

Visit to Modern Spain Reveals Historical Links to Middle East

Gerhard and Diana Marx recently travelled to Madrid, Toledo, Seville, Granada and Málaga. Their visit culminated in a week-long stay at the early Phoenician settlement in Almuñécar, near Málaga.

We flew from England to Madrid with Iberia Airlines, which is Spain's official airline, even though Iberia isn't a Spanish word in origin. The name itself preceded the Spanish settlement of the Iberian Peninsula by many centuries. During Roman times Celts joined with the Iberians to fight the Romans and they are referred to by historians as Celtiberians. It may come as a surprise to many of our readers that there was a Celtic connection between Iberia and Britain in pre-Christian times.

Origins of Iberia

Who these Iberians were is a mystery to historians. Some have connected the word *Iberia* with the Ebro, one of Spain's longest rivers. There is also the Delta de L' Ebre. These names are Mideastern in origin. According to the Bible, the forefather of the biblical patriarch Abraham was Eber, for whom it is believed the name of the Spanish river and delta, Ebro and Ebre, are named.

If this belief is correct, then the word *Iberia* may stem from the name of the biblical *Eber* as well. It would also show that there had been an important

migration from the Middle East to the Iberian Peninsula many centuries before the time of Christ.

It's an historical fact, backed up by archaeology, that the Phoenicians came to Spain and even western Britain centuries before the time of Christ. Could other Middle Eastern nations,



All photos by G O Marx

L to R: Almuñécar: the small pot is a 'tear jug'; former Phoenician settlement.

like a tribe or two of ancient Israel (possibly Dan),

have come to Spain as well?

To those *Good News* readers who have read our booklet on the identity of the English-speaking (Anglo-Saxon/Celtic) peoples, this possible link with the northern 10 tribes of ancient Israel

won't be surprising. The true identity of the historical people who settled in the British Isles (in some cases via Spain) is shown by the significant influence of Hebrew place names in Western Europe, including Britain. (Read about this history of the lost 10 tribes of Israel in our free booklet *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy*).

After our arrival in Madrid, we saw the *Palacio Real* (Royal Palace) and took photographs. We were also given a conducted tour of the Prado Museum, where three Spanish artists were highlighted – El Greco, Goya and Valezquez – depicting the times of upheaval Spain went through during the lifetime of these artists.

The next day we took a conducted excursion to Toledo, one hour's drive from Madrid.

The Spanish Inquisition

An interesting point in Toledo was a Roman Catholic church building. On the outside west wall were placed iron chains brought from the Moorish prisons when the Catholics conquered

that area from the Arabs (Moors). The idea was to let the Spaniards of the day know that the Catholic Church was their liberator. This was before the time of Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand, during whose reign the relative freedom and liberty the people had enjoyed was taken away.

During the Spanish Inquisition, a horrendous period of religious persecution, all Jews and Muslims (unless they converted to Christianity) were driven out of Toledo, as elsewhere. Not a single Jewish family lives in this city of 73,000 today. We also visited a former synagogue in Toledo called surprisingly the Synagogue de la Maria. When the Jews were expelled from Spain at the time of Christopher Columbus, the Catholic authorities retained the building and dedicated it to the Virgin Mary as a Catholic place of worship.

After Toledo we travelled to Seville, which also has a huge amount of exquisite Moorish architecture. No religious pictures are allowed in the Moslem religion, but instead the natural beauty of **God's physical creation is highlighted**. This prohibition reflects the Hebrew Scriptures, which leave us in no doubt that **'the One who inhabits eternity'** (Isaiah 57:15) must not be portrayed by images or pictures of any type. This is something that too many churches in Christendom have forgotten. (For further information see our free booklet *The Ten Commandments*.)

One of the highlights of our visit to Seville, apart from enjoying the tasty oranges, was the sight of a mosque inside a Catholic Church, with some of the most superb Moorish architecture of any Moslem building in Spain. After the Moors were defeated in the 13th century, the bishop of Seville was evidently so impressed with the Arab architecture that he refused to have it demolished, and retained the building as an expansive entrance into the cathedral.

Throughout Spain, on account of a large Jewish population before the Reformation, many Star of David emblems can be seen as design inscrip-

tions on pottery and even on stained glass in Catholic churches.

There was a golden age in Spain when all three religions tolerated one other. But the Spanish Inquisition put a stop to that.

Links between East and West

We spent our final week in Almuñécar, near Málaga, which again revealed the historical link between West and East. This area was settled by the Phoenicians from the Middle Eastern region of Lebanon. They established trading colonies on the south coast of the Iberian Peninsula in the eighth century BC.

In the local museum we were introduced to a number of **Phoenician artefacts**, including a small stoneware **'weeping jug'** which was used at a funeral to collect tears and then buried with the



The Royal Palace in Madrid.

dead to accompany them on their long journey to paradise. The Phoenicians believed that the more tears of relatives the deceased had in this jug in his burial ground, the quicker he or she would enter paradise. This belief of a purgatory, evidently of Phoenician origin, is still exemplified in Arab countries where weepers are hired to shed tears on behalf of the deceased. (To find out what the Bible teaches about the state of the dead, request our free booklet *What Happens After Death?*)

Almuñécar on the south coast of Spain is ideal for strolling along the beach, in the mild and sunny conditions

of late winter. It is a place to relax and **reflect on the past: on Spain's golden age of architecture, on her time of religious tolerance, on the country's plunge into near anarchy, and of late on her present status as a member of the European Union.**

Spain, like other nations, has experienced the despotic rule of man for all too many centuries and has had to pay dearly in the lives of its citizens. Until the monarchy was restored along with a democratic parliament after the death of **Franco, Spain was too often an unfortunate example of unjust autocratic**



Statue at the Royal Andalucian School of Equestrian Art in Jerez.

rule over human beings who were **created in the image of God** (Genesis 1:27).

The Gospel to Spain

During the first century the apostle Paul fully intended to take the gospel to Spain (Romans 15:24).

Neither the Bible nor secular history tell us whether or not he was able to fulfill his intentions.

Many centuries later an English author, George Borrow (1803-1881), played a major role in getting copies of the Judaeo/Christian Bible into Spain and Portugal. An expert linguist, he travelled in those countries between 1835 and 1839, later writing a book about his efforts called *The Bible in Spain* (1843). Evidently the true gospel has not yet penetrated the Iberian Peninsula in any major way, although there are a few scattered members of the Church Jesus built now living there.

Gerhard Marx

The Festival Code

Unlocking the Future

The following letters from and to Abdul are composites, but the events pictured by God's Holy Days are real. These little-known celebrations contain coded messages that reveal the future for everyone.

Dear United Church of God,

You don't know me, but I have read about your organisation in the February 8, 2006, edition of the Italian newspaper Libero. I found the interview with one of your ministers when I was doing a Google search for Christians who observe the festivals of the Bible.

You see, although I live in a country where it is very dangerous to become a Christian, I have become very interested in the Bible. I am beginning to believe that Jesus Christ truly is the Saviour. As I read the Bible I find that Jesus Christ is called our Passover, and I find that the Church of God started on the Day of Pentecost.

If these two festivals are so important, I suspect the other festivals must be as well. But as I learn about many Christian churches, I do not find them observing these days. Many of them say the meaning of these festivals has been fulfilled and therefore it is no longer necessary to observe them.

In the Libero interview, your minister said, 'What distinguishes us is the observance of the biblical feasts. . . .' Since this is so, please tell me, what does the next biblical festival of the year, the Feast of Trumpets, mean? Also, is there future meaning behind these festivals or are they simply memorials of historical events?

Sincerely
Abdul

Dear Abdul,

Thank you very much for your message and interest in the meaning of the biblical Feast of Trumpets. We applaud

your courage and desire for the truth even in difficult circumstances. You've asked some profound questions about matters that few understand.

To begin answering your questions, let me quote from a booklet we publish called *God's Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for All Mankind*. (A free copy is available in print, or if online you can download it from www.gnmagazine.org/booklets.)

A turning point in history

'The Feast of Trumpets depicts nothing less than the return of Jesus Christ to earth to establish the Kingdom of God! The book of Revelation reveals a sequence of earth-shaking events depicted by angels sounding a series of seven trumpet blasts. The seventh angel's sounding of the last trumpet signifies that "the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ" (Revelation 11:15).

'The return of Jesus Christ stands as the final and most significant event associated with the blowing of the prophetic trumpets. Of all the prophecies in the Bible, this one surely heralds the most exciting news possible for this weary, sin-filled world!

'The Feast of Trumpets also marks the future fulfilment of the many Old Testament prophecies that speak of a Messiah coming as a king who will rule with power and authority. The concept of a conquering Messiah was on the minds of the apostles immediately after Jesus' resurrection. When He appeared to them in those early days, they asked questions such as: "Lord, will You at

this time restore the kingdom to Israel?' (Acts 1:6).

'Even in His earthly ministry, Jesus had spoken of distinctions between His first and second coming. When Pontius Pilate, the governor of Judea, questioned Jesus just before the crucifixion, Jesus stated clearly that He had not come to rule at that time.

'**"My kingdom is not of this world"** Jesus told the government official. "If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here." Then Pilate asked Him, "Are You a king then?" Jesus answered in the affirmative: "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth" (John 18:36-37).'

The Bible, Abdul, shows that trumpets were used to communicate important messages, such as calling people to meetings or giving an alarm of war. Trumpets could also furnish a festive sound (Numbers 10:10). With their ability to transmit sound over long distances, trumpets were ideal for attracting people's attention.

The New Testament gives additional understanding of the significance of the blowing of trumpets. The apostle Paul described the return of Jesus Christ this way: 'For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive

and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air' (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).

Paul also wrote of the people God has called now (this group is pictured by Pentecost, the Feast of Firstfruits.) being resurrected to immortal life. In 1 Corinthians 15:52 he says this will happen 'in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.'

The apostle John also linked the blowing of a trumpet with Christ's return: 'Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"' (Revelation 11:15). These passages dramatically show the significance of the Feast of Trumpets.

Real life offered to all

There is much more in the booklet about the Feast of Trumpets, as well as about the three festivals that follow soon after: the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Tabernacles and the eighth day that we call the Last Great Day. These festivals help decode the mystery of God's plan for all human beings – for life itself! Briefly, these mean:

The Day of Atonement teaches us that Jesus Christ gave His life to pay the penalty for – to atone for – the sins of all mankind. It also points to the time when Satan, the ultimate source of sinful thoughts and attitudes, will be bound for 1,000 years (Leviticus 16:29-30, 20-22; Revelation 20:1-3).

The Feast of Tabernacles teaches us that when Jesus Christ returns, a new society will be set up to rule the earth for 1,000 years (Revelation 19:11-16; 20:4; Leviticus 23:39-43; Matthew 17:1-4; Hebrews 11:8-9). God's laws will spread throughout the world to bring a period of peace and prosperity

never seen before (Isaiah 2:2-4; Daniel 2:35, 44; 7:13-14).

Finally, a separate one-day festival, now referred to as the Last Great Day, immediately follows the Feast of Tabernacles. This Holy Day pictures the Great White Throne Judgement, the seventh step in God's plan as described in Revelation 20:11-13. People who have died having never heard about their incredible potential will have their true destiny revealed to them.

All the dead who have ever lived – people like the Queen of Sheba, inhabitants of ancient Nineveh and the people of Christ's own time – will be resurrected together (Matthew 12:41-42), including the 'whole house of Israel' as described in Ezekiel 37:1-14. These multitudes resurrected back to physical life are synonymous with 'the rest of the dead' spoken of in Revelation 20:5. Billions of human beings will have the opportunity to repent of their past sins and receive the gift of everlasting life.

Though few understand it in this age, this important step in God's plan has always been in the Bible. And understanding the biblical Holy Days

helps unlock this code.

God 'desires all men to be saved' and is 'not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance' (1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9). Through His wonderful plan, all of humanity will be given the opportunity to learn God's truth, come to repentance and receive salvation. (For a more complete explanation of our Creator's purpose for mankind as pictured by the festivals, please request our free booklets *What Is Your Destiny?* and *God's Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for All Mankind.*)

So, Abdul, the meaning of life, of the universe and of our future is tied up in these biblical festivals! These observances lay out the plan by which Jesus Christ is going to return to earth to establish the Kingdom of God, and they reveal how we can be part of it. What an incredible gift of God to allow us to understand these as we read and believe His Bible and obediently celebrate His commanded days!

Mike Bennett

Managing Editor of United News,
Cincinnati, Ohio

Lost Festivals?

Why do so few Christian churches keep the festivals of the Bible? That is another story, and a long one. But in short, it goes back to the first few centuries after Christ, when Christians were considered a sect of Judaism and were being persecuted along with the Jews. Many sought to distance themselves from those customs which were considered Jewish.

By the time of the Roman Emperor Constantine, this culminated in the complete rejection of many of the laws of the Old Testament.

In order to attract and assimilate those of other religions into the church then supported by the Roman Empire, other holidays were adopted and the biblical Holy

Days were rejected. (For more details, please request the free booklet *The Church Jesus Built.*)

The United Church of God in the United Kingdom will be celebrating these final Holy Days for 2006 (as others around the world will), on the following dates: Day of Trumpets – Saturday 23 September; Day of Atonement – Monday 2 October; Feast of Tabernacles – Saturday 7 through Friday 13 October; Last Great Day – Saturday 14 October. The last two comprise an eight-day celebration, which is being held in York this year. Other Holy Days are observed in several locations around the UK and in Europe. For further information, please contact us by post, telephone, or email.

Do You Believe God's Word?

So much depends on our belief in the accuracy and authority of the prophetic writings of the Bible. How can we know that the Scriptures are really true?

From beginning to end the Bible is full of prophetic promises. True Christians are given many assurances of a very bright future ahead. The first resurrection to everlasting spirit life is just one of them.

Yet in the secular world of modern Europe where almost all of modern education is based on the theory of evolution, it is often difficult for those who are beginning to show an interest in God and the Bible to separate truth from error.

So many of today's secularists in Europe and elsewhere look at the Scriptures as a collection of human documents, innately fallible and fallacious. On the other hand, evolution is erroneously viewed as a proven reality rather than the theory that it is.

Abusing the Bible

Even churches have lost their historical conviction that the Bible is indeed the Word of God. One astonished author wrote a book called *The Strange Silence of the Bible in the Church*.

Another observer described many church services today as 'meaningless, self-centered, feel-good motivational sessions.' Belief doesn't come into it. But what about the beliefs of many modern theologians and preachers?

The head dean of a conservative Bible and theological college in Britain attended a conference of biblical scholars, theologians and pastors. Afterwards he lamented: 'It had been disappointing enough to learn from one research project that *virtually no one ever preached from the Old Testament* . . . But worse was to come.'

This top college official was absolutely astonished at what then transpired. Some of the attendees dogmati-

cally declared that the Bible was of no use in their ministries. 'It was a book, they [falsely] claimed, that justified, even advocated, violence against women, child abuse, cruelty to animals, repressive attitudes toward law and order . . .' (*The Bible*, p. 9, Monarch Books, Grand Rapids, Mich., 2003, emphasis added throughout). This was not the same Bible that this dean knew and loved.

Let's take a look into its pages and see what the apostles of Jesus Christ actually said about the Hebrew Scriptures.

'Abraham believed God'

The apostle Paul tells us that the New Testament Church is built upon the apostles and the prophets (Ephesians 2:20). The apostle Peter adds that we should be 'mindful of the words which were spoken before by the Holy



Prophets and of the commandments of

us, the apostles of the Lord and Saviour' (2 Peter 3:2).

But do we believe that these sacred writings are for us today? Moses was an outstanding early prophet and the author of the Pentateuch. He wrote about the life of the patriarch Abraham in the book of Genesis.

Paul, who was very familiar with Moses' account, wrote that 'Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to Him for righteousness' (Romans 4:3).

Elsewhere in the New Testament it says that 'by faith Abraham obeyed God when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going' (Hebrews 11:8). His was a living, trusting faith readily reflected by the good works of obedience to God.

The apostle James also said of Abraham, 'By works faith was made perfect' (James 2:22).

Many centuries later Paul affirmed his faith in God and his unwavering belief in the validity of the Hebrew Scriptures. While defending his ministry before the authorities, He reminded His accusers: 'But this I confess to you, that according to the way which they call a sect [heresy, KJV], so I worship the God of my fathers, *believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets*' (Acts 24:14).

Peter, Paul and the prophetic word

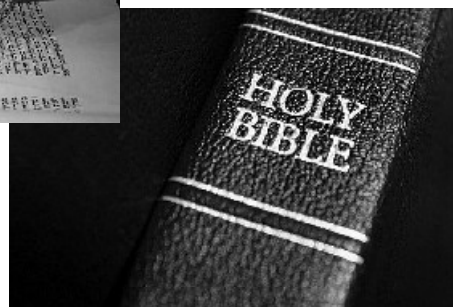
The apostle Peter also affirmed his

belief in the prophetic promises of God in the Old Testament. He wrote: 'And so we have *the prophetic word confirmed*, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place until the day dawns [Christ comes]

and the morning star rises in your hearts' (2 Peter 1:19).

Then Peter gets to the nitty-gritty. 'Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit' (verses 20-21).

To round out the overall picture we



interject Paul's classic instruction to Timothy: *'From childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus'*

Continue: *'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man [or woman] of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work'* (2 Timothy 3:15-17). The Scriptures are God-breathed (Greek, *theopneustos*, literally *'breathed out from God'*). A firm belief in and a solid knowledge of the Bible are absolutely essential for our spiritual wellbeing (see Hosea 4:1-6).

That belief and knowledge clearly requires a response from us, a determined course of action. However, it cannot be sheer enthusiasm void of wisdom, judgement and discretion. The Bible has to be properly understood. Paul had also advised Timothy to *'be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to*

be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth' (2 Timothy 2:15). The New International Version translates that last phrase, *'correctly handling the Word of truth.'*

The Bible interprets the Bible, and each section of Scripture has to be understood in the light of other biblical passages on the same subject. We are **to come to know and understand 'the whole counsel of God'** (Acts 20:27).

'Believe His prophets'

The ancient King Jehoshaphat professed some good advice to all Christians and to those who are just becoming acquainted with the Bible. *'Believe in the LORD your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets and you shall prosper'* (2 Chronicles 20:20). A truly abundant life depends upon a right approach to the Scriptures.

From a quarter to a third of the whole Bible is composed of predictive prophecy. Many of the writing prophets describe severely difficult conditions of their time, as a prelude to heralding passages about the fabulous world to come

– the millennial rule of Jesus Christ. Or they sometimes intersperse the good news of that coming utopian age with predictions of the bad news of our world today. We follow similar general patterns in the pages of our publications.

But do you believe the prophecies of the Bible? Do you take them at their face value as an accurate description of the world we shall face in the future? Or have you bought into the increasingly prevailing views of those who regard the Bible as just another classic collection of historic books?

Jesus Christ said: *'The Scripture cannot be broken'* (John 10:35). Many proofs of the authenticity and authority of the Scriptures are set out in our free booklet *Is the Bible True?* The two companion booklets *How to Understand the Bible* and *How to Understand Bible Prophecy* will show you many practical principles on how to grasp the message and purpose of the Holy Scriptures. All three are free for the asking.

John Ross Schroeder

Good News Seminar in Sweden

The United Church of God of God in Sweden (Guds Enade Kyrka) sponsored a *Good News* seminar in Mjölby on June 24, 2006. Current and past readers of *The Good News* magazine were invited to attend.

Eleven people were in attendance, with four who were not UCG members. Others called before the seminar to ask questions and express interest; two others contacted organisers Paul and Kira Spenser to say that they would have liked to come, but could not make it on this date.

Victor Kubik, the pastor of the Indianapolis, Indiana, USA congregation, showed slides of the Chernobyl nuclear reactor and the Revival Centre of the Rehabilitation of Disabled Children that he and his wife, Beverly, had just visited. He then explained what the Bible says about how the Kingdom of God will come and that the world will not end in catastrophe.

Listener comments ranged from *'exciting and positive'*, to *'thought-provoking, informative, scary but hopeful'*.

Following the seminar everyone gathered at the Spensers'



Victor Kubik presenting the message.

home for food and further fellowship.

The first Swedish-language booklet, *The Road to Eternal Life*, is at the printers in Ukraine, and will be offered shortly to *Good News* readers. Other upcoming booklets are *What Is Your Destiny?* and *The Gospel of the Kingdom*. The entire 12-lesson *Bible Study Course* is in the final editing stage.

United Church of God members in Sweden are Solveig Hammar along with Paul and Kira Spenser. Please pray that the Word of God will be spread more widely in all of Scandinavia and other Nordic countries like Finland and Iceland.



Top: Fellowshipping after the meeting. Bottom: Walking to the Spenser's home.

Questions & Answers

Q Can you tell me if there is any difference between immortal life, eternal life and everlasting life in the Bible?

R J, Alloa, Clacks, Scotland

A The Bible is the only source of divinely revealed information man has on the general question of inheriting life everlasting. It reveals a Being who 'inhabits eternity' (Isaiah 57:15). In the New Testament God is referred to as 'eternal, immortal, invisible' (1 Timothy 1:17).

In the most accurate sense, eternity is a word that applies to the present God Family. Since the Creator of the universe is not governed by time and space, He is indeed eternal, never having had a beginning. The word eternal cannot now, therefore, be applied to human beings.

Man, on the other hand, is offered everlasting life, meaning life without end. People sometimes refer to receiving eternal life, meaning 'everlasting' life beginning from a certain period in time but extending throughout eternity. The word *immortal* means the opposite of mortal, someone who is not subject to death. The apostle Paul refers to human beings being mortal but that we 'must put on immortality' (1 Corinthians 15:53).

In 1 Timothy 6:16 we see that no human being has yet been given immortality except Jesus Christ, 'who alone has immortality'. However, the word *immortality* in 1 Corinthians 15:53, as there applied to transformed, changed human beings who will have entered the God Family, is the same Greek word

used in 1 Timothy 6:16, implying that when true Christians are changed from flesh to spirit at the time of the first resurrection, they will have the same kind of immortality that God and Christ currently have – but not their authority.

So God's revealed Word teaches that every human being has the opportunity, with God's help, to cast off his or her mortality and receive everlasting life, to become composed of spirit rather than flesh. Please read 1 Corinthians 15:42-54 and 2 Corinthians 5:1-5 for solid verification. Instead of 'the soul' entering some sort of paradise or purgatory upon death, a concept common among ancient pre-Christian civilisations, everlasting life is gained through a resurrection from the dead. In this and many other respects the Bible teaching is totally different to the beliefs of many that an 'immortal soul' enters some sort of paradise at life's end.

On a practical basis, the terms immortal life, eternal life and everlasting life are used more or less interchangeably in normal writing and conversation. Although they have been given the 'down payment' of the Holy Spirit, true Christians have not yet received the ultimate expression of this divine state of being because 'flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God' (1 Corinthians 15:50, KJV).

This important question remains: What must we do to inherit everlasting life? This question is answered in our free booklets *What Happens After Death?* and *The Road to Eternal Life*.

Q I am searching for the true way to God through Christ. At the

moment I am a Catholic, but am not sure if this is the right way. From looking at your web site, I can't find any of your congregations in the Irish Republic. I would like to find out more about your Church and would appreciate it if you could help me.

T R, Republic of Ireland

A Several items of literature have been posted to help you on your way, including *This is the United Church of God*. Please let us know if you have further questions after reading this literature.

Another free booklet that may be of particular help is *The Church Jesus Built*. It will give you the required historical perspective.

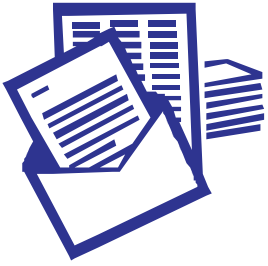
At this time the United Church of God does not have any congregations in the Republic of Ireland, but we do meet every few weeks in Ballymena, Northern Ireland. (Please request a list of the times of our meetings in the British Isles.) We are hoping to start a Bible study in Dublin in due time.

Online donations

Debit or credit cards may now be used to donate online locally or internationally. If you would you like to help us to provide *The Good News* free of charge to others, please visit www.charitychoice.co.uk and click on 'Charity Search'. Type in 'United Church of God' and press 'Search'. Then click the 'Donate' button. Thank you!

How our literature is funded

The United Church of God – British Isles is registered as a charity in England and Wales (number 1079192). The publication of this Supplement and other literature is funded by the generosity of members of the Church, co-workers and our readers. Following Jesus Christ's instruction (Matthew 10:8), it is supplied free of charge so that His message can be made available to all. We are grateful to those who assist financially in the work done by *The Good News*. Donations may be sent to: The United Church of God, PO Box 705, WATFORD WD19 6FZ, United Kingdom or given online (see box above).



Letters From Our Readers

Helped by letter and DVDs of sermons

Thank you so much for your kind and comforting letter which you sent when my husband died, together with the DVDs of sermons. In this present very troubled age, it such a privilege to find the Church which truthfully bases its preaching on the Old as well as the New Testament. I look forward to the many lessons I have yet to learn and rejoice over every opportunity. I am 75.

G N, Banchory, Scotland

Spreading the true gospel

I am a Christian and from time to time (mainly all the time) I find it hard to buy Christian literature because of high prices and my family and me being poor. The reason for this letter is to kindly ask you if you would send me more of your magazines. I feel comfort and truth in them. At the moment I am going through hard testing and I need to read the Word of the Lord at all times. Therefore, I would love to hear from you and to receive any literature you can supply me with. I truly look forward to your reply.

Mr F L, Hemel Hempstead

• *That is why Christ said the gospel is to go free. 'Freely you have received, freely give' (Matthew 10:8). The proverb says, 'Buy the truth and sell it not.' We have sent you a selection of literature, and we hope that the booklet You Can Have Living Faith will be of particular help during this time of trial.*

When I first subscribed for *The Good News* I thought it was not going to be good. But when I received my first

copy it was very profitable because of what it teaches. I am happy to pass it on to my friends and family. It helps me to know more about God and that Jesus Christ is coming back to this earth.

A A, Dagenham, Essex

I look forward to receiving *The Good News* and usually read it in bed. When I have finished, I take it to church. We have a shelf of books and magazines which are for parishioners to borrow.

Mrs D M, Moreton-in-Marsh

I very much appreciate *The Good News*, including the European Supplement. Your recent Pentecost letter reminded me of my own feelings of not participating. I do, however, have to live with myself and I understand the implications of just what that means. I hope the enclosed donation is helpful for your work.

R B, Camberley

Bible Study Course

I'd like to thank you from the bottom of my heart for giving me the chance to study the Bible. It really opens a new world and a journey to God. Better understanding truly helps me to learn more about the world I'm living in, and the God who governs all.

F P, Czech Republic

Many thanks for sending the *Bible Study Course*, a most welcome and honest application of the biblical truths. Please find enclosed my completed test cards for lessons four through seven. Please also find a donation to help with your work in spreading God's Word. I look forward to receiving the next lesson.

Mr J C, Southport

Concerning the Church

Although a Roman Catholic and at odds with some of your teachings, I nonetheless am grateful for your magazine which contains much material of interest.

M M, London

I read some of your literature in a friend's house. I was impressed and I wanted to know more, so he gave me your address. Please send me your *Bible Study Course* and *The Good News* magazine. I have attended many churches, but what they say confuses me.

Mr T E, London

Your literature is helping this new church-less Christian so much.

C F, Liverpool

I'd like to know under which denomination do you serve? I'm curious. I love the magazines but am puzzled by some of your comments.

C B, Bude, Cornwall

• *Our free booklet This Is the United Church of God will explain our historical roots and show that we are not a part of any Catholic or Protestant denomination.*

I think *The Good News* magazine is informative and enormously interesting. Keep on sending it to me. I just pray for a Church like yours to attend.

Mrs S L, Stone, Staffs

• *You may wish to request our free booklet The Church Jesus Built and a list of the times and general locations of our United Church of God meetings. We look forward to meeting you.*