

BEYOND TODAY

The British & European Supplement

March/April 2025

Mankind's thorny issue: Resolved

Adam's sin in Eden brought a curse of thistles and thorns, depicting the hardships and pains that lay ahead in our world. This is how God planned a resolution – at a very high cost.

The Garden of Eden was a peaceful paradise. Adam named the animals, which were not then fierce and violent. That change came with the curse on creation because of Adam and Eve's sin, when they ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Their disobedience brought changes not only to the animals but also to vegetation. A particular aspect of the punishment God imposed on Adam for following Eve in eating from that tree was: "Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you" (Genesis 3:17-18).

Difficulties in gardening and agriculture were certainly part of the curse, but it also led to difficulties and toil in making a living and in all man's endeavours. Furthermore, thorns are sharp and can cause injury. Thus, they have been a serious nuisance to human beings for the thousands of years we've been on the earth, especially as, until recent times, life has been agrarian for most people.

A portrayal of punishment

Thorns are a recurring theme throughout the Bible, representing the impact that was to come on all creation. Following the expulsion from Eden, the nature of animals changed to a predation system with creatures hunting and devouring others. The natural realm today, despite its beauty and wonders, is marred by pain, agony and loss.

Romans 6:23 tells us, "The wages of sin is death." That

is the ultimate penalty, but not the only penalty. Sin brings misery, pain and all the nefarious aspects of our world, and then finally death. Bearing this in mind, let's further examine what thorns represent in Scripture.

Proverbs 24:30-31 shows us a literal image that is also meant figuratively: "I went by the field of the lazy man, and by the vineyard of the man devoid of understanding; and there it was, all overgrown with thorns; its surface was covered with nettles; its stone wall was broken down." If



Ziziphus spina-christi, also known as the Christ's thorn jujube, is native to the Levant and Mesopotamia. Arguments abound as to whether or not the crown of thorns was formed from this tree. Other prickly possibilities include a Middle Eastern relative of the British native blackthorn (sloe).

Shutterstock

we don't take care of land, it will end up overgrown with thorns. More broadly, if we don't exercise care in overseeing what we need to in life, all manner of complications will spring up and take over, bringing past efforts to deterioration and ruin.

God warned of coming national captivity in these terms: "For indeed they are gone because of destruction. Egypt shall gather them up; Memphis [Egypt's capital] shall bury them. Nettles shall possess their valuables of silver; thorns shall be in their tents" (Hosea 9:6). This is a prophecy of the future.

Deceitful cares and troublesome people

In the New Testament, Jesus Christ mentioned thorns in His parable of the sower. It highlights different types of ground representing how receptive people are to the message of God's Kingdom. Those who are fully receptive would produce abundant fruit – spiritual growth. He noted, however, that "some seed fell among thorns; and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no crop" (Mark 4:7). Jesus explained these thorns as the cares of this world, deceitful riches and pleasures of life, which can stifle spiritual growth (Matthew 13:22).

Jesus also compared false teachers to thorny plants: "You will know them by their fruits [by what they produce, what they say and do]. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?" (Matthew 7:16). Clearly not. "For every tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush" (Luke 6:44). Thistles and thorns and brambles inflict harm and do not produce what God is looking for in terms of character or proclaiming the truth.

In the Old Testament, God said of the idolatrous and depraved Canaanite population in the Promised Land: "But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall be that those whom you let remain shall be irritants in your eyes and thorns in your sides" (Numbers 33:55). Israel did not do as commanded and suffered as prophesied, eventually following these peoples into evil ways.

The specific wording "irritants in your eyes and thorns in your sides" is expressed slightly differently in Joshua 23:13: "But they [the nations the Israelites were supposed to drive out] shall be snares and traps to you, and scourges on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish

from this good land which the LORD your God has given you." The Hebrew word for "scourges" here is *shotet*, based on a word meaning to pierce.

Thorns to be destroyed

Ultimately, God intends to burn away the literal and figurative thorns of this world – all the incorrigibly wicked. Confronted with the weapons of sinful men, the Almighty asks: "Who would set briars and thorns against Me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together" (Isaiah 27:4). And He further warns that "the people shall be like the burnings of lime [a very hot fire]; like thorns cut up they shall be burned in the fire" (Isaiah 33:12). Thorns are highly flammable.

This language is also used in the New Testament referring to the ultimate penalty for the rebellious and unrepentant in the lake of fire (Revelation 20:11-15).

Wrong ways are to be purged

The good news for all mankind is that an age of salvation is coming in which the animals will no longer prey on each other (Isaiah 11:6-9).

Vegetation will also be changed, symbolising the changes among humanity, with wickedness and the incorrigibly wicked removed forever.

Isaiah 55:13 prophesied, "Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree" Instead of prickly shrubs there will be well-watered, grand and beautiful trees, signifying also the nature of people being changed at that time.

As there will be no harm from the animal world, so it will be from the plant world, and this clearly symbolises an end of hostility from neighbouring peoples. Ezekiel 28:24 says: "And there shall no longer be a pricking brier or a painful thorn for the house of Israel from among all who are around them, who despise them. Then they shall know that I am the Lord God." Thorns will be burned away, just as a farmer clears His field for cultivation.

No longer will God and His Word be choked out because of the deceitful cares of this life. These thorns will be gone, and God's truth will fill the earth. Wrong ways of living will be rooted out. The people who remain will be transformed in their character. As in nature, no one will carry out further harm. It will truly be a wonderful world.

A substitute death

But what of the curse pronounced because of man's sin? This penalty ending in death still had to be paid if



Crown woven out of thorns. The Romans were accustomed to making laurel crowns for their heroes, both military and sporting.

Shutterstock

man were to be freed from it. And, thankfully, it has been paid in full.

Around 2,000 years ago at Golgotha outside Jerusalem we would see a Man severely beaten nailed to a “tree,” His head caught in a crown of thorns. Thus, He bears the very symbol of man’s curse in Eden, thorns. Roman soldiers had twisted this crown of thorns and jammed it onto His head, no doubt pricking His eyes. Derisively they hailed Him King of the Jews (Matthew 27:29). They intended it mockingly, but it was surely God who brought this to pass, intending something profound. Jesus as the ultimate representative Man and the One through whom God created man bore the curse in place of all mankind.

Christ bore this suffering of the curse of sin to free us from it. He then died in our place, paying the penalty for the sins of Israel and of all mankind in full. Galatians 3:13 tells us that “Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law [that is, the curse for disobeying it – pain, misery and ultimately death], having become a curse for us (for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’).” Through His suffering and death, Jesus showed the judgement and justice sin demands, whilst revealing the tremendous love both Father and Son have for mankind, enduring this penalty for the sake of the repentant.

An amazing foreshadowing of God’s plan of redemption and salvation appears in the Old Testament when God told the patriarch Abraham to offer up his son Isaac as a sacrifice. When they approached the offering site at Moriah outside Jerusalem, Isaac asked where the sacrificial lamb was (Genesis 22:7), to which Abraham responded, “My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering” (verse 8).

But that lamb was not to be Isaac. God prevented Abraham from offering his son and provided a substitute sacrifice at that time (Genesis 22:13). Yet even that was just a type of the ultimate sacrifice of “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). In the imagery of Genesis 22 a ram was caught in a thicket by its horns. Horns represent its power and strength, but the ram was held in place in entangling shrubbery. Here is a picture of the powerful pre-existent Christ coming down as a human being into this world of sin and suffering to take it upon His own head and then be offered in sacrifice in our place.

No more curse

During Christ’s millennial reign, the evils of today’s world will be removed. Isaiah 35:10 reveals: “And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing, with everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall

flee away. Yet this is but a foretaste of the ultimate future within the new heavens and new earth.

Those who finally choose to reject God will be the last thorns to be burned away. In contrast, those who repent and submit to Him will realise the best future imaginable. The end of the Bible provides a wonderful glimpse of that time beyond the Millennium and last judgement period. The apostle John wrote in Revelation 21:3-4: “And I heard

Through His suffering and death, Jesus showed the judgement and justice sin demands, whilst revealing the tremendous love both Father and Son have for mankind, enduring this penalty for the sake of the repentant.

a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.’ All these miseries, including the ultimate penalty of death, will be gone forever.

Instead of harmful plants will be the ultimate tree of life for healing (Revelation 22:1-3). These verses end with the words: “And there shall be no more curse.”

At one end of history a curse was imposed, but there is none at the other end. In between is the pre-incarnate Word, the very One who imposed the curse in the Garden of Eden. By His immense sacrifice, He took on Himself the penalty of sin, not just death but also suffering, indeed unimaginable suffering. In so doing, He bore on His head the principal symbol of that curse, thorns. He bore the pain so that ultimately, we wouldn’t have to. Through Him we can repent, seek forgiveness and have freedom.

The crown of thorns was no mere coincidence or accident of history. Nor was the scourging, crucifixion and piercing of Christ’s side. It was all part of a meticulous plan, the awesome plan of our redemption through our Redeemer. We are meant to learn from it and to stand in awe of God’s love for us.

Let’s reflect on what Christ went through to bring this great plan to fruition and gratefully acknowledge the staggering opportunity for us to walk the pathway to life in a new earth with no suffering – a world of peace and joy without end.

Abridged from a presentation by Tom Robinson

Retaining our first love

Jesus Christ praised the Church in Ephesus for their works, labour, patience and perseverance, but He warned, “Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love” (Revelation 2:1-4). How can we avoid sharing their predicament?

Our first love is the sense of excitement and commitment we had when we first learned of the Gospel of Christ and His Kingdom. In Matthew 22:36-38, Jesus affirmed that God’s followers should have a love for Him that comes before attachments to anything or anyone else. The Father and Christ are a family, so by implication our first love extends to both.

As time goes by, there is a danger that weariness, neglect or the cares of the world can take their toll on that love. The Church at Ephesus had that criticism levelled against them. Despite the appalling state of this world, we need to continue to commit fully to God’s way of life.

Our opportunity for eternal life comes through the sacrifice Jesus Christ made on our behalf. Scripture shows how the Word became Jesus Christ (John 1:1-15). The Bible clearly explains how one member of the God Family relinquished His glory to become flesh and dwell amongst us (Philippians 2:5-9).

Satan has had approximately 6,000 years to deceive and corrupt mankind, but that time is nearly up. All Satan can do now is to keep as many of God’s disciples from eternal life as he can. One way he does this is to employ distractions to blur our focus. Those called to be in the first resurrection should cherish God as their first love. It shouldn’t even be in question; however, Satan is devious. Before we know it, we have relaxed and put other matters ahead of the Almighty.

Prove God exists

Of primary importance is that there must be no doubt in our minds that God has eternally existed and that He created us through Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:15-18). If we do not have total certainty in God as the sovereign power of the universe, how will we endure through the greatest of tests and remain faithful? We must have established Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour who bought us at the cost of His own life. Without total belief in God, Father and Son, we will fail under intense persecution and pressure.

Praise God frequently

Giving praise to God throughout each day will draw

us towards Him. Through faith we will build a relationship based on deep repentance which will also draw us closer to God.

As a child I believed in the Father and Jesus Christ, yet I failed to really establish who They were. I was blessed with many talents, but I didn’t spend each day praising Them for all the abilities I had been given. What I lacked as a child was seeking to build that relationship. I knew the Bible stories, but didn’t really know God. An abundance of scriptural knowledge is useless if we are not building a relationship with Him.

Be easily shepherded

Isaiah 66:2 instructs us that God will look on one who is “poor [lowly or humble] and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word.” We should search the Bible to find His will and do it, rather than what we might want to do. Our focus must be on humbling ourselves before God. Ministers can shepherd us, but we also need to be alert to false teachers who do not preach what is in God’s word.

Messages from Scripture can impart wisdom, but those with a defiant attitude may prove to be unteachable and will miss out on God’s Kingdom, since such traits will not exist there (Revelation 21:7-8).

An abundance of scriptural knowledge is useless if we are not building a relationship with God.

Enduring throughout life in a humble manner, giving all praise and glory to God, growing in an attitude of love, obedience and commitment to God should ensure that both the Father and Jesus Christ our Saviour remain as our first love.

To study this important subject further please request or download our booklets *Transforming Your Life: The Process of Conversion*, *Jesus Christ: The Real Story* and *Who Is God?*

David Riddell

Beware signs and wonders of false prophets

How can we discern which supernatural signs and wonders are from God and which are from Satan?

From ancient civilisations to modern-day society, humans have consistently demonstrated a propensity to worship deities, idols, nature, ancestors, or even ideas. Every culture has developed some form of worship, illustrating that the need to revere something greater than oneself is deeply ingrained in human nature.

When times become exceedingly dire, and populations become desperate for answers that seemingly evade human governments, it is not that much of a stretch to believe that a powerful leader who demonstrates supernatural abilities will emerge and draw the attention and loyalty of the world.

Even now, the stage is set for a compelling figurehead to capture attention and rise above the current stock of world leaders.

Satan's tactics

The natural world can be manipulated by Satan and his demons to appear like the miracles of God. For instance, during the Exodus, Pharaoh's magicians were able to mimic some of God's miracles such as transforming Aaron's rod into a serpent (Exodus 7:11-12).

Signs and wonders appeal to the emotions. They can be evidence of alignment to a divine power. That power, however, may be of God or of the devil.

Jesus Christ warned, "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand" (Matthew 24:23-25).

If we are not vigilant or if we think we can't be deceived, this type of attitude could get us into trouble if we let our guard down. However, if we are diligent in guarding our hearts and minds, then it will be more difficult for us to be deceived.

The lawless one

The apostle Paul also warned of the coming deception. He wrote to the Church in Thessalonica: "The coming of

the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12).

Will we follow in the deception as Satan disguises himself as an angel of light, or fall victim to pressure from society to accept the prophesied beast power and false prophet?

The question is, if we consider ourselves as lovers of God's truth, will we follow in the deception as Satan disguises himself as an angel of light, or fall victim to pressure from society to conform and accept this prophesied beast power and false prophet?

How may we discern which supernatural signs and wonders are from God and which are from Satan?

Be aware

The first point is simply to beware and *be* aware. Many Bible commentaries purport that the elect cannot possibly be deceived due to God's grace. Discussing the previously quoted Matthew 24:23-25, bibleref.com states, "Jesus adds 'if possible,' since the true elect cannot possibly be lost by God. However, they may be diverted for a time."

This mindset can be dangerous, for if we believe that deception is out of the question, then we may not be prepared for the confluence of signs and wonders and social pressure to conform. If we think that being deceived is a possibility then we will take appropriate measures to guard ourselves.

Beware the message

We must pay attention to the message that a prophet brings. We will recognise a false prophet because he will contradict God's word and lead people astray. Just as Satan disguises himself as an angel of light, so too the false prophet will appear to be of God, but the message will be contrary to God's word, ultimately leading people into deception.

People will marvel at this person who can do great signs and wonders. They will be inclined to listen to the message, but it will not be the truth. Therefore, to guard ourselves, we must know God's truth, study His word and keep it, so it becomes real to us, as if it were etched on our hearts and minds. Only then will we be aware when we hear erroneous preaching.

Worship only the one true God

The Bible is consistent in its instruction regarding worship – only God is worthy of worship, both the Father and Jesus Christ (John 5:23). If a powerful being demonstrating signs and wonders desires to be worshipped or promotes worship of anything or anyone other than God, then this is a sign that a deceiver is at work.

The false prophet described in Revelation 13 urges the inhabitants of the earth to create an image and commands that the image be worshipped. This directly contradicts God's commandments.

We must understand the gravity of the times we are in and those ahead. Though we can rest assured in God's victory over Satan, before he is put away Satan will use false prophets and false Christs to deceive the world, performing great signs and wonders that will mislead the people, even the elect if they are not vigilant. The scriptures have warned us in advance, giving us the tools to discern truth from deception. By being watchful, discerning the message of these false prophets, and guarding our worship of God alone, we will be equipped to withstand these spiritual trials.

Let us heed these warnings, prepare our hearts, and encourage one another to remain faithful, for the day is coming when Satan will be bound, and truth will reign.

To study this topic further, please request or download our booklets *The Book of Revelation Unveiled* and *Who Is the Antichrist?*

Mark Mirigian

End time prophecies

An overview of prophesied end-time events identifies today's participants from Scripture.

More than three decades after the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia has been reasserting itself on the world stage, raising fears of a renewed Russian expansionism. Bible prophecy gives strong indication that Russia will play a significant role in end-time events. Recent actions in Ukraine follow a long history of imperialist oppression. Are these events leading the world back to the brink of nuclear extinction? In a lengthy prophetic outline of end-time events, Jesus Christ stated that in the last days before His return "there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time" (Matthew 24:21).

Another consideration is the role of China, and the "kings of the east" mentioned in Revelation 16:12. These are currently flexing their muscles on the international stage. Will a semblance of peace come soon? A worrying scripture states: "For when they say, 'Peace and safety!' then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labour

pains upon a pregnant woman" (1 Thessalonians 5:3).

Bible prophecy tells of a sequence of world-ruling superpowers. These powerful nations and their rulers have dominated the world throughout history. The Bible charts the story of their rise to power and their fall into obscurity. It also reveals that there is one more worldly superpower to come before the return of Jesus Christ. This power was foretold millennia ago by the prophet Daniel. It will rule with force and ferocity like none before. Its fall will come when Jesus Christ returns to establish the everlasting Kingdom of God – the last superpower the world will ever see.



To study into these issues more deeply please request or download our study aids *Russia and Bible Prophecy* and *The Final Superpower*.



Q In your literature you state that Jesus drank wine. What scriptures can you cite to prove this point?
FAQ

A The book of Luke states that the religious leaders of the time were upset with Jesus and called Him a “winebibber.” “For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, ‘He has a demon.’ The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Look, a glutton and a winebibber!’” (Luke 7:33-34).

Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words says the Greek word for winebibber, *oinopotes*, means “a wine drinker’ (*oinos*, and *potes*, ‘a drinker’).” In the Old Testament the equivalent Hebrew word is used to describe those who abuse alcohol (Proverbs 23:20). Since Jesus drank a little wine from time to time, specifically at the Passover (Matthew 26:29), this opened Him up to the charge of abusing it. Christ always drank in moderation; He never abused alcohol.

The Bible teaches that misusing alcohol is a sin (Romans 13:13; Galatians 5:21), but reflecting on its use in moderation, Judges 9:13 speaks of wine that “cheers both God and men.” Psalm 104:15 also presents moderate alcohol use in a positive light as “wine that makes glad the heart of man.”

It is noteworthy that Christ’s first public miracle at a wedding in Cana was turning water into a fine quality wine, something He surely would not have done if drinking any alcoholic beverage were a sin (John 2:1-11).

Christ instructed Christians to take a small amount of wine as part of the Passover service (1 Corinthians 11:25-26). In the context of this instruction, Paul corrected some of the Corinthian congregation for getting drunk at the Passover (1 Corinthians 11:21). Clearly, they were using fermented wine in the observance of the Passover or it

would not have been possible for them to become drunk.

Another reason this could not have been grape juice is that grapes were harvested in autumn and the Passover is in spring. Fresh juice would not keep for six months from the harvest until Passover without modern methods of preservation. Grapes could be dried as raisins or their juice fermented into wine. Often grape juice would ferment of its own accord due to naturally occurring yeasts in the air.

Wine was sometimes used as an antiseptic to cleanse wounds (Luke 10:33-34). Fresh grape juice would not have these properties, nor could it be kept for this purpose.

Christians of legal age who choose to drink should do so in moderation. Those with a proclivity toward alcoholism or who cannot drink in moderation should not drink, nor should anyone whose conscience would be violated by doing so. However, most people can take the tiny amount of wine at Passover without problems.

Q Considering statements in Leviticus 17:14 and Acts 15:29, should Christians avoid blood transfusions and eating blood products such as black pudding?

Reader from Cheshire

A Eating blood and blood products is explicitly forbidden in the scriptures you quote. The main reason given is that life is in the blood and it should be poured out on the ground and not be consumed.

When it comes to the question of blood transfusions for the purpose of saving lives, the Bible does not directly comment. The United Church of God feels that with insufficient clarity, it cannot teach against blood transfusions. As with all medical procedures there are risks involved, particularly of cross-infection. The Church leaves the choice of whether to go ahead up to the individual.

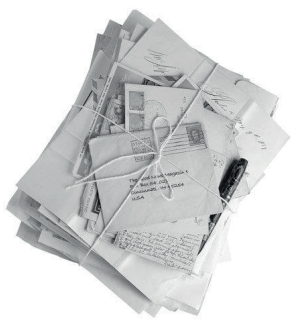
Let the Bible answer...

How does the Bible define “love”?

Godly love is fulfilling God’s law as outlined in the Ten Commandments: Deuteronomy 10:12-13; Leviticus 19:18; Romans 13:9-10; 2 John 1:6. (See also Matthew 22:35-40; Luke 10:27; 1 John 2:4-6; 5:3.)

Love involves action, and is not merely an emotion: Romans 5:8; 1 John 3:16-18. (See also John 14:15, 21.)

Love means keeping the whole law: James 2:8-11.



Letters From Our Readers

Multi-media outreach

Please continue to send me the *Beyond Today* magazine. It and your booklet study guides and TV broadcasts are invaluable.

Reader in Belfast

I find there are fewer genuine clerical messages from the pulpit in the church I attend. *Beyond Today* programmes are a good substitute. My attitude and approach to life is to read the Bible regularly and to love all our neighbours.

Reader in Cardiff

I was blessed to hear your TV programme [*Beyond Today*] on the Faith World TV channel. Please send me your booklet *You Can Have Living Faith*.

Reader in Borehamwood

Editor's comment: *Beyond Today* programmes can be found at www.ucg.org/beyond-today. You may also be interested in viewing shorter broadcasts at www.ucg.org/watch/beyond-today/biblical-worldview.

End times revealed

I have been encouraged each time I receive the *Beyond Today* magazine. It is very informative especially about the last days.

Reader in Blackburn

We are definitely living in the "last days." What I have read in the Bible is all happening.

Reader in Arbroath

Beyond Today is interesting and thought provoking with [pertinent] eschatology information. Thank you, and God's blessing for your ministry.

Reader in Epping

To the point

I want to thank you for sending me your written materials which are eye-opening about the ways of God.

Reader in London

Thank you for your literature. Please continue to send it to me, I have learned so much over the years from your straightforward explanations and in-depth investigations into

exactly what the scriptures are saying. So many just skirt round a lot of it and leave confusion.

Reader in Plymouth

Making disciples

I always read the *Beyond Today* magazines from cover to cover. I try to very selectively pass on many of your booklets, online teachings, sermons etc. to friends and to those who have questions and desire much more in their relationship with God.

Reader in Southsea

Beyond Today is an inspirational publication. I love sharing its messages with others. It often educates me and gives me new perspectives on life.

Reader in London

Our literature can be downloaded from our website at www.ucg.org or requested from the address at the bottom of the front page.

How you can help

The outreach work of the United Church of God in the British Isles, including the production of this Supplement to *Beyond Today* magazine, is carried out by a small team of part-time employees, together with the efforts of unpaid volunteers.

Distribution of *Beyond Today* magazine, this Supplement and other literature of the United Church of God is funded by the generosity of Church members, co-workers and readers.

Jesus Christ instructed His disciples that as they had freely received they were to freely give (Matthew

10:8), so we supply our literature free of charge, making Christ's message available to all. Our gratitude goes to those who assist financially in this aspect of the Church's work.

Donations may be sent to *Beyond Today* or United Church of God, PO Box 705, Watford WD19 6FZ, United Kingdom; or online at www.ucg.org.uk/donate.html through PayPal. Donations can also be made directly to our bank account. Please contact us for details.

The United Church of God – British Isles is a registered charity in England and Wales, number 1079192.