

## ACMA Camp: Chance To Go 'Up There For Jesus'

ACMA, The Australian Centre for Mission Aviation based at Coldstream in the Yarra Valley near Melbourne, is a One Stop Shop for those training to be missionary pilots and engineers. Graduates serve God throughout the world with JAARS, MAF, AIM, and Heli Mission.

From Monday to Friday, 2-6 July, ACMA will open its doors to around 30 Year 10-12 students for ACMA CAMP 2012. Guys and girls from all over the country will gather for an action packed week of aviation related activities. There are classes, excursions, speakers, games, practical tasks, and devotions all illustrating the way God uses aviation to reach out to a needy world.

Every camper goes for a flight in a 6-seater Cessna 206. Some opt for a Trial Instructional Flight and take the controls themselves. One camper from the last course wrote: 'The views are spectacular; no wonder God lives in the sky.'

Over the years at ACMA camp many have been strengthened in their walk with God, others have heard the Gospel for the first time. Some have been called to serve God in mission themselves. They've made friends, enjoyed great fellowship, learnt new things, and had



Class of 2011  
after their first flight.

lots of fun. Comments from last year's campers say it all: 'This has to top the list of best things I've ever done.' 'Just being able to learn about aviation with others was what I enjoyed. Overall it was fantastic, I loved it.'

Do you love all things aviation? Are you looking for a challenge? Join us for ACMA Camp 2012. Places are filling up fast. For details visit [www.acma.vic.edu.au](http://www.acma.vic.edu.au) or phone Jennifer on (03) 9739 0612.



## New Global Prayer Initiative For Saudi Arabia

THE nation of Saudi Arabia is the birthplace of Islam and has historically been very closed to evangelism. Now a US-based prayer movement seeks to change all that.

Window International Network is partnering with Kingdom-minded Christians to conduct a global prayer initiative for Saudi Arabia.

WIN has been mobilising prayer for the 10/40 Window since 1993. This campaign represents WIN's first effort to target a single nation. The organisation is a leader in prayer mobilisation and this new focus is expected to have a powerful impact on Saudi Arabia.

*Pray4Saudi: Preparing The Way For The Gospel Of The Kingdom* has been launched today, 15 March.

Churches, ministries, prayer networks, and Christians around the world have begun praying for the Gospel of the Kingdom to transform Saudi Arabia.

Each month, WIN and its partners will release articles and provide topics for prayer. They will provide intercessors with information and Biblically-based prayer points to enable them to pray strategically.

Pray4Saudi will focus on Saudi Arabia and its people until the Kingdom of God advances in this region and the nation is transformed. To learn more about this prayer movement and watch a video there, go to: [www.Pray4Saudi.com](http://www.Pray4Saudi.com)

— Michael Ireland, ASSIST News Service

## How Can YOU Help New Life?

- ◆ Keep us in your prayers.
- ◆ Recommend us to others.
- ◆ Forward *New Life* to your friends.
- ◆ Advertise with us.
- ◆ Send in your news and pix.
- ◆ Make a donation as you feel led.
- ◆ Check out our web-site.

## TO THE POINT ...



# A Grave And Growing Threat

By Franklin Graham

From *Decision Magazine*,

1 March 2012

*The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. – James 5.16 (NIV)*

THE Obama Administration recently set off a firestorm of controversy over an unprecedented expansion of government power. Under a new healthcare mandate, faith-based organisations are required to provide insurance that covers certain services – even if those services violate their deeply held religious beliefs.

This attack on religion comes on the heels of a relentless assault on the biblical definition of marriage. In February, activist judges on the US Court of Appeals in San Francisco overturned California's ban on same-sex marriage. Within days, the Washington state legislature made Washington the seventh state to legalise marriage for gay and lesbian couples.

What's really going on here?

I believe we are facing the greatest threat to religious liberty in our lifetime. These events are just some of the most recent signs of the growing war on people of faith, especially Christians who believe that the Bible is God's Word and that Jesus Christ alone is Lord.

My good friend Chuck Colson had this to say: 'Our founding fathers – even those who weren't Christians – believed, as I do, that without freedom of religion and freedom of conscience, all of our other freedoms aren't worth the paper they are written on. If government can dictate what we may or may not believe, or how we may or may not live out our beliefs, then we are no longer a free people.'

The time may be fast approaching when Christians have to face the very real prospect of civil disobedience – when we will have to choose whether to obey God or government. Whatever lies ahead, we must remember that God's Word supercedes man's law. When the early disciples were forbidden to preach in the Name of Jesus by the Jewish authorities, they boldly said: 'Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard' (Acts 4.19-20). Even after they were imprisoned, beaten and threatened, they refused to obey the edict and declared, 'We must obey God rather than men!' (Acts 5.29)

Pray for our country. Pray for our leaders. Pray for godly men and women in places of authority who will not be afraid to boldly stand for the truth of Scripture. The need is urgent, the hour is late, but 'the prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective' (James 5.16). ©2012 BGEA.

*(Our thanks to BGEA for permission to reprint this article. Decision, Magazine of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, is now available in electronic form as well as print. To subscribe, go to: [www.billygraham.org/Magazine](http://www.billygraham.org/Magazine) – Ed)*

### GET MORE OUT OF NEW LIFE

Learn more about a particular article, advertisement, contributor or advertiser!

NEW LIFE comes to you as a .PDF file, with many stories and advertisements containing links to other websites and email addresses which are printed in **bold italic** type.

You only have to position your cursor over the link to highlight it, eg: [editor@nlife.com.au](mailto:editor@nlife.com.au) ; [www.nlife.com.au](http://www.nlife.com.au) then click and you will be taken directly to that site.

When you are finished there, click on the back button to return to NEW LIFE.

## **NORTHERN NIGERIA: Boko Haram Plot To 'End The Christian Presence'**

EVIDENCE indicates Boko Haram, the Nigerian al-Qaeda-linked terrorist group, has transformed numerous suburban homes across the north of Nigeria into bomb-making factories. Several militants have been killed recently in Maiduguri, Damaturu and Kaduna when bombs exploded accidentally. Boko Haram's targets include schools, police stations, banks, government buildings and churches.

Apart from these strategic bombings, the militants also roam the streets killing people randomly. Bauchi State Police Commissioner Aduba Ikechukwu says these militants are well armed, carrying sophisticated weapons including machine guns, and improvised explosive devices. Boko Haram's aim is to make Nigeria ungovernable so they might extract concessions towards the Islamisation of Nigeria. Al-Qaeda supports Boko Haram as a way of furthering its own goal of establishing a sanctuary and base of operations in Northern Nigeria from where it can launch jihad into West Africa.

On Sunday 4 March Egypt-based news website Bikya Masr spoke by phone to a spokesman from Boko Haram who told them that Boko Haram is preparing to launch a 'war' against Christians. He said the campaign, which will involve numerous co-ordinated attacks, is part of a 'plan to eradicate Christians from certain parts of the country'. He also boasted that the government 'cannot be prepared for what is to come'. Such a threat indicates that Boko Haram may be preparing to launch a wave of co-ordinated suicide bombings targeting Christians. The Boko Haram spokesman told Mikya Masr, 'We will create so much effort to end the Christian presence in our push to have a proper Islamic state that the Christians won't be able to stay.'

On Tuesday 6 March the same Boko Haram spokesman told Bikya Masr that the group also plans to 'strike fear into the Christians of the power of Islam by kidnapping their women'. According to the spokesman, the kidnapped Christian women will not be harmed, 'but we [Boko Haram] will demand as ransom that the families leave our Islamic areas'.

**Please Pray Specifically That God Will:**

- protect and deliver His threatened children. 'For He will hide me in His shelter in the day of trouble ... He will lift me high upon a rock.' (Psalm 27.5 ESV)
- humble and frustrate those who plot against His Church. 'Give to them according to their work and according to the evil of their deeds ... render them their due reward.' (Psalm 28.4 ESV)
- redeem these dark days of suffering, to bring awakening to many Muslims and revival to the Church. For only then – after they come to the LORD – 'they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks ...' (from Isaiah 2.2-4 ESV).

## **Watching Sudan**

THE Sudan Revolutionary Front is an alliance of rebel groups from Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile. On 26 February the SRF defeated Sudan Armed Forces troops at the strategic garrison town of Jau near the South Sudan border.

The victory has theoretically opened the Kauda Valley for the Nuba refugees fleeing from genocide. The SRF is appealing for a no-fly zone to be established so that much-needed humanitarian aid can be delivered. On Saturday 3 March Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir declared that the SAF would 'purge South Kordofan' of 'traitors'. To that end he ordered the reopening of all Popular Defence Forces camps across the nation. [The PDF are Arab-Islamic paramilitaries or 'mujahideen'.] He arrogantly predicted that SAF troops would soon perform thanksgiving prayers in the town of Kauda. On 6 March the pro-Khartoum *Sudan Vision* reported that up to 80,000 paramilitary troops are ready to die in 'defence of the country and its Islamic belief'. Persevere in prayer for our imperilled brothers and sisters fleeing from genocide in Sudan. Psalm 10.16-18.

- For more information, updates and helpful links see Elizabeth Kendal's blog 'Religious Liberty Monitoring' <<http://elizabethkendal.blogspot.com>>

– Elizabeth Kendal, for the Australian Evangelical Alliance Religious Liberty Commission

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## **Australian Baptists Condemn Iran Over Death Sentence**

AUSTRALIAN Baptist Ministries has condemned a decision by the Iranian Government to impose a death sentence on an Iranian pastor convicted of apostasy and attempting to evangelise Muslims. The National Chair of Australian Baptist Ministries, the Revd Dr John Beasy, said he was dismayed at reports that an execution order had been issued for Pastor Youcef Nadarkhani and that the execution could take place at any time.

'We must not take our religious freedom for granted, either here in Australia or in other parts of the world. Wherever the fundamental human rights to freedom of religion and freedom of conscience are denied, either by the state or by groups or individuals, Baptists have a responsibility to speak for justice and take appropriate action to defend these basic rights,' Dr Beasy said.

Dr Beasy called on the Australian Government to continue to express its opposition to the execution order through the normal diplomatic channels. He urged all Australian Baptists to pray for Pastor Nadarkhani, and to take responsible action to demand that the Iranian Government reverse the execution order and order his immediate release. Prior to his imprisonment in October 2009, Pastor Nadarkhani was pastor of a 400-member Christian congregation and a network of Christian house churches in the city of Rasht in northwestern Iran.

Australian Baptist Ministries, formerly the Baptist Union of Australia, is the national voice of approximately one thousand Baptist churches in all Australian states and territories.

## **Mission Aviation Fellowship Celebrates 25 Years In Haiti**

MISSION Aviation Fellowship began operating in Haiti in 1986, serving missions and relief agencies in remote areas of the country. Poor infrastructure has plagued Haiti's development and causes non-profit organisations serving there to seek alternative transportation. A trip that might take eight hours or longer over rough, unsafe roads can be reduced to 25 minutes aboard an MAF plane.

Following the massive earthquake that hit Haiti in January 2010, MAF's knowledge of the country and expertise in transportation, communication, and disaster response positioned the organisation to effectively serve the scores of humanitarian and medical aid groups that descended upon Port-au-Prince. It is that longevity within Haiti that has endeared MAF to local church leaders, medical groups and government officials. Over the past two years, MAF has played a critical role in efforts to halt the spread of cholera in Haiti, assisting Samaritan's Purse, Operation Blessing, Medical Teams International, and other groups by transporting medical teams, equipment, and supplies.

MAF ([www.maf.org](http://www.maf.org)) is a family of organisations with a singular mission: to share the Gospel through aviation and technology so that isolated people may be physically and spiritually transformed. Serving in 32 countries with a fleet of 142 planes, MAF supports the efforts of some 1,500 Christian and relief organisations.

– Michael Ireland, ASSIST News Service



### **Vacant Position: Lecturer In Biblical Studies (Old Testament) Presbyterian Theological Centre – Sydney**

After thirty three years of faithful service, the Reverend Doctor John Davies has indicated his intention to retire at the end of 2012.

The Presbyterian Theological Centre, Sydney, invites applications from suitably qualified persons to be appointed to its full-time lecturing staff.

The person appointed will lecture and supervise research in the areas of Biblical Studies, with an emphasis on Old Testament, and such other duties from time to time as the Principal may determine.

Applicants should hold (or be in the final stages of) a research Master's degree or higher in Old Testament.

Preference may be given to candidates who have experience in pastoral ministry, in teaching and training people for ministry, and who have a history of publications.

The position is for the term of six years (renewable), commencing 1 January 2013.

Further details can be found on the PTC website: [www.ptcsydney.org](http://www.ptcsydney.org)

**Applications (by 13 April 2012) should be sent to:**

The Principal, The Rev Dr Ian Smith, Presbyterian Theological Centre,  
77 Shaftesbury Road Burwood NSW 2134 Australia. Email: [ismith@ptcsydney.org](mailto:ismith@ptcsydney.org)

## TIME TO CELEBRATE ...

# SYDNEY *easter* PARADE

ON Easter Sunday, thousands will fill the streets of Sydney CBD with music, colour, dancing and celebration. The atmosphere of celebration will be pulsating in the air, smiles will be on the faces of young and old as they enjoy the colourful flags, creative costumes, giant inflatables and the sound of celebration.

People from different ethnic heritages will take part in this joyous occasion to celebrate the resurrection of Christ. Some will dress up in their traditional costumes and some will feature different music and instruments from their country of origin. But together, they will celebrate Easter Sunday as Australian Christians. Hundreds and even thousands of spectators will line streets and also enjoy the celebration in Hyde Park.

The event will start in Hyde Park with an Easter

Sunday Celebration at 2pm. Then the parade itself will start at about 3pm. The best place to watch the parade would be at the corner of George and Park Streets.

This is a free family event to celebrate Easter Sunday together with thousands of other Sydneysiders. To participate in the parade, a registration form can be downloaded, filled in and sent back to the organisers at the latest by 30 March.

The Easter Sunday March has been running for some 20 years under the banner of *Awakening* organised by Fusion Australia, a non profit organisation helping young people and disadvantaged families.

For further details go to their website:

[www.sydneyeasterparade.com.au](http://www.sydneyeasterparade.com.au) or Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/SydneyEasterParade](http://www.facebook.com/SydneyEasterParade)

## Ernie Haase & Signature Sound Tour

ERNIE Haase & Signature Sound, America's foremost gospel quartet, are returning DownUnder for a much anticipated tour during March and April. Ernie Haase and Signature Sound have performed with Gaither Vocal Band and combine 21st Century ideas with the timeless quality of great quartets from the 1950s. Their unconventional approach to communicating the Good News with groundbreaking originality has blazed a trail that will go down in gospel music history.

### Tour Details:

Thurs 29 Mar: Bruce Mason Centre, Auckland.

Sat 31 Mar: Dallas Brooks Centre, Melbourne.

Sun 1 Apr: Her Majesty's Theatre, Adelaide.

Tue 3 Apr: The Great Hall, University Of Newcastle.

Wed 4 Apr: Hillsong Convention Centre (with MercyMe and Michael W. Smith), Sydney.

Bookings through Ticketmaster.



### The Highbury Centre, London, UK

Christian guesthouse on quiet private road with transport nearby. Discount for f/t Christian workers. Email: [enquiries@thehighburycentre.org](mailto:enquiries@thehighburycentre.org) Website: [www.thehighburycentre.org](http://www.thehighburycentre.org)



**WHO CAN YOU FORWARD NEW LIFE TO?**

**HERE, THERE AND EVERYWHERE ...**



## World Reformed Fellowship Board Of Directors To Meet In Australia 24-26 April

THE 30-member Board of World Reformed Fellowship will be hosted by the Presbyterian Church of Australia and the contact person for this event will be Dr John Wilson.

The WRF was founded in 2000 when two earlier evangelical Reformed ecumenical groups, one focused on Latin America and the other focused on Asia, merged and invited others from around the world to join with them in creating a global witness to and service of the historic Reformed Faith. As of 25 May, the WRF has 55 denominational members (including the Presbyterian Church of Australia), 69 congregational members, 104 organisational members (including the Presbyterian Theological Centre of Sydney), and 534 individual members (including Archbishop Peter Jensen and Bishop Glenn Davies, both of the Sydney Diocese of the Anglican Communion, Rev Professor Allan Harman and Rev Bob Thomas, Editor of *New Life*).

The full membership list may be seen at <http://www.wrfnet.org/web/guest/aboutwrf/membershiplist>

Membership in the WRF is free but candidates for membership must indicate their commitment to one of the historic Reformed confessions and to the WRF Statement on Scripture – 'The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are without error in all that they affirm.'

In 2010, the WRF General Assembly, meeting in Edinburgh, Scotland, gave initial approval to a *Statement Of Faith* on which the WRF had been working since its founding. The point of that statement is three-fold: 1) to mark out clearly those areas of agreement which evangelical and Reformed Baptists, Presbyterians, Anglicans and others hold in common; 2) to bring the wisdom of Christ's global church to bear on issues of faith and life, and 3) to address issues which simply were not 'on the table' in the 16th and 17th Centuries, when most of the historic Reformed confessions were written. Everyone working and/or voting on the *Statement Of Faith* had, prior to that work or vote, indicated agreement with one of the historic Reformed confessions and with the WRF statement on Scripture quoted above.

The full text of the *Statement of Faith* is available at [http://www.wrfnet.org/c/journal\\_articles/view\\_article\\_content?groupid=1&articleId=401&version=1.0&p\\_l\\_id=PUB.1.27](http://www.wrfnet.org/c/journal_articles/view_article_content?groupid=1&articleId=401&version=1.0&p_l_id=PUB.1.27)

The present major effort of the WRF seeks to bring the wisdom of our many Muslim Background Christian members to bear on issues related to ministry to Muslims around the world. Details of this project and of how members of Christ's evangelical and Reformed global church can assist in this work are provided through a link on the home page of the WRF website: <http://www.wrfnet.org/web/guest/home>

Anyone desiring further information about the WRF is encouraged to write the International Director, Dr Samuel Logan, at [samueltlogan@aol.com](mailto:samueltlogan@aol.com)



Sam Logan

Anyone interested in the possibility of inviting a WRF Board member to speak either before or after the WRF Board meeting in April is encouraged to write to the Associate International Director, Dr P.J. Buys, at [flip@mukhanyo.co.za](mailto:flip@mukhanyo.co.za)

## Fusion To Hold 'Easter In The City' Again

Fusion's *Easter In The City* program has now been running for seven years in Martin Place, Sydney, and for three years at Parramatta. This year 11 schools will be performing over three days from 2-4 April, sharing the Easter story through dance, drama and song to the lunch-timers and tourists.

At Martin Place there will be free refreshments and festival activities will be available. Come, bring your lunch and enjoy this Easter entertainment. Announcers from Sydney Christian Radio Station Hope 103.2 FM will be acting as MC's.

The venues are Martin Place Amphitheatre and Parramatta Mall.

Time: 11.30am-2pm

For further information please phone Brigitte Rakow on (02) 9789 4888, mobile 0417 354 528, or email: [sydney@fusion.org.au](mailto:sydney@fusion.org.au)



## **Banner Of Truth Conference Brings Blessing**

THE 2012 Banner of Truth Conference at Collaroy, on Sydney's Northern Beaches, from 21-24 February brought together some 100 men involved in ministry, some accompanied by their wives. Rev Iain Murray, General Editor Emeritus of the Banner Of Truth, led the conference and delivered two addresses on *Why Christ Will Build The Church* and *Why The Future Is Certain*. He writes:

The same day that I heard a Sudanese pastor and a Chinese missionary speak of their countries I read the text, 'Many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them' (Matthew 13.17). Even our little conference in New South Wales was representative of the blessing now come to the world – men and women of different nationalities, united in Christ and all placed by Him in their various places. Most came from Australia, three pastors from New Zealand, and a few from further afield. At the end of this year's three days together, comments such as 'This was the best ever,' were to be heard, and we were indeed greatly encouraged.

### **'Carefulness And Confidence'**

Chairing the opening session, Allan Blanch suggested that the subjects to be taken up in the main addresses might be summarised under the heading *Carefulness and Confidence*. The former had to do with ourselves and the times in which we are living; the latter with what we have in the Word of God.

The first address in which Peter Barnes spoke on *Prayer For More Fruit*' (Philippians 1.9-11) set the tone for all that was to follow. David Jones took the three evening sessions from the letter of Jude, under the headings, *Knowing The Times, Under-*

*standing Ourselves, and Safe Ministry*. Two main addresses were given by Bruce Winter, whose ministry, largely among students, has been in Singapore, Cambridge and Brisbane. His was a new voice in Banner conferences and one that was greatly valued. Concentrating on 1 Corinthians 1 and 2, he demonstrated how Paul's principles of teaching were in marked contrast with the popular methods admired in the Greek and Roman world, and how, therefore, he was in direct collision with the contemporary scene of his day. The relevance of this to dangers now facing evangelicalism was as disturbing as it was compelling. Other main sessions were taken by Lee-On Tan (*China, Today And Tomorrow*) and Todd Stanton (*The Happy Pastor*). All these addresses are available on one MP3 for \$A15 from [ptcmedia@presbyteriancollege.org](mailto:ptcmedia@presbyteriancollege.org)

In addition to the main addresses, there were much-valued short contributions of an informative nature from several speakers. Major Howard Davies of the Salvation Army told us how the splendid Collaroy Conference Centre came into being and how, as a Salvation Army officer, Banner of Truth books and magazines – beginning with a Lloyd-Jones title in 1984 – brought him to Reformed convictions.

Others who took five minute slots were Stephen Bignall, on the Aboriginal Inland Mission; Rob Flinders, worker with the Seamen's Christian Friend Society; Noel Weeks on MERF; Tut Wan Yoa on the church in the Sudan; and Andre Holtslag, a pastor in earthquake-stricken Christchurch, New Zealand.

Small and struggling this conference might have been, but it was a great blessing to those who attended.

### **Launch Of The New Christian Political Party**

#### **AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIANS (formerly Christian Democratic Party):**

**MONASH RELIGIOUS CENTRE, Building 9, Monash University, Clayton Campus**  
(entrance from Wellington Road)

**Friday 16 March at 7.30 pm, preceded by a piano recital.**

**Join us for an evening of new beginnings, fresh vision & positive hope for Australia's future.**

**Keynote Speaker: DAVID HODGSON, CEO of the Paladin Corporation**

**Subject: *The Need For Christians To Be Involved In Public Life.***

**Also: Support the AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIANS' candidate for the Niddrie by-election,**

**FRANK PAPAFOIYOU. Election on Saturday 24 March 2012.**

For further enquiries go to: [welcome@australianchristians.com.au](mailto:welcome@australianchristians.com.au) **Phone: 1300 788 502**

(Authorised by Spero Katos, 6 Sycamore Street, Caulfield 3162)

## FROM ALL QUARTERS ...

### New President Of FEBC US

THE Far East Broadcasting Company has announced the appointment of Edward W. Cannon as President of FEBC US. Ed Cannon's unique professional career includes leadership experience in both large ministry settings and corporate settings. Most recently, he served as Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. During his 8½ years at Moody, Mr. Cannon had oversight of broadcasting, publishing, the legal department, fundraising and the operations of the Institute.

Mr Cannon said: 'I've had a passion my whole life to be part of the Great Commission, and especially now, to reach those who have never heard the Gospel before. That's why I'm so excited to be a part of FEBC which is making such a powerful impact on the world for Christ. We're reaching nearly half the population of the globe with the Good News of Jesus Christ.'

FEBC proclaims the Gospel through media in 50 countries, 130 languages reaching three billion people. Their website is: [www.febc.org](http://www.febc.org)



### Taking The Good Fight Up To The Atheists

WITH the Global Atheist Convention to be held in Melbourne in April, the City Bible Forum is heading a coalition of Christian organisations who all believe that the Global Atheist Convention presents a fantastic opportunity to engage with the big questions of life and faith. CBF is planning to run a week-long mission in Melbourne the week after the convention (16-22 April), called *Reason For Faith Festival*. Preparations for the week are well advanced and CBF will unveil their plans at a launch and training morning at Ridley, 170 The Avenue, Parkville on Saturday next, 17 March, 9am-1pm.

Robert Martin, Director of City Bible Forum, says: 'This will be a great morning to hear more about what's planned, outline how people can be involved and be involved in a number of training sessions that will help equip people to respond well to the questions and challenges of the New Atheism. This promises to be a very exciting opportunity to engage Melbourne with the bigger questions of life.'

Call Robert Martin on 0412 632 435 or email him on: [robert.martin@citybibleforum.org](mailto:robert.martin@citybibleforum.org) for further details.

## Ramon A Williams – Worldwide Photos –

### WANT TO SEE MORE?

'New Life' can only publish a small selection of photos, but you can see more of those attributed to Worldwide Photos by going to: [http://community.webshots.com/user/ramon\\_williams](http://community.webshots.com/user/ramon_williams)

e-mail: [rlgmedia@ozemail.com.au](mailto:rlgmedia@ozemail.com.au)

### Decision Reached On Christchurch Cathedral

THE Bishop of Christchurch, Rt Rev Victoria Mathews, has announced that the Cathedral, severely damaged by the Christchurch earthquake, will be carefully deconstructed down to a level of 2-3 metres in order to meet safety requirements and allow the safe retrieval of taonga and heritage items, which can then be stored and protected until decisions about a new Cathedral are made.

'The Cathedral will be deconstructed with the utmost care and respect while at the same time protecting the treasures within its walls,' Bishop Mathews said. 'There will be no bulldozers or wrecking balls on the job.'

'We acknowledge the high level of community interest and sense of ownership as the Cathedral was both an iconic building and a place of regular worship by many.'

### The CLIFFORD WILSON books listed below are now available at KOORONG BOOK SHOPS Australia wide:

*Crash Go The Skulls ... And The Hoaxes*  
*Genesis – That Amazing Book Of Beginnings*  
*Jesus In Old Testament Shadows*  
*And New Testament Light*  
*Jesus The Master Counsellor*  
*Jesus The Master Teacher*  
*Meeting Jesus Of Nazareth*  
*New Light On The Gospels*  
*The Paluxy River Dinosaur Controversy*  
*The Stones Still Shout*  
*The Way God Works In Nature*

Anyone wanting a copy of the revised bestseller *Crash Go The Chariots* ('76) may write, with \$5, to:

**Pacific Christian Ministries,**  
**PO Box 311, Lilydale, VIC 3140.**

Please also supply your name and mailing address.

## **NSW Council Of Churches Demands: No More Casinos For Sydney**

THE President of the NSW Council of Churches, Rev Dr Ross Clifford AM, has commended NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell on his measured approach to pressure for a second casino licence for Sydney, and reiterated a call for an inquiry into the social implications of gambling in NSW.

'The O'Farrell Government should follow due process and maintain its commitment to a one casino policy for Sydney. It is not in the public interest for a second casino to be developed on the Barangaroo site, and allowing multiple campuses of Star Casino would undermine the intent of the one casino policy. The NSW Council of Churches has called for a wide-ranging state inquiry to examine the social impact of poker machines, telephone betting and online betting. NSW has around 50% of the nation's poker machines, and more problem gamblers than any other state. NSW also has a stable government, strong political voices representing healthy and informed discussion, and the numbers needed to achieve historic gambling re-

form,' Dr Clifford said.

'Suggestions of a second casino for Sydney, together with the state of debate on national poker machine reform, indicate a pressing need to take action to address gambling-related issues,' he added.

The NSW Council of Churches supports mandatory pre-commitment technology and a \$1 maximum bet limit for poker machines. The Salvation Army (Eastern Territory), a member of the Council, supports these reforms conditional upon pilot testing of mandatory pre-commitment to ensure the most effective outcome is achieved.

The NSW Council of Churches was founded in 1924 and represents the Anglican Diocese of Sydney, the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT, the Christian Reformed Churches of Australia, the Churches of Christ in NSW, the Fellowship of Congregational Churches (NSW), the Presbyterian Church of Australia (NSW), and The Salvation Army (Eastern Territory).

## **Creative Ways Used To Reduce Abortion Rate**

BILL Muehlenberg reports on his *Culture Watch* blog < <http://www.billmuehlenberg.com> > of two effective ways in which pro-lifers are saving babies:

In the US a number of states have passed ultrasound laws compelling women seeking an abortion to first look at an ultrasound of the baby in their own womb.

The purpose of the bill is information, giving women the ability to have a firsthand look at the fetal image of their baby before making a fateful decision. Advocates for the statute say the ultrasound image gives a woman the 'right to know' about her unborn child's development.

A very similar sort of action which is proving to be really effective is a small pro-life group in Texas led by 23-year-old David Pomerantz. He brings the ultrasound to where the action is: just outside an abortion clinic. His van has all that is needed for women to see what they are really aborting.

Approaching women outside the clinic, offering free help, with no mention of a pro-life ideology, has yielded a staggering success rate. By their estimate, about 70% of women who got on the bus for a sonogram decided not to abort. In one day, they saw nine women decide on life for their children.

**Have YOU visited  
our website?  
Just GOOGLE New Life**

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listed below are now available at  
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*Jesus In Old Testament Shadows*  
*And New Testament Light*  
*Jesus The Master Counsellor*  
*Jesus The Master Teacher*  
*Meeting Jesus Of Nazareth*  
*New Light On The Gospels*  
*The Paluxy River Dinosaur Controversy*  
*The Stones Still Shout*  
*The Way God Works In Nature*

Anyone wanting a copy of the revised bestseller *Crash Go The Chariots* ('76) may write, with \$5, to:

**Pacific Christian Ministries,  
PO Box 311, Lilydale, VIC 3140.**

Please also supply your name and mailing address.

## Salvos Respond To Floods Across Australia

THE Salvation Army's Emergency Services are continuing to respond to the needs of flood affected communities with teams working across Victoria and New South Wales. In addition to providing meals, emergency bedding and supplies, The Salvation Army has released funds to support individuals and families affected.

Salvation Army Emergency Services staff and volunteers in New South Wales are currently in full swing; operating evacuation centres in Hawkesbury, Cowra, Cooma, Goulburn, Queanbeyan and Bega with thousands of people assisted.

In Victoria, The Salvation Army centre in Wangaratta is currently on stand-by to provide whatever assistance may be required. In the shires of Shepparton, Rochester, Mildura, Castlemaine and Echuca, teams continue to be prepared to respond to the needs of the affected communities.

### Trellis And Vine Two-Day Workshops

COLIN Marshall from Vinegrowers is running a series of two day workshops designed to help church leadership teams develop fresh thinking and planning for equipping disciples of Jesus to be disciplemakers (Matthew 28.18-20).

The workshops will be held in the following cities and dates: Perth (8-9 and 11,12 May); Narwee, Sydney (21,22 May); Rockhampton (14,15 June); Adelaide (2,3 August); Christchurch NZ (20,21 August); Tamworth (14,15 September). For more information, see [www.vinegrowers.com/workshops](http://www.vinegrowers.com/workshops)

### Brazil Tops The Missionary Sending List

JERRY Beavan, who came to Australia in 1959 as an associate evangelist with Billy Graham, now 93 years old and still editing a conservative Christian newsletter, *Evangelical Viewpoint*, reports that there has been a major change in world foreign missionary programs. The Centre for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell Seminary reports that Brazil now sends the second largest number of missionaries to the rest of the world – 34,000 in 2010, second only to the 127,000 sent by the United States. And even though the US sends the most missionaries, it also receives the most – 32,400 foreign missionaries arrived there in 2010.

### The Seed Company Embarks On 800th Bible Translation Project

THE Seed Company has crossed a milestone: the beginning of its 800th Bible translation project. Pat Andrews with The Seed Company says, 'The 800th language is actually a cluster of languages in Aus-

'Our teams are ready to respond to the floods in Victoria, working closely with local authorities, and will continue to be on hand as the situation develops,' said Major Neil Venables, Communications and Fundraising Secretary for The Salvation Army. 'We expect in the coming days, as flood waters recede, people will need emotional, practical and financial support as they come to terms with the damage left behind. Our local response teams will be part of the relief effort as well as being part of the longer term recovery response,' he added.

Donations made to the Red Shield Appeal ensure that The Salvation Army can respond to emergencies and disasters from small scale responses through to large scale relief and recovery operations. To help support communities affected by flood and other disasters please donate by calling 13 72 58 or visit [www.salvationarmy.org.au](http://www.salvationarmy.org.au)

tralia. It's called the Arnhem Land Aboriginal Partnership Cluster.' And what is even more exciting than the hundreds this project will reach for the Gospel? The pace of getting the Word translated is increasing daily. 'Just six months ago, we entered into our 700th language. And six months later, we're in number 800. So the pace of our ability to partner and to help people do Bible translation is accelerating and growing, which is pretty exciting.' The faster the better: there are still 2,000 languages worldwide that don't have the written Scriptures. 'But of the 2,000 languages, about 1,500 languages have 10,000 speakers or less.' Some even have as few as 100 speakers. But God's Word is getting out. 'Dollar Dinner' Will Support The Oppressed GYMEA Baptist Church, which supports an advocacy group *Catalyst – United for Justice*, is holding a *World Changers Dollar Dinner* on Saturday, 31 March at the church in Tea Gardens Avenue, Kirrawee.

The main meal at the dinner will cost just \$1 to produce to help those attending to relate to the more than one billion people in the world who live on a dollar a day or less.

Scott Higgins, from Baptist World Aid, will be the speaker, on the subject: *Is Fair Trade, Fair Trade?*

Catalyst speaks up for the rights of the vulnerable and oppressed. It recognises that those with power, such as governments, businesses, and the social mainstream should be called to use their power not simply to avoid harm, but to actively do good. It wants the Government to lift the Australian aid budget to 0.7% of national income by 2015.

## **Concern Over Arrest Of Lawyers Protesting Against Constitutional Delays In Nepal**

A UK-BASED Christian human rights group is expressing concern over reports that police arrested 166 lawyers in Kathmandu, Nepal, on 24 February for participating in a protest demanding that the peace process and constitution be completed by the end of May deadline after four previous deadline extensions.

Christian Solidarity Worldwide [www.csw.org.uk](http://www.csw.org.uk) says an estimated 800 lawyers belonging to the Nepal Bar Association were involved in the protest.

CSW reports that following speeches at the NBA premises, they attempted to walk to Ratnapark, but were prevented by police from walking through the prohibited area around the Supreme Court.

'Struggles ensued, and the lawyers sat down on the road, shouting slogans against police intervention. Later police arrested 166 lawyers, who were held in custody until 6.30pm, when they were released,' CSW told ANS in an e-mail.

CSW's Advocacy Director Andrew Johnston said, 'There is a clear need for the peace process to be

brought to a close and for Nepal to define its new identity as a secular republic. By confronting and arresting lawyers who were exercising their democratic right to protest, the police simply risk compounding widespread public frustration about the delays in the process.

There are concerns that the government of Nepal is refusing to recognise the urgency of constitutional priorities within the peace process, or recognise legitimate democratic pressure to meet urgent deadlines. CSW continues to urge Constituent Assembly members to do their utmost to meet the new deadline, and to ensure that the new constitution protects human rights in a manner consistent with the international human rights framework, including full guarantees for freedom of religion or belief.'

Christian Solidarity Worldwide is a Christian organisation working for religious freedom through advocacy and human rights in the pursuit of justice.

– Michael Ireland, ASSIST News Service

### **Church In Tehran Forced To Quit Persian Language Services**

THE Armenian Anglican Church in Tehran has been ordered to quit its Friday Persian language service. According to a story by the Farsi Christian News Network, the church in Nader Shah Avenue is one of the few established churches in Iran which was still allowed to have Persian language services for Persian speaking Christians.

FCNN said officers of the Islamic Court informed church officials that if they ignore the order and continue to hold services on Friday, a sacred day for Muslims, their church building will be bombed 'as happens in Iraq every day.'

FCNN said it appears that Islamic authorities believed the new restriction would hold back the rapid spread of Christianity. – Jeremy Reynolds, ASSIST

### **Minorities Fear Persecution In A Post-Assad Syria**

'WHILE much of the rest of the world is waiting for the Assad regime in Syria to crumble, some Syrians, while not supporting the brutal dictatorship, still dread the prospect of a rapid disintegration of the Syrian state power. One such group is Assyrian Christians, who make up around 5% of the Syrian population. "There is great concern and fear among the Assyrians. Many think they will have to leave the country as soon as possible should the regime

suddenly fall as a result of the uprising," says Rima Haro, a political scientist and Middle East expert, herself of Assyrian origin, living in Sweden.' So wrote Aron Lamm in the *Epoch Times* ([www.theepochtimes.com](http://www.theepochtimes.com)).

Lamm said that the Assyrians are an ethnic group, traditionally spread out over Syria, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, and Turkey, but with a large diaspora in other parts of the world. As Christians in the Muslim-dominated Middle East, they have faced rounds of persecution throughout history, and just like the Kurds, they have not had a nation-state as a homeland. – Dan Wooding, Founder of ASSIST Ministries.

*File photo of Iraqi Assyrians in Damascus, Syria, wearing traditional dress to celebrate the New Year. (Photo: Louai Beshara/AFP/Getty Images)*



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## Radio Ministry Invites Arab World To A 'Journey Of Hope'

- HCJB Global Campaign Draws Attention To North Africa, Middle East

CHRISTIANS are scarce in the Middle East and North Africa. Less than 1% of the region's 355 million people are believers, and an estimated 95% of people in there will never meet a Christian.

Reports of persecution against Christians and churches, sometimes violent, have multiplied over the past year.

Few individuals have access to the Bible or Christian literature, but those who seek hope and answers for life are discovering the message of Jesus from fellow travelers through HCJB Global's broad-

### Bible Translation Centre Moves Forward Despite Boko Haram

BOKO Haram's efforts to rid Nigeria of Christians have also raised concerns in neighbouring Cameroon. Muslim leaders fear a rise in extremism could seep into their country.

At the same time, Wycliffe Associates is planning to build a new Bible Translation Centre in the same area. President Bruce Smith says, 'There is a lot of concern about what might happen, but so far, it's been peaceful. We're obviously concerned that the translations would be able to move forward without interruption. We'd certainly request people to pray.'

A new Bible translation training centre would support more than 40 language projects that are underway. It's a strategic area for the Gospel. 'It's a place where there are so many different languages – about 300 in Nigeria and about another 100 in Cameroon – that are still without one verse of Scripture. We are convinced that the best solution for the instability and the concerns that have arisen there is that God's Word go forward in a language they can understand.'

casts.

Now, more than a year after 'Arab Spring' upheavals began to oust governments in North Africa and shake up much of the Middle East, another wave of hope continues to sweep across the region.

HCJB Global reaches more than 1.5 million listeners each week in North Africa and the Middle East through satellite, shortwave and FM radio, as well as the Internet.

The pioneering missionary radio broadcaster HCJB Global launched its *Journey of Hope* campaign on 1 March, showcasing a media

outreach effort that offers a better future – and eternal destiny – for those still living amid social, political and cultural uncertainty.

HCJB Global has served the region for two decades, but unveiled its renewed effort this month at the recent National Religious Broadcasters convention in Nashville.

Arabic-language programming is broadcast daily via satellite and shortwave radio, as well as some FM frequencies, and is streamed over the Internet.

A smartphone app also provides access to broadcasts, so the voices of the programmers can literally 'travel alongside listeners,' as Jesus accompanied His disciples on the road to Emmaus after His resurrection. The organisation adopted the Emmaus story from Luke 24.13-35 as *Journey Of Hope's* theme.

'The risen Jesus joined the travelers along that lonely road and helped them understand events that left them confused and uncertain,' said Wayne Pederson, HCJB Global President. '*Journey Of Hope* broadcasters walk with Arabic speakers who yearn to understand who Jesus is.'

All *Journey Of Hope* program producers are trained by HCJB Global and are native to the locations they serve. They create programming across North Africa and the Middle East secretly due to government and social hostility toward Christians and Christianity.

Being on the ground at the time 'Arab Spring' got under way last year helped them engage listeners in the region, particularly through social networks, such as Facebook. Some *Journey Of Hope's* broadcasters stayed online for as long as 10 hours straight in what HCJB Global's regional director, Lobito (pseudonym), called a 'pre-evangelistic outreach' with their audience.

'We train our loyal partners to produce radio programs and give them the tools they need – portable stations, digital mixing and editing software,' said Lobito. 'One producer was recently forced out of his own country to live secretly in another, but he continued to produce Christian radio programming. This producer has since fled again. HCJB Global is still trying to find him.'

(Continued on p.13)



## GOOD NEWS FROM ABROAD ...

### A 'Journey Of Hope' (continued from p.12)

Programming is tailored to specific groups – young families, men and women – as well as those who want to learn English. Many find a connection with the producers through the radio programs, which reach them in a way that the printed word can't.

A recent independent media organisation's survey found more than 1.5 million people listen to HCJB Global's broadcasts in the region each week.

Listeners like 'Amani' (pseudonym) spur the ministry's renewed *Journey Of Hope* passion to continue their radio outreach in North Africa and the Middle East. He writes:

'My friend Rashid (pseudonym) told me about your satellite radio station, and I began to listen. The music and programs about Jesus have made an important impact on my life and now I listen to it regularly through my computer or phone. I feel empty spiritually and am at a crossroad. I am writing to you for help. Please send me the Holy Bible and some study materials that can help me and get me out of this lost feeling.'

### Broadcasting In Middle East Since 1991

HCJB Global began broadcasting Arabic-language programs to the region via shortwave in 1991. Satellite broadcasts followed 10 years later, with Internet streaming not long after. *Journey Of Hope* represents a renewal of ministry efforts focusing on North Africa and the Middle East and on encouraging Christians around the world to support the outreach and pray for Arabic speakers.

To raise awareness about the region and the *Journey Of Hope* initiative, HCJB Global is offering a number of ways to join its campaign, including:

• **Prayer:** A 31-day Prayer Calendar is available through a free download at

[www.hcjb.org/Journey-of-Hope-Pray](http://www.hcjb.org/Journey-of-Hope-Pray)

• **Giving:** It doesn't take much to reach listeners in North Africa and the Middle East. \$35 sponsors an hour of HCJB Global's Arabic-language radio programming to the region. Give online at [www.hcjb.org/hope](http://www.hcjb.org/hope)

• **Sharing:** HCJB offers *Journey Of Hope* materials to share with family, friends and church groups through prayer gatherings that raise awareness of the Arab World's need for the Gospel. Email: [journeyofhope@hcjb.org](mailto:journeyofhope@hcjb.org) for a Resource Kit.

– Michael Ireland, ASSIST News Service

**For 80 years, the passion of HCJB Global ( [www.hcjb.org](http://www.hcjb.org) ) has been to make disciples of Jesus Christ. Using mass media, health-care and leadership development, and working with partners around the world, HCJB Global has ministered in more than 100 countries. The Gospel is aired in more than 120 languages and dialects. Thousands of healthcare patients are meeting Jesus. Local believers are being trained as missionaries, pastors, broadcasters and healthcare providers.**

## Internet Ministry Draws Seekers To 'Stepping Stone' Web Sites, Leading To Relationship With God And Connection With Local Church

THE Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Samaritan's Purse and Campus Crusade, are among those partnering in *Jesus.net Japan* – an internet evangelism effort to reach millions shaken and still hurting from the March 2011 earthquake, tsunami and nuclear accident – launched as a series of seeker-friendly 'stepping stone' web sites in Japan in an effort to lead people to Christ and connect them with a local church. The US entity and English information source for the ministry is Jesus Net Japan ([www.jesusnetjapan.org](http://www.jesusnetjapan.org)).

This is an extension of Jesus.net ([www.jesus.net](http://www.jesus.net)), a global alliance of internet ministries that operates Christian evangelistic websites in more than 20 languages worldwide. Jesus.net recently was awarded the National Religious Broadcasters' 'Innovation Award' for its global, cutting-edge evangelism strategy.

In anticipation of the one-year anniversary of the disaster, Jesus.net Japan partnered with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association for its *Celebration Of Hope* event in Tohoku and supported Philip Yancey's speaking tour in Northern Japan 7-11 March. It also will be involved in four BGEA events in Japan in 2013. Other partners include Samaritan's Purse ([www.samaritanspurse.org](http://www.samaritanspurse.org)), Campus Crusade for Christ ([www.ccci.org](http://www.ccci.org)) and CRASH Japan ([www.crashjapan.com](http://www.crashjapan.com)).

'The disasters last spring and the continuing economic upheaval here have people wondering what life is about more than ever before,' said Christian Zebley, former missionary to Japan, and US spokesperson for Jesus Net Japan. 'The Japanese are a very private people and do not talk about religion easily. Many already use the Internet to answer questions or find information about topics considered too embarrassing to discuss in person. According to ABC News, two million people around the world "look for God each day" on line,' said Zebley. 'Searches are on topics about the supernatural or on the big questions about life and the future. We want to give people an opportunity to get answers and hope where they spend a lot of time – on the internet – and connect them with other Japanese who have satisfied the longings of their hearts in Jesus.'

Jesus.net Japan's initial web site, *Hope For Living* ([www.hopeforliving.net](http://www.hopeforliving.net)) introduces visitors to survivors of earlier quakes or other traumatic experiences. Their stories illustrate how they have been strengthened by faith in God, or how they got to know Jesus in the midst of their turmoil. The site also contains prayers and words of hope to encourage those who enquire.

## SEEKING REFUGE ...

# Burmese Christians Seek Refuge In India

THOUSANDS of refugees from Chin State in Burma have been fleeing into Mizoram State, India, to escape persecution at the hands of the Burmese military regime. These stories were heard from the Chin people who were resettled to the USA through World Relief, pleading that their family and friends left behind in Mizoram desperately needed assistance and protection. This population has been out of sight and out of mind of the international community because access to the Northeast of India has been restricted for decades by the Indian Central Government. The Indian Government lifted these restrictions in December 2011, which allowed me to participate in an assessment trip to see first-hand the challenges that these refugees face in this remote area of India.

### India's 'Christian' State

Mizoram State is a beautiful, rugged, mountainous area of India where houses hover on stilts over 40 feet ravines and children play alongside windy, unpaved roads.

What's striking about Mizoram is not only the physical beauty of the state but the vibrancy of the Mizo people's Christian faith. Mizoram is the most Christian state in all of India where over 95% of the residents are Christians. (Largely the result of Welsh missionary effort following the 1904 Welsh Revival – *Ed.*) In fact, the Church is the strongest institution in the state, providing much needed social services through hospitals, orphanages and schools.

Yet there are many Chin refugees who are living in the shadows of this beautiful society. The horrific abuses they escaped in Burma are haunting and real. One woman, for example, was a teacher in Burma and one of her 14-year old students was raped by Burmese soldiers. When she reported this abuse to the authorities, they came to her house

looking for her and she fled to India to seek safety.

She runs a small tea shop in Mizoram and tries to take care of her parents and brother who was tortured in Burma and escaped to India a few years before her arrival.

While these refugees have found some safety in India, the fear that the refugees live with in India is palpable. Without any form of proper protection in the form of documentation, many fear being deported back to Burma where they could be persecuted again.

For many Chin refugees, they hope for the day when they can return to a safe, democratic, free Chin state in Burma. In the meantime, the Chin people in Mizoram yearn to be able to integrate into their host country of India.

I hope that the international community will come alongside the church in Mizoram to welcome the Chins through protection and humanitarian assistance efforts, and that the US Government continues to raise with the Indian Government the need to provide protection to this group of vulnerable refugees.

A full 134-page report with findings, recommendations, and photographs and a shorter executive summary can be found at:

[www.chinseekingrefuge.com](http://www.chinseekingrefuge.com)

– Jenny Yang, *Special to ASSIST News Service*



Chin refugees selling at market in Mizoram.

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### Did You Know?

#### Christians Are Half Of The World's Migrants

CHRISTIANS comprise half of the world's 214 million migrants, those who have moved from their country of birth and are now living permanently in a different country, a new study has concluded. The study, *Faith On The Move: The Religious Affiliation Of International Migrants*, by the Washington, DC-based Pew Research Centre's Forum on Religion and Public Life, released 8 March, concluded 106 million Christians constitute 49% of the world's migrants.

## HERE TO HELP ...

### New App Capabilities Expand Mission Possibilities

NEW capabilities will mean much more than cool gadgetry on the Bible.is app. The *Faith Comes By Hearing* Bible listening application for smart phones and androids is already enormously effective in spreading the Gospel, says FCBH VP Troy Carl. 'We hear about it to the tune of tens of thousands, even hundreds of thousands of testimonies around the world thus far.' But now the app has introduced new options that will assist the missions world. App users can now view the *JESUS Film* in several languages. They can also download audio Bibles directly to a mobile device, so the Scriptures can be accessed even in remote areas without internet. Missionaries can introduce the Gospel in new ways, and it can also extend further. 'Where it would typically be dangerous or even difficult to



provide Bibles to certain areas of the world, through technology people can easily access it – listen to it in the privacy of their own home or in some other area that is safe. And it's really been an effective ministry tool for missionaries around the world.' Full story:

<http://www.MNNOnline.org/article/16938>

### The Theological Commons Digital Library

GOSPEL Coalition ([thegospelcoalition.org](http://thegospelcoalition.org)) reports that Princeton Theological Seminary has partnered with the Internet Archive to provide an online database called the Theological Commons digital library ([the-theological-commons-digital-library](http://the-theological-commons-digital-library)). It provides free, online access to over 50,000 theology and religion books from the PTS Library. This digital collection also includes about 100 rare 17th-Century theological books from the private library of the late Professor Thomas Torrance, the father of PTS President Iain Torrance.

### Get Into Training For The Olympics

THE *More Than Gold* team are representatives from Athletes In Action, Logosdor, Macquarie Chapel and Sports Serve. Their vision is to build a movement of Christ-followers engaging with the Olympics and other major sporting events to reach Australia by making disciples who can make disciples.

They will be holding a More Than Gold Vision Day on 24 March from 9.30 – 1.30, at Macquarie Chapel, 2 Herring Rd, Eastwood. They invite you to go and hear about: Strategies for Children/Youth Sports Outreach; Church-based events and evangelism leading up to and during major sporting events. To register go to: <http://tinyurl.com/7rlrbzt> or email Rosemaree Knight at: [rosemaree107@bigpond.com](mailto:rosemaree107@bigpond.com)

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## PASTORAL LEADER WANTED

The **Melbourne Chinese Bible Church (MCBC)** is located in the West of Melbourne. It is an independent church with over 100 Cantonese & English-speaking members.

MCBC is currently seeking a Full-time Pastoral Leader.

**Essential requirements include:** a genuine commitment to the Evangelical Faith, a minimum tertiary degree in Theology or Ministry, with fluency in both Cantonese and English.

Experience in counselling, training and Mandarin speaking would be advantageous.

For Job Descriptions & our church profile, please email

Charlie Huynh, Pastoral Search Co-ordinator,

[ckvhuynh@optusnet.com.au](mailto:ckvhuynh@optusnet.com.au)

Application closes at the end of April, 2012.

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## BOOKS WORTH READING ...

### Joshua, Pekka M. A. Pitkanen, Nottingham: Apollos, 2010.

HERE is an important new commentary in the Apollos Old Testament Commentary series. It is abreast of all the recent archaeological discoveries and sensitive to the obvious moral issues that make the interpretation (and particularly the application) of the book of Joshua difficult for the modern preacher. There has never been any question about Joshua's inclusion in the canon of Scripture, for the conquest and possession of the Land of Promise is a fundamental part of the Israelite faith (God gave His people this land as a gift). That does not, however, make it easy to preach and apply.

Pitkanen seeks to interpret Joshua as real history and as profound theology, and he also tries to integrate the two (which is what every good commentary needs to do). He tells us what we know of Late Bronze and Early Iron Age Palestine, because he posits a conquest in the 13th Century BC (even though I would see the biblical data strongly suggests a 15th Century dating). He treats Joshua as a separate book rather than merely as a section of a larger historical work (the so-called Deuteronomistic History) and is right to reject the idea that it is a thinly-veiled work of propaganda for later Josiah.

It is plain that much of the material that makes up the book must come from the pre-monarchic period (eg the prominence of the Shiloh sanctuary and of the Trans-Jordanian tribes). He points out that the book's theology connects with the Pentateuch (notably the themes of Deuteronomy and dominant priestly concerns) rather than with the historical books that follow it in chronological sequence.

In many ways the generation of Joshua was better than those that preceded (the wilderness period) or followed (the judges period), so that a model is set before the reader to fol-

low. This immediately raises the thorny issues of conquest and genocide, especially for people like us who live in a post-colonial world.

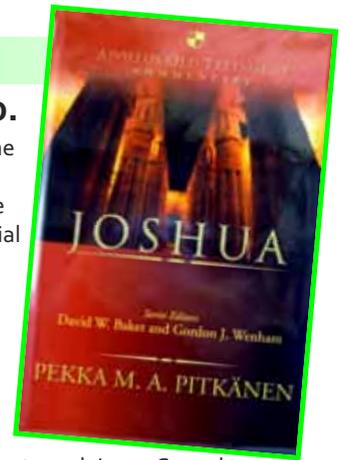
Pitkanen does not skirt around these moral issues, though he does point out the exceptional nature of the conquest (even in the Old Testament with its many wars) and that certainly the New Testament proclaims a Gospel to all nations and rejects any division of humanity along ethnic lines. The seeds of this are found even within *Joshua* itself, with the incorporation of Rahab's family and the Gibeonites into Israel.

All this leads to the author's plea for tolerance and justice in the Palestinian-Israeli dispute over land, for Joshua should not be seen as mandating a one-sided resolution of that dispute.

The bulk of the book is a detailed commentary on the biblical text, with a number of excurses about key archaeological sites. Pitkanen is careful, discriminating and non-dogmatic as a commentator, which means that even those who may disagree with his tentative conclusions will find this a valuable aid to a better understanding and application of the book of Joshua.

It is refreshing to read a commentary on Joshua that rejects too-easy answers to moral questions and takes a different line from the dominant critical consensus, while also making many useful observations on the text.

— Greg Goswell



## LATE NEWS ...

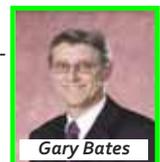
### Evolution Tour To Melbourne Will Answer Questions About Origins

HAVE you wondered why your witnessing falls flat and people fail to respond? Why does evolution have a damaging effect on the Church? Why are our youth walking away from their faith? What are the answers? Many comment that science has disproved the Bible and therefore it is not relevant to today's modern world.

Is there evidence for evolution? See how the supposed 'scientific evidence for evolution' is really nothing of the sort. See how myths behind evolutionary assumptions are 'busted'.

Learn how the evidence fits the biblical Creation account better. Why do evolutionists deny biblical foundations and accuse Christians of believing superstitions? Can the majority of scientists really be wrong? Find out how you can question evolution.

Internationally known speakers, Dr Jonathan Sarfati and Gary Bates, will present this enthralling and faith-affirming truth that will astound you as part of their Question Evolution Tour at Kingston City Church, 316-322 Kingston Rd, and Clarinda on Tuesday 1 May from 7pm. For more information, visit [creation.com/QEtour](http://creation.com/QEtour)



Gary Bates



Jonathan Sarfati

### Bible League Wins Australia-Wide Fundraising Award

BIBLE League International has picked up a national fundraising award for their Bibles for Japan campaign last March. They have won the Fundraising Institute of Australia Award for Best Use of Electronic Media. The award is recognition of the quality of the Bible League International campaign, which saw the targeted budget of \$50,000 reached in just 72 hours, with overall income generated exceeding budget by 192 %.

Following the devastating earthquake and tsunami, Bible League received an urgent call for help from Christian churches in Japan for resources to meet the spiritual needs of victims, especially Japanese Bibles in both traditional and Manga formats. Due to the urgency, Bible League adopted an integrated electronic media campaign involving the web, SMS, email, media releases and social media (Twitter and Facebook) and direct phone contact with donors. The campaign was developed and implemented within 24 hours!

The campaign was successful in that it met the spiritual needs of the people, rather than the physical needs covered by other agencies. 'We are thrilled to be recognised nationally for the Japan campaign,' says Bible League Fundraising Director Hamilton Smith. 'It was an intense campaign and it was clear Australians were touched by the plight of the Japanese people in this time of tragedy.'