

Adventure Into Asia Minor

Modern Turkey is host to many historical ruins that were living cities in the time of the apostles and early Church. This autumn a group visited many of those sites. Peter Hawkins shares his observations about this fascinating tour.

The book of Acts and the epistles of Paul come alive when you walk the streets of Ephesus. Yet in almost complete contrast, the town of Colosse, home to many Christians of the first century AD, remains a 300-foot-high mound or tel waiting to be excavated.

How much of Bible history still remains to be uncovered, ready to continue to verify the importance and accuracy of the Scriptures?

In October, my wife, Sonja, and I were part of a group of 123 visiting Turkey, ancient Asia Minor, during the annual Feast of Tabernacles. This 10-day trip was organised by the United Church of God as one of its worldwide sites celebrating these important Holy Days.



Suburb of Istanbul overlooking the Bosphorus.

We hope you too will be able to capture some of the excitement and value of this unique experience through our pictures and comments.

Deeper meaning to the words

Messages during the eight-day festival services focused both on the future fulfilment of God's kingdom and the present application of words written 2,000 years ago. We would be walking on streets uncovered from

Archaeology continues to verify the accuracy of the Scriptures.

tions of rubble and soil that fellow Christians had trodden, sometimes on their way to buy bread, but also occasionally being dragged to the local amphitheatre to face wild animals and be martyred for their beliefs.

Visiting this area enhanced our appreciation of much of the New Testament. We were guided around archaeological sites that included the locations of the seven congregations mentioned in chapters two and three of the book of Revelation. The messages given by Jesus Christ in vision to John, the last survivor of the original 12

apostles, took on deeper meaning.

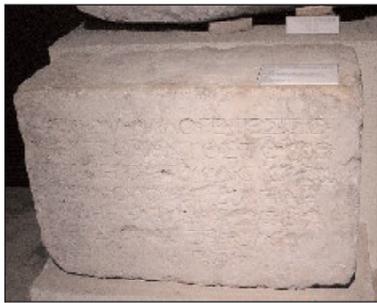
Our journey begins

The early Friday morning flight from Luton airport in England brought us into the smaller of the two international airports at Istanbul by midday. Although we had never travelled to a Moslem state before, Sonja and I were soon to find out that Turkey is a secular Islamic nation. For example, we arrived in the middle of Ramadan, expecting that we would have to take great care not to offend those fasting during the day. However, many people ate openly during the day and before sunset.

Evidence also abounds that Turkey would love to be in the European Union (EU). Prices were often quoted in euros, even though the Turkish lira (YTL) is the official currency. European markets already buy cotton, olive oil and cars from Turkey, but the existing EU member nations are hesitant to accept an Islamic nation into their fold. This reluctance is causing a change in attitude among many Turks and Turkey is beginning to look elsewhere for its trading partners.

Christianity – then and now

On Friday evening we gathered for the opening service of the Feast of



Istanbul Museum: Stones bearing inscriptions: 1) from temple area of Jerusalem; 2) from Hezekiah's tunnel; 3) pillars 'To the Unknown God'.

Tabernacles at the Pera Marmara hotel in Istanbul.

Charles Melear, who co-ordinated the trip, showed four important parallels between Christians living in Asia Minor 2,000 years ago and those living today: There were doctrinal challenges in the early Church; the behaviour of society influenced members; the Church was challenged by leadership issues; and true Christians lived with an expectancy of freedom from slavery and the end of the domination of the Roman empire. Ultimately the return of Jesus Christ will address the challenges.

Festival messages were all encouraging and often linked in with sites we visited later in the day.

Istanbul has beautiful views of the Bosphorus. It bustles with 12 million people – often living in densely populated apartment blocks. The city was previously known as Constantinople after the emperor Constantine. Before leaving the city we visited the museum where three things of biblical interest are particularly significant.

- One of the inscriptions taken from the wall surrounding the temple in Jerusalem declared death to any non-Israelite who passed beyond that point. The apostle Paul referred to this barrier, 'the middle wall of partition', being removed for Gentile Christians in Ephesians 2:14.
- The stone declaring the point where the two teams of builders of Hezekiah's water tunnel met after tunnelling from both ends.
- Three stone pillars 'To the Unknown God', similar to the one Paul spoke of when talking to the

Athenians. No one was allowed to talk about any god other than those already being worshipped. The custom was to erect such a monument to the 'unknown' god to avoid offending any they had omitted.

Some lessons that shone through

It would be impossible to give a detailed description of all the places we visited, yet you can still appreciate the atmosphere and flavour of the land. Here are some of the impressions we gained as we travelled.

Steep and rugged mountains constrain the traveller on foot to the fertile plains below. They also determined the routes followed by traders, armies



and migrations. The mountain ranges run from east to west, resulting in travel along the western shores of Asia Minor being much easier by boat. You didn't have to climb mountains!

There has been a lot of tectonic movement over the centuries, and the earthquakes have



Ephesus: Amphitheatre at end of harbour road, the Arcadian Way; facade of Library of Celsus.

been responsible for the destruction of many of the pagan temples and other buildings.

Colosse

Excavations of pagan Roman and Greek towns and cities reveal massive temples to the gods and centres of sport, learning and culture (hippodromes, gymnasiums and amphitheatres). There must have been such a contrast between these monuments to society and the humble lives of those called by God out of society.

The graves of Colossian members lie buried under the mound of rubble, which is untouched as yet by the archaeologist's trowel. Yet in the resurrection they will rise to tell their stories of counteracting the influence of society around them.

As we walked down streets that Church of God members had trodden nearly 2,000 years ago, we realised we also are often in a 'parallel universe', experiencing this sharp divide between society and the true Way of God.

Experiencing Ephesus

Walking the streets of Ephesus was perhaps when we could best imagine being transported back in time.

So much has been excavated, including several well-decorated Roman houses, that you

can sense the atmosphere of the shops along the street, the chanting of Roman priests in the temples nearby, and the rumble of chariot wheels and sound of horses' hooves on the stone paving.

Bath houses and public toilets were available in the side streets. There was a three-storey library of Celsus that Paul may have visited, housing a vast array of manuscripts. There were 12,000 scrolls according to some sources. The theatre where the Ephesians shouted for two hours against Paul and his companions (Acts 19:23-41) was one of the first sights a visitor would have seen up the Arcadian Way from the harbour.

On another occasion, Paul met the Ephesian elders at the shore and warned that the Church of God would be subject to attack from without and within. In the book of Revelation John recorded that members had to test whether some were false apostles and reject them. The important example of Paul's humility, care for the Church and faithfulness to the true doctrine once delivered is there for all ministers of God today (Acts 20:17-38).

Izmir, the site of Smyrna

Smyrna was a wealthy port city, often rivalling Ephesus as the trade centre of the region. Its very name means 'myrrh', a precious resin used throughout the region in incense, perfume, embalming and medicinal use. Why would Christ in Revelation 2:8-11 describe the members of the Church in Smyrna as being in poverty? What brought about their persecution and sometimes death?

One of the greatest challenges facing Christians living in this powerful Roman province of Asia Minor was the yearly practice of burning incense to the Roman emperor, who was deemed superior to all the Greek gods. This was more of a political than a religious act for most citizens, but Christians are commanded not to worship any human being or idol.

Jews were generally exempted from emperor worship, as their commercial and banking skills were valued and

Smyrna: Some of the tour group – *Good News* managing editor Scott Ashley in front; columns line three-storey shops and municipal buildings.



encouraged in most areas. Before the inclusion of gentiles in the Christian community, the Church of God was seen as one of a variety of Jewish sects. But in the Roman province of Asia Minor, administered from Pergamum, a high proportion of gentile converts led to Christians no longer being under the umbrella of the Jewish exemption.

Christians had to choose between being accepted by society through compromise, or being relegated to menial positions and often persecution. Tradesmen and craftsmen and women would be excluded from the guilds that ensured work. They became political and religious outcasts.

Pergamum

Of all the inland cities we visited on our tour, Pergamum must have had

Pergamum: two views showing height of city defences; ruins of temple of Trajan.



have been impressive to the villagers. But Pergamum was a powerful city and dangerous for a follower of Christ.

Pergamum became the chief town of the new Roman province of Asia, and the site of the first temple for the worship of Caesar. It was dedicated to both the goddess Roma and the emperor Augustus in 29 BC. Pergamum was active in promoting the imperial religion and became the provincial centre of the Roman state religion.

It is not surprising that Christ inspired John to write that the Christians of Pergamum dwelt at Satan's seat. They suffered persecution for refusing to worship the emperor.

Thyatira

There is little above ground to show a tourist what Thyatira may have been like in the first century AD. A small Byzantine church structure takes up half of the area of excavated Thyatira. The other half is scattered with broken columns and just a hint of the bustling community that lived there. Lydia, an

influential businesswoman, was from this town (Acts 16:14, 40). The purple dye





Thyatira: open area of Byzantine church; little has yet been excavated.

that made the area famous was probably extracted from a root or sea snail.

The references in Revelation 2 to Jezebel may have historical as well as prophetic significance. The guilds that allowed members to trade and be protected by law required certain ceremonies and initiations that would have been unacceptable to a Christian. Jezebel had an attitude of compromise for the sake of personal gain or avoiding persecution.

Sardis

Sardis had an 'impregnable' fortress that records a history of defensive errors. The stronghold that once stood high above the plains was easily able to defend itself against attackers. As a result the soldiers became careless. One man climbed down at night to collect a piece of armour that had been dropped, revealing the crevice that could be climbed by one of the attacking army. The guards also fell asleep on their watch thinking all was well. But the city's defences were breached and it was taken.



Sardis: huge unfinished columns of pagan temple.

This happened twice! Both Cyrus and later Antiochus took Sardis in this manner. No wonder the Church was told to watch to prevent a thief taking their spiritual city. Satan our enemy looks for our weaknesses. We are told to stay awake and hold fast the sound words given to us (2 Timothy 1:13).

Philadelphia

The city called Philadelphia has no visible first-century archaeological sites, although there are several massive support columns remaining from a Byzantine church built nearly 300 years after the apostle John recorded Jesus' message to the Church there.

An earthquake in 17 AD produced severe aftershocks that lasted 20 years. During the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Philadelphia was again destroyed by an earthquake. This gives additional meaning to Christ's words, 'You shall go



Philadelphia: one of the massive columns of a Byzantine church.

out no more', as true Christians in the Kingdom of God will be eternally safe and secure in the Holy City (Revelation 21 and 22). Normally, you do not want to be inside structures made with massive marble slabs and granite blocks when an earthquake strikes!

Even though there is nothing visible from the time of the early Christians, all around Philadelphia are vineyards producing an abundance of fruit. Jesus notes that His true disciples will be well known by their fruits, which give glory to the Father. John 15:1-8 shows that the fruits come from Christ living in us.

Laodicea and Hierapolis

It is remarkable to taste from the waters flowing into Laodicea from Hierapolis (near modern-day Pamukkale Denizli) a few miles away. They were gravity-fed along aqueducts and through clay pipes. Brethren lived in both towns (Colossians 4:13).

The town of Laodicea is on a hill a few miles from the hot springs of Pamukkale. The whole area of Hierapolis was a centre for healing, as the hot spas and salts dissolved in the water gave relief for many conditions. Many came to die there, and the area is filled with burial chambers.

New excavations at the site of Laodicea are showing how wealthy the area was. After it had been destroyed by an earthquake in 60 AD, Rome offered grants and tax relief, as it had done for rebuilding Sardis and Philadelphia. In a show of independent financial power the citizens disdained the offer of help, preferring to use their own resources.

As a contrast, the Christian learns how much he or she relies on the help of Jesus Christ. Gold was abundant in these wealthy cities, but He wanted a spiritual character of gold to be developed in His followers. To overcome sin and be changed from the inside we need the involvement of Christ, who knocks on the door of the self-reliant and offers to come in and help (Zechariah 4:6; Revelation 3:19-21).

The common factors

The letters addressed to the seven congregations in Asia Minor by the
(Continued on page 6)



Laodicea: long streets of the market place. Wealthy indeed!

The Weekly Sabbath

God's Plan in Action

How does the seventh-day Sabbath contribute to our overall view of God's purpose for mankind?

The weekly Sabbath day features prominently in the introductory verses of Leviticus 23 in the Old Testament. Yet it is not always included in our view of God's plan and purpose for humankind. Those who are already familiar with the seven annual Holy Days (or yearly Sabbaths) know that they give us an overall summary of this plan. Yet when the weekly Sabbath is also factored into the picture, it gives us a much greater overview as God would see it.

Leviticus 23

Leviticus 23 is the biblical chapter that gives us the most comprehensive view of God's Holy Days and festivals. It surely dictates that the Sabbath should be included in any consideration of God's plan. This chapter tells us: 'Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: "*The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations [commanded assemblies], these are My feasts. Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no [occupational] work on it: it is the Sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings*"' (verses 2-3, emphasis added throughout). Instruction then follows about the seven annual Holy Days, taking up the rest of the chapter.

Notice that God claims ownership of the Holy Days by calling them 'My feasts' – and the weekly Sabbath is the first one listed.

How then does the Sabbath expand

our view of God's plan? Without question it sheds great light on the matter, but let us now see what extra insight we can glean from its inclusion.

God's plan in the light of the weekly Sabbath

God's plan and work are largely equivalent to and inextricably tied into the weekly Sabbath day. The Creator rested the seventh day from all the work of the physical creation He had made – setting us an example for our own behaviour (Genesis 2:3; Exodus 20:8-11).

But He did not stop being the *Creator God* on that first seventh day.

The Sabbath is evidence of a great family activity and an unlimited shared inheritance.

He rested from the work entailed in the physical creation, but He was and always will continue to be working toward His overall purpose for mankind – gradually preparing us for our complete transformation from the physical realm to the spiritual (Philippians 3:20-21).

If God hadn't worked for six days on the physical creation, there would have been no need for a Sabbath of rest at that time. So it's part and parcel of the advanced work He did in preparation for resting on the seventh day.

So what God is doing on this earth cannot be uncoupled from the Sabbath

day. To keep the Sabbath more perfectly is to know what God is doing more perfectly.

The command to keep the Sabbath is number four in order. The first three encompass our relationship with God and the last six our relations with our fellow men and women. The Sabbath command is in the midst, crucial to both relationships. It enables us to possess a clear view of our duties and responsibilities in both realms.

The weekly Sabbath and the end of time

The Sabbath day is not eternal, in the sense that it came into existence at a certain point in time. Clearly from the words of Christ, it was made specifically for mankind (Mark 2:27). But how can it both belong to God (Leviticus 23:2) and yet simultaneously be made for man? The answer is as wondrous as it is exciting.

A fabulously rich father leaves his wealth and business lands to his sons. As he gets older and his sons mature they understand that all their father's possessions are to be theirs, and he gives them more and more control as time goes by.

When you understand it, the Sabbath is evidence of a great family activity and unlimited shared inheritance. In contrast to Sunday, it occurs at the end of the week, not the beginning. The seventh-day Sabbath shows the culmination and fulfillment of God's purpose and plan for humankind.

It pictures the time when God has

finally finished what He is doing with the physical. It indicates to us that we have a limited period of time in order to accomplish His work in our lives.

God says He will do a short work on earth. But men don't believe it! Human nature says leave it till tomorrow. It's nearly always mañana with human beings. Doubters and sceptics said in the apostles' time, Where is his coming? All things continue as they did from the beginning (2 Peter 3:4).

The Sabbath day teaches us differently. There will come an end to this age of man, and ultimately a new beginning, when God 'will make all things new' (Revelation 21:5).

But now in this present age, we are told to redeem the time, with the example of the weekly Sabbath day urging us on to act in cooperation with God in fulfilling our life's goal and mission. The seven-day week structures our life, with the Sabbath rest focusing on the goal of our human lives. The Sabbath is a marker pointing to a great conclusion. It is a pivotal and a test commandment.

The Sabbath is God's gift to mankind! But the vast majority will not accept it during this present age of man.

The Sabbath and the 1,000-year rest

God is very concerned for our welfare and gives us rest every week from our secular labours. The seven-

day week indicates a 7,000-year course or model for the fulfilment of God's work. The Sabbath looks to a 1,000-year rest. But for whom?

Notice Hebrews 4:9: 'There remains therefore a rest for the people of God.' When a gift is given to everyone (such as a pen or mug) it loses some appeal. But only a small percentage will receive this gift in this present age of man.

Look around you and what do you see? A broad understanding and keeping of the Sabbath? Very few actually observe the seventh day! The Sabbath is not at all convenient to men who want to work when they want to and do what they wish (Hebrews 3:7-12; 4:1-4).

By and large most men and women are not concerned with what God is doing on this earth, as pictured by the weekly Sabbath. Many view the Sabbath day as a quaint relic of history, altogether impractical in today's modern world.

This is why God clearly describes the Sabbath day as a sign between Him and His true people (Exodus 31:13-17; Ezekiel 20:12, 20). The Sabbath clearly indicates whom the Creator is working with as well as the identity of the God who is doing the work.

Jesus Christ said He was Lord of the Sabbath (Mark 2:28; Luke 6:5). Let's consider for a moment just what He meant.

'Lord of the Sabbath' tells us what Christ is for, where He is coming from and where He is going?

Yes, indeed, God tells us that He made the Sabbath, and the Creator fully believes in working to achieve its intended purpose and conclusion. 'The Sabbath was made for man.' This statement indicates the inclusiveness of God's plan and shows that we are definitely included.

The Sabbath's ultimate fulfilment

Hebrews 4:9 says 'There remains a rest for the people of God'. What rest is this? Fear and insecurity will belong to the past. Today, we work through the week and it's very tough at times. Each week can be hard going. The weekly Sabbath day brings a pleasant relief after six days of labour, stress and difficulties.

What it pictures for our future is almost beyond our imagination! No crying, pain, sickness, hunger, stress, fear, unhappiness, anguish – a peace beyond our understanding.

God will give us this future rest. The Sabbath day is a promise of that fact. Let's treasure this precious gift and make it our own.

*Will McLoughlin, Pastor,
Bricket Wood, St Albans, Herts
congregation*

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Adventure Into Asia Minor

apostle John have several aspects in common. Jesus Christ describes part of His own nature to give context to what He is about to say. Christ commends the Church when possible and then picks out some essential points to take to heart.

Then Jesus gives promises to the overcomers – those who are resisting the pressure to sin from society and Satan and gaining the mastery over their lives and improving in godly behaviour. Christ never sinned, but He 'overcame

the world'. One common factor is that all who read the book are told, 'Listen to what the Spirit says to the churches'. The messages from Christ are there for all of us, both the encouragement and the warnings. The promises all point to us being like Christ when He returns (1 John 3:1-3).

*The author, Peter Hawkins,
is the co-ordinating elder for the
United Church of God – British Isles.
All photos by Sonja Hawkins.*

Recommended Reading

Why did God command the seventh-day Sabbath to be kept as one of the Ten Commandments? And why is this command almost universally ignored? Some believe that Sunday is the Sabbath, and that spending an hour or two on the first day of the week at church services fulfills the intent of the Fourth Commandment.

Why should there be such confusion about one of the 10 basic guiding principles and laws that God gave mankind? Our free booklet *Sunset to Sunset: God's Sabbath Rest* addresses and answers all these questions. Request it today.

Questions & Answers

Q A friend of mine believes that Luke 9:31 indicates the possible existence of an immortal soul. Can you help me to understand?

C D, Somerset

A An important principle of understanding unclear biblical passages is that you should always approach such passages in the light of the plain and clear scriptures on the same subject.

You asked about Luke 9:31 in terms of a friend's belief that an immortal soul goes to heaven when we die. This passage is in the account of the transfiguration which also appears in Matthew 17 and Mark 9. Matthew 17:9 tells us that the transfiguration was a vision of the coming Kingdom of God, not a material reality. Moses and Elijah are dead in their graves and will remain so until the second coming of Christ and the first resurrection. Remember also that Jesus at the time of the transfiguration had not yet been glorified (John 7:39).

Hebrews 11:13 tells us that 'these all died in faith, *not* having received the promises'. Verses 39 and 40 clarify the fact that 'all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did *not* receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should *not* be made perfect apart from us.'

The promise will be received at the

first resurrection when Christ returns to earth, as shown in 1 Corinthians 15 and 1 Thessalonians 4. Both the dead in Christ and those faithful Christians who are still alive at that time will receive brand new spirit bodies.

The pre-existent Christ also interacted with the patriarchs and prophets as the God of the Old Testament (please see 1 Corinthians 10:1-4). We are told in 1 Peter 1:10-11 that 'the Spirit of Christ' was in them, indicating both the future sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. Other passages show that they will be resurrected and be in the Kingdom of God along with true Christians of all generations.

The annual Holy Days picture the whole plan of God. The transfiguration is associated with the Feast of Tabernacles. These yearly Holy Days all fit together into one cohesive plan and purpose. It is but natural that Jesus, Moses and Elijah should have been discussing the sacrifice of Christ. It is the first step in God's overall plan of redemption and never to be forgotten.

Even the Day of Atonement pictures the live goat (Satan) being exiled into the wilderness by a fit man, or angel (Leviticus 16; Revelation 20:1-3). But this annual Holy Day also reminds us of the other goat mentioned which was sacrificed in this ancient annual ceremony. This latter goat pictured the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our sins. These concepts are all explained in our free booklet *God's Holy Day Plan*.

This repetition is to ensure that the vital Passover events are not forgotten

as we observe the other annual festivals.

Luke 9:31 tells us of Jesus, Moses and Elijah 'who appeared in glory [depicted in this vision of the future Kingdom of God, Matthew 17:9] and spoke of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem' (NKJV). The transfiguration was for the benefit of Peter, James and John, and of course ultimately for all who would read the gospel accounts throughout the generations to come.

But this vision actually occurred in the presence of the three apostolic witnesses *before* Christ was sacrificed. A phrase in John 7:39 shows us that during His time as a human being 'Jesus was not yet glorified.' The three apostles would need to understand deeply the significance of the transfiguration in terms of the all-important sacrifice of Christ for our sins.

All three transfiguration accounts occur in the context of the second coming of Jesus Christ (see Matthew 16:27-28; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26). The resurrection is *when* Moses and Elijah will receive the promise and be made perfect in new bodies composed of spirit.

Luke 9:31 does *not* teach an immortal soul which goes to heaven at death. The vision occurred on the earth, and the three principals (Christ, Moses and Elijah) will be reigning on earth for 1,000 years after Jesus returns (see Revelation 5:10; 20:4-6). For additional information, please ask for our free booklets *What Happens After Death?* and *Heaven and Hell: Does It Really Matter What You Believe?*

How our literature is funded

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Letters From Our Readers

The Good News

I have been receiving your free magazines since early this year and hope to continue getting them. Reading them has helped me understand many things about our Creator and about life. I feel so much freer now that I know that God listens to me and is with me. It's a wonderful feeling to walk with Him. I know now He will open hearts that are willing to know the truth. I'm enclosing a small donation as thanks and with the hope that you can continue to publish these wonderful magazines.

G Z, Switzerland

Your *Good News* is a light in the world's darkness and long may it shine to prepare us for the second coming of Jesus Christ.

J C, Okehampton

Thank you for *The Good News*. We need it very much during these dark days. My husband is very depressed and ill. Please include him in your prayers.

Mrs M G, Blackburn

• *Our free booklet You Can Have Living Faith and our two reprints about depression and mental health may prove helpful to your husband.*

Reader interest in our free booklets

Thank you for nourishing me spiritually. Thank you also for the booklet you've just sent me and all the previous booklets as well. They are such interesting reading. It's so good to have God in our lives and the hope the Bible gives us during this dark

and perilous time. Can you please also send me *Are We Living in the Time of the End?*

V D, Birmingham

These small booklets that you send me are easy to read as I am not very good at reading a long book.

Mrs M Y, Billingham

Managing Your Finances has been a blessing to me in the area of budgeting.

A O, Republic of Ireland

God the Father and Jesus Christ

Please never stop sending me my *Good News* magazine. It is through your magazine that I draw nearer to Jesus and God.

T G, Willenhall

Thank you for opening my eyes to a loving God. I have been in darkness for so long.

J F, Northern Ireland

The United Church of God is doing a great job of informing people about God.

D S, Blackburn

Questions about Godhead

Please, I would like to know what your belief is concerning a triune God?

S K, Birmingham

I am a Roman Catholic and I wonder about Christ being divine. Was He aware of His divinity as a human being? Can I be certain of a personal God?

P B, Blackpool

A few years ago I read an article in *The Good News* explaining that Jehovah and Jesus were one and the same being. I have since forgotten the details, scriptures, etc. Are you able to help? Would I be able to download it from the UCG website? I do not belong to any church at the moment.

A W, Milton Keynes

• *Reader concerns about the Father, His Son Jesus Christ and the nature of the Godhead are addressed in our free booklets entitled Jesus Christ: The Real Story and Who Is God? You can either request the two in print or download them from our booklet web site at www.ucg.org/booklets. In regard to church membership, the reader from Milton Keynes might find the booklet The Church Jesus Built very helpful.*

Bulgarian appreciates truth

Your teachings, doctrines, gospel preachings, quotations and references from the Holy Bible, your analysis of current events relative to biblical prophecy, the holy days and seventh-day Sabbath all are firmly grounded and built on the faith of Jesus Christ of Nazareth and the teachings of His apostles. Every day at home or in the park (anywhere at any given free time), I read and study all the materials you have mailed to me. They have become special spiritual food for my mind. I am really appreciative of the *Bible Study Course* and I repeatedly express my gratitude to you and to those whose financial support makes it possible for people like me to receive the literature and lessons free.

A A, Bulgaria