



Edited by  
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**YOUNG PRECIOUS SEED**

is a supplement of *Precious Seed*, designed for those young in the faith. Its purpose is to restate timeless truths from the word of God for a new generation of Christians and to kindle a biblical approach to current issues in the world in which we live. YPS is published by *Precious Seed*, PO Box 10544, Grantham, NG31 0HW, UK, and is available separately from the main magazine.

Volume: 22 Issue: 3  
**AUGUST 2025**



YOUNG.PRECIOUSSEED

## Editor's Introduction

Welcome to the August issue of YPS.

Holiday times are a great opportunity for reading and if this is

a holiday period for you, I hope you will enjoy working through this issue of YPS. But if you have more time than usual available to you, why not explore other written Bible teaching? Much is available at [www.preciousseed.org](http://www.preciousseed.org).

Also, past and present YPS articles are now available as podcasts on Spotify and Apple Podcasts – search 'Young Precious Seed'.

Andrew Dutton

## Seeing the world through a biblical lens – the creation of humans

STEPHEN G. BAKER, LIVERPOOL, ENGLAND

When describing the origin of human beings, the Bible states that God created people in His own image, Gen. 1. 27. There were two types of humans created, male and female. They were like God in some way and, as we will see shortly, the intention was for them to manage the planet on behalf of the Creator. At this early stage, we do not get much detail of the differences between male and female; we have to wait until the second chapter of the Bible for this.

In the same passage, Gen. 1, the initial responsibilities of humans are outlined – they were to have children and populate the earth. As responsible adults (they were created as mature humans) they were delegated the task of managing the planet and controlling all the species of animals, Gen. 1. 30. Both humans and all other living creatures were initially vegetarians, vv. 29, 30. In the second chapter of Genesis, we have some additional responsibilities outlined. Adam's first job was to maintain and tend the Garden of Eden, 2. 15, and to cultivate the soil, v. 5. Work was part and parcel of human existence before the fall and sin came into the world. Adam was a worker before Eve was created.

Now we come to the detailed account of the creation and formation of the first man and woman. Adam was created from the dust of the ground, v. 7. He had a physical body first and then God breathed into him the breath of life. This reminds us that we are more than just flesh and blood. Humans have a spiritual dimension to them. Later in the Bible, we get additional details about man being a living soul and having a spirit. But what about Eve, the first woman? Before we get to that, please note a few things.

- Adam was lonely and had social needs, v. 18;

- The animals that God had made could not satisfy his deep longing for companionship, v. 20;
- Adam needed someone who was compatible and who could help him live life to the full, vv. 18, 20.

So, God created a suitable helper for Adam. She was designed specifically with the man in mind, as without her life could not be full, satisfying, and complete, v. 18, and the man would have been alone. Note this, she was made from the same materials as Adam. Not from dust but from one of his ribs, v. 21. They were the same kind of people; different from the animal creation, 1 Cor. 15. 39. It could be significant that the part of Adam's body that God made Eve from was close to his heart. We learn later in the Bible, Eph. 5. 25–33, that husbands are to love their wives 'as their own bodies', v. 28, so Eve being made from part of Adam's body is significant, Gen. 2. 23.

The relationship of Adam and Eve before sin came into the world, Gen. 3. 16, Rom. 5.12, was evidently very intimate. The principle of the lifelong union of marriage was established in the Garden of Eden. Adam does what every man should do when he gets married. He cleaves to his wife. This indicates that in marriage a bond is created between a man and a woman that is unique to them. Malachi chapter 2 verse 15 makes it clear that this union between a man and a woman in marriage is made in heaven by God, as well as confirmed on earth by the husband and wife.

These initial chapters of the Bible establish the distinctions between the two genders biologically and emotionally, and form the basis on which the scriptures will explain the principles of healthy living within families, communities, and nations. It is well worth considering this biblical perspective.





# Gone, but not forgotten. Epitaphs of the kings of Judah

RICHARD SMITH, BRIDGE OF WEIR, SCOTLAND

All quotations are taken from the New King James Bible

## 2. Joash

In this series we are examining statements made about some of the kings of Judah – how they will be remembered. Previously we considered Jehoram, who **departed without being desired**. Now we turn to Jehoram's grandson Joash.

The kings make for thrilling reading, full of intrigue, ambition, and violence. Jehoram's son Ahaziah was another evil king. He was hunted and killed in Samaria by Jehu. Ahaziah was 'the [grand]son of Jehoshaphat, who sought the Lord with all his heart', 2 Chr. 22. 9. It is tragic to see the complete failure of Jehoshaphat's son and grandson. Sadly, it is still possible for the same to happen: a generation to turn its back on what faithful believers have established, leading to individual and family failure. Let us determine to remain faithful to the Lord and His word.

When Athaliah saw her son was dead she seized the throne, destroying the seed royal – murdering members of her own family! It's a reminder that we have enemies: the world, the flesh, and the Devil, all of which seek to dominate us – we must resist, allowing God's Spirit to have dominion over our lives. The Devil was clearly behind Athaliah, his aim to kill off the kingly line through which the Messiah would come. God would not allow this. Step forward Jehoshabeath, 'the lady who saved Christmas', according to DALE RALPH DAVIS! She smuggled the baby Joash into the temple and, along with her husband Jehoiada the priest, protected him for six years, 2 Chr. 22. 11, 12. Godly women are so necessary. I well remember an older sister in Bridge of Weir who supported me through my difficult teenage years – the warmth of her friendship, the sternness of her rebuke when necessary. Her prayers were sincere and helped to preserve me as a young Christian. Godly sisters have such a valuable role to play in our individual and assembly lives. Although rightly silent in public gatherings, their influence is invaluable. Eventually Jehoshabeath's husband Jehoiada presented the six-year-old king to Judah. He covenanted with the military to protect Joash, and through collecting and arming the tribe of Levi he encouraged an environment of worship, ch. 23. Protection from the world along with worship and service of God are key features of the church. We should ensure that we gather with the Lord's people at every opportunity. The king was then presented to the people. Athaliah's reign of evil was over. On behalf of young Joash, Jehoiada set a great foundation for the people. The result was that the people rejoiced, v. 21, and the city was quiet. We must be before the Lord, asking that He would give us the courage to stand firm as He did for Jehoshabeath and Jehoiada.

Joash reigned for forty years and 'did what was right in the sight of the Lord', 24. 2: He married and had children; he



restored the temple that Athaliah had ruined; he ensured the people played a role in the restoration; he acted quickly, and the work was completed; the house of God was restored to its original condition and reinforced. Sacrifices were offered once again, and all was well.

Jehoiada the priest died at the age of 130 years. He had been faithful to God, he had 'done good in Israel, both toward God and His house', v. 16. What happened to Joash when his godly influence was no longer there? To complete the quotation from verse 2, 'Joash did what was right in the sight of the Lord **all the days of Jehoiada the priest**'. After Jehoiada died, Joash changed. He was influenced by the princes of Judah. He abandoned the house of God, abandoned God Himself; he returned to serving idols; he would not heed the prophets; he even had Jehoiada's son Zechariah stoned for speaking out, v. 22. The result was God's judgement, executed by the Syrians who attacked and stripped the wealth of the temple, taking it to Damascus. Joash was wounded in the battle and his own servants assassinated him for his wickedness towards Zechariah. In short, his fall was dramatic when Jehoiada was gone.

The principle of a godly mentor is scriptural: Elisha spent years learning from Elijah; Timothy spent years with Paul; the disciples spent more than three years with the Lord. However, when they were left without the physical presence of their teacher they were expected to stand on their own two feet; in the language of Paul, to 'work out your own salvation with fear and trembling', Phil. 2. 12. Where will the power for this come from? 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me', 4. 13.

May God give us the wisdom to lean on Him for all the strength we need, even when all other support has gone.





# Christian basics – Looking for Bible teaching

STUART SCAMMELL, CARDIFF, WALES

**‘These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so’, Acts 17. 11.**

The Bible is the best-selling book of all time. Each year there are about 100 million Bibles printed, and it is estimated that over five billion copies of the Bible have been printed over time. This is astounding. There is no doubt that God’s message through the scriptures transforms lives. Paul could write, ‘I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth’, Rom. 1. 16. This is the message that God has for rebellious mankind, and it is a beautiful message of love and grace.

God does not want us to stop there. He wants us to progress through our spiritual lives. He wants, as it tells us in Matthew chapter 28 verse 19, ‘to make disciples of all the nations’ NKJV. To become a true disciple of Jesus Christ, we need to learn of Him and read from God’s word.

In the UK, we have the privilege of being able to freely read from the Bible. It may well be that we do not always value it enough. It does us good to remember the words of 2 Timothy chapter 3 verse 16, that ‘all scripture is given by inspiration of God’. This means that it is breathed out by God and is His specific guidance to us. If we stopped to think about that and try to grasp exactly what the Bible is, it would cause us to read it more. The end of this verse tells us that it ‘is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness’. God tells us, through the Bible, how we should live, yet when we get things wrong, we are shown through scripture that we have stumbled. God does not leave us there; we are told that we are corrected through the inspired pages and instructed in the way that we should live. The following verse in 2 Timothy tells us the reason for this is ‘that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work’, 2 Tim. 3. 17 NKJV.

God wants those who have trusted in Him to mature and grow and be doing God’s work in His way.

The Bible, in some places, is a very simple book, yet in others we need guidance to help us to understand. We can get help in understanding the scriptures in a number of ways. Many local assemblies convene teaching meetings, often called ‘ministry’ meetings. These would fall into two main categories. First, if there are teaching meetings that are arranged weekly by our own assembly, then we should be there. Acts chapter 2 verse 42 tells us that, ‘they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine’ NKJV, and Hebrews

chapter 10 verse 25 tells us ‘not . . . [to forsake] the assembling of ourselves together’.

Second, there are meetings and teaching weekends organized by others. These are very useful and are also great times for making Christian friends.

When listening to a Bible teacher, remember that the art of a good teacher is to make the complicated simple. Listen to those that do this avidly as they demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the scriptures, and God has given them the gift to teach for your spiritual growth.

Magazines, such as the one you are reading at the moment, are very important. Small articles that ignite interest in scriptural topics might be transformative in our spiritual growth. Ask an older Christian who you respect for their recommendations for magazines.

Bible commentaries are a valuable resource also. Over the years there are many excellent, helpful books that have been written to help us to understand the scriptures. These are readily available and can often be purchased second-hand at a reasonable price or are available online, sometimes free of charge. It should never be an exercise in accumulation, but acquiring a good selection of helpful commentaries is a useful thing to do.

Online Bible teaching can be another useful resource. This, however, must come with a health warning. There are many sites on the internet that are at first glance good, but subtle twists to doctrine can lead to error. The Devil is the master of lies and we need to be aware.

We should read and study the Bible regularly; we should see it as essential as eating. After all, if we starve, we die. If we are not reading, spiritually we are starving, and we will suffer spiritually. Feed regularly on the word of God



# Saints' CVs: Anthony Norris Groves

BY JEREMY SINGER, BRIDGE OF WEIR, SCOTLAND

## ANTHONY NORRIS GROVES 1795-1853

Modern-day Baghdad has endured decades of conflict caused by oppressive regimes, war, and terrorism. But even in the 1800s, it was a dangerous city, rife with crime, civil unrest, and disease. Despite these challenges, Anthony Norris Groves chose to take his wife, Mary, and their two young sons to this city – then a provincial capital of the Ottoman Empire – to share the gospel with its predominantly Muslim population. He paid a high price for his obedience to God.

Groves was originally a successful dentist in southern England. Raised in the Anglican tradition, he began to question its framework and practices after an intensive personal study of the Bible. Longing to return to the simplicity of New Testament Christianity, he became part of the emerging evangelical movement in Victorian England – coming into contact with figures like John Nelson Darby and George Müller.

In 1825, Groves published a small but impactful book titled *Christian Devotedness*, which is available to read online.<sup>1</sup> In this work, he outlined key principles of biblical discipleship, emphasizing trust in God's provision and wholehearted surrender of personal possessions. He also proposed a radical vision for missions: that missionaries should rely entirely on God, rather than on institutional support or guaranteed income.

At that time, many missionaries were commended and sponsored by missionary societies. Groves rejected this model, choosing instead to live by faith alone. His distinctive approach led to him being called the 'father of faith missions'.<sup>2</sup>

His first mission field was Baghdad. Groves had limited apparent success there but he sought to build relationships, and taught English using the Bible – an evangelistic method still widely used today by Christians for teaching English as a Second Language (ESL). Tragedy struck when his wife Mary died of plague, along with their newborn daughter. Groves recorded this desperate sorrow in his journal, 'I trust, in the Lord's will from the bottom of my heart, yet I feel a desolation and loneliness of heart . . . I may have nothing in this world left but His service'.<sup>3</sup>

However, his heart remained burdened for under-evangelized regions. Before long, he felt called to India, where he established a mission work based on similar

principles. Indigenous Christians in India faced strong social and economic persecution, losing their jobs upon professing faith. In response, Groves helped to set up small-scale businesses such as coffee cultivation, enabling new converts to support themselves – following the example of the Apostle Paul with his tentmaking.

Although the number of believers was small, one of them – Indian evangelist John Christian Arulappan (also spelled Aroolappen) – went on to have a significant itinerant evangelistic ministry.

Groves eventually returned to England in poor health and died in 1853. His impact, however, extended far beyond his lifetime. He influenced missionary work in the Middle East, India, and Britain. His son Henry, who survived the Baghdad ordeal and accompanied his father to India, became a strong supporter of missions. Henry also developed the *Yearly Bible Calendar*,<sup>4</sup> which became the basis for devotional reading schemes like *Choice Gleanings* still in widespread use today.

Anthony Norris Groves was also the brother of Mary, who married George Müller. Both families followed the same principle of absolute dependence on God for daily needs in Christian service.

As we reflect on the biography of Anthony Norris Groves, we see a remarkable example of sacrificial service and unshakable faith. Though his life was marked by suffering and loss, his legacy endures – challenging us to trust God fully and to demonstrate similar wholehearted devotion

### Quotes from *Christian Devotedness*

'Primitive Christianity owed much of its irresistible energy to the open and public manifestation by the early disciples, of their love to their Redeemer and King, and to one another'.

'Whether the gathering in the sheep of Christ out of a lost world, or even of a single one, be not worthy of all the sacrifices we are called upon to make?'



<sup>1</sup> A. N. GROVES, *Christian Devotedness*, 1825. Found here: <https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/24293>.

<sup>2</sup> R. B. DANN, *Father of Faith Missions – The Life and Times of Anthony Norris Groves*, Authentic Media, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> A. N. GROVES, *Journal of a Residence at Bagdad*, 1832. Found here: <https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/29631>.

<sup>4</sup> H. GROVES, *Yearly Bible Calendar*. Found here: <https://www.benshamgh.org/bible-reading-plan>