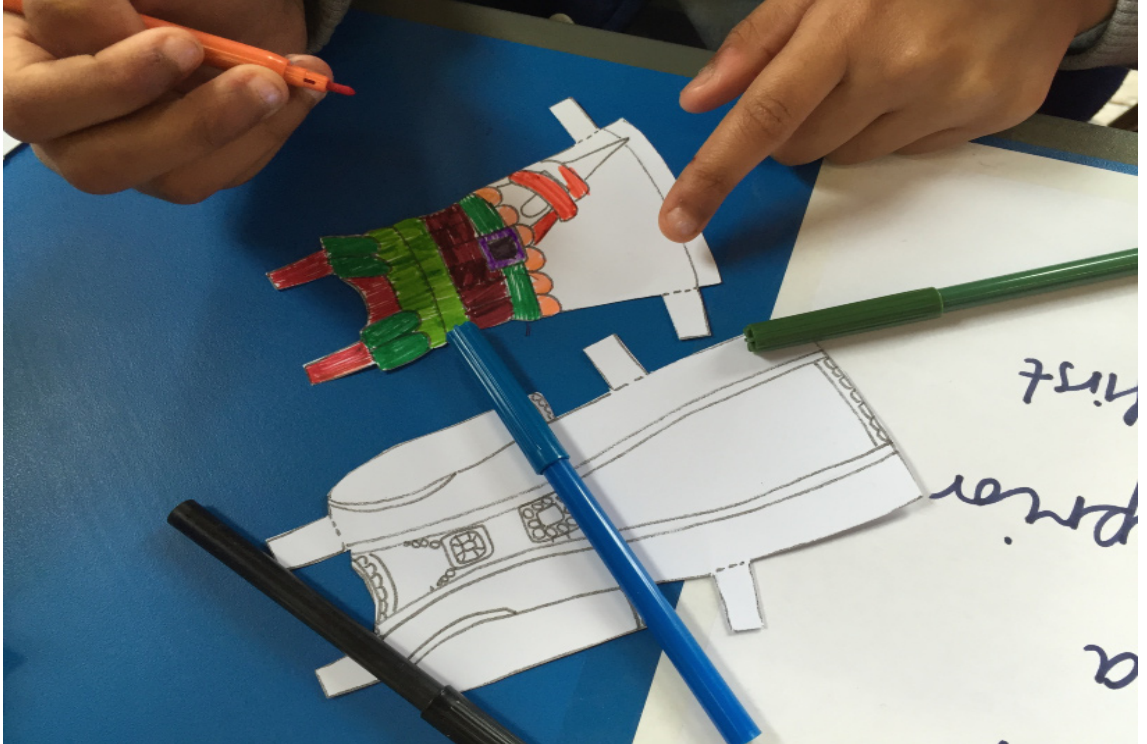


Clifton News

No 269 April - June 2015

Published since 1948





News

Easter Holiday Club

We give God thanks for answered prayer during this year's holiday club. Over 80 different children attended, many of whom already come to our weekly clubs. Numbers each day were 57, 67, 70, 68 and there were a total of around 80 for the prize giving including 24 adults and older siblings. The theme was the Easter story beginning with the entry of the Lord Jesus into Jerusalem moving onto His arrest in Gethsemane, His trials and the crucifixion. The resurrection was the subject for the prize giving and there was good attention to the Word of God every day and the memory verse, 1 Corinthians 15 vv. 3&4, was learnt by all which was most encouraging. Some children have expressed a desire to come to the Kingfisher camp which takes place in July/August.

There was a good number of helpers from the assembly and we would like to express our thanks to David and Jean Penfold who came every day to help. We would like to also thank all our readers who have been praying for this week of outreach.

Special meetings

We are looking forward to a visit from John Bennett from Kirkby in Ashfield for Special Bible teaching meetings in the will of the Lord

Saturday 6th June at 7:30 pm

Monday 8th June at 7:45 pm

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Meetings

THE WEEK AT CLIFTON

Lord's Day

Breaking of Bread	11.00 am
Family Service	4:00 pm

Monday

Prayer & Ministry	7:45 pm
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Wednesday

Seekers Club	6:30 pm
(Term time only for under 10s)	

Friday

Friday Club	7:30 pm
(Term time only for 10+)	

SUNDAY AFTERNOON FAMILY SERVICE

April

5	Richard Catchpole
12	Nitish Patel
19	Ferranti Wong
26	Alastair Rodger

May

3	Nitish Patel
10	Phil Briercliffe
17	Mike Surry
24	John Aston

June

- 7 Alf Taylor
- 14 Richard Catchpole
- 21 Alastair Rodger
- 28 Norman Gibbons

MONDAY PRAYER & MINISTRY

April

- 6 Easter Monday
- 13 David Willis
- 20 Nitish Patel
- 27 Nitish Patel

May

- 4 Bank holiday - no meeting
- 11 Martin Hayward
- 18 Martin Hayward
- 25 Bank holiday - no meeting

June

- 1 Alastair Rodger
- 8 John Bennett
- 15 Colin Roberts
- 22 Colin Roberts
- 29 Colin Roberts

Question Box

Here are answers to questions asked by the young people at our Friday Club.



What colour is Jesus?

This is a question that is asked fairly regularly by some of the youngsters on a Friday night. I have my suspicions that most of the time it's usually deployed to try and distract whoever's giving the Bible talk. The author remembers trying use a similar technique with his teachers at school to try and distract them from teaching us...

However, taking the question at face value, we would give the following answer:

We don't know for certain, the Bible doesn't tell us.

That is to say, God's Word doesn't provide a photograph or a physical description of Jesus for us, so we can't answer the question definitively. We do know that when the Lord Jesus came into the world, He was a Jew and born in Israel. From that we would assume that he looked like a Middle Eastern or Jewish man.

That answers the question, but also leaves quite a lot of space to fill. So I want to think a bit more about this question.

Is it important to know what colour the Lord Jesus is?
It is and it isn't.

By that I mean that it is important that we know He was born a Jew. The Messiah was prophesied to come as a descendant of Jacob (Numbers 24:17) a descendant of David, (2 Samuel 7:12-13). Were Jesus British or Chinese or Indian, He wouldn't be able to fulfil these prophecies concerning Him. The Lord Jesus is indeed the promised Messiah, the King of the Jews.

On the other hand, it's not an important issue. The Lord Jesus is the Saviour of all kinds (as in age, ethnicity, social class etc ..) of people. It makes no difference, whatever colour our skin is, Christ can save us. He's not more of a Saviour if He shares our particular skin colour; He's not more of a Saviour if He shares our particular ethnicity. The Lord Jesus took on human flesh so that He might "taste death for everyone". He became a man so that He might become the substitute for all that believe in Him, whether they're black, white, rich or poor.

So even though the Lord Jesus came into this world as a Jew, He isn't just the Saviour for Jewish people. Though Jesus came to the nation of Israel first (John 1:11), He commanded His disciples to take the message of the gospel "to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8). God makes it clear for us that there is no longer any distinction between Jew and Gentile (non-Jews). All can be saved by Christ. In Ephesians 2:11-22, Paul explains how through Christ Jesus, God has broken down the wall of division that separated Jew and Gentile, so that now "through Him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father." (v18).

As Paul could put it in Galatians 3:28, "There neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male or female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." God sees no distinction; everyone who is saved is one in Christ Jesus.

Maybe our question was asked to waste a bit of time on a Friday night, but it's given us the chance to think of what God has done. We can be encouraged to know that whoever we meet, wherever we meet them, we can point them to the same Saviour of sinners (Acts 4:12). Should they repent and believe in Lord Jesus, whatever their skin colour, whatever their social status, we can then call that person our brother or our sister in Christ.

Alastair Rodger

Bible Teaching

Elisha Prophet of Water (Part 8)

By the late Charles Wigg (Tasmania)

THE WIDOW'S POT OF OIL

In chapter four of 2 Kings, we are introduced to two women and the first is a widow. She is in a pitiable condition, and is bankrupt. Her husband had been one of the 'sons of the prophets', and according to his widow was one that 'feared the Lord', (Jehovah). Her husband had left her with two sons, who had grown to be young men, and old enough to work, and should have been an asset to their widowed mother. Instead they had proved to be a liability, and instead of being a help to their mother, were running her into debt.



She had borrowed until she could borrow no more, and the crisis had arrived, the creditor was coming to take her two sons to be slaves. If the Law of Jehovah had been followed, this would mean that they would be forced to work. Whether they liked it or not, they would be deprived of their liberty, and have to work for seven years for nothing. She was thus faced with humiliation, sorrow, and disaster, and in her dilemma turned to Elisha to seek his help.

I think that this woman is like many Churches today. There is deadness amongst those that should really provide spiritual food for the Church Family. The result is that the Church is reduced to a state of widowhood, has been borrowing from the world for years, but now is in a situation of emergency, and the young people, who should normally take up their father's responsibility, and carry on the ministry

of the Church, are threatened with slavery by the very world from whom the Church has been borrowing for so long. If we borrow from the world, borrow its entertainment, its organization, its sports etc, its way of doing things, then the day of reckoning will surely come, sooner or later. The great threat today is that our young people will be carried away by the world, and into slavery to the world and its master, the 'wicked one'. 1 John. But if there is a right spiritual state, our young men will be strong, and will overcome the wicked one. 1 John, 2:14-17.

ELISHA'S DILEMMA

What was the Prophet to do? If he put his hand in his pocket, and gave the money necessary to pay the widow's debt, (if he had the money), then he would have made her dependant on him for life. She would have always been after him for more money. There is an important lesson for us to learn here. We should never make people to depend upon us, as if we are the answer to their problem, but rather teach them to depend upon the Lord, and to discover the resources that He has endowed them with.

This is what the Prophet did. He asks "what shall I do for thee? Tell me, what do you have in the house?" To which the widow replied that she had nothing in the house, but then almost as an afterthought, she said, "except a pot of oil". Elisha saw this to be the answer to her need. In that pot of oil, she possessed an inexhaustible resource. Elijah had perhaps told him about his experience with another widow and her cruse of oil, and barrel of meal, at another time, and in another place. But that experience could be no help in this situation, as this widow was in debt. If the oil in the pot did not fail, then she and her sons could eat day by day, but that would not pay her debt, and her sons would still be taken into slavery. So this situation called for another solution, and that solution was to be found in the pot of oil that the widow had ignored.

ELISHA'S REMEDY

Elisha told her to put those lazy boys to work. Send them out to gather vessels, empty vessels, and they were not to be few in number. Because the size of the blessing would depend on the number of vessels gathered. She was then to go inside, and shut the door upon herself and her sons. That means that this was to be a secret experience, there was to be no publicity, no noise, no boasting or shouting to the neighbours, a salient lesson for us in this day of exaggerated claims, and outward show! Then she was to pour out the golden oil from that little pot, into the empty vessels they had borrowed.

It required faith to do this, as we would assume that the pot was small, and the vessels were large. However she did not question, she simply obeyed. The sons brought her the vessels that they had borrowed, and she began to pour out into the formerly empty vessels. It must have filled them all with wonder, as the golden oil poured from that small pot. Perhaps she felt a sense of shame that she had borrowed from outside, while she had such a resource in the house, yet ignored it, left it sitting on the shelf.

Those lazy boys were now useful to her, it was them who brought the vessels to her, and set aside the full vessels, which must have been quite heavy. At last she requested them to bring another vessel, but there were no more remaining, all were full, then the oil stayed. It ceased to flow, if it had not done so, then it would have poured on to the floor, and been wasted. What lessons there are for us in this!

OUR 'POT OF OIL'

The pot of oil represents the Holy Spirit, because in both Old Testament and New, oil represents the Holy Spirit. He is God, and Solomon said of Him that the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him. Yet he deigns to dwell in frail human beings like you and I. What wondrous grace and humility! When he is given His rightful place of Lordship, as guide and controller of everything in the Church, the House of God, then all is well. However down through the ages He has been progressively ignored. Men have taken His place, it is men

that lead and control everything. The Holy Spirit is ignored, grieved and quenched, yet still He does not leave, because the Lord Jesus said that He would be with us forever, and Paul tells us that we are sealed with Him, unto the “day of redemption”, the day when the Lord Jesus will come and take us away, into the place that He has gone to prepare. Until He brings all of us into the enjoyment of the fullness of His completed redemption.

A gradual turning away from God’s word, will lead to spiritual poverty, and eventually to bankruptcy, Mal. 3:7-8, and God is robbed of the place, and the honour that is His due, in His house.. As the result men assume a place of prominence and importance. When men take over, spiritual death takes place, as at Sardis, (Rev. 3:1). Then to keep the household going, the leaders of the Church borrow from the world. This leads into a debt situation, and once we borrow from the world, we have to keep borrowing, so the debt increases, until bankruptcy stares us in the face. It is often the young people that suffer spiritually because of this. It works out this way: In order to keep the local Church seemingly lively, entertainment is introduced. Young people are encouraged to ‘discover and to use’ their musical talents. This enables both boys and girls to show off in front of the congregation, and suits the vanity of the flesh very nicely. History has proved that the more the flesh is catered for, the more attention it demands. However all is covered with a religious garb, and is called ‘worship’. In time if the decline continues, the world will demand payment of the debt owed to it, and our sons and daughters are carried away into the world’s slavery. They may continue in the Church, but only if they can control it, by manipulating, or sacking the elders, and replacing them with younger people who will give them what they want, or even demand. Or else they will often leave the local Church, and either join worldly Churches, or go right into the world.

.... to be continued

Good News

Jesus Wept

by Robert E. Surgenor



THE WORDS, “Jesus wept” compose the shortest verse in the entire Bible; yet what a treasury of thought concerning the Lord Jesus Christ they convey to our hearts. The divine record bears testimony to the fact that He was the Creator of all things (John 1:3; Colossians 1:16). Yet seven hundred and ten years prior to His coming into this world as a babe in the manger, the prophet Isaiah speaks of Him as “a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief” (Isaiah 53:3).

Three times in the Scriptures, we read of the Lord Jesus weeping. At the grave of Lazarus, we find Him with the departed one’s sisters, Mary and Martha, and we read these words: “Jesus wept.” As I think upon this expression, it helps me to understand the compassion and love that was bound in our Lord’s heart toward mankind, even though men hated Him without a cause (John 15:25). This scene of death reminds us of the terrible results of Adam’s sin in the garden of Eden. “Wherefore, as by one man (Adam) sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Romans 5:12). Well might the Saviour weep as He considers the ruined condition of man through sin.

The second time we find the Master weeping is near Jerusalem as He beholds the city (Luke 19:41). He is about to enter its gates, only to be taken, crucified and slain. As a divine Person, He knows all that is going to befall Him there. He also looks beyond that moment and sees the judgment that Jerusalem will bear forty years later (Luke 19:43); and in fulfillment of His words, Titus, in the year A.D. 70, besieged that very city. Because of hunger, mothers cooked and ate their children. Over 2,000 died hiding in sewers; thousands were massacred, the temple was destroyed, and our Lord’s prophecy was

fulfilled. He wept, for they knew not the time of their visitation (Luke 19:44). He came to save them, but they pursued Him to Calvary and nailed Him to the tree. He wept as He thought of their rejection of Him.

The last time we read of the Saviour weeping is in the garden of Gethsemane. The divine record of this touching event is found in Hebrews 5:7. "Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears . . ." Luke says that at this time, He was in such agony that His sweat was mingled with blood. Pain produces sweat, but severely intense pain has been known to produce blood in the sweat. Before chloroform was invented, surgery was often performed with the patient totally conscious. Some experienced blood-mingled sweat because of the excruciating pain. Our Saviour's heart was broken and He experienced such pain as He cried to His Father in heaven to spare Him, if at all possible, from the sufferings of the cross.

THE WEEPING SAVIOUR CRUCIFIED

Sin had raised its ugly head, ruining mankind and shutting heaven's door. Now the Saviour was about to offer Himself as the only Sacrifice to put away sin and to open the way for sinners to obtain forgiveness and eternal life. God declares, "But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Hebrews 10:12). To those who rest on Christ as their only Sacrifice, God guarantees, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Hebrews 10:17). For those who rely on the atoning work of Christ completed on the cross for their eternal forgiveness, His guarantee is final for He says, "Now where remission (a sending away) of these (the trusting sinner's sins) is, there is no more offering for sin" (Hebrews 10:18). Is that clear my friend? "There is no more offering for sin"! What could be plainer than such a statement? The offering of good works can never take away sins! The offering of a wafer on an altar can never remove sins! Confessing sins can never remove sins! Praying can never alter the sinner's position before God or erase his sins! No, no, my friend, only one thing can remove all sins

from the soul's record. God declares, "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22) and the Lord Jesus was the only One who could shed His blood for the remission of sins (Matthew 26:28). God speaks through the apostle Peter saying, "whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43). If God could have provided salvation for us by any other way, He would have spared His only Son from the death of the cross.

How thankful we should be then, for the compassion of the Saviour of sinners, and for His love toward us. Well may we exclaim like the apostle Paul when He wrote to the Galatians: "The Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20). Have you experienced His love for you, by receiving Him as your Saviour?

For those who refuse to rely solely on Christ for forgiveness and salvation, the Lord says, they "shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 8:12). I hope that this situation will never be your eternal case, but that you will come to the Lord Jesus now and rest on Him for your salvation and everlasting blessing.

*"Man of sorrows!" what a name
For the Son of God, who came
Ruined sinners to reclaim!
Hallelujah! What a Saviour!*

*Bearing shame and scoffing rude,
In my place condemned He stood;
Sealed my pardon with His blood;
Hallelujah! What a Saviour!"*

Church History

THE LIFE OF A. W. TOZER (PART 2)

BY MARK BEARDALL

After his ordination, Tozer served a second year at Stonewood Christian and Missionary Alliance Church before moving to the CMA Church in Toledo, Ohio.

His father came to Toledo to hear him preach and was soundly converted. This man who had suffered from depression and a number of nervous breakdowns became a happy, joyful Christian who was always humming hymns, especially, "When the roll is called up yonder."



After a few months at Toledo, Tozer was transferred to another Church in Morgantown, West Virginia. He was often away holding Gospel meetings and many were converted through his preaching. It is interesting to note that in his early ministry, he took part in Gospel meetings held by the healing evangelist F. F. Bosworth. Bosworth was once a follower of the deluded Alexander Dowie, founder of the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion City, Illinois. Bosworth left Zion for the Assemblies of God when he began to speak in tongues. Bosworth was an influential leader in the early days of the Assemblies of God but he could not stay in that denomination because he did not believe that the initial evidence of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit was speaking in tongues. The Christian and Missionary Alliance believed in Christ the Healer but did not emphasize speaking in tongues, so Bosworth joined them. Bosworth encouraged Tozer in his evangelistic preaching and advised him to concentrate on preaching the Gospel rather than trying to exercise a healing ministry. Tozer preached the Gospel and Bosworth prayed for healings.

In December 1924 Tozer became the pastor of the Indianapolis, Alliance Church. Up until this time most of his preaching had been evangelistic and he had been preaching to small congregations but he was now in a large church where people were hungry for Bible teaching. Tozer began to give more time to Bible teaching than he had done in his previous churches.

Tozer's written ministry began in Indianapolis. It was the custom for the pastor to prepare one written sermon for each edition of their local church magazine, "The Light of Life." This publication became more popular than the denominations magazine, "Alliance Weekly."

On 4th November 1928 Tozer moved to Southside Gospel Tabernacle, Chicago where he spent the greater part of his ministry. The congregation gradually grew from about 80 people to about 500 people. The building was unable to contain all the people. So a new building was opened in 1941.

Tozer's thoughtful preaching was popular with students, especially those from Moody Bible Institute. Many students attended their own churches in the morning and Southside in the evening, increasing the attendance to about 800 people. Tozer's fame increased when he was asked to host a radio show for WMBI (Moody Radio) called talks from a Pastors study.

Tozer had a great appetite for reading. He enjoyed reading books on many different subjects. He was often seen carrying piles of books from the library or searching out second hand bookstores. He enjoyed poetry, philosophy, history and the English classics among other things. Tozer developed a large vocabulary and this helped him to speak and to write with precision.

Tozer enjoyed reading religious literature from the past. He was dissatisfied with the shallowness and superficiality of the Christianity of his time. He loved to read the Puritans and the Mystics. He found a hunger and thirst after God in these writers that was lacking in the Christians of his day. He loved to read the hymns of A. B. Simpson and Charles Wesley. We might not endorse some of the mystics that he

read but he read them for their devotional spirit. Tozer wanted to draw near to God and he read books that helped him in this. He had no time for Christian fiction or what he termed, “cheap religious fiction.” He was once invited to speak at a Christian writer’s convention and he preached against using fiction as a means to spread the gospel. It was a sharp rebuke to the organisers and the writers of religious fiction in the congregation. Fiction by its nature is false and we can not communicate the Gospel with falsehood. He was also against the use of drama to communicate the Gospel and he had little time for choirs and entertainment. Nothing could replace the God ordained means of preaching. Tozer felt that the Church was following the entertainment world and that some preachers had made themselves into religious celebrities. He was not impressed with the testimonies of “half converted cowboys” and converted pugilists (boxers) who were, “all converted except their fists.”

Tozer spent hours preparing his sermons and he believed sermons should be made in prayer. “True preaching always begins in prayer.” “Any sermon that does not originate in prayer is not a message from God no matter how learned the speaker. It does no good to make up sermons to preach. Preaching must be the present voice of God to a particular people.”

In 1946 Tozer became Vice-President of the Christian and Missionary Alliance but he resigned after four years because he was afraid that he might become President. In 1950 Tozer became the editor of the Alliance Weekly, later known as the Alliance Life. He prepared an editorial every week as well as preparing sermons, preaching at Southside and conference speaking. The magazine included missionary news and articles by CMA preachers as well as selections from the writings of men of the past like A.B. Simpson, George Mueller, John Bunyan and some of the mystics. Tozer went to his office early in the morning in his neat pressed suit and on his arrival changed into his sweater, visor and his “praying pants.” These trousers allowed him to kneel or lay prostrate before the LORD his maker without creasing his crisp suit. Tozer spent most of the day in prayer, worship, reading and writing. He was not a particularly social man

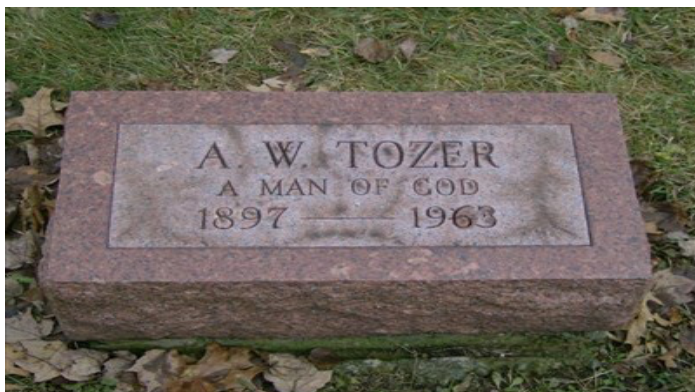
and did not often engage himself in pastoral visits but others in the congregation more gifted in that area saw to that work.

In the late 1950s there was a lot of racial tension in South Chicago as African-Americans moved into the neighbourhood. Many whites wanted to move away and a significant number of people left the Church to move to “all white areas.” The congregation wanted to relocate the church but Tozer was happy to stay and would have welcomed black people. However, when it was clear what the church wanted to do Tozer resigned as pastor. Relocation was too much for him to bear.

Tozer later accepted a call to the Alliance Church in Toronto, Canada. All he was required to do was preach twice on Sunday and the pastoral work would be left for another man. This gave Tozer time for conference speaking and editing the Alliance Life.

Although there are at least forty A. W. Tozer books, Tozer only wrote 9 books the rest were taken from his sermons and editorials. The Pursuit of God and The Knowledge of the Holy are his most popular books. We do not believe that he would have endorsed the A. W. Tozer Study Bible. This has been produced long after his death. He preferred a plain Authorised Version Bible though he sometimes used a Scofield Bible. He wore out many Scofield Bibles but he said that he didn't believe the notes. The A. W. Tozer Bible seems to be the result of “Christian Marketing.”

A. W. Tozer suffered a heart attack on 12th May 1963. He survived until just after midnight. Memorial services were held for him in both Toronto and Chicago.



And thou shalt make holy garments ... for glory and for beauty. And they shall take gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen. (Exodus 28)

Glory and Beauty

In every part His Person shines
As purest gold from Ophir's mines;
A sacred sun that ne'er reclines,
That ne'er reclines!

His heav'nly ways like heav'nly blue,
Enchanting in its azure hue;
Like glist'ning drops of heaven's dew,
On mornings new!

The august air about Him borne,
As purple by a monarch worn,
His stately steps shall e'er adorn,
Shall e'er adorn!

The lonely length to which love led;
Unsounded depth of sorrows dread;
The Suffering Sovereign - scarlet red!
Oh! scarlet red!

Ah! wondrous life of love and light,
As linen finely twined and bright;
A garden of shoshanim white---
My chief delight!

(Leon Hartley, Brook Street Chapel, Tottenham)

The Mount of Olives & Garden of Gethsemane

