

controlled its overall construction, design, and recording of contents. In other words, it is not the product of human devising, manipulation, or imagination, but God was the author and architect behind its creation from beginning to end.

### **WHY DO PEOPLE REJECT THE BIBLE?**

For a variety of reasons, many remain skeptical and unconvinced concerning claims about the Bible's trustworthiness and divine authorship. Some of the questions raised regarding the Bible are, on the surface, both reasonable and justifiable, while others are based upon willful ignorance and blind opposition.

Many reject the Bible as the Word of God without even examining the facts. Some harbour deep reservations about the Bible because they have not been confronted with sufficient proofs to the contrary. Some reject its divine authorship, without sacrificing a measure of respect for the Bible, as a noble piece of ancient literature of a great religious masterpiece. Still others challenge the Bible's reliability on superficial grounds. Their opposition is often based on well-worn arguments, sweeping generalisations, mindless objections, and pre-conceived prejudices rather than the sound foundations of reason, truth, and reality.

### **Times of Services:**

Sunday Morning 10:30 am

Sunday Evening 6:00 pm

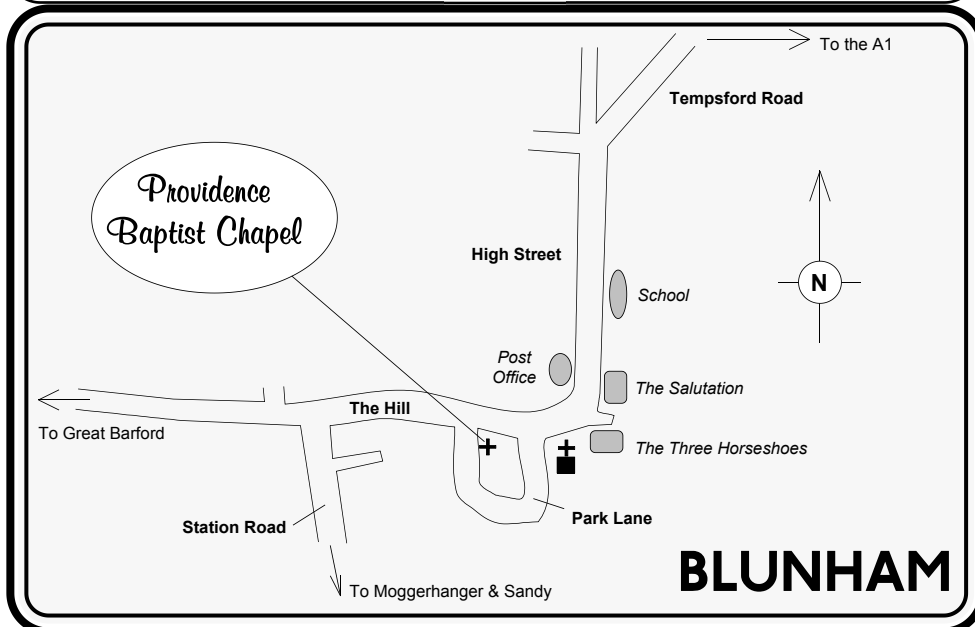


### **Carol Service**

**Tuesday 21st December**

**7:00 pm**

*Followed by refreshments*



Any enquiries should be addressed to Mr. David Green, 'North Lodge', 104d Green End Road, Great Barford, Bedfordshire, MK44 3HD. Tel: 01234 870 681



# **First Steps**

**December 1999 No.3**

### **WELCOME!**

**A Personal message from David Green, Deacon at 'Providence' Chapel.**

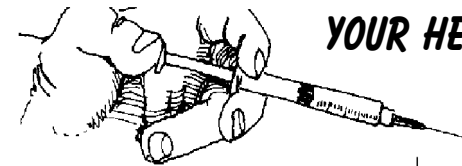
Dear Readers,

Hello again. It's nearly Christmas, the last one this Century. No doubt we have been making many plans how we are going to spend the time. The end of the year will be the end of the Millenium, it will also be 2000 years since Jesus was born in the stable in Bethlehem. We shall all be singing or listening to the well known Carols that come round every year. Please don't think that this is just some historical event. Jesus is alive today, and He is able and willing to help all who really ask Him in faith, believing truly in Him. We would extend a very warm welcome to you all to come along and join with us in the services at the chapel, not only for our Carol Service on the 21st, but every Sunday to hear the Gospel - the good news of Jesus Christ.

*David Green.*

### **CONTENTS:**

- |   |               |
|---|---------------|
| •YOUR HEALTH MAY BE WORSE THAN YOU THINK! | <b>PAGE 1</b> |
| •2000: THE YEAR OF JUBILEE?               | <b>PAGE 3</b> |
| •IS THE BIBLE THE WORD OF GOD?            | <b>PAGE 3</b> |
| •WHY DO PEOPLE REJECT THE BIBLE?          | <b>PAGE 4</b> |



### **YOUR HEALTH MAY BE WORSE THAN YOU THINK!**

Most people are very concerned about physical health - especially when they develop strange pains which could indicate some serious problem. But one major part of us which escapes attention in this concern for health is the soul.

This is certainly rather illogical, because the body is only temporary, while the soul goes on for ever.

As you read this, imagine you have entered a kind of soul clinic where the

organs and limbs of the soul will be checked out, and where you will get a full report on its condition. The trouble is that any examination is bound to reveal serious problems. No ordinary human being has ever been found free from major defects and diseases in the soul.

At the time of the Korean war, American doctors carried out numerous post-mortem examinations on soldiers killed in action. As time went by they drew up statistics which startled the medical world. They found that a majority of young men under 25 years of-age already showed marked signs of heart disease which would have resulted in heart attacks within 20 years.

If our souls could be laid open to inspection in the same way it would be found that every one of us has a very advanced, fatal condition. The malady which affects us all is the disease of sin. Its symptoms are easy to recognise, not by our pallor or blood pressure, but by far more disfiguring signs.

### The great spoiler

The symptoms of this disease of the soul show up in the personality. It makes us vain, cold, haughty and even arrogant. It makes us deceitful, shifty and boastful. It is the disease which creates dirty-mindedness, jealousy and back-stabbing. It also gives rise to greed and selfishness - the list of symptoms is endless.

Sin is the vilest, and yet the most underestimated disease in the world. It infects every part of the soul and character, steadily spoiling and corrupting everything. But even worse it totally disables us for the greatest experiences of life.

Paralysis will usually prevent a young man from ever engaging in athletics or any other active sport. Such pursuits are far beyond his hopes and dreams. Similarly,

the disease of sin ruins all possibility of interaction with God. It completely cuts us off from God so that we can have no personal experience of Him.

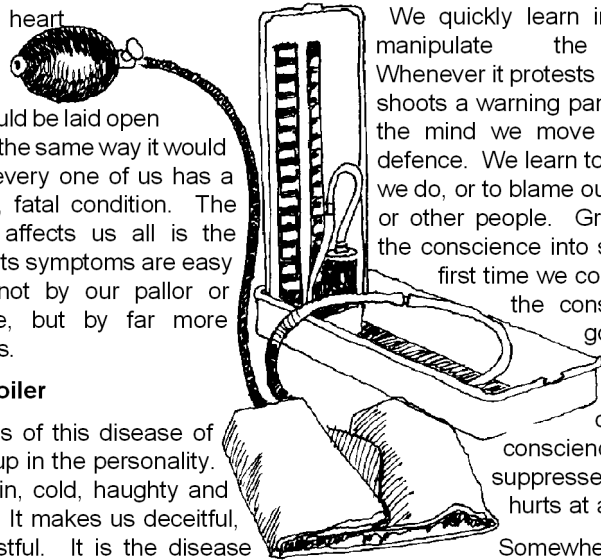
Our diagnostic health check must begin with an examination of the conscience. Is it in good health? Is it a functioning conscience?

The answer must be negative, because most of the time the conscience suffers from a kind of sleeping paralysis. It hardly moves and seldom speaks. Why is this? It is because of the self-inflicted battering it has received over the years.

We quickly learn in youth how to manipulate the conscience. Whenever it protests over some sin or shoots a warning pang of shame into the mind we move quickly in self-defence. We learn to justify whatever we do, or to blame our circumstances or other people. Gradually we beat the conscience into submission. The first time we commit serious sin the conscience hurts a good deal. The second time it hurts less. But once the conscience is fully suppressed it scarcely hurts at all.

Somewhere down in a dungeon of the soul, a starved, bruised, weakened conscience eventually becomes limp and silent, and then we are free to behave and speak as we like. We are at liberty to be as selfish, greedy and even sensual as we want, with little trouble.

Take another aspect of the soul. In what state of health is the faculty or power of self-control? What happens when bad temper begins to build up, or envy, or greed - does it all have to come out? Can we control ourselves? Or is this portion of the soul flabby and weak and hopeless? What about the great faculty of integrity or



honesty - is it healthy? Sadly, this part of the soul is generally riddled with disease. Everyone is shoddy and shabby here. Everyone is full of white lies, excuses, exaggerations, invented boasts, direct lies, deceits, and every other form of dishonesty. The faculty of integrity has become wilfully twisted beyond recognition.

*Next issue: Checking vital organs, Living with pain and The only cure.*

## 2000: THE YEAR OF JUBILEE?

A campaign is under way calling for the national debts of some of the world's poorest countries to be cancelled next year. The Roman Catholics have gone a step further - they have proclaimed the year 2000 as 'the Great Year of Jubilee'. What is this Jubilee, and more importantly, what is its special meaning for us?

The Year of Jubilee was an institution of God found in the Old Testament (Leviticus 25). It formed part of the laws given to Moses on the mount for the Israelites, as they journeyed to the Promised Land of Canaan. The Jubilee Year stands alongside the offerings and special feast days, each of these institutions points to varied aspects of the person and work of the long-promised Messiah. Now Christ has been long revealed we can see with amazing clarity what these ancient institutions picture, although observance is no longer required of God's people.

God made this world in six days (it doesn't take millions of years - even today he makes a babe in 9 months), and on the seventh day he rested. It was the Sabbath day, a holy day of rest, appointed by God for the good of man's body and soul. Every seventh year was appointed a Sabbath for the Land, where nothing was sown or reaped - and God supplied extra bounty, from the land in the sixth year, to provide for the people. At the end of seven Land Sabbaths (49 years), upon the evening of the Day of Atonement the loud sound of the trumpets were heard throughout the

land. The people had just made peace with God, and now they entered into a year of rest. It was the 50th year, and the great year of Jubilee had begun.

What a Year of Forgiveness, Joy and Redemption it was! What a Redeemer Christ is! He restores man; tarnished, dirty and broken to resemble himself. He takes away the filthy cloak of our own attempts to please God, and clothes us in a robe of his own righteousness. And in so doing prepares us to enter Paradise, and stand in God's presence for all eternity.

On beginning his public ministry Jesus returned to Nazareth, and on the Sabbath entered the synagogue and read before the people from the great Messianic prophecy in Isaiah 61.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

Repent today for now is the day of salvation, now is the acceptable time, don't delay: for the angels shall soon be sounding the trumpet again, and heaven and earth shall pass away. And you and I, and all flesh, shall bow the knee and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

## IS THE BIBLE THE WORD OF GOD?

The Bible is often referred to as the 'Word of God. This simple means that the Bible is the divinely inspired and infallible revelation of God to man, rather than the mere words of men to other men.

When we say that the Bible is the Word of God, we do not mean that all the words are God's words. Some are words of man, angels, demons and even Satan. However, it is in its entirety the Word of God in the sense that God, through the agency of the Holy Spirit, divinely directed and inspired the writing of it and supernaturally