP Vol.11, 1865, P.249, Rom.8:30); *'...We expect a reigning Christ on earth; that seems to us to be very plain, and to be put so literally that we dare not spiritualise it'* ('Things to Come' MTP Vol.15, 1869, P.329, 1 Cor.3:22); *'Jesus, in a Millennial age, shall be the light and the glory of the city of the new Jerusalem'* ('The Lamb - the Light' MTP Vol.10, 1864, P.439, Rev.21:23).

Summary

The root of the issue here is one of *hermeneutics* - how we *interpret* scripture. The literal grammatical method is arguably more logical and consistent to scripture. The guess work of what symbols and signs mean is less dependant on the interpreter, as seen in many differing and strange interpretations by the commentators over the centuries, many proven erroneous by history.

(1) Extensive quotes from the church fathers and later divines can be found on our website in the booklet titled: *'The Millennium - Literal or Figurative; The Early Church and Beyond'*.

Part 15 Chapter 20:1-4

Vs.1-3 *'And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season [time]'*.

There is much detail in this chapter which describes the binding of Satan, the millennial reign of Christ, a short final rebellion, and the final judgement of the lost and of Satan. Note the chronological timeline continues as John 'saw' (tribulation ch.6-19; the second coming ch.19 and now the kingdom ch.20)...

John 'saw' a powerful angel (possibly Michael cp.12:7) with *'the key of the bottomless pit'* to bind the one called the *'dragon'* (Rev.12:3,4,7,9,13,16,17; 13:2,4,11; 16:13; 20:2), the *'old serpent'* from the garden of Eden (Gen.3:1-6; 1Cor.11:3), *'the Devil, and Satan'*, to *'bind him a thousand years'*.

The *'key'*, as seen before (3:7; 9:1), is used as a figure of power or authority (Is.22:22; 3:7; Matt.16:19,18:18). The *'bottomless pit'* (or the *'abyss'* - *'ábyssos'*) is mentioned seven times in Revelation (Rev.9:1,2, 11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1). It is not

of the *world*. At the root of this is a laxity in the doctrines of the *inspiration* and *inerrancy* of the Bible as being the *objective* and *all sufficient* Word of God.

Apostasy then often accelerates when the church first *dialogues* with those they at one time considered to be in error. But this dialogue is not for the purpose of correction but rather out of a misplaced sense of human 'love' and a desire for 'unity'. History repeatedly shows that the next step is a gradual *tolerance* of the error, then a subtle *acceptance* and soon an *embracing* of extra-biblical doctrines, methods, and the ever changing worldly fashions.

One of the doctrines that oppose this slide into apostasy, much hated or ignored, is the almost forgotten doctrine of separation. Yet the Bible is quite explicit: *'have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them'* (Eph.5:11); *'withdraw yourselves from every brother that walks disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us'*; *'do not keep company'* with any who do not obey the apostolic epistles (2Thess.3:6-15); and *'any man that is called a brother if he be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater...with such a one do not even eat'* (1Cor.5:11).

We are not to dialogue with false teaching but *'mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which you have learned; and avoid them'* (Rom.16:17) and *'rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith'* (Titus 1:13). We are to *'come out from among them and be separate'* (2Cor.6:17).

Why have these commands become 'unloving' to many today? The *phileo* love of man is put above the truth of the Word and the *agape* love of God, in obeying His commands. *A sentimental love and desire for unity is sought at the expense of truth*. The fear of God and His judgement is lost.

The result is 'another gospel, another jesus and another spirit' (2Cor.11:4; Gal.1:6). Many lone voices have warned of this apostate history...*'A chasm is opening between men who believe their Bibles and the men who are prepared for an advance upon Scripture. The house is being robbed, its very walls are being digged down, but the good people who are in bed are too fond of the warmth, and too much afraid of getting broken heads, to go down stairs and meet the burglars...Inspiration and speculation cannot long abide in peace. Compromise there can be none. We cannot hold the inspiration of the Word, and yet reject it...'* (Spurgeon, 1887, Sept. 'Sword and the Trowel')

'...Holy Scripture are in confederacy with those who deny plenary inspiration; ...professedly orthodox Christians publicly avowing their union with those who deny the faith...we are unable to call these things Christian Unions...Fellowship with known and vital error is participation in sin' (Spurgeon, Nov.1887, *Sword and the Trowel*);

The antidote to apostasy is to have a high view of the truth and the all sufficiency of God's Word. It follows then that we would obey it and teach it to others. It is not loving to leave anyone in error, and it is essential to separate from those who do not obey the scriptures. Throughout history mankind would do well to heed Proverbs 3:5 *'Trust in the LORD with all your heart; and lean not unto your own understanding'*!

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C.H. Spurgeon's Quotes



Salvation

'Sometimes we are inclined to think that a very great portion of modern revivalism has been more a curse than a blessing, because it has led thousands to a kind of peace before they have known their misery; restoring the prodigal to the Father's house, and never making him say 'Father I have sinned'. How can

he be healed who is not sick, or he be satisfied with the bread of life who is not hungry? The old fashioned sense of sin is despised and consequently a religion is run up before the foundations are dug out. Everything in this age is shallow. Deep sea fishing is almost an extinct business so far as men's souls are concerned. The consequence is that men leap into religion, then leap out again. Unhumbled they came to the church, unhumbled they remained in it, unhumbled they go from it'.

(C.H. Spurgeon, *The Sword and the Trowel*, 1882)

Hell

'Some say, 'I could not rest comfortably if I believed the orthodox doctrine of Hell'. Most true, but what right have we to rest comfortably?'

'No preacher was ever so loving as Christ, but no man ever spoke so horribly about Hell'. 'It is a very remarkable fact that no inspired preacher of whom we have any record ever uttered such terrible words concerning the destiny of the lost as our Lord Jesus Christ'.

'Think lightly of Hell, and you will think lightly of the cross. Think little of the sufferings of lost souls, and you will soon think little of the Saviour who delivers them'.

'If sinners be damned, at least let them leap to Hell over our bodies. If they will perish, let them perish with our arms about their knees. Let no one go there unwarned and unprayed for'.

(C.H. Spurgeon, Selected quotes)

Discernment

'Discernment is not a matter of simply telling the difference between what is right and wrong; rather, it is the difference between right and almost right'.

'It has been well remarked by a great writer, that he never knew a man who held any great theological error, who did not also hold a doctrine which diminished the depravity of man'.

'This shall be an infallible test to you concerning anyone's ministry. If it is man-praising, and man-honouring, it is not of God'.

(C.H. Spurgeon, Selected quotes)

the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which you saw are the seven churches'. The 'candlesticks' are figures, but then we are told that they are literally 'seven churches'.

Some will use strawmen argumentation for a figurative interpretation with examples such as *'the cattle on a thousand hills'* (Ps.50:10). However, this is obviously a figurative expression, a Hebrew, and even a modern expression for many hills. The context also is clear - God owns cattle on a lot more than 1,000 hills! Who would say that Psalm 50:10 is a literal 1,000 hills?

Another example is *'one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day'* (2Pet.3:8). The two phrases are put in contrast - *'is...as'* - but the main point here is that God does not keep time as we do, even a thousand years. In addition the context would suggest not a literal 'day' or a 'thousand', but rather that God is being 'longsuffering'.

4. Chronology

John literally 'saw' things (mentioned 25 times in Revelation) in a chronological order of events. The literal view supports the timeline and order in Revelation. Revelation is made up of *'the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter'* (Rev.1:19). The timing and the order of events in the first three chapters are presented as events in John's day with a divide in time and order at chapter 4 (see 1:19). Chapter 19 has the coming of Christ followed by the millennium. Chronologically Revelation clearly reads as a progression concerning Churches; then tribulation; the second coming; the Millennial kingdom; the Great White Throne judgement; and the new heaven and new earth.

5. Early Church Views

Most early church fathers were pre-millennial ('chilliaists') with a literal view of Christ's reign on earth for 1,000 years. Papias (AD 60-130 - a student of John), stated: *'there will be a millennium...the kingdom of Christ will be set up in material form on this earth'*. Other church fathers who were like minded were Clement of Rome (90-100); the Shepherd of Hermas (96-150); Ignatius of Antioch (98-117); Barnabas (100); The Didache (100-160); and Victorinus (Died 303).

Justin Martyr (110-165) stated: *'...there will be a...thousand years in Jerusalem, which will then be built, adorned and enlarged, as the prophets Ezekiel and Isaiah and others declare'*. Tertullian (155-220) stated: *'We do confess that a kingdom is promised to us upon the earth...for a thousand years in the divinely-built city of Jerusalem'*. Only a small number of the early church fathers rejected a literal kingdom (Clement of Alexandria, Caius, Origen and Dionysius).

However, near the end of the 2nd century church fathers began to allegorise scriptures. Commentaries increasingly suffered from mystical interpretations. *The problem with a non literal grammatical view is that what the figurative interpretation means is left largely to the mind of the human interpreter.*

The Amillennial view owes a lot to the Reformers during the Great Reformation. But it must be remembered that although the Reformers restored the Gospel, Biblical inspiration and other critical theologies, they were far less

line who would *reign* (2Sam.7:10-13). The scriptures for a literal reign on earth in a millennium are not just found in Revelation chapter 20 but also in numerous other scriptures, many which clearly have the saints *reigning with Christ*, and *in Jerusalem*. Isaiah 9:6-7 speaks of the Messiah reigning on David's throne, which was on earth. Zechariah 14:1-21 speaks of the Messiah ruling over the whole earth from Jerusalem. The scriptures for the same are numerous (Mic.4:1-8; Is.2:2; 11:9; Jer.3:14-18; 23:5,6; 33:14-18; Dan.2:44,45; Joel 3:18-21; Amos 9:11-15).

Revelation 5:10 states that with Christ *'we shall reign on the earth'*. The word *'reign'* and *'on'* (*'epi'* - upon) are hardly ambiguous in their meaning. If we do not take the millennial reign in Revelation 20 literally, why would we take other prophetic books such as Zechariah to be literal, where Jesus is *physically* coming to the Mount of Olives (Zech.14)? The latter passage correlates with the prophecy in Revelation chapter 20 - that Jesus the Messiah will reign *'on the earth'*.

3. Consistency

The historical grammatical literal interpretation is arguably consistent when compared to the inconsistencies of the varying allegorical or figurative views. What of the *inconsistency* in taking as literal the numbering of thousands for the tribes of Israel, of 'silver and gold', the *'five thousand'* fed with *'five loaves and two fishes'*, the *'two thousand swine'* and the *'three thousand souls'* saved in the book of Acts, and yet denying a literal 1,000 years in Revelation?

Many could be named, who being against the literal view of the millennium, have freely admitted that *if one interprets prophetic scriptures (literally) the way you interpret other scriptures one will end up believing in a literal millennium*. The Genesis creation, the Egyptian plagues are taken literally yet Revelation and its *seven* plagues are not? (The earlier Irenaeus (AD130-202) stated they were the same literal plagues in both books - *'Against Heresies'* 4.30.4).

The problem is that someone invented the idea that apocalyptic scriptures cannot be interpreted literally and books like Revelation have a different 'genre' (category of literature). But even within 'apocalyptic genre' inconsistencies arise with a non literal view - the Great White Throne, the Lake of Fire and the second coming are literal, yet *'the thousand years'* are not? In Revelation chapter 7 a multiplication of 12,000 in each tribe gives 144,000; there are 7 churches in 7 literal cities, 7 seals, trumpets and vials, there are 3 unclean spirits (16:13) and 12 apostles (chapter 21) - are any of these to be counted as not being literal?

What do we do with Luke chapter 1:31-33 when the angel promises that Jesus would sit on 'David's throne' and 'reign in a kingdom'? Why do we take the Lord's ascension and the crucifixion in Psalms to be literal, yet not *'the thousand years'* in Revelation? What do we do with the obvious *apocalyptic* events in Zechariah 14 with the detailed geography and cataclysmic events?

This author freely admits there are times when figurative interpretation is needed. But for the most part they are *obvious*. By applying rules such as *context* and *scripture interpreting scripture*, difficulties can be resolved. For example, the *'seven lampstands'* (Rev.1) - are they figurative or literal? Verse 20 tells us: *'The mystery of the seven stars...and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are*

In **Part 1** (chapters 1-4 - *Diakrisis* July/August 2019) the intent was to show that the book of Revelation *is to be understood* at least as far as *what John saw and described*. *What is figurative and what is literal can be determined by the language and referencing to other scriptures* ('scripture interprets scripture').

The *timing and the order of events* in the first three chapters are presented as events in John's day *with a divide in time and order at chapter 4* (see 1:19).

In **Part 2** (chapters 4,5 - *Diakrisis* September/October 2019) we continued to explore *what is 'literal' or 'figurative'* and *why*. This was done by searching the same *symbols, signs and wording* elsewhere.

In **Part 3** (chapters 6-8 - *Diakrisis* July/August 2020) we saw the first of three distinct judgements beginning with seven *'seals'* (ch.6), all increasing in intensity.

In **Part 4** (chapters 8,9 - *Diakrisis* September/October 2020) we saw the second set of seven judgements begin the *Trumpet Judgements* and an increasing intensity in three last graphic *'woes'*. A perfect God has a perfect judgement!

In **Part 5** (chapters 9,10 - *Diakrisis* November/December 2020) - The sixth trumpet judgement brings a more severe judgement - *death*. Over half the earth's population is destroyed in divine judgements! Those left alive are unrepentant.

In **Part 6** (chapter 11 - *Diakrisis* January/February 2021) - the 'two witnesses' preach and the antichrist arises amidst signs and wonders, the likes of which have never been seen before since the first coming of Christ.

In **Part 7** (Chapter 12 - *Diakrisis* March/April 2021) - Symbols, signs and figurative language refer to Israel and the great battle between God and evil. The war in Heaven becomes a war on earth against God's elect nation and his saints.

In **Part 8** (Chapter 13 - *Diakrisis* May/June 2021) - The antichrist and the false prophet arise with their 'mark of the beast'. They are given power by God to do great signs and wonders. Authority is given to the beast to slaughter the saints. There will be false worship of the beast. Prophecy will reach a climax...

In **Part 9** (Chapter 14 - *Diakrisis* July/August 2021) - Chapters 12-14 are an interlude before returning to the judgements. A literal 144,000 Jewish evangelists from the *tribes of Israel* (7:4-8) preach a final *'everlasting Gospel'* to the whole world. Their redemption then comes with worship and singing a 'new song' (vs.8,9).

Armageddon is foreshadowed with God's fury to be finally poured out in full.

In **Part 10** (chapter 15 - *Diakrisis* September/October 2021) we see an introduction to the final horrific 'vial' (bowl) judgements. The angels stand ready.

The saints stand in awe and sing in worship to a majestic holy God, but a God of wrath who has warned of such judgements (Joel 2:28-32; Zech.14:1; Mal.4:1-5).

In **Part 11** (chapter 16 - *Diakrisis* November/December 2021) the seven angels, by the authority of God, pour out the final vial (bowl) judgements upon the earth. God dries up the Euphrates to bring his enemies to a final battle. The will of God upon the earth will be *'done'*. The unrepentant depravity of man is shown.

In **Part 12** (chapter 17 - *Diakrisis* January/February 2022) there is a parenthesis between chapter 16 and 18, pausing to look at what happens during the 7th vial (bowl) judgement. It is a description of the end time world wide false religion.

In **Part 13** (Chapter 18 - *Diakrisis* March/April 2022) is a further description of the 7th vial (bowl) judgement and the commercial aspect of a future city called Babylon which is destroyed. This description matches Old Testament prophecies, dual prophecies both for the Babylon of old and the one described in Revelation.

In **Part 14** (Chapter 19 - *Diakrisis* May/June 2022) is a most terrifying chapter with God judging the nations at the battle of Armageddon and avenging the righteous; the antichrist and false prophet are cast into the Lake of Fire, all necessary judgements with the triumphant return and reign of Christ. But it also includes the marriage supper of the Lamb and a crescendo of praise and worship in Heaven. This fearsome chapter should be a warning to the unrepentant. To the believer who has received Christ as Lord and Saviour, the admonition is to fear God and to worship Him in spirit and in truth!

Part 15 (Introduction)

The Issue of the 'Millennium' - literal or figurative?

It is in Revelation chapter 20 that much disagreement exists as to whether the *'thousand years'* is to be interpreted literally, symbolically or figuratively. The *'thousand years'* (millennium) is mentioned six times:

'...an angel come down from heaven...laid hold on...Satan, and bound him a thousand years...that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled...I saw the souls of them that were beheaded...they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years...the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished...they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison' (vs.1-7).

Postmillennialists believe this 1,000 year period is an indefinite triumphant church period before the coming of Christ to a largely christianised world. Such a view was popular during the 18th and 19th centuries when revivals and the Awakenings were frequent, but this view became less popular in the 20th century

with such events as the two world wars and an increasingly secularised world.

Amillennialists believe we are in the millennium now, the *'thousand years'* an indefinite period. At some point the Church flourishes on earth, Jesus comes back and reigns spiritually in Heaven rather than in a kingdom on earth.

Both views see Israel as the 'church' which is now 'spiritual Israel'. (Some do believe in a mass conversion of Jews in the end).

Nevertheless, the scriptures speak of the *election* of Israel (Amos 3:2; Dt.7:6-8; 10:15; Ps.135:4; Is.44:1,2), and that God will never cast away His chosen elect (Rom.8:33; 11:28,29; Matt.24:24,31; Tit.1:1; 1Pet.1:2).

Both views might suffer when considering that arguably things are hardly getting better towards a 'golden age' of the gospel and the church?

Pre-millennialism sees Christ's coming to an increasingly wicked world, an apostate church (2Thess.2:3) and then the millennium of 1,000 years in which Christ will reign on earth (Rev.5:10).

The differences in the above views is primarily one of *hermeneutics* - how we interpret scripture. With great respect to many of our God fearing readers who may disagree, we put a case for an historical grammatical literal interpretation:

1. Word Meanings

The Greek for *'one thousand'* in chapter 20 is the *cardinal number* *'chilioi'*. In contrast a *different Greek word* is used for an *innumerable* number - *'muriás'* (we get 'myriad' from this). *'Muriás'* is translated *'innumerable multitude'* (Lk.12:1); *'innumerable company'* (Heb.12:22); *'ten thousand times ten thousand'* (Rev.5:11); *'ten thousands'* (Jude 1:14); *'thousand thousand'* (Rev.9:16); and *'thousands'* (Acts 19:19; 21:20).

When we would *not* take the word 'thousand' literally is also clear as in 1Corinthians 4:15: *'...you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet not many fathers...'*; and also 1Corinthians 14:19 *'Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue'*. It is obvious the contexts here use *contrast* and *hyperbolic language*. But again, the word here for *'thousand'* is not *'chilioi'* as in Revelation 20, but *'muriós'* - an indefinite number.

Where *'chilioi'* is used, (as in Revelation 20), it is a *cardinal number*: *'A thousand (years)'* (2Pet 3:8); *'a thousand two hundred and three score'* (days) (Rev.11:3; 12:6); *'a thousand six hundred'* (furlongs) (Rev.14:20); and six times in Revelation 20 as the *'thousand (years)'*. The use of the cardinal *'chilioi'* rather than the indefinite *'muriás'* in Revelation 20 is important.

The phrase *'thousand years'*, used no less than *six times* in seven verses, also has four verses having the *Greek definite article* before it (*'the thousand years'* - vs.3,4,5,7), again suggesting this is a definite period of time.

2. Scripture

The Palestinian Covenant promised Israel a restoration to, and occupation of, *the land* (Dt.30:1-10). The Davidic Covenant promised Israel a king from David's