



PROPHECY *Today* UK

Bringing the unchanging word of God to a changing world

FACING THE FUTURE

Rev Dr Clifford Hill

The axe is at the root of the trees

Earlier this year I spent considerable time in pain from a tooth that I should have dealt with long ago. My dentist had been warning me that a large molar next to my wisdom tooth had a cavity underneath a filling, which was slowly turning into an abscess and dripping poison into my gums.

I stubbornly did not want to lose a tooth and insisted on a refilling, but the result was unbearable. I had to have an emergency extraction which led to ten further days of

pain. I learned a salutary lesson: if you allow poison to drip-feed into your body, the whole body suffers.

I believe this is a picture of the UK Church. The poison of false teaching and unbelief in theological colleges and universities has drip-fed into the spiritual arteries of virtually all the mainline denominations. Things have reached a critical point; we are now entering a period of separation: separating truth from deception.

We will see Bible-believing Christians expelled from ungodly institutions



WELCOME! OUR STORY

From 1985 to 2006, Prophecy Today was published in print and grew to become one of the most widely read Christian magazines in the UK. It was an iconic publication renowned for declaring the word of God for our times



Covers of the original Prophecy Today magazine, in print 1985-2006

In 2015, Prophecy Today was reborn online as Prophecy Today UK, taking a new format but keeping the same vision. Our small but dedicated team is led by Prophecy Today's original founder the Rev Dr Clifford Hill and operates under the umbrella of Issachar Ministries, publishing fresh editions each Friday. You can sign up on our website to receive these straight to your inbox, for free!

At Prophecy Today UK, we believe that God is as involved in the world today as he was in biblical times. We also believe that he longs to give Christians understanding about the world and how he is working out his purposes in it.

The next four pages contain excerpts from the contemporary ministry of Prophecy Today UK, which includes commentary on public affairs, teaching articles and book reviews.

Every one of our articles published since 2015 is available on our website – find us at www.prophecytoday.uk.

Prophecy Today's original logo



I believe we are now entering a period of separation: separating truth from deception

and others finding that they cannot remain in fellowship with those who are denying foundational gospel truths. As Jesus declared: "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots" (Matthew 15:13). Jesus' words echoed those of his cousin, John the Baptist: "The axe is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire" (Matthew 3:10).

To come back to my parable of the tooth, I had to recognise that merely refilling an old tooth would not deal

with the level of decay in the system. There had to be an extraction, right down to the roots. John the Baptist did not say that the axe was poised to cut off a few branches, or even fell the trunk of the tree. He said, "the axe is at the root of the trees" – meaning utter destruction. This indicates a level of judgment that goes beyond pruning, which is what I believe we will see in some of the institutional churches.

The Methodist Church is expected to accept same-sex marriage at its annual conference this summer. If that happens it will likely bring about calls for a separation of Bible-believing ministers, preachers and members, splitting that denomination.

A similar separation cannot long be delayed within the Anglican Church. Unity in the established Church has always been important. But if unity threatens the integrity of the gospel,

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what should believers do? A time surely has to come when compromise can no longer be acceptable.

Maybe God intends to allow sections of the Church to die so that new life can thrive. Jesus called this separating the sheep from the goats (Matthew 25). This certainly does not mean that God has condemned the whole of his Church – it is unbelief that is coming under judgment!



I am not encouraging people to leave their churches: rather, to be prepared for the cost of witnessing within places that do not value truth. Believers should not sit suffering silently but seek the Lord's wisdom for how and when to be witnesses.

The conflict between truth and deception has intensified decisively at all levels of society. Every Bible-believing Christian has to make a personal decision as to where they stand in this battle. Of course, we need each other – the community of believers is of great importance today – but each of us must also decide individually where we stand, ensuring that we are right before the Lord.

■ **The Rev Dr Clifford Hill is Prophecy Today UK's Editor-in-Chief. Read his weekly editorials at www.prophecytoday.uk.**

THE BRIDE OF MESSIAH

God is preparing a people for himself

Something is happening amid the escalating tribulations of this fragile world, the immorality and selfishness of our culture, the persecution of believers, rising anti-Semitism and growing levels of deception and apostasy in the Church.

God is preparing a people for himself.

As believers we often interpret what God is doing in the world through the lens of our individual faith, or through the lens of our nation, or that of the British 'Church', or with particular (and necessary) regard for Israel. We are often less deliberate about viewing things through the lens of the global Body of Christ, also described in Scripture as Jesus' Bride.

Marriage was created by God as a glorious picture (in its ideal form) of his covenant relationship with his people: holy intimacy and oneness encircled by loving devotion, cherishing, service and faithful commitment.

God's offer of a relationship of spiritual marriage with his people has always extended to all who would enter into covenant with him by faith in the blood of Jesus, whatever their nationality or place in history.



Passages of Scripture so often reserved for weddings (eg Ephesians 5) are principally prophetic verses which speak of a much greater, more wondrous spiritual reality

Indeed, the passages of Scripture so often reserved for weddings (eg Ephesians 5) are principally *prophetic* verses which speak of a much greater, more wondrous spiritual reality, to be fulfilled when the Lord returns: the preparation of a Bride for the ultimate Bridegroom, Jesus the Messiah.

We are presently in this preparation period, somewhere between betrothal (marked by Jesus' first coming) and marriage (when he returns in glory, having prepared a place for us). This means a number of things:

1. The Bride is being prepared by the Lord, being arrayed spiritually in

3. The Bride is separating from her counterfeit, described in Scripture as an idolatrous harlot, embodying everything that has ever imitated true, biblical faith (eg false religions, apostasy in the Church) (see also Revelation 17-18)

4. The Bride is supposed to be one united, cohesive body (Ephesians 4:3-5), purified of both ungodly divisions and unholy mixture

5. The Bride is Jew and Gentile, together in Christ. Bible prophecy is not just about the Gentile 'Church' on the one hand and unbelieving Israel on the other, but the bringing of Jew and Gentile together as 'one new man'

Each of these aspects of the Bride of Messiah ought to shape the way that we see what is going on in the world today and God's purposes behind it. While the Bridegroom is busy preparing a place for us, let us also be busy preparing ourselves for his return, which may be sooner than we think.

Read the full version of this article at www.prophecytoday.uk. Search 'The Bride of Messiah'.

■ **Frances Rabbitts & Ben Robinson**

'If My People...'

A biblical understanding of repentance

One of the most 'thumbed' Bible verses of recent years is 2 Chronicles 7:14. In it, God affirms to King Solomon that if Israel turns from its wicked ways then the Almighty will "forgive their sin and heal their land".

This 'turning from wicked ways' is known as 'repentance'. Repentance has two components: conviction of sin and a turning back to righteousness. It is a spiritual conviction (from heaven), outworked in a tangible response (on earth).

Sadly, a whole industry has developed around calls for the Church to 'repent' for the wickedness in the nation, in the understanding that if this happens enough, God will turn around the UK's fortunes. However, this phenomenon, while well-meant, is mistaken.

Its fundamental error is the idea of 'vicarious repentance': that believers can repent for the actions of others.

If a third party sins, then one can express sorrow over their actions and call for repentance from them (Acts 2:38). However, in a New Covenant

context, the detached observer will not be held accountable for the other's misdeeds. Each of us will be held to account solely for our own individual behaviour (John 3:18; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

So, we as individuals cannot 'repent' on behalf of the nation, the Church, or those within. We can, and should, like Daniel (chapter 9), **confess** the sins of our nation as a whole and petition God for a Holy-Spirit-led turning back to his ways. But conviction is the work of the Holy Spirit; repentance is the individual's response.



Let us shrink from any notion that by assembling enough believers in one place, at one time, to pray in concert, we can somehow exert greater influence in the heavens to achieve our will. In a situation which begs judgment, we ask of the

Lord: "in wrath remember mercy" (Habakkuk 3:2). Ultimately, we need to pray not 'our' will, but "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven".

■ **Colin Wilson**



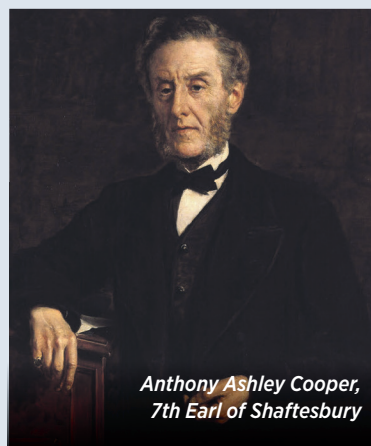
NANNY IMPACTS NATIONS

Gospel seeds faithfully sown produce miraculous harvest

Discovering how a 19th-Century hero of mine was converted to Christ is a welcome encouragement to my greatest heroine – my wife Linda! I'll explain why in due course.

Lord Shaftesbury's passion for Christ influenced an entire generation. Yet this might not have happened had it not been for an 'unsung saint' few people have heard of – one Maria Millis.

Maria was a devoted follower of Jesus who, as Shaftesbury's nanny, shared Bible stories and prayed with young Anthony Ashley Cooper (born 1801).



**Anthony Ashley Cooper,
7th Earl of Shaftesbury**

The son of an earl, the boy was otherwise neglected and bullied, both at home and at school. Sadly, Maria died when he was just ten, but Ashley described her throughout

his life as the best friend he ever had. And she would never know – in this life – the results of her faithful witness.

Shaftesbury devoted himself to helping the weak and powerless. As an MP and later a peer, he worked tirelessly towards improving the conditions of factory workers and the mentally ill while also helping to develop universal education.

He played a leading role in a number of Gospel programmes, including the Church's Ministry among Jewish people (CMJ). When he died in 1885, nearly 200 missions, schools, hospitals and charities – all of which had been his personal concern – sent representatives to a packed memorial service at Westminster Abbey. And thousands from the slums of London lined the streets as his hearse passed by.

The Bible says: "Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it" (Proverbs 22:6). So what's the link with my wife Linda?

Like Maria Millis, she feels called to share the Gospel with young people. Over the past 25-plus years she has had the immense privilege of sharing Bible stories with tens of thousands of primary school pupils. It sometimes seems a thankless task. But the seeds of Gospel truth have been sown liberally, waiting for

fertile ground in which to take root. There are rare moments of particularly encouraging feedback, such as the recent occasion when a young man at church told me that it was Linda's visit to his school many years ago that started him off on his Christian journey.



Linda Gardner, heading up Christian work in Doncaster's primary schools

Linda is always telling me not to put her on a pedestal. But my reason for sharing her story (and that of Maria Millis) is to encourage all those who are faithfully sowing Gospel seeds in their various endeavours, perhaps never knowing their full impact.

As Brian Maiden, author of the feature¹ that inspired this article, put it: "You don't have to do anything spectacular for Jesus. Just do what you can where you can. One day you may be surprised by the results."

¹**Maria Millis: the definition of an unsung saint**, *Evangelicals Now*, October 2019. I am indebted to Brian for a significant part of this article.

■ **Author: Charles Gardner**

GREEK VS. HEBRAIC THINKING

Two worldviews battle for the souls of mankind

When Abram left Ur of the Chaldees he became the first Hebrew. He responded to God's call to walk with him and learn to live by faith. The culture and way of thinking which developed from Abra(ha)m's walk, and those of his descendants, is what today we would call a 'Hebraic worldview' or a 'biblical worldview'.

Thousands of years later, when Plato taught his students in the field called the 'Academy', he taught a different

way of thinking based on a life lived independently of God. Ancient Greek thinking was carried through into the Roman Empire and from there into the culture and education systems of the entire Western world. It has endured through the centuries and remains the major rival of Hebraic thinking today.

The two worldviews, Hebrew and Greek, are in outright conflict for the souls of men and for the way

Continued over



'OUTSIDE IN' - SEEKING TO SERVE 'OUT OF CHURCH' BELIEVERS



In recent years, a growing number of faithful Christians in the UK have become disillusioned with current expressions of Sunday church available to them, or have left altogether.

They are not falling away from the faith, but rather acting in line with their consciences. Unable to find or attend a congregation that affirms the authority of the Bible, they are searching for fellowship in other ways, as they go through a 'wilderness' season with the Lord.

For Christians in this position, **Prophecy Today UK** is pleased to commend 'Outside In', a new area of ministry supporting and connecting believers who are on the 'outside' of current 'church' life but still very much 'in' the Body of Christ.

If you would like more information about this initiative, please e-mail outsidein@issacharministries.co.uk or write to 'Outside In' at Issachar Ministries, Office 5, Shannon Court, High Street, Sandy, BEDS, SG19 1AG.



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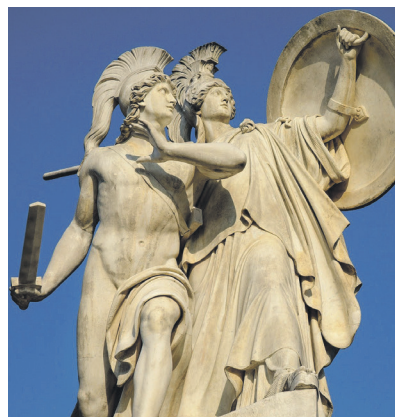
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GREEK VS. HEBRAIC THINKING



our society seeks to live – with or without God.

Today, much of our thought lives is influenced by Greek thinking, although most of us do not realise it. Its influence is subtler than we might think, especially if we have not recognised how it has shaped the culture of the world in which we have grown up.

The contrast between a Hebraic worldview (the life of faith in God) and a Greek worldview (a life based on human rationality, strength and achievement) is a battle for the mind between two different sorts

of wisdom: wisdom coming from a personal walk with God and wisdom coming from philosophies that are based on human logic alone. But the wisdom of this world will never reason out the way of salvation brought through faith in the sacrificial death of Jesus the Messiah (1 Corinthians 1:18-25).

Today, the influence of Greco-Roman humanism is both strong and growing. It influences our education, our sciences, our politics and even our churches. It is deceiving millions into thinking that man is the measure of all things, that the universe evolved and that laws can be changed to govern the world in ways that are directly opposed to God.

The conflict between these two worldviews is central to the spiritual battle for the souls of men and women and will increase in intensity as we move closer to Jesus' return. The Hebraic walk of faith is still God's best.

Read Dr Clifford Denton's six-part study series, 'Comparing Greek and Hebraic Worldviews', at www.prophecytoday.uk.

ISSACHAR MINISTRIES UK

Prophecy Today UK is a project of Issachar Ministries. Its inclusion in Heart is still in its pilot stage and we need to be able to justify its production costs. We will be assessing its effectiveness after two further issues of Heart.

If you appreciate Prophecy Today UK's inclusion in Heart please let us know and encourage us to continue!

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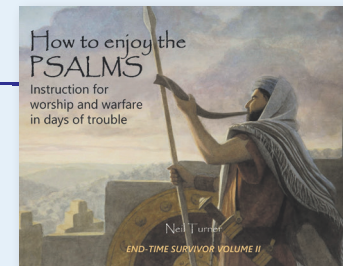
Prophecy Today UK reviews books, DVDs and other resources, both old and new, which we hope will bless your walk with God. Read the full reviews of the books below in the 'Resources' section on www.prophecytoday.uk

How to Enjoy the Psalms

Neil Turner

ProjectZone, 2019, 118pp

£24.95 (paperback). Purchase from Amazon. Find out more on the author's website, www.omegaprogramme.com



The Psalms are the literary centrepiece in our Bibles – as well as making up the longest of the Bible's books and the book most quoted by Jesus. Could this be so arranged by the Holy Spirit to show us that praise and worship should lie at the heart of our faith? Few believers would doubt it.

Bible teacher Neil Turner, author of 'End-Time Survivor', believes that the Psalms have a particular role to play in preparing us for the turbulent times preceding the return of our Lord Jesus. Written by men who overcame great odds and tremendous pressure, the Psalms are uniquely placed to help us in these increasingly difficult days.

Arranged in five volumes and spanning several hundred years from Moses' time (around 1450 BC) to the post-exilic period (5th-4th Century BC), the Psalms are a treasure trove of extraordinary breadth and depth. Turner meticulously analyses all 150 in turn, considering their technical elements and structure, their prophetic application and how they can best be enjoyed by modern readers.

He shows their astonishing richness and relevance to every area of Christian experience and provides us with the tools to embed their treasure into our lives. There are vital gems for every individual believer, gems for intercessors, training gems for pastors and preachers and powerful gems for corporate worship.

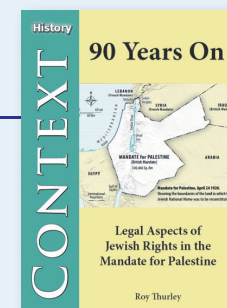
The book is beautifully presented, with contextual illustrations and comprehensive footnotes. This is an inspired and inspirational book that deserves our close attention. ■

90 Years On: Legal Aspects of Jewish Rights in the Mandate for Palestine

Author: Roy Thurley

Publishing info: Christians for Israel (CFI), 2010, 10pp

Purchasing info: £2.50 (paperback). Purchase from CFI



This is a short but well-produced booklet with colour maps, produced from conference material commemorating the 90th anniversary of the San Remo Agreement. It is still just as relevant ten years on, as we celebrate the Agreement's centenary this month. It makes a worthwhile contribution towards a better understanding of the aftermath of the Balfour Declaration and the subsequent British Mandate.

For anyone who has not studied the legal aspects of the British Mandate for Palestine before, the points made in this booklet will be revelatory.

Its conclusion is that the Jewish State draws its legality from the San Remo Agreement of 1920, a fact that counters much of the misinformation spread in recent times about the perceived illegality of Israel, especially that which uses the United Nations Partition Plan of 1947 (Resolution 181) as its basis.

The only modification to the Mandate for Palestine was the creation of the Emirate of Trans-Jordan in 1946 (now Jordan). Thus the provisions of the Mandate to the land west of the Jordan remain applicable to this day. It soon becomes clear that the expression 'illegally occupied territory' is totally inapplicable to Israel's presence in what has become known as the West Bank, as well as other areas that were assigned to Israel under the 1920 San Remo Agreement.

The booklet argues that those who would deny Israel's right to the territories it recaptured in 1967 should be challenged, using the legal case set out in its pages. ■