

Wholeness

Quarterly World Digest of Christian Healing

Founded 1957. P.O. Box 16099, Hamilton, New Zealand. Gratis.



*From the
Editor*

His Grace is Sufficient

In 1 Samuel we read of the young man who killed the giant and inspired a mighty victory over the Philistines. Not only is he the darling of the people, but he has earlier been anointed as the future King of Israel. Surely the world is at his feet. A little later we read of how that young man became the beloved King of the most blessed nation on the face of the earth, "David son of Jesse was the man whom God made great, whom the God of Jacob chose to be king, and who was the composer of beautiful songs for Israel." (2 Samuel 23.1) David's life must have been quite idyllic, yes? Actually, no.

In the 30 or so years between saving Israel and ruling over God's chosen people, David endured more unasked-for hardships than we could experience or survive in several lifetimes. He was banished by the King and hounded continually for his life by Saul's army. His wife was given to another man, while he and his ragbag bunch of followers lived in caves fighting as mercenaries for foreign kings, eventually living in a town only to have their wives carried off and their city burned. We can't be surprised that the Psalms are full of prayers like, "Come and save me, Lord; in your mercy rescue me from death." (Psalm 6.4) Take time to read Psalms 121, 124, 142 and 143.

So, what does all this mean for us? David's life story is a picture of our own journey with Christ. Between the time we first really know that our sins are forgiven through to the time we enter our eternal rest we are called to "... not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed." (1 Peter 4.12, 13) Are we experiencing hardships right now? Give thanks! We are on the road, the narrow one, that same one that requires us to bear our own cross, but the one which ultimately and gloriously leads to eternal life. Our road is the one that David spoke of in Psalm 23, "He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me ..."

Surely we can't fail to endure, to endure with unwavering fortitude, knowing that we will hear these very words, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world." (Matthew 25.34) David came to rule a kingdom that, great as it was, had an end; we are destined to be kings & rulers of an eternal kingdom. Amen.

**God can use life's
reverses to move
us forward.**

John Borman

WHERE IS GOD WHEN WE SUFFER?

The Rev. David L. Schriber, Sharing, January 2006

In recent years humanity has seen so much death, suffering and destruction from natural disasters. There have been numerous earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, floods and hurricanes, leading many to ask, "Where was



God in all of this? Was it the will of God that so many should suffer nature's wrath?" An even more fundamental question that comes to everyone's mind at some time is, "Where is God when we suffer?" This is, of course, a question as old as the Book of Job, the story of a decent and morally upright person who suffers one undeserved calamity after another, and who struggles to find God's place in all of it. In the main body of the book Job's friends attempt to offer comfort by giving sage counsel. But all their arguments are based on the conventional wisdom that says God rewards the just and punishes the unjust, so if misfortune befalls you, it must be punishment for some sin you have committed. This view is common throughout the Old Testament. For example Proverbs 14.11 plainly tells us, "The house of the wicked will be destroyed, but the tent of the upright will flourish." We might think that we're far too sophisticated to be caught up in this kind of retribution theology, yet how often do people still ask the question, either aloud or to themselves, "What have I ever done to deserve this?"

Some suggest that personal suffering is God's testing of our faith. Among the words of the well-meaning: "Everything happens for a reason," "It must have been God's will," "God has a plan; we just don't understand it all." Some argue that God uses suffering to make us better people. That may be true, but that's not the same thing as saying God sends the calamities to teach us a lesson. Good can indeed come from suffering, but that doesn't mean God wills suffering. We must understand that God does not will everything that happens, **but God wills something in everything that happens.**

But where is God when we suffer? In his frustration Job asks God at one point, "Do you have human eyes? Do you see as we see?"

Are your days like those of mortals, your years a human life-span?" "Would that there were an umpire between us who could lay a hand on us both." (Job 10.4, 5 & 9.33) What has Job said here? That we can never be sure God understands

us in our pain, suffering and brokenness until and unless God becomes one of us, a God-man who knows both divinity and humanity. Ah! Isn't that precisely what God did in sending his Son?! God entered human history through the life of Jesus, experiencing in human form the joys, sorrows, pains and suffering of the human condition. What more could Job, or we, ask for?

Where is God when we suffer? The incredibly simple answer is - right beside us; **God suffers with us!** Faced with impending disaster people often recite the Twenty-third Psalm. Think carefully about the words here. The shepherd psalm doesn't promise that we shall not have to walk through the valley of the shadow of death. What it does say is, "Yea, though I (do) walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." Why? **"Because you (God) are with me!"** The answer to the question, "Where is God when we suffer?" is certainly not, 'watching us from a distance', as a pretty but totally misguided song puts it. God is definitely not sitting back with divine arms folded to see how His universe runs its course. After creation God rested on the seventh day, but He went back to work on the eighth!

When Jesus calmed the storm over the lake, the disciples' fear of both the storm and life's challenges took on a new perspective as they experienced the awesome power of God in Christ. Today Jesus isn't with us in bodily form; Christ has no body on earth at present except the body of His believers. He has no ears but our ears to hear the cries of those in danger. Christ has no feet but our feet to run to help the afflicted, no hands but our hands to reach out to bring healing. Christ has no voice but ours to bring words of comfort, reassurance and hope. Today others are echoing the words of the frightened disciples, "Carest thou not that we perish?" Yes, Christ cares, and that's why He sends us out as His body in the world to bring peace and healing. Thanks be to God for His great compassion. Where is God? He is right here in us.

Be sure to read page 4!

WHY DOES GOD NOT HEAL EVERYONE?

Mary Light, Rewritten from Wholeness February 1971.

It may surprise those who ask the above question to know that anyone who attends a service of divine healing in faith does receive a blessing, whether they realise it or not. The inner change may not be immediately discernible, but it can actually be more important than a mere physical cure. The latter can be delayed for any number of reasons, including spiritual sickness such as unforgiveness, resentment, self-pity, hatred, jealousy—all of which are poison to the soul, and have their expression in our physical diseases. The following are just some of the reasons why more people are not instantly healed.

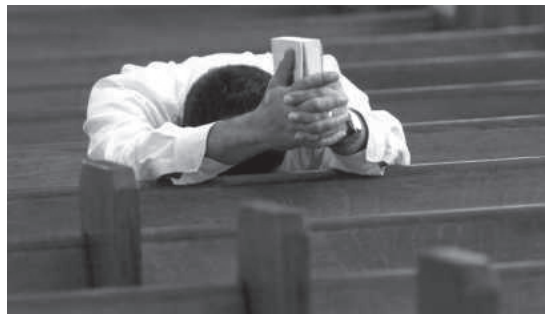
1. Some do not wish to be healed, and there are even people who request that others NOT pray for their healing! The security of being waited on and receiving attention, as well as the thought of returning to the daily duties they dread so much, are probably contributing factors to this request.
2. Some seem to think that charisma is involved in healing, and see only the person who is praying instead of God the giver, whom they should be praising and thanking for their perfect healing.
3. Negative thinking on the part of the sufferer, relatives and friends can block out God's healing. Positive thinking is so very important. Whenever we pray we should always visualize the perfect answer, and have a joyous expectation that good news is on the way. "... no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." (Psalm 84.11)
4. Some people mistakenly believe that sickness and disease are God's will for them and that this is the cross which they have to bear for His sake, when really these afflictions are imposed by the devil. **Were suffering God's will, Jesus would not have healed anybody!** We have been given free will, and God allows us to use it as we wish, resulting in everyone, Jesus excepted, having sinned. The sins of the world, including ours, have brought sickness and disease upon mankind. While illness is not God's will, He can use and of course has used sickness to draw people to himself. One sufferer of multiple sclerosis was instantly healed at a healing service. Her testimony included the statement that she would never give up what she had received from God during those three years in a wheel chair, because before becoming incapacitated she had had no time for Him at all.
5. Some people do not desire a relationship with Christ, and want to be healed for purely selfish reasons, having no intention of thanking God for answered prayer, or of helping others. Perhaps they do not believe in God, or prayer, and He does not force Himself on those who do not believe, "And he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith." (Matthew 13.58) He just waits His time until His children are ready to confess the words of the hymn, "Just as I am without one plea, God of love, I come."
6. Some are not healed because it is time for them to go to God's Presence in Heaven. It is so uplifting to contemplate their perfect healing and measureless joy, the same reward that awaits us. I know of a husband

who expressed his gratitude to a prayer group because his wife had had such a perfect passing, her last words being, "I have never felt so well and so happy in all my life."

7. Many concentrate on ill-health instead of on divine wholeness, and impress the idea of disease on their sub-conscious minds. How easy it is to fall into the habit of speaking of "my asthma" or "my operation". When people do this, all their thoughts and prayers revolve around them. Instead of concentrating on their lack of health they should count their blessings and praise and thank God for all that is good in their lives.

We don't always have an answer as to why God doesn't heal in every circumstance. But, unless the Holy Spirit leads us to do otherwise, our role is to apply affirmative prayer to every condition and to every problem. The verse "... my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4.19) is true today and will be true tomorrow no less than when the scripture was written. If God doesn't seem to be meeting our needs, or others' needs, then rejoice all the more that He sees what our real needs are, and He has committed Himself to meeting them in the best possible way. "The Lord is faithful to his promises" (Psalm 145.13)

CONFESSION



Forgive us Lord, for everything that makes us less than our better selves.

For moodiness and irritability which make us difficult to live with.

For everything that has spoiled our witness for You, that so often no one would know we had been with Jesus and pledged ourselves to Him.

That so often we have denied with our lives what we have said with our lips.

For our sins of omission, for the encouraging word seldom said, for forgetting the difference a warm smile can make.

For the times we waste Your precious time by not getting our priorities right, for being slack in prayer and slow to witness.

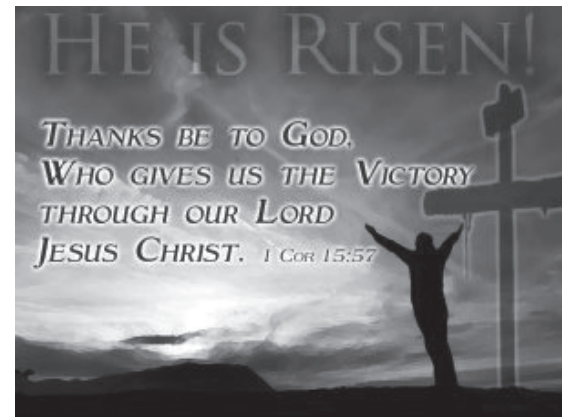
For the sins of pride, for passing judgement, and assessing the faults of others as worse than our own, without knowledge of their difficulties.

O Lord, before whom our hearts are laid open and bare, forgive us, and by Thy grace and power help us to do better, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reprinted from Wholeness no. 53, 1 February 1971, E.L. Mulcock

"Don't say, 'I wish they would do something about this problem.' **You** are they - do something!"
Bob Gass

IN CHRIST ALONE



In Christ alone my hope is found;
He is my light, my strength, my song;
This cornerstone, this solid ground,
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace,
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease!
My comforter, my all in all—
Here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone, Who took on flesh,
Fullness of God in helpless babe!
This gift of love and righteousness,
Scorned by the ones He came to save.
Till on that cross as Jesus died,
The wrath of God was satisfied;
For ev'ry sin on Him was laid—
Here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground His body lay,
Light of the world by darkness slain;
Then bursting forth in glorious day,
Up from the grave He rose again!
And as He stands in victory,
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me;
For I am His and He is mine—
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear in death—
This is the pow'r of Christ in me;
From life's first cry to final breath,
Jesus commands my destiny.
No pow'r of hell, no scheme of man,
Can ever pluck me from His hand;
Till He returns or calls me home—
Here in the pow'r of Christ I'll stand.

"In Christ Alone"

Words and Music by Keith Getty & Stuart Townend

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZuIyrwSqHY&feature=related>

Prayer and action are never far apart in our lives. In fact, there is no separation between the missions of prayer and action. They are two aspects of a harmonious whole, two manifestations of a God-centred life. Action and prayer are different modes of expressing the same truth.

Mother Mary Clare, Fairacres

ORDER OF ST. LUKE

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or phone 09-432 0421. For prayer requests, testimonies etc.,
contact "Wholeness" using the addresses on page 4.



Rev. Lionel Brown

"Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" (Mark 4.40)

Jesus and his disciples were crossing the Sea of Galilee when suddenly a great storm arose and threatened to swamp their boat. To the disciples' consternation Jesus was asleep, seemingly unaware of the danger they were facing. In a panic they woke him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" He awoke, rebuked the wind and commanded the storm "Peace be still!" The storm ceased and there was a dead calm. He then turned to the disciples and asked, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?"

Fear is something we all experience from time to time. We live in a fear-filled world in which many people spend their lives seeking ways to alleviate their anxieties. I am writing this just a few days after a 6.3 magnitude earthquake struck our city of Christchurch killing about 200 people and severely damaging many homes and buildings. As the aftershocks continue many people are living in apprehension, some being so fearful that they have left the city. Others are finding it difficult to function properly, particularly children who are finding it hard to cope with the aftershocks.

There is another group of people who are quietly going about their tasks as best they can and seeking to help others in need as they are able. Many of these people are committed Christians, some of whom have suffered great loss and yet have a quiet trust in Jesus. This trust is not based on a belief that Jesus will keep them from all harm, but that he will be with them in their time of stress and will calm their troubled hearts.

When we are afraid, Jesus asks us the same question he asked those disciples so long ago, "Have you still no faith?" Faith in Jesus is the key to peace of mind in this troubled world. He is not about to take those pressures away, but when we trust in Jesus, God promises to walk

with us through those troubles and enables us to overcome those things that are causing us to fear. Isaiah gives us the wonderful promise of God,

"For I, the Lord your God,
hold your right hand;
it is I who say to you,
'Do not fear, I will help you.'"
(Isaiah 41.13)

Everyone has fears at some time or other; that is just part of being human. Some fear is healthy, as it can protect us from unwise actions. But if we find that we are becoming overwhelmed, then it is time to reach out in faith to the One who stilled the raging sea. Fear need not rule our lives.

The peace of Christ be with you all.

Lionel Brown

Speaking against works-based religion, Martin Luther said, "Be a sinner and let your sins be strong, but let your trust in Christ be stronger... rejoice in Christ... the victor over sin." No, Luther wasn't excusing sin! He was restoring grace to its rightful place, affirming that nothing can separate us from God's love (Romans 8.38,39). He wasn't downgrading the law, He was upgrading grace. "And if by grace, then it cannot be based on works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace." (Romans 11.6)

Bob Gass

A Prayer for Pentecost, A Prayer for the Global Day of Prayer

Intercessors for New Zealand

"They lifted their voices to God with one accord ..." Acts 4.24

Almighty God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
Together with believers all over the world, we gather today to glorify Your Name.
You are the Creator of Heaven and earth.
There is no one like You, holy and righteous in all Your ways.
We submit to Your authority as the King of the universe.
We pray with one voice to enthrone You in our hearts and to honour You before the world.

Lord God, You alone are worthy of our praise and adoration.

Our Father in heaven, Thank You for loving the world so greatly.
You gave Your only Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross for our sins so that we could be reconciled to You.
We are grateful to call You Father and to be called Your children.
Nothing can separate us from Your love.

Thank You Father, for adopting us into Your family because of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Amen

Worship – Our Primary Calling

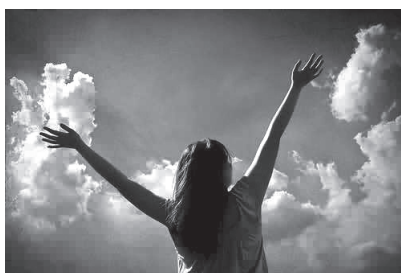
Juliet Thomas, Forerunner, May 2006

In my younger days one of the things I really loved was being in the choir where I joyously sang to the Lord with my whole heart. Although my voice has grown hoarse with much speaking I have again begun to sing out those beautiful songs of praise and adoration as I worship God in solitude. His Spirit touches my spirit and lifts me up to the majesty and splendour of His holy presence. Worship then becomes an awesome experience.

Worshipping God is the primary calling and purpose of our life. It is by worship that we touch the omnipotence of God. It is while we worship that the glory of God comes upon us and fills us in abundant measure. Of course there are times when it is hard to break through. I remember one occasion when I was fervently asking God to fill me with all His fullness as I sang,

"Fill my cup, Lord, I lift it up Lord,
Come and quench this thirsting of my soul.
Bread of heaven, feed me till I want no more,
Fill my cup, fill it up and make me whole!"

Then it was as though His Spirit so tenderly and gently whispered to my soul,



"I cannot fill you, because your 'cup', your heart and mind, is already filled with many disappointments and painful struggles. See your hands; they are closed, tensed up over stressful relationships. You have come to Me with closed fists and a cluttered heart. My child, there is very little place left for Me!"

I wept in the loneliness of the struggle in my soul ... and His Word came again,

"Thou shalt keep Him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee!"

"Come unto Me all ye that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and you shall find rest for your souls."

Jesus keeps us in His peace when our mind and being are focused on Him. He gives us His rest when we take His yoke upon us and learn from Him. It is then that we find rest for our souls. His "yoke" means His commandments, His way of life, His relationship with us; all so very different from the ways of the world. As I repeated the words He had spoken to me I opened my hands to release to Him all the tensions within. I asked His Spirit to clean out my heart of all the clutter that was there. Then I again asked Him to fill me. And Oh He did! The joy, the release, the peace that came flooding my heart; there are no words to describe them!

Only the Holy Spirit can enable us to worship Him in "Spirit and in truth". (John 4.24) Worship can certainly involve music and dancing, but true worship takes place in the quietness of one's soul. It is an acknowledgment of who He is, a response to His command to "Be still and know that I am God." The next time we sing let us each remember the words of Psalm 69.30, 32, "I will praise God with a song ... those who worship God will be encouraged." Worship, our primary calling.

SUPPORTING WHOLENESS

The following are the most important ways in which you can support our ministry, your ministry.

1. Praying for the success of Wholeness:

- That God's word as shared on our pages will "... not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing (human hearts) whereto I sent it." (Isaiah 55.11)
- For the editors to select items that will bring real blessing into the lives of readers.
- For the board to make wise decisions under God's guidance.
- For financial resources to be released, so that this ministry can not only continue, but can grow in effectiveness as a light in a world of darkness.

2. Encouraging new readers.

There is no better way to reach new readers than for present subscribers to give copies away. So, request more copies and give! This, along with encouraging words and a prayer, will bless the recipient, you and Wholeness.

3. Using our web site.

This edition, and all future editions of Wholeness, will be found online at our web site, at www.wholenessinhim.net Should a reader want any of our previous editions to be posted online please let us know which ones and we will be happy to oblige. In the past we have been reluctant to share Wholeness electronically as we have anticipated there will be a reduction in the number of those wanting regular mailed copies, and a resultant effect upon donations. This was not selfishness on our part. Rather, it was a concern that readers in poorer nations, who comprise a large proportion of our readership, but who generally have no ability to donate, would no longer have their subscription subsidised by those who can afford support. May each of us who are able to give know that we are very privileged. "Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, and He will repay him for his deed." (Proverbs 19.17)

4. Contributing Financially.

From its first edition in 1958 Wholeness has charged its readers nothing, and will always remain free, but that doesn't mean that it costs nothing to print. Each edition costs \$NZ5,000.00 in publishing and mailing charges. Someone has to pay the accounts, and that someone has of course been faithful donors, for whom we do praise God. However, in recent times the donations have not always been sufficient to meet our obligations. In particular, in the past financial year our income has been \$12,500.00, while our expenses have been \$20,000.00. This is not a complaint, it is an item of information, shared so that your prayers for this ministry can be specific and effective. Should you be inspired to give, then you might like to sponsor say 4 mailings a year to:

a Christian group in India	\$ 20.00
a prison in Egypt	\$ 60.00
a congregation in Malawi	\$120.00

Please do know that if you can contribute only \$5.00 it will be as valuable as were the 2 mites Jesus spoke of in Luke 21. And of course, if you are unable to give at all then your prayers for God to release finance will be an even more effective contribution than any material donation you would otherwise have made.

5. Sending in Articles.

Contributions for Wholeness are always most welcome. Testimonies of healing and blessing, encouraging teachings and inspiring devotions are all very much appreciated. Even when items aren't published, do know that they still bring God's precious message to the hearts and minds of our staff.

**God bless you,
dear reader of Wholeness,
for whom this ministry exists.**

God's Promise

"Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath." Hebrews 6.17

When God made His promises to mankind He did so by making an oath not to us, but to Himself. Why? The Bible chronicles our

constant unfaithfulness in contrast to His unchanging love. God is not looking at our abilities to keep this agreement, but at His own. We couldn't deliver ourselves, so He came as a man to deliver us. God is the initiator and the guarantor of this agreement. This should give us supreme hope! God has promised to be our God and to hear our prayers through Jesus Christ. **This is not based upon you, but upon Jesus!** Run to Him today, for, "God is faithful, who has called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." (1 Cor. 1.9)

Dave Whitehead, Senior Pastor,
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"WHOLENESS"

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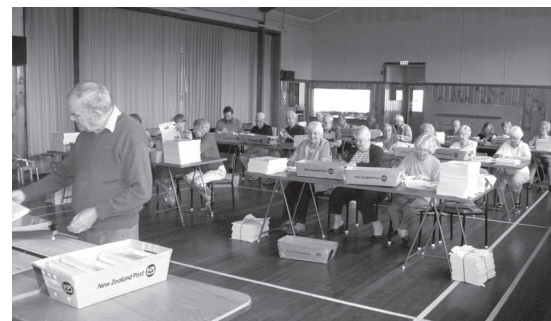
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Packing Wholeness



Dian and Walter Stark

Every 3 months since 1998 a team of faithful volunteers have met at St Luke's Anglican Church in Hamilton, NZ, to pack Wholeness ready for posting. Members of this happy group of around 24 come from many churches, including St Luke's, St Pius Catholic, Melville Methodist and St Stephen's Presbyterian. It is under the well organised direction of Walter and Dian Stark, who will be retiring in November after 10 years of sterling service, that your copy of Wholeness begins its journey to you each quarter. May its receipt bring as much blessing to you as its preparation does to those who serve on our magazine's distribution team.



The Team

Some Godly Resolutions

St Luke's Anglican Church, Hamilton, NZ

I resolve to put Christ before the creed.

I resolve to put Christ before my church and my church before my interests.

I resolve to put the spiritual before the material and the eternal before the temporal.

I resolve to put God's Word before people's opinions.

I resolve to walk more by faith and trust and less by sight and reason.

HOW TO ORDER

"Wholeness" is supported entirely by love offerings: mainly from individual readers and especially those who regularly send a "birthday present in reverse". Some churches and groups allocate a special offering to this Ministry.

Cheques in your currency are acceptable, but not Postal Notes. For donations to our KiwiBank account number 3890050310586-00 please include your name in the details space. For N.Z. receipts (tax deductible) a stamped and addressed envelope is appreciated. God bless you all and thank you.

We love to hear from you: testimonies, news, donations, and requests for prayer. Please address all such letters to our editorial office. We also hope that you will interest others in our paper.

WE PACK AND PROCESS

We dispatch as follows: Envelopes of 2 or 5; N.Z. packs of 10, 20, 30 etc. Overseas packs of 10 or multiples of 20. (Our most economic rate.)

N.B. For change of address or order please try to return your label.

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