

LET THE PROPHETIC VOICE BE HEARD!

The guiding light Newsletter



On 29 September Bishop Nat Phomane, founder member of the AIM Church and Vice-Chairperson of the ACRP Board, was the keynote speaker at the recent Vastfontein Alumni Meeting. On Page 3 you will find an excerpt from his message he shared with delegates on the day.

His message about the *calling of the Church of Jesus Christ, the calling of pastors and other spiritual leaders* was very relevant in the day and age where we live: *"This calling in ministry is divine. This work is Divine. We are called to ministry for such a time as this.... We are called to make a difference. We are called to preach the prophetic WORD"*.

This is a serious challenge to the spiritual leaders of our day. **How do we respond to this?** How do we respond, for example, when in this same week we read in report of the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime (GI-TOC) that **five African countries (including South Africa) are among the top ten percent of 193 countries** where organized crime (including the horrible crime of child trafficking) occurs most.

INVITATION TO OUR READERS:

Please write to us, telling in short (around 100 word) how you see the duty and responsibility of church and ministry leaders to overcome the waves of crime we experience. **What is the prophetic word on crime that our countries and continent must hear? What is our duty as followers of Christ?**

(Send to acrp@acrpafrica.co.za (e-mail)

073 557 4716 (WhatsApp / sms)

Issue 11 - October 2021



This is a daily devotion excerpt from the African Women Devotional Bible

What are you sowing?

In life we have an opportunity to sow something good or something bad with each response or each interaction with others. A smile will build acceptance leading to friendship. A frown will lead to distance and enmity. A gift given at an appropriate time grows relationships. Failure to give at the right time leaves the relationship dormant.

Hosea 10:12 says: "Sow for yourselves righteousness; reap steadfast love; break up your fallow ground, for it is the time to seek the Lord, that He may come and rain righteousness upon you."

Today, Hosea encourages us to love God and Love others by doing acts of kindness that grow love amongst those around us. Not only does Hosea encourage us to sow in righteousness towards the people we are comfortable with, but even the people with whom we have not yet built relationships. These would be the fallow ground. As we push ourselves to doing what is right, the Lord will bless us with righteousness.

Father, help me to choose to sow the seeds of kindness in my life and the lives of those around me. Please forgive me where I have not tried to sow the right seed. In Jesus Name I pray, Amen.

The African Women Devotional Bible - Available from the Bible Society
(website: <https://www.biblesociety.co.za>).
Email: sales@biblesociety.co.za



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Oasis Int. has been intensely involved with the development and distribution of books by authors speaking to the African contexts. The Africa Study Bible is one of these.

Please read part 8B of their sponsored article on the next page.

*Article sponsored by OASIS International –
Publishers of the Africa Study Bible*

THE BIBLE — WRITING, HISTORY, RELIABILITY – PART 8B

As we continue learning about the history and writing of the Bible, let's focus on why we can trust it.

We Can Trust the Bible

Today's text of the Bible has been passed down through the centuries with amazing accuracy. Before 1947, the oldest known Hebrew manuscript was from AD 930. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls showed that the text of Isaiah from that manuscript was virtually identical with the one being read a thousand years earlier. The Dead Sea Scrolls also confirmed the accuracy of the Septuagint, an important Greek translation of the Old Testament begun in Alexandria in Africa in the third century before Christ.

We have an abundance of New Testament manuscripts. Existing manuscripts of ancient writers usually number in the dozens or few hundreds at most. In comparison, the earliest New Testament fragment demonstrates that the Gospel of John was being read in Africa within fifty years of John's writing it on the other side of the Mediterranean Sea. More than 5,500 ancient New Testament manuscripts and fragments exist. While scholars debate small variations in these manuscripts, the variations don't create doubt about any tenet of the Christian faith.

The psalmist says, "The word of the LORD holds true, and we can trust everything he does" (Psalm 33:4). Jesus Christ taught that the Bible is completely accurate, saying, "I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God's law will disappear until its purpose is achieved" (Matthew 5:18).

The Bible Tells History Accurately

The Bible is historically true. For example, Ahab, king of Israel, is mentioned in an Assyrian monument. Jehu, king of Israel, is mentioned on the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III. A seal bearing the name of Jezebel, queen of Israel, has been found. And Pontius Pilate, who ordered Jesus's crucifixion, is mentioned on a stone inscription. A ninth-century BC stone slab found at Tel Dan mentions "the House of David".

The archaeological discoveries that confirm biblical events and persons are numerous. For example, the collapse of the walls of Jericho (Joshua 6) can be seen today as bricks from the upper wall lie by the lower walls. The revolt of Moab against Israel (2 Kings 1:1; 3:4-27) is recorded on the Mesha Stele. The Assyrian king Sargon II's capture of Ashdod (Isaiah 20:1) is recorded on his palace walls.

The Bible contains hundreds of prophecies that have come to pass. For instance, in about 550 BC, Daniel had a vision in which God made specific predictions about the Greeks conquering the Persian Empire, and the Greek Empire then dividing into four sections (Daniel 11:1-4). Two hundred years later in 334 BC, this happened. Another example is the more than three hundred prophecies about Christ found in the Old Testament including his being born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14), his place of birth in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2), and a description of his death (Psalm 22; Isaiah 53).

In the next newsletter, we will consider what the Bible says about itself.

CALLED TO MINISTRY

By Bishop Nat Phomane, founder member of the African Independent Methodist Church and Vice-Chairperson of the ACRP Board. This is an excerpt from the message delivered at the Vastfontein Alumni Meeting on Wednesday 29 September at Vastfontein near Hammanskraal in the northern district of the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Area.

The topic is itself intriguing. It can be tackled in a twofold way. First as a statement to affirm one's calling and secondly to question one's calling in relation to GOD.

Let me speak first about Christian ministry.... it's about servant leadership. It's an upside-down kingdom. It's not like the secular world. Matthew 20:25-27 **"..You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant. And whoever wants to be first must be your slave..." (NIV).**

How do we display that servanthood? The answer is in Saint Matthew 25:31-46. The key statement that is mentioned is verse 40 and 45 "

...⁴⁰ **"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me..."**⁴⁴ "They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?'⁴⁵ **"He will reply, 'truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'"**

Let me speak about calling (In a Christian context) (Called to ministry)

God is a relationship. He has called the father of faith, Abraham and many other patriarchs, prophets, etc. and their callings were different. We are all called as individuals with diverse gifts and they all complement one another. All in all the Church has its missional calling. The world views the Church differently and any controversy or unethical, immoral acts dents the image of the Church. Controversy by Church leaders or lay leaders can impact negatively to the world that we need to bring to God's kingdom with the good news. With all the challenges faced by our country this is the time when the Church must clearly define itself in relation to the secular world.

We need to focus more on a missional Church than an "attractional Church". A missional Church has a different character and conduct than an "attractional Church". A Missional Church focus on the demonstration and proclamation of God's love through Jesus to all people. Missional means to be sent into the world, not to expect the world to come to the Church to be saved. The Church is then the community of disciples of Jesus, living, teaching and motivating one another to be a blessing to all people and all nations.

An attractional Church's main focus is usually to conduct and "dress" their ministry in such a way as to draw as many people to their Church and will most likely be careful not to offend them in any way- even when reprimanding is necessary.

In John 1:14 we read the "WORD" (Jesus) became flesh (man) and dwelt amongst us – He moved into the neighborhood of mankind and demonstrated and proclaimed grace and truth for all to hear and see. What is important is that He went to where the people were and proclaimed that the kingdom of God was near. A Church that strives to be true followers of Jesus cannot be an "attractional" church, but a Church that moves into the neighborhood and the world. A true missional Church exists because of its calling and not because of itself.

So, I encourage you my brethren to be the true disciples of Christ who have responded truthfully to his call and be doers of the word, not hearers only.

This calling in ministry is divine.

This work is Divine.

We are called to ministry for such a time as this....

We are called to make a difference.

We are called to preach the prophetic WORD

Called to minister to the downtrodden, the sinners and all who need to hear the good news to repentance.

We are called to serve and save God's people, save them from substance abuse and alcohol abuse.

We are called to minister to their needs.

WE ARE CALLED TO MINISTER...

Books that give children “permission to really feel”

The circumstances in which we live since Covid-19 made its appearance are emotionally challenging for children – to say the least.

Add to that more “normal” challenges like bullying and you have a pressure pot of emotions that needs to be managed.

That is why it is so important for children to have the ability to understand, own, regulate and process their emotions, said dr Beatrix J van Rensburg, a clinical social worker in private practice.

Van Rensburg said, “These skills must be in every child’s emotional tool basket. Especially in times like these. These skills form the core of every child’s emotional development, and that is why it is so important to empower children with the skills concerning their emotions, but also the emotions of others.”

According to Van Rensburg the Lightville series, a series of four books that minister and play-therapist Siegfried Louw recently wrote, will help parents, teachers and therapists talk to children about their emotions.

As play-therapist, author Louw helps children and adults to acknowledge and manage their emotions. “The joy of my work is that I can help others through therapy to be freed from their painful baggage that they are carrying around with them. God gives me the privilege to see how people get back the twinkle in their eye.”

When you ask Louw about the simple language he uses in the Lightville series to address very difficult subjects like death he says, “Children have taught me how to say a lot with only few words.”

Louw says that with these books he wants to give children (and adults) permission to feel what they are feeling. “Yes, we have unwelcome emotions, but to suppress them causes more pain.”

The goal of these books is, for example, to rethink the pain that is caused by losing a loved one. “I want children to understand that their pain means they loved the person that is no longer with them. The missing of the loved one hurts, but it actually tells you something about your love for that person.”

How can the Lightville books help?

- It gives us new ways to think about the experiences in our lives.
- It makes conversations possible between people of different ages who might not know how to talk to one another about some things that happened.
- It encourages emotional integration.
- It empowers parents to talk to their children about the difficult experiences in life *and* about the exciting possibilities it creates.
- It gives children the chance to explore their own experiences.
- It confirms to children that their experiences are valid.

The Lightville series

The Lightville series consists of four books that each has a colourful character that children can identify with.

Lisa is the main character in *The stone in Lisa’s chest*. Lisa has to deal with the difficulty of losing her Uncle Hun. The most important message Lisa sends to other children is that love will always be stronger than death.

In *Ben and the dragon* Ben is trying to tame his dragon – anxiety. When Dragon visits Ben, he struggles to breathe and starts sweating. The aim of Ben’s story is to equip someone to talk to a child about anxiety, that will help normalise the topic for them.

In *Spot and the poison* Spot will help children to recognise bullying behaviour and teach them what they can do about it. Spot’s message is that love will always be stronger than our fear for a bully.

In *Sophia and the cave* Josh is dealing with loneliness. This book was written to help children remember that we were not made to live alone in our “caves” and that we can ask people to help us deal with difficult situations in our lives.

Visit www.lightville.co.za for more information and to order the books.

Help children, young and old, with the difficult situations of life

The stone in Lisa's chest

Help young children think about loss, to talk about it and eventually process it.

Ben and the dragon

Ben and the dragon is specially written to help children discover more about anxiety and how it works, and what they can do to deal with and tame their dragons.

Spot and the poison

Spot and the poison help children to recognize bullying behaviour and teach them what to do with a bully's poison.

Sophia and the cave

Sophia and the cave is specially written to remind children, young and old, to look into the eyes of the people they love. They will help you escape from the loneliness of your hiding place.

25% DISCOUNT

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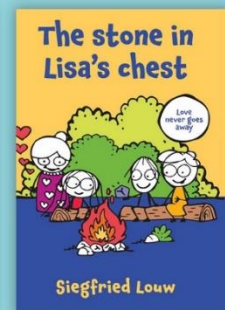
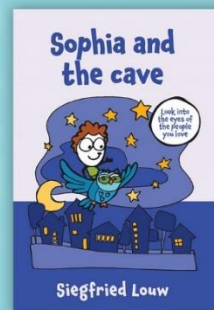
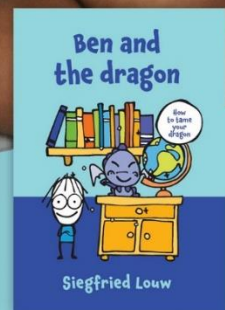
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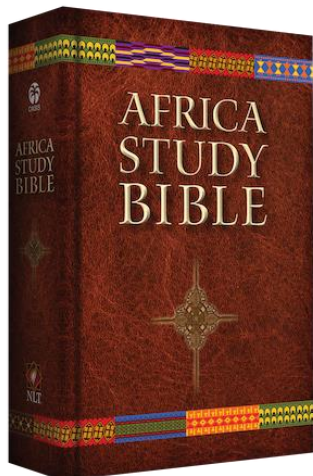
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The two **Must Have Resources** for the private library of pastors of the African continent. Together they form a complete library!

Both available from ACRP office
(place orders by sending an e-mail to cgmp@acrpafrica.co.za)

1. Africa Study Bible (ASB) Hardcover

General Editor: Dr John Jusu



Key features:

The Africa Study Bible (ASB) was written by 338 contributors from 48 African countries, making it the most ethnically diverse, single-volume, biblical resource to date.

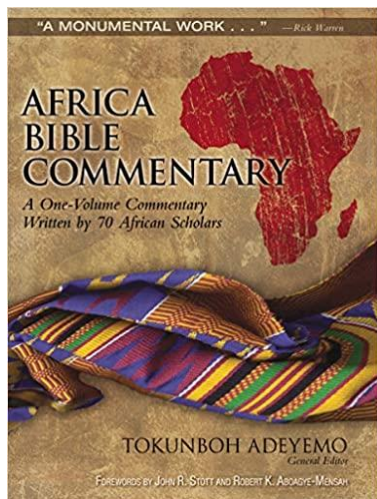
- It was built from the ground up by scholars and pastors in Africa who see the critical need to make Scripture relevant to our everyday lives.
- It contains more than 2,600 features that illuminate the truth of Scripture with a unique, African perspective.
- It is an all-in-one course in biblical content, theology, history, and culture.
- "Touchpoints", "Proverbs" and "Stories" gives an African perspective on the Bible and also show parallels with African wisdom.
- An absolute treasure of 2100 pages

Price: R450.00 (excluding delivery costs). A discount for orders of 10 or more can be arranged.

"The Africa Study Bible is a pacesetter in using the African experience for understanding the Bible. I recommend it highly to those who have sought to understand life and the world from an African perspective". **Dr Mvume Dandala**, former presiding bishop of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa and former head of the All Africa Conference of Churches.

2. Africa Bible Commentary (ABC) (Hardcover)

General Editor: Dr Tokunboh Adeyemo



Key features:

- One-volume Bible commentary produced by African theologians, in Africa, for the needs of African pastors, students and lay leaders—and for the world.
- Section-by-section interpretive commentary, providing a useful guide to the entire Bible.
- More than 70 special articles dealing with topics of key importance in ministry in Africa today, but that have global implications.
- 70 African contributors from both English- and French-speaking countries in Africa
- Transcends the African context with insights into the biblical text and the Christian faith for readers worldwide.
- An absolute treasure of 1585 pages.

Price: R450.00 (excluding delivery costs). A discount for orders of 10 or more can be arranged.

"A rich and valuable contribution to biblical knowledge and understanding. I commend it to Christian leaders. not only in Africa but the world over". **Dr Justice James Ogenyi Ogebe**, High Court Nigeria

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