YPS young

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 8,829, Derby, DE1 0SY, UK, and is available separately from the main magazine.

YOUNG.PRECIOUSSEED

Editor's Introduction

Welcome to the November issue of YPS.

Here are more interesting articles for you to enjoy and I hope you find them to be a blessing.

Remember that past and present YPS articles are also available as podcasts on Spotify and Apple Podcasts – search 'Young Precious Seed'.

Andrew Dutton

Seeing the world through a biblical lens – the impact of sin and God's resolution

ANDREW DUTTON, NORWICH, ENGLAND

In the previous article we considered the creation of humans, and the wonderful scene in Eden – man and woman in fellowship with God. The events of Genesis chapter 3 brought about a catastrophic change to God's creation. In this article, we are going to look at the implications of Adam's disobedience to God.

Loss of power

When Adam disobeyed God, 'sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned', Rom. 5. 12. With sin came physical death, which has passed to all human beings.

As Christians, most of us would love to live better, but we struggle with our moral frailty and inability to do the right thing. Romans chapter 2 teaches that people have an awareness of right and wrong, but they are often powerless to do what is right even though they have a deep-seated desire to do so, Rom. 7. 15.

Lack of power and a distinct tendency to do the wrong thing is normal in every human being. It is a direct consequence of the fall, Gen. 3.

Loss of privilege

Before Adam sinned, mankind had a privileged position in God's creation. He was made 'a little lower than the angels', Heb. 2. 7; he was crowned 'with glory and honour', v. 7; he was set 'over the works of . . . [God's] hands', v. 7. These statements teach that, as a physical being, Adam had a kingly glory over all of God's creation. With God's delegated power and authority, all things were in subjection to him, v. 8.

This privilege was lost when sin came in, 'But now we see not yet all things put under him', v. 8. Sin has not only affected mankind, but 'the whole creation groaneth', Rom. 8. 22; this includes the animal kingdom. There is aggression and violence between animals and a deep distrust between the animal (apart from domestic animals) and the human.

The writer to the Hebrews moves from considering the failure of the first man to the glory of the second Man, the Lord Jesus. One that was also 'made a little lower than the angels', Heb. 2. 9, He became man, that He 'should taste death for every thing', v. 9 JND.

In a future day, the Bible predicts the Lord Jesus returning to rule His world. His kingdom will affect politics, finances, and morality. All creation will then also be in harmony, subject to a perfect, glorious Man, 'The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them', Isa. 11. 6.

Responsibility

After the disobedience in Eden, Adam blamed Eve and seemed indirectly to blame God for his sin, 'The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat', Gen. 3. 12. Yet it was Adam that disobeyed the command of God; he was accountable. Eve acted independently of Adam and Adam denied the responsibility God gave him to lead – this was against God's purpose in the order of creation. Paul explains that 'Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression', 1 Tim. 2. 13, 14.

From the point sin entered the world, it was indicated that there would be conflict between animals and humans, and a curse to the ground bringing sorrow, Gen. 3. 17. But also, there would be a continual ambition on both the part of males and females to dominate each other, Gen. 3. 16 – opposed to the complementary order in God's creation.

Resolution

This will all be reversed in the future when the Lord Jesus comes because, as 1 Corinthians chapter 15 and Ephesians chapter 1 teach, the Lord Jesus will bring everything under His authority and His control. He will then hand that regulated and ordered kingdom back into the hands of His Father, and God will ultimately rule as 'all in all', 1 Cor. 15. 28.

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

3. A whole heart, Amaziah

Our behaviour is being observed from every angle by family, friends, believers, non-believers, and, most important by far, by the Lord Himself. Our conduct therefore must be righteous and worthy of the One who called us. Paul urged others to be imitators of him, and then to be a 'pattern of good works', Titus 2. 7, for others to follow. There is a difference between righteous works and good works. Righteous works are doing what is right. The Pharisees were very good at making sure their works were right. So right in fact that they 'despised others', Luke 18. 9, because their works didn't match up to the exacting standards set by the Pharisees. Righteous works often have a tendency to draw attention and glory to the person doing the works and, in the case of the Pharisees, often masked their less-than-righteous behaviour towards the poor, the less religious, their wives, and parents, etc. Saul of Tarsus was engaged in righteous works in his determination to rid the world of the gospel of Christ. He refused to behave unrighteously, so obtained legal permission to travel to Damascus to round up believers there. What he did was legally right but was far from good, as demonstrated by his vicious, irrational attacks on the church. Should we not practise righteousness? Didn't the Lord say to His disciples, 'I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven', Matt. 5. 20? Yes, He did. He was saying that *some* righteousness is not enough, and righteousness to be seen by others wouldn't suffice. Years ago, I bought a plaque for my study saying, 'Integrity is doing the right thing, even when no one is watching'. Righteous works become good works when done in devotion to the Lord.

In the case of Amaziah, he had a great start. He dealt with the traitors who had assassinated his father. He was not vindictive; he dealt with them under Levitical law, 2 Chr. 25. 4. He then went to battle with the Edomites and defeated them decisively. Even when his error in recruiting soldiers from Israel was pointed out, he reacted well and sent them home. However, his righteous works were done 'not with a loyal heart', v. 2. After his victory over the Edomites his heart was attracted to their gods, whom he set up as his gods to worship them. Then, in disobedience, he went to war with Israel, a war which he lost. He was taken captive by Joash, king of Israel, Jerusalem was compromised, and the precious vessels of the temple were taken away to Samaria. Eventually, his own people conspired against him and put him to death. His lack of full commitment to the Lord caused his own carnal impulses to take control, which skewed his behaviour, eventually into sin. Amaziah had a great start, but his whole heart wasn't in it. As a consequence, he had a humiliating end.

The challenge to the Colossians was, 'whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men', Col. 3. 23. Pause for a moment and think what that meant. Paul was addressing slaves in this verse. People who had no control over their lives at all. They often lived in the most appalling circumstances and had no say whatsoever in their own life. Gentile slave-masters were not subject to the laws of Leviticus, and many treated their slaves with great cruelty. In spite of this, Paul instructs them to do everything heartily. The word 'heartily' is also translated 'soul'. In other words, 'put your heart and soul into everything you do'. However menial, however hum-drum and tedious, half-hearted is not good enough. Paul speaks similarly in Ephesians chapter 6 verse 6 to slaves, that they should be 'as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart'. A heart half-full of Christ will be half-full of something (or someone) else. The result will be a compromise at best, but, at worst, could be failure, as was Amaziah. The Lord doesn't want half of us. SAMUEL M. ZWEMER said, 'Unless Jesus Christ is Lord of all He is not Lord at all!'[1]

When Paul reviewed all that God had done in His sovereignty for our sinful souls in that magnificent explanation of the gospel, the letter to the Romans, his only conclusion was, 'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service', Rom. 12. 1.

'Love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all'.[2]

HENRY VARLEY said, 'The world has yet to see what God can do with a man fully consecrated to him. By God's help, I aim to be that man'.[3]

What about me?
What about you?

[1] S. M. ZWEMMER, *The Solitary Throne: Addresses Given at the Keswick Convention on the Glory and the Uniqueness of the Christian Message*, Pickering & Inglis, 1937, pg. 9.

[2] ISAAC WATTS.

[3] HENRY VARLEY, https://www.christianitytoday.com/1990/01/world-has-yet-to-see/.

Christian basics – Bible study

STUART SCAMMELL, CARDIFF, WALES

Any library is stacked full of books. In fact, the British Library in London contains over 170 million items of literature. Yet the Bible stands alone as a book far different from any other. It is the best-selling book of all time, over five billion have been sold. We read in 2 Timothy chapter 3 verse 16 that it is 'given by inspiration of God, and is profitable'. This means literally that its words are breathed out by God Himself and are good for us. It is an amazing concept that as we open the Bible, we are actually reading God's words to us.

God is our creator and just as the maker of a gadget would write a detailed instruction book, God's word, the Bible, is His instruction book to us. Psalm 119 verse 105 describes God's word as a lamp to light up the path of our lives – without God's word we stumble our way through life.

The word of God is dynamic, it is not just a history book or good advice; it is so much more. The Bible is living and active; it has the power to penetrate our hearts, Heb. 4. 12. As we read the Bible, God speaks to us, giving us challenge and guidance for our lives. In fact, in Jeremiah chapter 23 verse 29, we are informed that when we are living outside of God's instruction, His word can act as a hammer, breaking us in pieces; this shows us how powerful it is and how God uses it to speak directly to us.

In 2 Timothy chapter 3 verse 16, we are told of the great positive effects of the scriptures. They instruct or train us in righteousness. Verse 17 informs us that they equip us for every good work.

Knowing that the Bible is God-breathed should excite us. It is God's word to us, absolutely true and carefully designed for our good. We should want to read it more.

Ephesians chapter 5 verse 26 tells us that this exercise alone does a remarkable thing. Reading God's word purifies us; it uses the phrase, 'washing of water by the word'.

However, since the Bible is God's truth, we will be missing out if we don't attend more closely to it. When we study God's word, we will always benefit from it.

How should we do this?

How we study God's word is personal to everyone, and each of us must find the way that works best for us. But it won't just happen, we need to dedicate ourselves to it and allocate a time and a place to study.

You will need to create an environment where you can concentrate, without distractions. It is essential to have a good clear copy of an accurate Bible translation, a notebook and pen so that you can jot down your thoughts. It is important that you plan for your study and that you carefully choose a book to go through. If you haven't been saved long or are starting to study your Bible seriously for the first time, then it would be good to start with a Gospel. In fact, a wise man once told me that I shouldn't stray far from the Gospels. So, I often return to them to learn more of my wonderful Saviour. It is always good to read and reread the whole book; this gives you a good overview and feel for the book, its places and people.

You have to learn a style of study that suits you. Sometimes it is good to go through a passage verse by verse, and some people love this method, and it enables them to look at the various phrases and understand what is meant by each of the God-breathed verses. You can look out for repeated phrases and key words to aid your understanding.

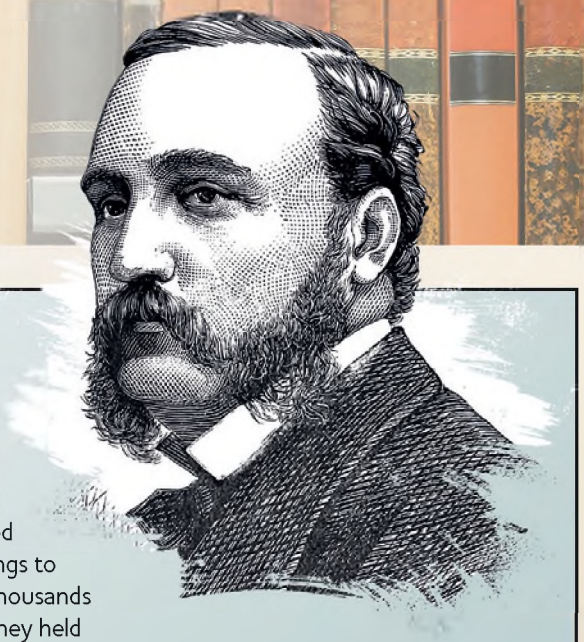
Another method is to study a passage looking for its challenges and encouragements. Some books lend themselves to this better than others. Whichever method we choose, it is always important to start by praying for help and understanding, and that the Holy Spirit will open our eyes to reveal His word to us.

There are many online helps that can aid our study; it is good to take advice from someone we respect that uses these tools. We can also ask about commentaries and concordances. It is good to discuss what we have learnt with someone that we trust too.

It is important that what we learn isn't just head knowledge and that we don't allow it to make us proud or arrogant. It is vital that we allow the scriptures to change us to be more like Christ.

Saints' CVs: Ira D. Sankey

BY JEREMY SINGER, BRIDGE OF WEIR, SCOTLAND



IRA D. SANKEY 1840-1908

From my childhood, I fondly recall *Sacred Songs and Solos*, a slim hardback volume containing an astonishing 1200 hymns. This book is more commonly known as Sankey's, after the name of its compiler. In this article, we will explore the remarkable life of Ira David Sankey.

Born in the USA in 1840, Sankey was brought up as a Methodist. He was born again at the age of 19. Sankey had a fine baritone voice, which he used for Sunday School work and church choirs.

Sankey fought in the American civil war on the side of the Union. During this conflict, General Sherman sent a signal to a besieged group of soldiers in his army. They were surrounded by Confederate enemies, who were intent on capturing their defensive position. Sherman's signal, held aloft on a pine tree trunk, read, 'Hold the fort; I am coming'. Philip Bliss repurposed this famous story as a Christian hymn, which later became one of the most frequently performed songs in Sankey's repertoire.

'Hold the fort, for I am coming,
Jesus signals still;
Wave the answer back to heaven,
By Thy grace we will'.

In 1870, the renowned evangelist, D. L. Moody heard Sankey singing in Indianapolis. Moody immediately invited Sankey to join him, although the invitation sounded more like a demand. In his autobiography, Sankey recalls the encounter:

'Upon telling him that I lived in Pennsylvania, was married, had two children, and was in the government employ, [Moody] said abruptly, "You will have to give that up".

I was amazed, at a loss to understand why the man told me that I would have to give up what I considered a good position. "What for"? I exclaimed.

"To come to Chicago and help me in my work", was the answer.

When I told him that I could not leave my business, he retorted, "You must; I have been looking for you for the last eight years"'.[1]

After much prayer and pondering, Sankey moved to Chicago, where Moody was based. Within a year, the Great Fire of Chicago struck, devastating the city and bringing a pause to Sankey's musical ministry. However, the pair soon reunited and continued their gospel witness.

Starting in 1873, Moody and Sankey made several visits to Britain. Their meetings were attended by royal family members and famous politicians. Ordinary people also crowded to hear the two Americans. Moody and Sankey hired large buildings to preach to thousands at a time. They held meetings in prime locations, including Glasgow's Kibble Palace, London's Royal Opera House and Cambridge's Corn Exchange.

Each meeting followed a similar pattern: Moody preached and Sankey 'sang the gospel'.[2] Sankey's hymns had a powerful spiritual effect. Here is the testimony of one young man, 'It was a few evenings ago . . . when Mr. Sankey was singing in the Free Trade Hall "Jesus of Nazareth Passeth By", that I was made to feel the need of my Saviour . . . and I took him to my heart there and then'.[3]

While many of Sankey's compositions were carefully prepared, sometimes he resorted to spontaneity, making up tunes on the spot. Sankey describes how he read a poem called, *The Ninety and Nine* in a Scottish newspaper, and the next day he was compelled to set it to music during a meeting.

'At this moment I seemed to hear a voice saying: "Sing the hymn you found on the train"! But I thought this impossible, as no music had ever been written for that hymn. Again the impression came strongly upon me that I must sing the beautiful and appropriate words I had found the day before, and placing the little newspaper slip on the organ in front of me, I lifted my heart in prayer, asking God to help me so to sing that the people might hear and understand. Laying my hands upon the organ I struck the key of A flat, and began to sing. Note by note the tune was given'.[4]

'There were ninety and nine that safely lay
In the shelter of the fold
But one was out on the hills away,
Far off from the gates of gold —
Away on the mountains wild and bare,
Away from the tender Shepherd's care'.

On the day Sankey died in 1908, he was heard singing under his breath, 'But oh the joy when I awake within the palace of the King'.

His rich musical legacy lives on. There are plenty of Sankey tunes available to stream on Spotify and YouTube. *The Sacred Songs and Solos* hymn book remains in print and is used widely across the UK.

1 IRA D. SANKEY, *My Life and Sacred Songs*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1906, pg. 6.

2 *Ibid*, pg. 25.

3 E. J. GOODSPEED, *A Full History of the Wonderful Career of Moody and Sankey*, 1832. H. S. Goodspeed, 1876, pg. 54.

4 IRA D. SANKEY, *op. cit.* pg. 249.