A photograph of a sunset over a pond. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright orange and yellow glow. A large tree is silhouetted on the left, and a smaller, bare tree is on the right. The water in the foreground is calm, reflecting the sun and the trees. There are lily pads floating on the water.

# the presbyterian banner

November 2017

*The Mighty One, God, the LORD,  
speaks and summons the earth  
from the rising of the sun to the place where it sets.  
Psalm 50:1*

## CONTENTS

Editorial	2
<b>Are You On God's Roll?</b> <i>Proverbs 16:3</i>	3
History in the Banner <i>Tongan Christian History</i>	5
The World in the Banner <i>News and Views</i>	10
Children in the Banner <i>Jonah 4</i>	12
Prescribed Search Work	13
Life under the Banner <i>Bible reading with your children</i>	14
Synodical Treasurer <i>Synod Finances</i>	14
The Bible in the Banner <i>Divine Pronoun Capitalisation?</i>	15
Churches in the Banner <i>Taree &amp; Ulverstone</i>	16

ISSN 0729-3542

Editor:  
Rev. Sjirk Bajema  
44 Prospect Hill Road,  
Narre Warren, VIC  
AUSTRALIA 3805  
Ph. (03) 9705 1505  
Email: sjirkb@gmail.com

Subscriptions for 2018  
11 Issues per year  
*Within Australia:* \$40 [Bulk \$35]  
*Overseas:* AU \$50 Airmail.

Direct Credit :  
NAB (BSB) 083-802  
A/C No. 98 473 8955

## Editorial

The effect of recent natural disasters has been quite horrific. After all, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, hurricanes, floods and wildfires don't usually leave fond memories.

And doesn't it seem that they are appearing even more often nowadays? The fiery ring of the Pacific was certainly busy at work in September, leaving its mark on Japan, Bali, New Zealand, Mexico, and a few other places dotted around the Pacific Ocean.

Mind you, in an earlier time they were called different things by many evangelical Christians. There were names such as the 'sign of the times', 'the coming of the end', and 'God's final judgement'. It was not that long ago that you could hear many preachers and publications expounding the pre-millennial dispensationalist view that these disasters clearly indicated we were in the last days. Now it appears that what is overwhelmingly shared from those same pulpits is a very affirming personal message with little to frighten any one.

But the facts haven't changed. There are still natural disasters. And while the number and the effect of them may vary and may be disputed, it does not change what the Lord Jesus said about this age we now live in. It is a very temporary time period and it will soon come to an end in the most graphically vivid way.

This is why we must be living as those who already have a foot in the future world. It must be clear that we are pilgrims here. And that's why we are not frightened by the phenomenon. It is actually a part of a fallen world and confirms to us that this is not our true home.

The same applies with the increasing persecution against the Church of Jesus Christ. Our Lord spells that out unequivocally as a part of what we must endure in the time between his two comings. He says that we should not be surprised if we suffer for the faith – in fact, we should be more concerned if we are not suffering in some way as Christians. While for a time we have been blessed with religious freedom in our western world, that has not been the norm since Christ was amongst us. The gospel is the stumbling block to this world and its prince is dead-set against it in every possible way. As our Master very much suffered in his time here, let not any of servants think they should be exempt.

There is an apt question which has been used in this connection: If you were charged in a court of law with the crime for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you? Now, isn't that question itself convicting? Makes you think, doesn't it? But may it also make us pray.

*Nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.*

*There will be famines and earthquakes in various places.*

*All these are the beginning of birth pains.*

*Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death,  
and you be hated by all nations because of me.*

Matthew 24:7-9

*Photo Credit: Cover: Alex Steel—Sunset Yellow Water, Kakadu, NT*

**The Presbyterian Banner** is the official magazine of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia. The PCEA was established in 1846 and adheres to the Westminster Confession of Faith (1647) as its doctrinal standard.

Literary contributions are welcome. Submission by email is preferred.

The opinions expressed in signed articles are those of the authors - not necessarily of the editor or the PCEA and may not be reproduced without permission. Articles written by the Editor may be reproduced without asking for permission, although with appropriate acknowledgement.

This magazine is available as a pdf file on the Church Website: [www.pcea.org.au](http://www.pcea.org.au)

## How You Know When You're On God's Roll!

### Proverbs 16:3

Have you ever heard the saying, "When you're on a roll"? It means that you're on to a good thing, that what's happening is going well for you – in fact, very well! It means also that the good thing just keeps on going and going – it's on a roll, it's got momentum.

Perhaps our boys and girls find that their sports team for the last four or five games have been winning its games – that's being on a roll. Or you're passing all those exams and tests at school – then you can feel you're on a roll. Until you fail, or lose, of course!

Interestingly, the first word of Proverbs 16:3 in the Hebrew is literally the word "roll". So we could translate this to say, "Roll on the Lord whatever you do."

That can give us quite a different meaning than we first think. Because first impressions with the word "commit" might make us think that it's our response to the Lord that matters. In other words, it's what I do.

This is quite different than the idea of depending on him. And it is especially so when this depending, this rolling on him, is actually putting your troubles on him and away from you.

#### **1. This Is Actually All About How Much We Need Him**

This brings in something else we didn't first see in the text. It looked like we were committing our very best qualities to God. But now it's saying we actually give him what we're unhappy about most of all. This is like Psalm 55, as it tells us in verse 22 to "Cast your cares on the LORD..." The apostle Peter says the same hundreds of years later in his first letter chapter 5, verse 7, "Cast all your anxiety on him..."

With the difference this verse has from what we think it means,

and with its difference also from what we would like it to mean! Let's realise how much you know when you're on God's roll.

Now, I've mentioned that what this text talks about giving over to God aren't exactly the best things we have. In fact, it's the very

*Commit to the LORD  
whatever you do,  
and your plans will succeed.  
Proverbs 16:3*

things bugging us and upsetting us, those things that make us feel how useless we are – they are what we have to trust the Lord with.

Friend – what is it that upsets you and really bugs you? It's not usually that thing itself – is it? Isn't the fear of something much worse than the thing itself? Of all the difficulties in a believer's life, isn't the fear of committing yourself completely the beginning of so much trouble?

You and I know very well what we ought to do. But do we do it? Especially, are we really motivated to do it?

The Lord knows us oh, so well! For without being wholeheartedly and unreservedly his, we're missing the mark.

In sport, there's the saying that a miss is as good as a mile. That shot at goal you missed, or the near try that hasn't scored, no matter how close you were. And the writer here, perhaps Solomon out of his own hard experience, tells us that that isn't good enough – it has to be all or nothing! "Commit to the LORD whatever you do..." he declares.

Allow me to illustrate this: I used

### Sjirk Bajema

to do part-time work when I was at theological college. It was work that we had to do in pairs, so we students would team up to do it. This work involved cleaning supermarkets on the other side of Geelong.

Now, one of my fellow student cleaners had been a taxi driver in Melbourne. You soon knew that he'd been a taxi-driver once you were in the car with him. It scared me, sitting next to him as we whipped down those Geelong streets on the way to work. In and out of the traffic, indicating, weaving, speeding up, slowing down, and inside of me it was churning all around!. But he knew what he was doing!

It wouldn't have done me any good getting upset about the fear I felt. I had to simply trust him.

Isn't this which the name for "LORD" means here? This is no God away up there, a god who rules like some deistic entity from afar. He is the God who made a covenant with us. Whether it was Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, or any of the others, he stepped into our time and our place. In fact, he was so concerned for us that he is the One who came down to live amongst us! He is the One who in his Son brought home to us the ultimate fulfilment of his love for us. All you have to do is simply trust him.

#### **2. This Is Totally Giving What You Do Over To Him**

Do you so trust the Lord to look after you so that you will depend on him completely? And doing this can only mean you are living simply by his Word.

Joshua spoke about this same thing after he had led the Israelite people victoriously into the Promised Land. The people had been settled into their tribal and family

allotments. Everyone was provided for.

Now, you would have thought that after such blessings the people couldn't have thought of doing anything else but serving the Lord. But Joshua then says in Joshua 24 verse 15: "...if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."

That was a re-commitment for Joshua; and he laid it before all the people. And notice how he said it for his whole family.

There could be no totally giving yourself over to the Lord without involving those you were responsible for as well. That's what we realise considering the life of someone like Joshua. We can reflect on what we know of him in Scripture, and we see that trust in his Lord.

After all, out of twelve spies who went to check out the Promised Land, who was one of only two confidently looking to God? Who, with Caleb, said to the entire Israelite assembly in Numbers 14, verses 7 till 9, "The land we passed through and explored is exceedingly good. If the LORD is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us. Only don't rebel against the LORD."

And don't be afraid of the people of the land, because we will swallow them up. Their protection is gone, but the LORD is with us. Don't be afraid of them."

But the people were afraid. Rather than roll themselves onto God they grumbled, and they lost it with the Lord. There in the wil-

derness many of them were killed, because they didn't give their concerns over to the Lord. They still worshipped those other gods. Deep down, they did not believe. And that is what our text is about – believing.

With that story of the Israelites in the wilderness grumbling, there is shown an open rebellion against God. This is the same spirit which is in the people who hurl insults in Psalm 22 verse 8. There they cried out to the believer, "He trusts in the LORD; let the LORD deliver him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him."

When our Lord gave us the words of this text, he meant us to know the attack that the evil one constantly throws against us. But especially with Psalm 22, the



*The Jews in the Desert, by Tintoretto, c. 1593*

LORD wants us to also know the One who was insulted and despised most of all. This One is the man who was perfectly committed to God in everything; this One who could only be the Lord Jesus Christ.

When a believer in the Old Testament Church committed himself to doing something, he would symbolise that by coming up to the temple in Jerusalem and offering up a sacrifice. Now the ultimate sacrifice has come, the one sacrifice that fulfilled all those

past sacrifices and much, much more besides!

Until that Messiah came the righteous also lived by faith, as we read about Abraham in Romans 4, and the Lord never let them down. They could roll on the Lord because of the hope of the coming Messiah. But that was only the shadow and not the substance. It was only after the coming of Christ that the apostle Peter could add to the plea, "cast all your anxiety on him," adding these words as well, "because he cares for you."

What they had before Christ's coming was the promise. Psalm 37 verse 7 said, "Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this." Psalm 55 verse 22 said, "Cast all your cares on the LORD and he will

sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall." And earlier in Proverbs 3 verse 6 we read, "...in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight." Now that promise is fulfilled. We don't only live looking forward; there is also what has been done in the past through the doing and dying of our dear Lord and Saviour.

As you give yourself over to the Lord, you will see your life blessed in him. And thus our text concludes, "...and your plans will succeed."

### **3. This Is Knowing Your Life Being Blessed In Him**

We have this described in Ecclesiastes 11, verses 1 and 2. There the teacher declares, "Cast your bread upon the waters, for after many days you will find it again. Give your portions to seven, yes to eight, for you don't know what disaster may come upon the land."

It is all about living by faith. And let me put it to you, dear believer, if you have committed to the Lord everything you do, have you ever been let down?

I'm not saying that you might not have suffered sickness and hardship of different kinds, even that you may have been persecuted for your faith. But has the Lord even then let you down?

Aren't our moments of greatest insecurity when, like Peter walking across the lake, we take our eyes off Jesus and start looking at our fearful position? And when we stop looking at him, don't we quickly start to sink?

This is why we must look to the Lord and keep looking to him. In the words of Hieronymous van Alphen, "Faith cannot do too much expecting; the words of Jesus all come true; Friends offer only weak protection; Jesus the Friend will see us through."

This is precisely the confession the apostle Paul made in the first chapter of his second letter to

Timothy. There he declared in verse 12, "...I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day."

You think about it: How can any of us who have professed our faith ever hope to keep those promises fully? Which way can we truly be blessed in all we do? Not by depending on ourselves – that's for sure! But rolling ourselves on the One we promised to trust, that makes the difference.

Someone once put it this way, "The highest pinnacle of the spiritual life is not joy in unbroken sunshine, but absolute and undoubting trust in the love of God." And isn't that what the world really notices – not what we're like when things are on the up, but how we handle life when it's down!? Your faith really shows when life isn't on a roll, when things are actually pretty bad – indeed, when it seems things cannot get any worse! That's when you know you are truly on God's roll!

Jesus has been there and he has done that – much more faithfully than we ever could. Because he totally trusted his Heavenly Father, we have become God's children too. With his commitment nothing can trap us or fail us – indeed, it will all be accomplished for us!

This is when those great words of Romans 8 verse 28 come true. Because then "we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." Your plans will succeed, because they're his plans!

May the Lord bring us into such a love of his Word and the guidance by his Spirit that we – each one of us – will know that our plans have succeeded.

You are on God's roll!

## History in the Banner

### The History of Early Christianity in Tonga

*Ane Havea*

Tonga had maintained a unique social structure in terms of government and leadership for many generations. The whole of Tonga was under the rule of the Tu'i Tonga dynasty, followed by the Tu'i Ha'atakalaua, and the last dynasty is the Tu'i Kanokupolu, which is the line that is on the throne now.

Tongans were ruled by the three different dynasties and each dynasty had its own chiefs. Each chief was the head of a socio-political unit.

In the pre-Christian era, the Tongan after-life was a world of unseen spirits and animals called "Pulotu," and it encompassed both heaven and hell. A host of evil spirits and ghosts haunted the beliefs of the Tongan, but eventually these evil spirits came to represent the Chris-

tian devil.

The chiefs were the only members of Tongan society with spirits that went on to the afterlife upon death (Pulotu) – the commoners did not have spirits. That belief changed quickly as Christianity spread the idea of salvation amongst all the social classes. The missionaries' teachings introduced a new standard of values which made no distinctions among people. All men were equal in the sight of God. Everyone was a sinner and had to be forgiven and submit to certain moral disciplines in order to go to heaven, a place for everyone after death. This was one of the main reasons why the chiefs did not welcome the idea of Christianity.

### Christianity introduced to Tonga in 1797

The London Missionary Society (LMS), founded in 1795, sent its first missionaries to the Pacific to begin work in Tahiti and Tonga. Both islands were thought to have a good climate and food for the missionaries, and that they had languages which would be easily learned. The LMS ship *Duff* first arrived in Tahiti in 1797 and then went to Tonga with ten missionaries, to start the work of the mission. They were not well prepared for the task. Most of them were artisans and the Tongans were only interested in their material goods, not willing to replace their traditional beliefs with those of Christianity. During the civil war in 1799 and 1800, three

of the missionaries were killed and the rest fled to New South Wales.

**This is a short account of how Christianity spread in Tonga**

In 1822 the Wesleyan Methodist Mission first attempted to convert Tonga with the arrival of its pioneer, Walter Lawry. He met similar problems to those encountered by the earlier mission and with the failure of his wife's health, Lawry abandoned the mission after 14 months in Tonga. However, in time Christianity began to take root in Tonga.

In 1826 the second Wesleyan Methodist Mission party, led by John Thomas, arrived in Tonga and established their mission in Hihifo (the western part of Tongatapu, the main island in Tonga). From this time the work of the mission began to grow despite the strong resistance from the Tongans, especially the chiefs.

John Thomas decided to establish his mission at Hihifo with the assistance of the paramount chief Ata, who gave Thomas and his party a piece of land to build a house, for his gardening and a school. Ata promised to allow the missionaries to worship their God in their own premises without interruption. He also said he would protect them from other chiefs in case of war. Ata was regarded as the most powerful chief in Tongatapu. Thomas preached his first sermon in Tonga from Psalm 84:11.

As time went on Ata withdrew his support, forbidding his people to join the mission. In spite of the strong opposition from the chief and most of the people, some still attended services regularly. They worshipped God privately in small villages, a few miles from where the chief lived.

Thomas and his fellow mis-

sionary Hutchinson became frustrated and ready to leave for Sydney, and asked for a bigger ship to bring all of the mission party home. The brethren in Sydney rejected this request from Thomas and decided to send another mission party instead, to save the work in Tonga.

In 1827 Nathaniel Turner, William Cross and William Weiss decided to make their new base at Nuku'alofa, the capital of Tonga. Nuku'alofa at this time had already been under the influence of Christianity through the successful work of four Tahitians,

the breakthrough in the work of the mission. Unlike Thomas and Hutchinson they spent no time in learning the language, for they had done it before their arrival.

Early in 1828, Turner and Cross revived the school that had been established by the Tahitians. Within a short time, there were 80 pupils. Their task was to teach both children and adults to read their language. Within six months, the school roll grew to 150. After 14 months, the work at Nuku'alofa started to bear fruit. The mis-

sionaries baptized seven converts and gave each of them a name from the Bible. They were Mafile'o (Noah), Takanoa (Moses), Lavola (Elisha), Kavamoelelo (Barnabas), Lavemai (Joseph), and Moun-gaevalu (John). The congregation increased to 500 and the chapel built by the Tahitians became too small. On May 5

1830, the construction of a new chapel began and was completed by September 3 that year. The day it was opened, there were 1,000 in the building and many others outside.

**Missionaries worked in closely with Taufa'ahau: 1829-1834**

The success of the mission at Nuku'alofa opened the doors for Christianity to spread out to other parts of the country. It was not long after his acceptance of Christianity that Chief Aleamotu'a Tupou sent one of his relatives to Finau 'Ulukalala, ruler of the Vava'u group, and also his nephew, Ulakai, to Taufa'ahau in Ha'apai, to advise them to accept the new religion. It was clear that when a chief accepted Christianity, he had



whose name were Hape, Tafeta, Borabora, and Longi. They built a chapel, ran a school and were greatly supported by chiefs Aleamotu'a and Ulakai, who moved from Hihifo to join the mission at Nuku'alofa because of Ata's resistance. About 300 people around Nuku'alofa met regularly for worship.

Turner could be called the true founder of the Wesleyan Mission in the sense that he saved the future of the church in Tonga, although Walter Lawry pioneered it and Thomas spent 25 years working in Tonga. Turner's experience and convictions about missionary work changed the situation in which Thomas and Hutchinson had been struggling.

The growing experience of Turner and Cross contributed to

tremendous influence in turning his people from heathenism to Christianity.

As a result of this meeting with Ulakai, Taufā'āhau decided to find out more about the new religion. He made a few trips to Tongatapu in 1827 and 1828. During these trips he met the missionaries and spoke to his relatives, particularly Aleamotu'a and Ulakai, who had been following the new ways of Christianity. He observed these people's lives closely, and began to imitate them.

On the Sunday before Thomas was expected to leave Tonga (in 1827), Taufā'āhau visited Thomas at Hihifo for the first time. The meeting of these two men started a relationship between them that continued for a long time, until Thomas left the country in 1859.

Taufā'āhau's interest in the gospel increased. In October 1828, he made another trip to Tongatapu, where he met Nathaniel Turner. He told Turner that he wanted a missionary to be sent to Ha'apai to teach his people. He had seen the missionaries and their teaching program at Nuku'alofa, and was impressed. With Ata strongly refusing to accept Thomas and Christianity, the missionaries looked at the urgency of Taufā'āhau's request and decided to close the mission and send Thomas to Ha'apai, where there were signs of success.

However, because they had to get approval from the Committee in London for their decision, they decided to send a native convert, Pita Vi, to Ha'apai. Pita Vi was regarded as the first Tongan preacher and teacher.

At first, Taufā'āhau was deeply disappointed by the missionaries' decision to send a native teacher to Ha'apai. He refused to take Vi with him but he met a severe storm, which almost stopped them from reaching Ha'apai. On arrival, Taufā'āhau believed that the storm was a "divine judgement" for not taking Pita Vi and immedi-

ately went back to Tongatapu to collect him.

Pita Vi didn't have a deep knowledge of the Bible and missionary work, but used all he had learned from the missionaries to teach his people. He started a school on Lifuka, the main island of the group and Taufā'āhau's place of residence. Taufā'āhau had commanded his people to learn to read and write. They destroyed the objects of their traditional gods. He also burned down the idol houses and destroyed the sacred objects.

Taufā'āhau was not only enthusiastic to show his people the powerlessness of the traditional gods, but he wanted to demonstrate the power of the Christian God.

An opportunity for this occurred when he was on a canoe voyage. Taufā'āhau saw a shark which he believed was the god Taufā'itahi. He threw a spear at the shark, thinking that if it was truly a god, the spear would miss. That is what happened. Pita Vi and another man were then thrown into the sea to fetch the spear and bring it to the island of Ha'ano, where the rest would be waiting. Taufā'āhau reasoned that if the Christian God was truly God, He would save Vi and the other man from the sharks. The two men were not attacked by the sharks and arrived safely on shore with the spear.

On July 29 1829, Thomas left the work at Hihifo. Six months later, in January 1830, a canoe arrived at Nuku'alofa from Ha'apai bringing Pita Vi to take the place of Thomas, because Taufā'āhau and the people were hungry for more Christian instruction. Unlike Ata and the chiefs of Tongatapu, Taufā'āhau's desire for a missionary was not for their goods and property, but for more teaching on the new faith that he had embraced.

By the time Thomas arrived in Lifuka there was widespread sup-

port for the new religion, through the work of Vi and the great influence of their King. Thomas told the Committee in London, 'there are no more than three islands out of 20, but the people have turned to the Lord. I have had 250 to 400 every time I have preached.'

It would be wrong to say that Christianity was accepted without any difficulty. The chiefs of Ha'apai were very upset by Taufā'āhau's commitment to the new religion and made plans to kill him. At one of the festivals, most of Taufā'āhau's enemies attended. During the festival the King became very ill and it appeared he was going to die. It was believed one of the enemy chiefs had given him a poisoned drink. The people made preparations for his funeral. At this stage, Cross was on a visit to Lifuka so Vi called Thomas and Cross to help. While the two missionaries were helping Taufā'āhau to vomit out the poison, a little group of Christians spent the whole night in prayer until the next morning. As the daylight appeared, a wailing cry was heard. At first they thought the King was gone, but they soon learned that it was a cry from the King's sister because he was better.

Up to the time of his poisoning Taufā'āhau had not yet really joined the Christians in their religious meetings, because he was still busy testing the power of both the heathen gods and the Christian God. After he learned of the chiefs' plan to kill him, he openly joined the Christians in their prayer meetings and burnt more objects used for worship in the old religion. Most important was his decision to be baptized.

The following day (August 7, 1831), there was a big service of more than 2,000 people, who attended to witness the great step of faith for their King. Three of his children were also

ready to be baptized, named Salote, David and Josiah.

Taufa'āhau took the name "King George" because he had heard from the missionaries about King George III of England, and greatly admired him. Recording his baptism, Thomas wrote in a large and bold handwriting "George Taufā'āhau, King in Lifu".

Taufa'āhau became the ruler of Vava'u in 1833. He was still practising the traditional marriage pattern of polygamy until he was severely disciplined about the matter by one of his missionaries. Peter Turner, a new missionary and cousin of Nathaniel Turner, terminated Taufā'āhau's membership in the church because of this. In the following year, 1834, Taufā'āhau repented and married Lupe Pau'u in a Christian ceremony.

Taufa'āhau became a local preacher and evangelist. Both he and his wife also became class leaders, assisting their people to grow in their spiritual life.

This new religion, which began in Tongatapu, spread to Ha'apai spontaneously. Vava'u was also ready to welcome the new religion, but there was no one to take it across to the group of islands. Their King George, Taufā'āhau, took the initiative for this mission in 1831.

Prior to this time Finau Ulukalala, the ruler of Vava'u, had shown some interest in Christianity as a result of the advice he received from Aleamotu'a. In 1828 Finau used an English sailor to carry a letter to Nathaniel Turner at Nuku'alofa on his behalf, asking for missionaries.

Because of the shortage of missionaries, Turner could not do anything about Finau's request. However King George was keen to win Finau to the new religion, and went over to Vava'u with a missionary intent, taking Pita Vi with him.

The Sunday after they arrived at Vava'u, they had the first public Christian worship service in that

group of islands. Pita Vi preached the word of God before King George, Finau, and a big gathering. On the Monday following the first Christian worship service, King George and Finau started to attack the old religion by burning and destroying the gods and their houses, and the sacred objects of worship.

The acceptance of Christianity in Vava'u, as in Ha'apai, caused a rebellion against Finau led by his half-brother Lualala, who was already rebellious towards Finau for political reasons. Finau asked King George for help and the King and his warriors from Ha'apai put down the rebellion.

William Cross, who was at Nuku'alofa with Turner, was sent to Vava'u at the beginning of 1832 to keep the work going. On August 5 of the same year, Finau was baptised with the name Zephaniah, together with eight of his children.

Finau's conversion opened the way for a large group that had been awaiting such a move. Finau died on February 18, 1833, after nominating King George to take over the rulership of Vava'u. The King was installed on April 30 of the same year. It is said that all the chiefs of Vava'u came together on this occasion. King George of Tonga was now ruler both of Ha'apai and of Vava'u.

Under the influence and initiatives that Taufā'āhau had taken, Christianity was accepted nominally by the whole of Vava'u, and practically all of Ha'apai. Not only did it become part of the people's lives, but more and more people attended school, Bible classes, and prayer meetings.

The 1833 report for the district meeting records the growth of Christianity in terms of church members and school attendance:

Up to June 11, 1834, there was a total staff of seven missionaries in Tonga, most of whom came from England. They were stationed to the three island groups as follows: Tongatapu: John Tho-

mas (chairman of Tonga District), William Cross and John Hobbs, who arrived in 1833 from New Zealand.

Ha'apai: James Watkin and Charles Tucker, who arrived in 1833 from England.

Vava'u: Peter Turner and David Cargill, who arrived in Tonga on January 24, 1834.

The Revival of Christianity  
The initial acceptance of Christianity in Tongatapu, Ha'apai and Vava'u was followed by a period which historians have referred to as "the consolidation of the mission work".

It was marked by a religious revival called the 'Pentecost of Tonga', which occurred in 1834. During this revival, the country as a whole embraced Christianity.

During the Evangelical revival, which took place in England in the 18th century, John Wesley emphasised the doctrine of sanctification and holiness.

Unlike his colleagues in the mission work, Peter Turner had a strong desire for revival. His experience of the Methodist Revival at home made him realise the importance of a religious revival in Tonga, as a means whereby people could experience the personal conviction of the Holy Spirit.

For two weeks, the "holy epidemic" spread from village to village, and from island to island. The sounds of weeping and confession were heard everywhere.

While Vava'u was experiencing the "new touch from above", King George sent a message to Ha'apai asking the people to withdraw from secular work for a few days and "occupy their time and attention with spiritual subjects". When they did this, revival broke out in Ha'apai.

### **The War for the Faith**

The revival divided the country more clearly into Christians and heathen, particularly in Tongatapu. The two northern groups

had experienced a people's movement to Christianity during the revival. However, the heathen were stronger than ever in Tongatapu since the coming of Christianity. The chiefs of the island felt that the new values and moral standards of Christianity threatened and undermined their privilege and prestige politically, socially, and religiously. The Christians were driven from the village and took refuge at Nuku'alofa, where chief Aleamotu'a Tupou built a fortification for them.

The heathen chiefs then made a plan to depose Aleamotu'a and give the title to someone loyal to their cause. Aleamotu'a appealed to King George for help, and he came with the chiefs and people of Ha'apai and Vava'u. They arrived at Tongatapu on January 1, 1837. Seven days later war broke out, and it was purely a "religious and holy war". King George and his warriors destroyed two heathen fortresses and killed 300 men, women and children.

In 1840, fighting broke out again at Hihifo led by chiefs Ata and Vaha'i. The King returned to Nuku'alofa again with his warriors from the north. When they reached Hihifo, the King told his men to invite their relatives to leave the fort before their attack. Many accepted the invitation. The King's warriors then moved forward to attack, but the heathen surrendered immediately and no lives were lost.

After these wars, the heathen did not cause any further trouble for the Christians. King George's political position was further secured and consolidated. His leadership in the wars made him well known and accepted by the chiefs of the Tu'i Kanokupolu line, a reversal of their previous attitude in 1827.

The outstanding result of the revival was a tremendous growth in church membership. It also had far-reaching implications for

the mission in its outreach within Tonga, and to many other different parts of the Pacific Island world. Peter Turner reported that after the revival, many young men in Vava'u had a desire to work for God.

Another important result of the revival was the taking of the gospel to Fiji and Samoa. Tongan evangelists and teachers like Joel Bulu, Sailosi Fa'one, James Havea, Paula Vea and many others, went to Fiji with the gospel.

For the first time, commoners knew that they had a hope for life after death. Everybody now had this hope through faith in Christ, irrespective of their social status.

The great revival in the early days of Christianity in Tonga had a long-standing effect on the life of the church.

### **King George Tupou I commits Tonga to God in 1831**

It is said that no other ruler in the Pacific has done more for his people and his country, than Taufa'āhau (King George Tupou 1). Historians call him "The Maker of Modern Tonga." Taufa'āhau changed the traditional socio-political system by uniting Tonga into one kingdom under constitutional rule. He kept Tonga unique in its position as the only island country in the Pacific that has never been colonised.

Taufa'ahau was also responsible for the successful transition of Tonga from being uncivilised to a modern society, through adopting Western ideas and accepting Christianity.

As mentioned before, in August 1831, Taufa'ahau was baptized by some Wesleyan missionaries. Taufa'ahau later became King George Tupou of Tonga.

According to tradition, King George Tupou I dedicated the Kingdom of Tonga to God by lifting a handful of soil to the skies and praying to God declaring, "God and Tonga are my inheritance." Since then, Tonga has

been a place where its people seek to be dedicated to God.

Today more than 90 percent of the Tongan population practice some form of Christianity as a result of missionary settlements from the Free Wesleyan Church, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Mormon Church over the last two centuries.

On Sundays, Tongans close their businesses in order to keep the Sabbath Day holy.

Tongans also believe in one God and Christ's sacrifice on the cross, and they observe Sunday as a holy day in the Christian tradition.

Belief in God and allegiance to the church is even encouraged in the Tongan constitution, along with support for freedom of religion.

I hope that this short presentation has given you an insight into how Christianity started and spread in Tonga.

Malo 'aupito.

*Prepared by Miss Ane Havea, Sydney, and presented by Elder Sekona Taungakava Latu at Mount Druitt Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia, 6 May 2015 (Synod Missions Evening)*

### Sources:

'Ahio, P. F., *Christianity and Taufa'ahau in Tonga: 1800-1850*, Melanesian Journal of Theology 23.1 (2007)  
 Latukefu, S., *Church and State in Tonga: the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries and Political Development, 1822-1875*, Canberra ACT ANU Press, 1974.  
 Moulton, J.E., and Moulton, W. F., *Moulton of Tonga*, London UK: Epworth Press, 1921.  
 Wood, A. H., *History and Geography of Tonga*, Nuku'alofa: C. S. Summers, Government Printer, 1932.

# The World in the Banner

## Assyrians In Iraq Request Prayer As Kurds 'Play With Fire'

Between June and August 2014, some 130,000 Assyrian Christians were driven from their homes in Mosul and the Nineveh Plains by ISIS. Most found refuge in Iraqi Kurdistan. Now as their lands are liberated, Assyrians are trickling back into their towns and villages.

However, talk of Kurdish independence has sent tensions soaring. Christians fear the Kurds will seize the Assyrian heartland of the Nineveh Plains. The Iraqi Government, Turkey, Iran and essentially all Shi'ites have vowed to stop the Kurds annexing oil-rich Kirkuk. Chaldean Patriarch Louis Raphael Sako's urgent appeal is for 'courageous dialogue'. Lamenting that 'some have already started beating the war drums', he appeals for peace, noting war would be 'disastrous', especially for minorities who, as usual, would 'pay a high price'. Please pray for Iraq and its Christians.

+ *Religious Liberty Prayer Bulletin | RLPB 424 | Wed 20 Sep 2017*

## Mosque in Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, Scotland

(On 31 August 2017, the Western Isles Council approved a planning application for the creation of a mosque in Stornoway, [Isle of Lewis, Scotland]. Following this decision, the Presbytery of the Outer Hebrides issued a press release in which they indicated their concerns regarding this development. (The text of the press release is below.)

### Mosque in Stornoway

Last Thursday, the Comhairle granted planning permission for the setting-up of a mosque in the centre of Stornoway. The Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) Presbytery of the Outer Hebrides regard this as a most unwelcome development. Having made a representation on the matter to the Council prior to the determination of the application, we now wish to state publicly the reasons why we object to the creation of a mosque in Stornoway.

Our main concern is with the

religion of Islam itself. If a mosque ever opens, Islam will be able to promote itself in our midst through public worship, despite its beliefs and practices being alien to the religious convictions of the vast majority of our community. Islam is wholly inconsistent with the teaching of the Word of God in Holy Scripture, which is the only rule to direct us. It is opposed to the Christian religion as confessed by the Church historically since apostolic times, and as established by law in our land since the Reformation.

Fundamentally, Islam utterly denies the divine Person and redeeming work of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who died on the cross to satisfy the justice of God, that He might grant forgiveness to sinners. Since Islam has no Saviour, it offers no hope to guilty and hell-deserving sinners, for we cannot save ourselves by our own works. The Bible declares that, having paid the price for the sins of His people, Christ rose triumphantly from the dead, ascended bodily to heaven, and is now seated at God's right hand. From there He will return to this world at the end of time as the infallible Judge of us all.

Islam is also incompatible with, and indeed a threat to, our religious and civil liberties, as is very evident from the situation which prevails in those countries where it dominates. The oppression of Christians and the reduced status of women under Islam are well-known, as is the willingness of some of its followers to spread its influence by violent means.

It is a sobering fact that in recent years many militant Islamists or 'jihadists' have entered European countries under the guise of being refugees and migrants, when their real intention has been to wage war on the West on behalf of their religion; we are witnessing the tragic results of this deception in the form of regular acts of carnage, including in the UK. We have also seen young men born and brought up in

our own country who have been radicalised in mosques and have turned against the society which has hosted them.

We stress that we have nothing against individual Muslims, least of all any who have been forced to flee their homelands because of persecution and suffering. Our desire and prayer for those who have made their way to Scotland and other parts of the UK is that they would hear the gospel of Christ and find the way of salvation, coming to know the love, grace and forgiveness of God.

Finally, we urge the Lord's people to make this situation a matter of earnest prayer, asking the Almighty that in His kindness He will grant that no mosque will ever appear in Stornoway. Man may propose, but God always disposes. Above and beyond this particular issue, we need to plead with the Lord that in His mercy He would enable us to turn from our sinful and foolish course as a nation, and return to Him. Let us take our confidence from the Bible, which says, "Is any thing too hard for the Lord?" (Genesis 18:14).

7 September 2017

+ *Presbyterians Week, 20 September 2017*

## Muslim Youths 'Beat Drums of War' in Nigeria

A coalition of Northern Muslim youth groups issued a chilling ultimatum in Kaduna on June 6. The 'Kaduna Declaration' gave the Igbo (the mostly Christian Africans indigenous to Nigeria's south-east) a deadline of 1 October (Nigerian Independence Day) to leave the North, after which time they would be forcibly ejected. Subsequently, anti-Igbo hate speech has proliferated across the north, sending ethnic-religious tensions soaring.

In early September the government of President Muhammadu Buhari launched Operation Python Dance 2 and sent military

forces into Umuhia, the capital of Abia state, to arrest IPOB leader Nnamdi Kanu. [IPOB (Indigenous People of Biafra) advocates for the independence of Biafra/Eastern Nigeria. It is not a militant group and does not have an armed wing.] On 12 September tanks and other armoured vehicles descended on Kanu's home, triggering protests from horrified IPOB supporters. Clashes ensued, resulting in numerous deaths. Video footage posted to social media showed Nigerian soldiers beating, torturing and killing unarmed Igbo. This in turn triggered ethnic-religious skirmishes in other cities in neighbouring states as Igbo sought revenge.

On 14 September the cycle of violence escalated further as Hausa-Fulani Muslims attacked Igbo traders in Jos, capital of the volatile Middle Belt state of Plateau. At least three Igbo were killed (including two known Christians) and several injured before the police managed to calm the situation. Security was strengthened at churches on Sunday 17 September to prevent further attacks.

On 17 September a mob of some hundreds of Muslim youths attacked Igbo traders in Sokoto, the capital of Sokoto State in Nigeria's far north-west. The Igbo fled for their lives as their properties were looted and torched.

**BLAME THE VICTIM:** The government subsequently proscribed IPOB as a terrorist organisation, rendering anyone who participates in the group's activities liable to a jail term of 20 years. Catholic Cardinal John Onaiyekan slammed the move noting: 'The title of terrorists should not just be thrown at anybody. And there is a danger that if we continue this way, it may become more and more difficult for us to arrive at a peaceful solution.' He wondered why IPOB had been deemed terrorists while the Fulani herdsmen 'who are armed, lethal, murderous, vicious and have been killing people in our communities' were not. Operation Python Dance 2 – which one commentator has likened to 'killing a fly with a sledgehammer' – is ongoing in five south-eastern states.

The situation in Nigeria is absolutely dire. The stage has been set for a serious ethno-religious crisis. Please pray! May the Lord protect and preserve his precious people.

+ *Religious Liberty Prayer Bulletin | RLPB 425 | Wed 27 Sep 2017*

### **Victoria's Euthanasia Bill Puts Vulnerable People At Risk**

Legalising physician-assisted suicide in Victoria would fundamentally change the nature of medicine and put vulnerable people at risk, argues FamilyVoice Australia.

'Allowing doctors to deliberately kill certain patients radically alters their role,' said FamilyVoice's National Director, Ashley Saunders. 'Euthanasia creates a tectonic shift in health ethics and risks bringing out the worst in human nature.'

He expressed concern that the pressure for a cost-efficient health system may warp into a preference for cheap death over expensive care. Euthanasia laws implicitly tell terminally ill people that they are a burden to their loved ones and to the economy and should remove themselves. As Dying with Dignity admits, fear of being a burden is cited in 40-59% of assisted suicide requests in Oregon and Washington.

Mr Saunders rejected the argument that euthanasia laws are needed to allow people to die with dignity, saying, 'People have intrinsic dignity and a deep worth that can never be diminished. It is not dependent on a certain state of health or manner of death. Respecting people's dignity does not mean killing them off when they are most vulnerable but rather supporting them through high quality palliative care until their natural death,' he said. 'Euthanasia laws remain rare because we are rightly concerned about protecting vulnerable people and upholding high standards of medical ethics,' concluded Mr Saunders. 'I urge politicians to listen to the grave concerns of three former presidents of the AMA Victoria, and reject this dangerous bill.'

+ *FamilyVoice Australia, Media Release, 26 September 2017*

### **Westpac Bank Employees Manipulated & Shamed Into Voting**

### **Yes**

Coalition for Marriage calls for Westpac and St George bosses to retract the incorrect, manipulative and morally bankrupt email that was sent from a staff networking group to all bank employees advising that voting 'yes' in the same sex marriage survey "would prevent 3000 suicides per year".

It is unclear on what the email based its data, given that there were less than 3000 suicides in Australia in 2016. Coalition for Marriage spokesman Dr David van Gend said the claim is completely incorrect. "The claim is at best ignorance, at worst emotional blackmail. Clinically, it is absurd to suggest that marriage laws lead to suicide.

A gay academic points out that there is no simple connection between laws for same-sex marriage and youth suicidality. Associate Professor Rob Cover from the University of Western Australia observes that the rate of GLBTIQ suicide "has not dropped significantly despite a whole host of other legislative changes and protections, from de-criminalisation of homosexuality, to anti-vilification laws, to institutional anti-discrimination policies in schools and youth recreational organisations."

Dr van Gend asked, "Why then would 'marriage equality' be the magic legislative wand that makes LGBT depression disappear?"

"After all, gay couples in Australia have already achieved full 'relationship equality' – the same legal status and social benefits as other couples," Dr van Gend concluded.

"The issue of suicide is highly emotive and should not be used as a coercion technique to manipulate employees into voting a particular way on a political issue," said Coalition for Marriage spokeswoman Sophie York. "Also, given that the email went to all staff and was obviously intended to affect the response of staff members to the postal survey, these banks need to consider whether the email was required to have political authorisation," she concluded.

+ *Coalition for Marriage, 6 October 2017*

# Children under the Banner — Jonah 4

## An Angry Prophet: A Forgiving God!

God did not destroy Nineveh because they turned away from being wicked.



Jonah was very angry. He knew God was kind and forgiving.

Jonah made a shelter near the city and waited to see what would happen.

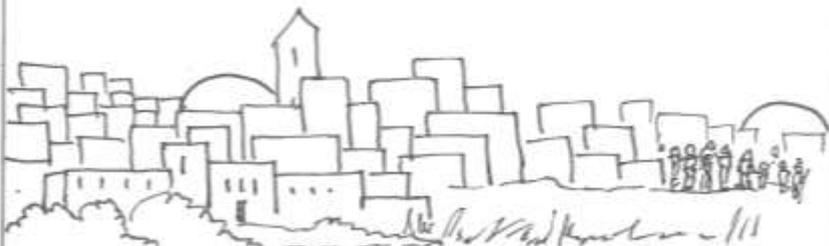


God made vine grow to give Jonah shade.



The next day God sent a worm to destroy the vine. A scorching wind came and the sun blazed on Jonah's head. Jonah felt sorry for himself and wanted to die.

"You worried about the vine," said God.



"Should I not be concerned about Nineveh, a city with more than 120,000 people in it?"

# Prescribed Search Work

## NOVEMBER 2017

*Senior Section 12 years and over; Intermediate 10—11 years; Junior 9 years and under*

### SENIOR AND INTERMEDIATE (Intermediate omit questions 4 and 8)

#### 1 SAMUEL 28

1. What did Saul say to his servants, when the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams nor by Urim nor by prophets?
2. What did the woman of En-dor do when she saw Samuel?
3. What did Samuel tell Saul would happen on the next day?

#### Chapter 29

4. Why did the princes of the Philistines ask that David be sent home and not go to battle with them? (2 verses)

#### Chapter 30

5. What did David find had happened to Ziklag when he returned? (2 verses)
6. What was the Lord's answer when David asked if he should pursue the Amalekites?
7. How much of the spoil did David recover from the Amalekites? (2 verses)
8. What was David's answer when the wicked men would not give any of the spoil to the two hundred men left at the brook Besor? (2 verses)

## JUNIOR

#### MARK chapter 14

1. What did Jesus say when some were angry with the woman who had anointed him? (2 verses only)
2. What were Jesus' words when he gave the bread and then the cup to his disciples? (2 separate verses)
3. What was Jesus' prayer to his Father in the garden of Gethsemane?
4. How did Jesus answer when the high priest asked him if he was the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?

**Please send the answers to:**  
**Mrs I Steel**  
**PO Box 942**  
**Epping NSW 1710**  
**The questions for the whole year**  
**are available from the above postal**  
**address or by email at:**  
[iesteel@gmail.com](mailto:iesteel@gmail.com)

# Life under the Banner

## 8 Tips that Improved my Bible Reading with my Kids

Marty Sweeny

I know that reading the Bible with my kids is important—but I find it a real challenge. Even though my four kids are keen to read the Bible, it's a lot harder to get God's word in front of them than it should be. You would think that a seminary-trained pastor like myself wouldn't need much help. I've been trained in teaching people the Bible, and I have lots of experience in explaining it to others. It's what I do every week.

But I *still* struggle to do it. With all the different schedules going on in our household, it's hard to find a consistent time for us to sit down together and do *any* activity, let alone a 20-minute Bible study.

I also struggle because our kids are so different developmentally. Our eldest is ten and our youngest is five, so it feels like their learning stages are worlds apart. We want to make the Bible reading interesting and engaging for our eldest, and also accessible for our younger children. This takes hard work, and when we're already tired it can seem impossible. It's easy to be discouraged.

My guess is that I'm not the only one who feels this way. If we're honest, there are lots of things that make it hard for us to sit down with our children and spend time in the Scriptures

together.

So let me share with you eight tips that really encouraged me to continue persevering when it comes to reading the Bible with my children. These tips are short and practical, and helpful regardless of whether you're in a regular Bible reading routine or a real rut. They come from Jon Nielson's new book *Bible Reading with Your Kids* (published by Matthias Media):

1. Pick a regular time and place for Bible reading
2. Read short chunks of Scripture
3. Where possible, pick a literal Bible translation
4. Stop often to explain and gauge comprehension
5. Think of age-appropriate questions for follow-up discussion
6. Connect each story/passage to Jesus
7. Let the Bible reading guide you to a time of prayer
8. Be willing to do it badly.

That fourth tip changed our Bible reading immediately. It sounds straightforward and obvious, but I needed to hear it and I've been able to put it into practice already. Instead of racing through our devotional time, we now stop regularly to check how our kids are going. I am actively mak-

ing sure that my kids understand the words and concepts in the passage. Often it's just a short pause to ask if anything was confusing, and many times I find there was a word or phrase they simply didn't understand. When we explain what it means, we see them really start to comprehend God's word.

I have really been encouraged by Nielson to keep the Bible in its proper place, at the centre of our family devotions. With so many wise tips and encouragements, I'm excited to see how the wisdom in this book continues to transform the way that our family reads the Scriptures together.

If you're like me and find that reading the Bible with your children isn't easy, take time to reflect on the list of tips above, and consider which one you might be able to try today. Also have a read of Jon Nielson's *Bible Reading With Your Kids*, where he explains each one of these tips in greater detail, both why he recommends it and how he personally has put it into action. Finally, continue to think and pray about how you will persevere in the crucial task of sharing God's word with your children daily.

+ [GoThereFor.com](http://GoThereFor.com)

### Synod Finances

"As at 30/9/17 the balances of the main *Working Funds* of the church Synod were:

\$ 18,033 - Missions General

( 26,587) - OVERDRAWN Missionary Support (TI Leggott/AIM)

-----

\$ ( 8,554) – OVERDRAWN Combined balances

=====

\$167,910 – Missions Relief (Equities Account)

\$ 6,353 - Missions Relief (Working Account)

\$ 13,671 - Stipend Relief

\$ 5,000 – Stipend Relief (Brisbane)

\$190,381- Training of Ministry

\$ 13,309 - Youth & Fellowship

\$ 58,042 - Synod General Fund

The main area of need is *Missionary Support (TI Leggott AIM)* which is currently overdrawn \$26,587.

Increased financial support for Rev TI Leggott is needed in Missions funds so as to be able to provide his stipend and superannuation payments at the current level.

Your prayerful and practical support is encouraged.

"By faith give yourself to Him, and then by charity serve Him with what you have, and doubt not of a plentiful return." -

Thomas Gouge.

# The Bible in the Banner

## Capitalisation for Divine Pronouns?

Stephen 't Hart

You will find many Christian writers use the capitalisation of pronouns when referring to the Triune God. They do this to show a deep respect and reverence for the name of God, a reverence that we would not want to see diminished in any way.

However I am not convinced that the capitalisation of the pronouns such as you, your, he, him, who, whom, me, my and us when referring to God necessarily does this and, more importantly, if the lack of such capitalisation diminishes our reverence for God's name.

You cannot say that the NIV and ESV removed the capitalisation of pronouns referring to God still adhered to by the NKJV..." It would be more correct to say that the NKJV added the capitalisation of pronouns. Such capitalisation is a relatively new development, beginning in the late 1800s and isn't found in the historic English Bibles such as those of Wycliffe (1380), Tyndale (1534), Geneva (1557), or the King James Version of 1611. Hence, for example, Psalm 23:3 reads in the KJV, "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." In addition, you won't find this capitalisation in older Bible commentaries such as those of Calvin or Matthew Henry.

A second reason to emphasize the fact that the NKJV added the capitalisation of divine pronouns is because this is not done in any shape or form in the original text of holy Scripture.

Hence the translator interprets when a pronoun refers to God and indicates this by giving it a capital letter. That does not normally matter but there are texts where this becomes problematic. It is jarring, for example, to see such capitalisation placed in the mouths of the

Jews at the very time that they denied Christ's divinity in John 10:33, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God." (NKJV)

More problematic, however, is when such capitalisation is applied to the Messianic texts in the Old Testament. Some texts such as Isaiah 7:14 are commonly thought to have a first and second fulfilment. How then should we write the pronouns in those instances? The NKJV has "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel" but the lesser-known Holman Christian Standard Bible does not

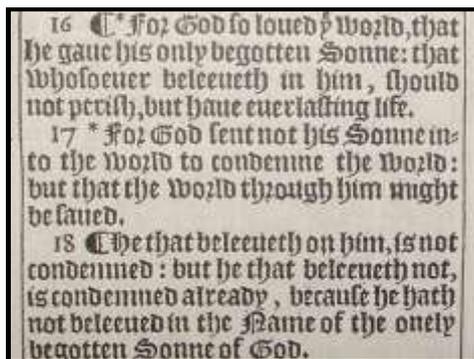


Photo of text of a 1611 First Edition Authorized Version (KJV) Holy Bible

use capitalisation in this instance, since it sees an initial fulfilment of the prophecy in the immediate context to King Ahaz. Who is right? If we see a first and a second fulfilment in prophecies such as this (an exegetical decision in and of itself) should we capitalise or should we not? Either way a decision is made for the reader that neither the original text nor the common usage of English grammar require us to do.

We also see this problem in the Messianic Psalms – a matter that is of particular importance when it

comes to our song book. The NKJV considers Psalm 45 to refer to the Messiah and capitalises all pronouns. Not only does that make for awkward reading (cf. verse 9, 11, 16), but it also takes away from the understanding that this Psalm probably refers in the first place to Solomon. I note that the 1984 Book of Praise does not follow the NKJV (or the NASB) with respect to capitalisation here. Similarly, Psalm 22 has the pronouns capitalised in the NKJV, but this is not found in the 1984 Book of Praise. What should be done here: use capitals for the entire Psalm at the expense of interpreting it in its original context, or choose in this instance not to capitalise but then lose something of its clear Messianic intent? It is particularly in the Old Testament Messianic psalms and prophecies that the use of capitalisation of pronouns referring to the Triune God become a hindrance rather than a help. Perhaps it would be better, therefore, to go back to what was done in previous generations, stick to the common usage of English grammar and to rethink the practice of capitalisation when it comes to the translation of Scripture and putting Scripture into song.

*This first appeared as a response letter in 'Una Sancta', 18 June 2016. It has been slightly adapted. The Rev. Stephen 't Hart is a minister in the Free Reformed Churches of Australia.*

# Churches in the Banner



### The Taree PCEA Sign

Objections to several signs were fully reported in *The Presbyterian Banner* of November, 2016.

During the period for filling in the Plebiscite survey, our signs have read as indicated. To date no complaints have been received nor the board defaced. The Christian Church is under attack world-wide. May we all stand firm against the lunacy invading our nation and the Western World. Remember Christ's words: "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. Christ announced: "If you love Me, keep my commandments" (John 15:15). If you turn from the Lord Jesus to the support of organised Satanic attacks on Christian morality, remember the coming day of judgement. But remember to pray as Christ instructed us – "But I tell you who hear Me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who ill-treat you" (Luke 6:27-28)

+ *Issachar, Taree*



in. Ladies' craft group met to do cards and scrapbooking. Thank you to Denise. Our friend Rita passed away recently and her presence and witness will be sadly missed. We were pleased to welcome Wilma Robinson, who will be here until the end of October. We are thankful to have her husband Neil, an elder from Taree, supply our pulpit for some three months.



### Ulverstone

The Fellowship Group organised an evening at the Ten Pin Bowling Alley. Thirty people enjoyed a fun filled night, with a very vocal cheer squad and some good (and not so good) scores. The evening finished with drinks at McDonald's. Thanks to the young ones for inviting the oldies to join



Please note your subscription renewal for 2018 is due

The annual subscription prices are \$35 per annum within a bulk order (5 or more), \$40 per annum for an individual subscription within Australia, and \$AU50 for individual overseas subscriptions.

Donations are also gladly received to enable mailing to theological colleges and libraries.

Please send your subs in as soon as possible to ensure continued reception  
If you send it via our Bank Account please put your name with the deposit