

Understanding the Ultimate Jubilee

When Queen Elizabeth II reached the Golden Jubilee of her reign this year, she became the fifth-longest-ruling English monarch. The kings who had lengthier reigns were George III (59 years), Henry III (56 years) and Edward III (50 years). Queen

to all its inhabitants' (Leviticus 25:10). The Israelites were instructed not to oppress one another, and were to treat each other with dignity and respect, as people who were created in the very 'image of God' (Genesis 1:27). However, the frailties of human nature made it necessary

'[The Jubilee's] social values lay in teaching personal liberty, restitution of property, and the simple life' (John D Davis, *The Westminster Dictionary of the Bible*, p 333).

Surprisingly, the word *brit*, as in Britain, derives from a Hebrew word meaning 'covenant'. One is reminded here of the 17th century 'Covenanters' who were parliamentary and religious reformers in both Scotland and England. These word connections may be more significant than is generally realised.

Society in general has neglected God's fundamental guide to morality, the instruction emanating from the Bible, and is paying the dire consequences.

Victoria is the only sovereign to have reached a Diamond Jubilee, celebrated in 1897 with a special service in London's St. Paul's Cathedral and the kind of jubilant rejoicing that ancient Israel was famous for during the celebration of their national events.

But why is the Jubilee important? The word 'jubilee' is derived from the Hebrew word *yobel*. It refers to a ram's horn which was used to audibly proclaim the beginning of the 50th year. The people who first celebrated a jubilee were the ancient Israelites after they entered the Promised Land. The jubilee 'proclaimed liberty throughout the land

that at the end of 49 years, as they entered the jubilee, lands had to be given back to their original owners, all debts were cancelled, and bond-servants were freed.

The exact date when the very first jubilee fell in ancient Israel isn't known. But the overall concept of freedom and release of land at the jubilee was liberating. Domestic servants and those burdened by debt could look forward to better times. It meant that however badly an Israelite may have mismanaged his affairs, the land would eventually be restored to his family, preventing the cycle of inescapable poverty so common today. Summing up,

Evaluating the House of Windsor

How will historians judge the modern House of Windsor? Although the Queen's family, like many others, has been unable to escape the adverse influences of modern society with its shifting foundations, there is overall support for the monarchy. This is reflected by a recent poll in the editorial pages of *The Daily Telegraph*: 'An overwhelming 77 percent said they *wanted* to carry on [with the monarchy]. The Queen emerges triumphantly from the poll, with 83 percent acknowledging

her strong sense of duty, and 79 percent saying she has done a good job of representing Britain abroad' (Feb 4).

Many British subjects see the Queen as a representative of a lifestyle that is based on more stable foundations than the relativism of today's society. The timeless Judeo-Christian concepts that the Bible teaches have continued to guide Queen Elizabeth II.

The royal law

One is reminded that at the Queen's coronation on 2 June, 1953, she was asked by the Archbishop of Canterbury, 'Will you to the utmost of your power maintain the laws of God and the true profession of the Gospel?' The Moderator of the Church of Scotland shortly thereafter provided the Queen with the 'manual' on just rule, the Bible, stating: 'Here is Wisdom. This is the royal Law. These are the lively Oracles of God.'

Regrettably, society in general has neglected God's fundamental guide to morality, the instruction emanating from the Bible, and is paying the dire consequences. Increasing crime, a higher-than-ever divorce rate, racial tensions, and an entertainment media that delves ever deeper into the cesspool of gross immorality are the results of society turning its back on biblical teachings.

But it does make a difference when even one or two of those who lead us set the right example and thereby encourage the people to live by the 'royal law'.

The Jubilee is an appropriate occasion to express the same wish of longevity of life to Queen Elizabeth II that was extended to King Solomon almost 3,000 years

ago. This was beautifully set to music by Handel with the words, 'May the king live forever'.

That expression is no meaningless sentiment. Nor should it be limited to monarchs, prime ministers, or presidents. The Jubilee is a type of God's coming Kingdom, when freedom from the sufferings brought on by sin will be proclaimed, and every human being will be given the opportunity to inherit everlasting life. God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). In His eyes, there is no difference between monarch and commoner

when it comes to fulfilling the purpose for our existence.

But God's offer of the gift of salvation isn't automatic. It brings obligations. 'Keep the commandments', Christ told the young man who asked Him how to gain everlasting life (Matthew 19:17).

This is the lifestyle that the Creator wants us all to embrace. It's a way of life that has purpose, brings fulfilment and eventually everlasting life (John 10:10). That will be the final chapter in man's destiny, the *ultimate* jubilee.

Gerhard Marx

THE BRITISH EMPIRE REVISITED

Great Britain is presently sustaining a massive assault on its Anglo-Saxon legacy of empire and culture.

As the European Union (EU) restricts the British right to market their goods in pounds and ounces, *The Daily Express* headline of February 19 reads: 'Europe Smashes 1000 Years of British Culture'. Overstated? Perhaps, but once again the United Kingdom felt the heavy hand of Europe when the EU confirmed that metric measurements have to be shown exclusively in UK shops, as shopkeepers understand the law.

Since many Britons still do their calculations in pounds and ounces (as I do as an American expatriate married to a British citizen), it seems to make good sense to also display wares marked in traditional Anglo-Saxon measurements. But whenever there is a conflict, European Union laws now appear to reign supreme in actual practice.

However, the EU is not the only enemy of British tradition. We oppose ourselves as well. As *Scotland on Sunday* reports: 'Talk is growing in Whitehall of decolonising the dwindling remains of the British Empire' (17 Feb). As I write, in defiance of Gibraltar's own wishes and many who reside in the UK itself, the British government continues negotiations with Spain about joint rulership.

The official government line reflects a commitment to retain the status quo in all the remaining colonies unless and until they themselves seek to end the imperial relationship. However, according to the *Scotland on Sunday* feature article, 'In Whitehall, there are those who find the vestiges of colonial rule distasteful to the 21st century and who talk of micro-decolonisation'.

Questions are being asked, such as, if Gibraltar is subject to negotiation, why not the other colonies? What about Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Indian Ocean territories, the British Virgin Islands, the Caymans, Montserrat, Pitcairn, St. Helena, South Georgia (near Argentina), the Turks & Caicos Islands and maybe even the Falklands, all of which remain as parts of the British Empire?

However, since the recent loss of Hong Kong to China, the number of people remaining under the UK colonial administration has dwindled to around 125,000. Inevitably such a limited number brings to the fore the administrative costs of maintaining colonial rule.

Although these small islands of imperial rule are at best only fleeting shadows of the old British Empire, those who understand the true origins of our Anglo-Saxon, Celtic and Nordic peoples wince at the very thought of losing them to strictly financial considerations, careless neglect or a cavalier attitude. Yet according to the *Scotland on Sunday* feature, 'If these relics would just go away of their own accord, the government would be quite happy with that'.

Pride in Anglo-Saxon achievement

It should go without saying that racism is inherently wrong. The apostle Peter perceived that 'God is no respecter of persons' (Acts 10:34). His salvation is freely available to members of every race and colour who work righteousness (verse 35), are truly repentant and submit to being baptised into His family (Acts 2:37-39; Revelation 5:9).

However, there is nothing amiss in respecting the legacy that our common Anglo-Saxon/Celtic

culture has given to the world. Regrettably, in recent years a strong counter-cultural movement in Britain has become so pronounced that many people have accepted a distorted view of our history.

As *Daily Mail* columnist Simon Heffer clearly states, 'As Labour

*In post-millennial Britain,
we live in post-imperial
times. The captains and
the kings have departed;
the squadrons and the
legions have come
home; the plumed hats
and the ceremonial
swords have been put
away; the Union Jack
has been hauled down
again and again and
again; Britannia no
longer rules the waves
at Heaven's command;
and even the royal
yacht has ceased to
sail the seas.*

David Cannadine

stifles more British history lessons . . . there has been more damage done to children by "educationists" in the past 20 or 30 years than by any other malevolent force' (5 Feb). In his feature article Mr. Heffer extolled the past achievements of many Britons in many fields of endeavour, comparing them to the current scene by saying: 'Now by contrast, we search in vain for great achievements in art and literature. Our culture, rooted in celebrity and superficiality, is now an empty vessel.'

He summed up the benign effects of our Anglo-Saxon culture and legacy by writing: 'It taught us about a mindset and way of life, and it instilled basic values of decency and respect for service and sacrifice that are the basis of a civilised society. Yes, it made us tolerant too.'

Of course, this traditional legacy was very far from perfect and the current counter-cultural movement has not been slow to point out its major flaws. There is usually another side to every story, but even obvious faults should not blind us to the beneficial gifts that the Anglo-American way of life has contributed to mankind.

Historical perspective

Without an understanding of the origins of our Anglo-Saxon, Celtic and Nordic peoples, and their God-given mission in this modern age, it is almost impossible to properly evaluate present national trends in Britain.

As Melanie Phillips summed up matters in her regular column, 'Pounds and ounces have been banned. BC and AD are to be dropped from our history books. Inexorably our democracy and history are being destroyed' (*Daily Mail*, 20 Feb). We need to understand why!

To help you comprehend the vital historical background, the United Church of God has published a comprehensive 48-page, full-colour brochure explaining the startling significance of the Anglo-Saxon and Celtic peoples. The title is *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy*. Please request your free copy. The mailing address is shown on page 6.

John Ross Schroeder

What the Gospel Is Really About

Two years ago the new millennium began with all kinds of hope. It was almost as though people were expecting a beautiful new world to be ushered in as we entered a new year, a new century and a new millennium.

However, the stark reality is that man has no answer to the problems the world faces. But surely there are some answers. Surely the established churches have answers? What about the philosophers, thinkers, educators and politicians?

Journalists? Some certainly have more perception than most and can focus upon the troubles that afflict mankind around this world today. They can identify them, but again they have no answers. Religion certainly should have the answers, but really does not seem to know the solutions. Otherwise, why would we be in such a bad state on this planet?

The little flock

There is one Christian group that does have answers. Together they are committed to the most important work in this world today – transmitting the message of hope for a future that will work. Just a small group, spread rather thinly around the world, continuing the legacy of the Church Jesus Christ founded. They are a people who look to God the Father, who live to serve Him and the whole of mankind. These people truly endeavour to obey God and to live His way. Jesus Christ Himself spoke of this group as a ‘little flock’ (Luke 12:32).

God has chosen to call people as a result of the preaching of other human beings (Romans 10:14-15). This calling is a miraculous process that results in people repenting and submitting themselves to God, and then receiving His Holy Spirit, after baptism (see Acts 2:37-39).

As the preaching of the gospel progresses, God may call more people to have a part in His work. This means that as a result of the work of our Creator, there will be more people in the first resurrection. Those who have a part in the first resurrection are called ‘blessed and holy’ (Revelation 20:6). Hebrews 11:35 calls it ‘a better resurrection’.

God wants as many as possible of those called to be in the first resurrection. These will then be able to take part in serving all of mankind during Christ’s millennial rule. They will have a part in bringing all mankind into a reconciliation with the living God. We surely want to see as many people as possible coming to repentance, being baptised, accepting the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and then receiving the Holy Spirit of God – giving them a knowledge, an understanding and a relationship with the Creator of the universe.

Preaching the message of hope

The millions of people suffering at this present time need the message of hope that only those preaching the true gospel of God’s coming kingdom can bring. There is only one name under heaven by which we can be saved (Acts 4:12). There is only one way, one hope and one method of having that very real relationship with our Creator.

Unbelievably, we are sitting in the very front row as the greatest drama in the history of the world is being played before us. Around us, to our sides, behind us, above us in the dress circle, in the gallery, is everyone else. They don’t understand what the drama on stage is about.

We are already seeing prophecy coming to pass. The Word, the pre-existent Jesus Christ, inspired Daniel to write about a world-dominating power that would arise in Europe. Later He also inspired the apostle John to give us the overall direction this world would go at the time of the end. We are seeing signs of that power of which John wrote in the book of Revelation, and of which Daniel wrote hundreds of years earlier.

Let’s be about getting this work of God done – dedicating ourselves to it. Let’s put aside those weights that Paul spoke of that prevent us from making the progress we should. Let’s have the love for the world that the Father does – reflecting His mind. Let’s be involved more fully as we are able, so that more can share in the blessing and opportunity of meeting Jesus Christ when He returns, and then serving with Him to bring all of mankind into a reconciliation with the Father. Let’s work to bring many more sons and daughters into God’s family.

*John Jewell, CEO
United Church of God British Isles*

The Netherlands in Biblical Prophecy

We can explore Dutch origins by carefully comparing modern conditions with early prophetic writings from the Pentateuch.

Many of you know the biblical story of Abraham and how God promised him that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob received both physical and spiritual promises. We know that the spiritual promises – the promise of the Messiah – are fulfilled in Jesus Christ, who was a descendant from David, of the tribe of Judah.

Physical promises

However, what about the physical promises? These also are fulfilled, but not in a way you might expect.

The physical promises were made through Jacob to the people of Israel. But where are the Israelites nowadays? Maybe you think these are the Jews. That understanding is not completely correct. True, the Jews are descendants from the house of Judah. But what happened to the descendants of Ephraim, Manasseh, Reuben, Dan, Zebulun and the other sons of Jacob? These nations have not disappeared. They are still among us, but have largely forgotten their own origins.

Do you realise that what we now call the Caucasian people of northwest Europe and North America are the descendants of the sons of Jacob? Please request and read this incredible truth in our free brochure *The United States and*

Britain in Bible Prophecy. This booklet shows that the name and birthright of Israel was passed on to Ephraim and Manasseh, the sons of Joseph.

There has been some speculation on what happened to the other tribes of the House of Israel.

As a Dutchman, I'm interested to know which son of Jacob is my

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ancestor. Fortunately, the Bible gives clear indications that the original Dutchmen may well be descendants from the tribe of Zebulun.

Who was Zebulun?

Leah was Jacob's first wife. She bore him six sons and one daughter, Zebulun being Leah's youngest son.

'Leah said, "God has presented me with a precious gift. This time my husband will treat me with honour, because I have borne him

six sons." So she named him Zebulun' (Genesis 30:19-20).

Jacob had the following prophecy for Zebulun: 'Zebulun will live by the seashore and become a haven for ships, his border will extend toward Sidon' (Genesis 49:13).

Generally speaking, the Dutch peoples fulfilled Jacob's ancient prophecy by migrating north-westwards from Palestine to finally dwell at the haven of the sea.

Historically, Zebulun's borders in the land of Israel were not at the sea. The 12 cities of Zebulun in Israel had no sea harbours. But according to Jewish tradition, Zebulun's banner always was a ship. The images show a typical fishing boat with a sail, and not a galley with oars. Holland has been known for its shipbuilding, overseas trade and fishing.

'His border will extend toward Sidon,' is sometimes translated as 'on both sides he will catch fish'. At times more than 20 percent of the Dutch population has been directly involved in fishing. Also a large part of the rest of the population was directly involved in shipbuilding and trade over water. It is clear that the Dutch blessings were received through the water and the sea.

We do not find a great deal written about Zebulun. In contrast to his brothers, he did nothing particularly evil, at least nothing that was thought worth mentioning in the Bible.

Can the same be said about the modern Netherlands? In contrast with other Israelite powers, we have usually played a peaceful role. Is it a coincidence that our country was designated for the International Court of Justice in The Hague?

Holland's history shows that she mostly fought defensive wars. Our ancestors beat back aggressors like the Romans during the Batavian rebellion led by Claudius Civilus, the Vikings by the Frisians, and the strong, but unfortunately futile defence by the Dutch army during the Nazi invasion of May 1940. Except during the horrible slave trade and colonisation of the Dutch West Indies (what is now called Indonesia), the Dutch have been called the most peaceful colonists of the western nations.

A prophecy of Moses

Moses said the following about Zebulun: 'Rejoice, Zebulun, in your going out, and you, Issachar, in your tents. They . . . will feast on the abundance of the seas, on the treasures hidden in the sand' (Deuteronomy 33:18-19).

The Netherlands became rich because of the overseas trade. In the last centuries, they also became famous for three other facts that have to do with water and sand:

- The Dutch are the world's most famous dredgers and dike builders. Centuries of beating back the North Sea and reshaping the coastlines have given the people of the

Zebulun's name

The name Zebulun consists of three Hebrew consonants:

Z: Zain: to bring up, to jack up.

B: Beith: home, living room, house.

L: Lamed: movement, to set in motion by power or impulse.

From this it is clear that Zebulun means more than just 'home'. Helene van Woelderren, a Dutch author living in England, wrote in her book about Zebulun (*Wonderful Parallel*) that the combination of the three meanings wonderfully fits the functionality of the most typical Dutch building, the watermill.

Z: Water is being brought up and then pumped away.

B: The old windmills (not the present turbines) were inhabited by the miller and his family.

L: The mill is set in motion by the wind.

Netherlands an enormous amount of essential knowledge in the field of land reclamation and development – knowledge that may well be used when the waste places are rebuilt during Christ's future millennial reign (see Ezekiel 36:33-35).

- The polders: A polder is an area of low-lying reclaimed land. Where else in the world does the farmer milk his cows on land claimed from the sea? Where is the land so rich it gives a great abundance of harvest of potatoes and sugar beets from the rich clay grounds?

The peoples of the Netherlands have made the sea become land. Multiple thousands of Dutch acres were formerly under water. Without the polders up to half of Holland would now be sea water.

The polders especially, are where 'they will feast on the abundance of the seas'.

- Besides this, Holland has enormous amounts of natural gas under its surface.

Exporting knowledge

'Rejoice, Zebulun, in your going out.' Think of all the Dutch emigrants who have exported schooled knowledge to under-developed countries.

Deborah sings in Judges 5:14, 'From Zebulun those who bear a commander's staff'. Another translation says: 'Those who wield the writer's pen'. This indicates that the Dutch have been a blessing concerning writings and writers. This is true. The Dutch made the first improvements to the printing press,

and the Dutch abbeys were renowned during the Middle Ages for their calligraphy.

Our country also specialised in cartography. The Netherlands has produced many scientists and philosophers like Erasmus and Spinoza. This land was always a refuge for the oppressed and for freedom of the printed word.

From a biblical point of view, the modern Dutch today seem to fit the prophetic descriptions of the descendants of Zebulun. Our nation is enormously blessed by God through the sea in so many ways.

*Martin Arendsen
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Why Christ Is Called Our Rock

A familiar scene when a new building is started is the crane with a large earth drill. This tool drills the holes for the concrete piles the building is to stand on. The architect specifies these piles to ensure a strong foundation in a situation where the surface strata are not stable. Since ancient times castles have been built on rock foundations, often in prominent positions. My hometown of Nottingham has such a castle. It is built on a south-facing sandstone prominence overlooking the flood plane of the Trent River.

Most of us have walked on hills and mountains, and their size, permanence and grandeur never fail to impress us.

Our spiritual Rock

The Bible uses similar language to describe Jesus Christ. Notice 2 Samuel 22:2-3: 'The LORD is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer. The God of my strength, in him I will trust. My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge.' There are many other

Unlike mountains, He will not erode or crumble with time, but is absolutely permanent.

places in the Bible where Christ is likened to a rock, but with this important difference. Notice that in 1 Corinthians 10:4 He is called a 'spiritual Rock'.

But unlike the foundations of buildings, large outcrops of rock, or even mountains, He will not erode or crumble with time, but is absolutely permanent.

Why then is Christ likened to a rock? We are to learn an important lesson from this: that we can depend on Him for access to the Father throughout our life, relying on Them for all eternity.

A climber learns to depend on the rocks he climbs. With practice he or she knows how to use the rock to his advantage in order to make progress upwards. I have been on steep faces of mountains where looking down there is just space. If you dislodge a stone, it falls so far below that when it strikes the ground you cannot even hear it. Whatever the situation, an experienced climber is not frightened, as he concentrates on staying in contact with the rock. The adrenaline will be pumping through his veins, but he is engrossed in the task at hand and does not doubt the rock, but works with it and depends on it.

The twin towers

Some years ago I looked down over the edge of one of the towers that once were the World Trade Centre. Below me were clouds being blown against the building about half way up. I could feel the

building swaying in the wind and felt very uneasy. This was not the same as being on a mountain. Rocks don't move; this man-made structure did.

Life can be hard, making progress difficult. We all have our challenges, whether it's paying the bills, progressing in our career or education, or just getting along with people.

We can be overtaken by problems that need solutions. We find ourselves needing to make decisions, but whom can we trust for help or counsel? We will have to put our trust somewhere, whether it is in friends who advise us, or books we read, or perhaps more often just in our own opinion.

One man knew where to look for the right advice, and where to find a solid foundation on which to base his life. This man was David.

King David says: 'I will love you, O LORD my strength. The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold' (Psalm 18:1-2).

God praised David as a man who would turn to Him for help in time of need. He had no doubt that His Creator could and would help him.

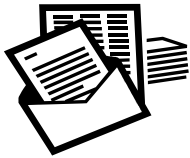
What is our foundation?

What about us? On what foundation is our life being built? Doubts assail us at times; we feel precarious and about to fall. We need to practice dependence on Christ, who is rocklike in dependability. A life built on Jesus Christ as its foundation will last for eternity.

Moses wrote: 'For I proclaim the name of the LORD: ascribe greatness to our God. *He is the Rock*, His work is perfect; for all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; righteous and upright is He' (Deuteronomy 32:3-4).

Christ truly is a rock, dependable for all eternity (1 Corinthians 10:4). He is the way to the Father. You can stake your life on that.

Will McLoughlin



Letters from Our Readers

World Tomorrow broadcast

I'm greatly enjoying the creative, fresh, spontaneous-sounding programmes you're producing. I also appreciate the compact 15-minute package . . . An ideal length for Internet listeners. I've sent a few emails urging consideration of testing Mr David McDermott [the presenter] on American radio. Keep up the good work. It is a pleasure to tune in.

C A, Pasadena, California

The British & European Supplement

When I was reading the latest issue of the British & European Supplement to *The Good News*, I learned for the first time that there is a supplementary publication called *World News & Prophecy*. Would you please let me take out a subscription for this magazine?
J M, Somerset

Why Suffering?

I'm constantly being asked why my belief is so strong with such atrocities happening in the world. Why are people so eager to blame God for life's catastrophes? I believe there is a reason for everything, although at times it is difficult to understand the why. I don't think we'll ever find the answers for September 11th, which showed us a depth of pain we never knew existed, and left many people empty and broken. But God in all His glory reached out to the people

of New York and gave them an inner courage that echoed around the world. That's why my belief is so strong and why I get so much comfort from my Bible and *The Good News*.
Mrs J D C, Cumbria

- *Well stated! Readers may benefit from requesting and reading our free brochure Why Does God Allow Suffering?*

The Holy Spirit

I identify with so much in your magazine. It seems to me that people miss the fact that God Himself has not only given the world the perfect code (instruction book) for life, together with the Living Word (Jesus Christ), but has also given us the power to apply His purposes in our lives through the Holy Spirit.

F N, Tunbridge Wells

I received *The Good News* today, but could you tell me your beliefs regarding Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit?
M B, Bristol

- *They are clearly expressed in Who Is God?, the free booklet we have already posted to you.*

Merits of translations

Would you have a booklet that discusses the merits or otherwise of the many modern translations of the Bible – both Old Testament and New?
M A, Lancashire

- *How To Understand the Bible has been sent to you.*

From the Isle of Man

You have been sending regular copies of *The Good News*. Both my wife and myself are very grateful and enjoy reading it very much. The writings are very well thought out and are of benefit to us, especially the present day ones about the happenings of September 11.

*Mr & Mrs H W L
Onchan, Isle of Man*

The Christian way

I have been a Catholic for many years, but for the past year I have turned to the Christian way to help me along the right path to God. Could you please forward some helpful booklets?

C C, Republic of Ireland

- *We recommend Transforming Your Life and The Road to Eternal Life to our readers. Both booklets have been mailed to you.*

Voluntary donations accepted

A little behind with *The Bible Study Course*, but I find it is getting me back into God's Word. I look forward to receiving the booklets requested. I know you offer them free, but I could afford to pay for them. Please accept the donation enclosed.

Mrs N J W, Hants

- *To understand our financial policy, please read the box below.*

How our literature is funded

The United Church of God *British Isles* is a charity registered in England and Wales (number 1079192). The publication of this Supplement and other literature is funded by the generous donations of members, co-workers and our readers. Following Jesus Christ's instruction (Matthew 10:8), it is supplied free of charge so that it can be made available to all who may desire it.