

SANDHURST BAPTIST CHURCH
RYE ROAD, SANDHURST, CRANBROOK, KENT.
Website: www.sandhurstbaptistchurch.org.uk

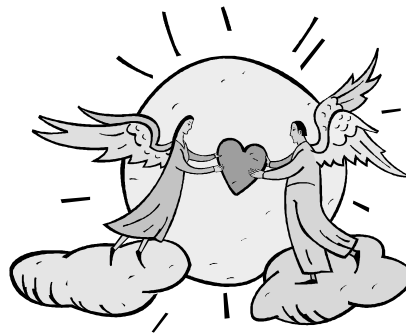
Pastor: Ken Slater, "Cherry Yate", Brookfield, Sandhurst, Cranbrook, Kent,
TN18 5HU. Tel: (01580) 850446. E-mail kenslater@waitrose.com

Secretary: Mr. Chris Knott, Alderden Cottage, Sponden Lane, Sandhurst, Cranbrook,
Kent, TN18 5NR. Tel: (01580) 850251.

Treasurer: Mrs E. M. Slater, "Cherry Yate", Brookfield, Sandhurst, Cranbrook, Kent.
TN18 5HU. Tel: (01580) 850446

Deacons: Mr. Ron Binder, Mr. Shaun Chapman, Mr Chris Knott (Secretary),
Mrs. Liz Slater (Treasurer),

Dear Friends,



“I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband” (Revelation 21 vs. 2)

What will heaven be like? What will it be like on that great and glorious day when Jesus returns? These questions cannot be adequately answered due to the inadequacy of languages to describe the glories of eternal bliss.

The writer of Revelation uses picture language to give us a glimpse of what glory will be like and he tells us enough to make us aware that heaven is going to be a wonderful place for the believing Christian. The picture above reminds us of some of the fantasy which surround the subject of heaven and if words are inadequate to describe celestial glory, then the works of the greatest artists also fail to portray its majesty.

In his vision John saw something which led him to compare it with one of the loveliest experiences a man can have. He saw the New Jerusalem coming down from Father God and to him it was like seeing a beautiful bride, walking with her father down the aisle prepared for marriage. For those who have had that experience, it remains unforgettable. No words can describe the feelings and emotions that stir in the heart of a bridegroom, when he sees the one he loves approaching to be presented to him adorned in a beautiful bridal dress.

The marriage ceremony signifies the beginning of a new life which is to be spent in close harmony and lived out in love. Sadly due to sin and selfishness, the wonderful estate of marriage is being somewhat destroyed in our generation. Though marriage can and should be a wonderful estate, it can never match the marriage that is to come for Christians when Christ the bridegroom will return for his bride, the church.

Marriage involves “leaving and cleaving” and usually living in a new home. Heaven will involve in us leaving this earth as we know it and living for ever in the many mansions which Jesus is

busily preparing for eternity as time and seasons get daily nearer to their extinction. What will heaven be like? Will the many mansions be the myriads of stars and planets?

Using picture language which calls for us to employ our imagination, John speaks of heaven's brilliance being like that of a very precious jewel, like jasper, clear as crystal. When very precious jewels are viewed, they have the capacity to make a person gasp with wonder and admiration. I don't know how many of us have ever viewed the foundations of our earthly dwellings, we are content to rarely think about them and in a lifetime never dig down to look at them. They are not worth seeing from an aesthetic point of view. All we are likely to see is cold stone surrounded by mud.

In heaven John describes the foundations of the Holy City as being made of the most precious jewels and such is the glory of the edifice above, that even the most glorious of precious stones can be buried in the ground to support it. In Rev 21 vs. 18 he tells us that the walls are made of jasper which is often highly polished and which was one of the stones in the breastplate of the Old Testament High Priest.

It would be seriously missing the point of the book of Revelation, if all the Christian longed for were streets paved with gold in a city as clear as glass. If only architectural beauty is to beholden in that city of light then it will like be surveying a magnificent cathedral and failing to appreciate any spiritual significance. It is said of a tourist from the USA that she became frustrated when on a conducted tour of a mighty cathedral because the tour guide spoke only of statues, stained glass windows and history. After the tour the guide asked if there were any questions and the American lady enquired. "Have there been any conversions here lately?" Such a question can readily bring silence.

We may walk on streets that seem like pure gold in heaven but the true glory of our heavenly abode will not be the eternal city, magnificent as it will be, but rather He who dwells therein. Due to God's presence, nothing which defiles will enter, there will be no night there because the Lord God will give light and the city gates will never be closed. We will see the Saviour's face and his name will be on our foreheads. It will be great to be inside!

However on the outside it will not be glorious because debarred from the New Jerusalem will be those who practise magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practises falsehood (Rev 22 vs. 15).

The burning question is how can we gain entrance to the New Jerusalem, how can we be guaranteed a place where forever we will be with the Lord Jesus, how can we avoid the misery of being with those who make life down here on earth miserable? Jesus himself gives us the answer through his servant John to whom he gave the book of Revelation.

In John 3 vs. 3 he said to Nicodemus, "*No-one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.*" Without the new-birth a person cannot recognise the kingdom of God, his eyes blinded by Satan cannot behold its beauty. In John 3 vs. 5 Jesus goes on to show that not only can an unbeliever not see the kingdom but he cannot and will not *enter* it. Jesus said, "*No-one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the spirit.*" Jesus makes clear what disqualifies, but in John 14 vs. 6 he shows what qualifies a person to enter.

Is it by study, can a person purchase salvation and thus buy a ticket to heaven, can a person merit it by personal obedience and keeping the Ten Commandments? Is going to church, reading the Bible or praying the way in? Jesus says, "*I am the way, the truth and the life,. No-one comes to the Father except through me.*" The context is all about Jesus going to heaven to prepare a place for his followers. This verse shows us that is about *who we know* rather than *what we know*. Often we glibly say when we see people gain an advantage, "*It's who you know that counts!*" That may be true on earth at times but it is always true about heaven.

Will you be there? Do you know Jesus as your own personal Saviour? Jesus is coming soon which is certainly true not only regarding his Second Coming, but he is certainly coming for each one of us as individuals. It is an exciting prospect for the believer.

Every good wish

Ken



The invisible proof that God exists

By Silvio Famularo

(Part 1)

Silvio is a God-loving New Zealander born of Italian parents. He is a semi-professional operatic tenor, actor, comedian and orator. Silvio is passionate about exposing the false theories of evolution and spreading the gospel to the unsaved.

Many people, including a lot who believe in God, have stated that we cannot prove that God exists. They come to this conclusion because unlike animals, vegetables and minerals, God is not a being that can be seen, measured, weighed, put on display or examined. As they say, “You can’t put God in a test tube.” Nevertheless, the proof that He exists has always been patently obvious from the very first day He created the world.

Nearly two thousand years ago, in the first chapter of his letter to the Romans, the apostle, Paul, wrote, “From the time the world was created, people have seen the earth and the sky and all that God has made. They can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse whatsoever for not knowing God. (Romans 1:20 New Living Translation.)

Well, if God’s known invisible qualities were obvious enough in Paul’s day for people to be without excuse for not believing in Him, how much less excuse is there today for not believing in God? Man is discovering more and more of God’s extraordinarily amazing invisible resources all the time.

The invisible resources discovered in modern times

In Paul’s day, it was doubtful that people understood the invisible forces of **magnetism and gravity** that keep every planet in the whole universe rotating at a predetermined speed and travelling continually in a predestined course. The evidence of magnetism and gravity may have been noticeable to some people in Paul’s time, but few people, if any, would have understood that these forces hold the universe in place.

If we were to be deprived of electricity in this day and age, the entire world would be thrown into complete chaos. But who would have known what this **invisible power** we call electricity was in Paul’s time?

People in those times knew that sound travelled, but who would have known about the reality of sound waves, which are **invisible**?

Many people centuries ago would have noticed how cats, dogs and other animals, after being taken many kilometres from their usual habitat, could find their way back to

where they came from without using a map, but who would have guessed that to do this they relied on their ability to pick up invisible ultrasonic sounds and sniff out smells that are beyond the powers of human beings to detect?

Many creatures, notably dolphins, depend on invisible ultrasonic sound waves for catching prey. Bats, which we all know are completely blind, rely on ultrasonic sound waves to catch flying insects while flying at full speed. Their expertise at doing this is so great that they are able to distinguish between a moth and a falling leaf in pitch darkness.

To what invisible provision can we attribute the fact that birds know how to migrate to specific destinations they have never been to before on the other side of the world?

Cell phones

Now let's consider cell phones. Who would have believed, even a century ago that through some invisible means it would be possible to both speak and listen to someone on the other side of the planet, using a little plastic wireless gadget that you can carry in your pocket? And not just talk and listen to anyone by chance, but be able to choose the very person you want to have a conversation with. Sure, man has invented cell phones and discovered how voices can be transmitted through them. But can any person take the credit for creating the invisible waves that the voices travel on? Are sound waves supposed to be a consequence of evolution?

Who in the apostle Paul's time would have believed that it would have been possible to capture coloured moving pictures with sound, which could be replayed at will, let alone be transmitted by air? People can now capture videos with their cell phones and then email them overseas using the same tiny gadget. And almost unbelievably, every frame in the series of pictures is sent in the exact sequence with every sound synchronised. Can any person with a sound mind come to the conclusion that such miraculous transactions that are taking place through the air millions of times every minute of the day can be attributed to a fluke of nature?

That audiovisual pictures can be transmitted through thin air is amazing enough, but is it not even more mind boggling that with the click of another tiny gadget, a remote control device, it is possible to select any of hundreds of television channels instantly and at any minute of the day. If that doesn't strike you as being astounding, what about the fact that on these programmes it is not unusual to see a television presenter interviewing a couple of people living in separate countries and seeing all three on the screen at once? Such interviews can be seen even on battery operated television sets with no connecting cables. The pictures of the interviewees are transmitted to a satellite floating above the earth and then relayed to television studios and then sent out to our TV screens, generally with no detectable loss in time. It seems that there is no limit to the amount of sound and moving pictures that can be transmitted via invisible waves that inhabit invisible air.

Because we now take all these miraculous invisible resources for granted, we seldom stop to think how incredible it is that not only can the sound of an orchestra

playing a whole symphony can be stored forever on a round bit of plastic, but on a DVD you can even watch the members play the symphony.

Can one ignore the reality of God's invisible laws of nature that enable us to move the dial on a radio and keep receiving broadcasts from innumerable radio stations transmitted on different frequencies?

Who in Paul's day would have thought that by some invisible power it would have been possible to look inside a human body by means of x-rays?

Who would have cooked their dinner using microwaves in the first century? Most people have seen microwave ovens, but has anyone ever seen a microwave?

Who in Old Testament times could have imagined that there was such a thing as radar? Invisible radar waves are commonly used in ships and submarines to identify the altitude, direction, or speed of both stationary and moving objects, even when the moving objects travel at great speeds huge distances away. Just before the time of writing this article, scientists using radar were able to detect and shoot down a troublesome spacecraft circulating the earth 240 kilometres above it. Someone described this feat as the equivalent of one bullet aiming at and hitting another bullet travelling at thousands of kilometres an hour 240 kilometres away. The people who were able to achieve this feat deserve credit, but it would have been impossible to achieve it without the reliability of God's invisible resources.

It was obvious to people in Paul's time that the sun gave off heat, but who would have known much about ultra violet rays and solar power? No one was able to see the rays, but it would be a very ignorant person who didn't notice how much vegetation depended on the invisible power being relayed between the sun and the earth. I find it both intriguing and amusing that invisible resources such as wind and solar power can be employed to produce another invisible resource, electricity.

The computer and the Internet

But if the invisible resources mentioned above are still not enough testimony to the existence of God, then surely this evidence should be blatantly manifest to anyone using a computer.

How can anyone who has operated a computer not be aware of the invisible powers that enable the computer to store virtually unlimited information and perform miraculous, mind-boggling calculations with lightning speed? For instance, how come virtually any data contained within billions of web sites can be so hastily singled out of thin air? It confounds me that I can type words like 'Jesus Christ' in a computer's Internet search engine and within a fraction of a second it will inform me that it found over 300 million responses. But even more amazing, all these responses will have been sorted in some calculated order of preference in the manner that telephone books have entries sorted in alphabetical order!

I have a copy of the Bible stored on my computer. By clicking on the '**Word Count**' button in the program that contains it, it informs me, instantly, that this Bible contains:

- 1,682 (A4) pages

- 815,448 words
- 3,458,107 characters - with no spaces).
- 4,272,158 characters - with spaces).

Astoundingly, by clicking on the computer only three times in the right places I can make a complete copy of that whole 1,682 page Bible with it having every single character and punctuation mark in the identical place. I could then print it out if I wanted to. With only two more clicks I, or anybody else, could make another complete replica that could be printed out.

Once again, I've got to give the credit due to all those people who have been involved in developing computer technology, but they have only been able to achieve what they have achieved because God paved the way with so many invisible resources.

When it is possible because of God's invisible resources to recreate a whole new copy of the Bible in a few seconds, one can almost begin to start to understand how God created the first living creatures just by saying "*Let there be, birds, animals and human beings etc.*"

I spend hours on my computer every day, and never cease to be amazed at what can be achieved by them as a result of human beings discovering the hitherto unknown invisible resources that God has provided us with. When he was on earth, Jesus said, "*Seek and you shall find*". Knowing what we now know, would anybody in this day and age doubt that statement?

I waver in opinion over what is the most outstanding factor concerning the manipulation of God's invisible resources through the computer. But one that continually has me staggered is the fact that one can download programs that enable one to manipulate these resources. These programs are virtually comprised of invisible implements we call 'tools' that can be used to do the manipulating. One of my hobbies is editing videos by means of an editing suite that I downloaded on my computer through invisible thin air. If that isn't bewildering enough, this invisible substance, like all computer programs, is not something that vanishes after it arrives. Because of the use of other invisible electromagnetic resources it remains stored in my computer.

(To be continued)

Quote ***“Evangelicals throughout history have taken things that are peripheral and made them central – resulting in what is central becoming peripheral”***