

Draw From The Well

Thoughts about the Bible

Recorded by

Don Gresswell

*Dedicated to my wife to mark the fiftieth anniversary of our wedding
on the twentieth day of May, nineteen hundred and sixty one*

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Enquires:

Email: don.g@southernphone.com.au

Mail: P O Box 205, Ballarat, 3353, Australia

Introduction

How this Book Came About

I would have to say that more often than not I don't read, or don't completely read, the introductions to books. What about you? Maybe you always read the introduction, or maybe this time is an exception. In any case, you are reading this particular introduction. And probably doing so because you are interested to understand, "Why has this person written this book?" Perhaps you are even asking, or will at some time, "**Should** this person have written this book?" Either way, it's not surprising, because these questions have frequently been in my mind also - almost to the state of tormenting me at times. But those kinds of feelings did not survive long. A different conviction did.

What can I say about my motivation for writing? I believe that I could put forward a cohesive set of reasons. I could say, for example, that I wanted to share thoughts and meditations that have been very sweet and moving to me. And I could say that I don't want to be like the man given the one talent and "wrap it in a napkin and bury it" and not share things from God's word that have resonated in my heart and soul. In addition, I could say that I would love thoughts God has blessed me with to also move others as they have moved me. Such reasons for this book would, I believe, all be true and worthy and sincere - but not the the real, laid-on-my-heart reason.

The real reason came about like this. As members of a bible study 'family' we have been through a period lately when our weekly Bible study meetings seem to have been particularly richly blessed. On one occasion, the thoughts that had filled my mind about one subject were so greatly enjoyed by those we met with that someone was moved to say to me afterwards, "You should write a book".

What would you have done? Probably what I did - shrugged it off. Shrugging it off worked - for a while. But then, over the next couple of weeks another part of scripture filled my mind - at home, at work, driving, in bed. Many thoughts continually flowed into my mind about what that scripture held. And with those thoughts came the

increasingly compelling conviction that I should write those thoughts down. That I **should** write a 'book' - if book is the correct description.

Again, doubts and tormenting fears soon surfaced. Some of them were similar to what Moses and Gideon experienced when God told them he had a job for them to do. Thoughts like theirs, such as I didn't have the standing or the abilities or was in any way fitted for the task. Not that I would liken myself in any way to either of those "greats" of the Bible. But we serve the same God and he works in the same way and we have the same make-up, so I feel we can expect to have similar experiences, if on a much lesser scale. I believe that God's arm is not shortened to equip us to do what he wants us to do. And that when he lays a conviction on my heart, I should undertake the task in faith.

That dealt with the question of feeling I didn't have the standing or the abilities or was in any way fitted for the job. Because that's all irrelevant if God is behind it. But I had an even greater fear, and it was this - what if 'the well' dries up? As things were, I had at that point in time, some thoughts that I believe God put in my mind. Those thoughts I could record quite readily. But if I was to go on to write more than a few pages comprising a few thoughts, I would need to have more than those few thoughts that were already in my mind.

And then, I was beset, time and time again with the doubt - "What if the well dries up?" What if I write down the one or two lines of thought I already have - and then - nothing. And in response to that fear, I heard over and over a reassuring voice, "The well will never run dry". That has persuaded me to go on in faith. To not wait until I have the whole book. To make a start with what God already has given me, not even knowing what the 'whole book' will be. But trusting that he will continue to provide the substance for me to write, if that is his will. And that is how I have proceeded.

How the Title Came About

The title, “Draw From the Well”, comes from an experience during the times of writing the first few chapters. That very well known part of scripture (KJV Matt. 11: 28-30 “*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden...*”) lodged in my mind and some new (to me, at least) insights came strikingly to me. As I thought about recording these thoughts, I came up with what I thought would be a powerful way to present them - a layout that would have great impact.

As I began to work on it, I laid out the words of those verses as I had pictured in my mind. It had ‘worked so brilliantly’ in my mind, but when I tried to put it down in writing it just didn’t work how I imagined it would and my thoughts dried up. I tried a different layout. Then another. I tried a different approach. Nothing worked. I started to wonder, “Has the well dried up?”. Discouraged, I thought the best thing I could do was put it aside, at least temporarily, go to bed and wait for more guidance before attempting it again.

I did receive more guidance - but not how to make my ‘brilliant idea’ work. As soon as I put my head on my pillow I heard a voice admonishing me - not severely, but firmly and persistently nevertheless: “Draw from the well, not from your brain; draw from the well, not from your brain; draw from the well”. And so, taking that as the Spirit’s guidance, that became the title of the book, “Draw From The Well”.

About the Use of Scripture

I have been greatly impressed lately by the power of the scripture, God’s word, when it is read out aloud. For that reason, wherever substantial passages of scripture are referred to, a full quotation of the entire passage is included. In this way, it is hoped it will encourage readers to read the passage out loud, whether in private or with others.

In most places where scripture is used, the reader is provided with book, chapter and verse - but without unnecessary repetition of these details when the quote, or part of it, is used more than once in the same section of the book.

From time to time, scripture quotations are from different translations, depending on which seemed to lend itself best to expressing the meaning at that point. Versions used may include the King James version (KJV), the New King James version (NKJV), the English Standard version (ESV) and the New International Version (NIV). Readers are encouraged to use a version with which they feel most comfortable, whether this is one of the versions listed or another. It is unlikely that any variation between versions will detract from the meaning of either the scripture itself, or the thoughts presented about that portion of God’s word.

In relation to names and pronouns used for God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit, the King James version (KJV) of the Bible is followed. That is, the names are capitalised (as in God the Father) but pronouns are not (as in his, him, he, thou, thee, you, your etc).

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About the Author

Who wrote the Bible? It is generally believed that Moses wrote the first five books. Most feel that Joshua wrote the next book, as it carries his name. However, it seems that someone else added the last few verses that record Joshua’s passing. Who wrote Judges? Was it Samuel? We’re not so sure. After the book of Ruth, we have two books that bear the name of Samuel, but as Samuel died before the end of Samuel 1 there was probably more than Samuel involved. The writers of other books like Isaiah and Jeremiah seem to be more clear cut. Other

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writers also identified themselves (e.g. David, Amos, Habakkuk, Paul and others), leaving little doubt as to the identity of the author.

Of course, what we really believe is that God himself is the author of the Bible. The 'writers', whoever they are, were God's scribes. Some we can identify, some we can't, and some we think we know but it's not quite clear. And since we believe God is the real author, the identity of the scribe is not so important.

So it is with this book. If God is the real author, any detail about the scribe is irrelevant. On the other hand, if God is not the real author, any information, no matter how well it speaks of the scribe, counts for nothing. If, through this book, God can speak for Himself, nothing needs to be said about the scribe. Likewise, if God cannot speak through this book, nothing said about the scribe can redeem its content.

After a lot of soul searching, I have put my name to the writings simply to accept responsibility as the scribe. In the case of an anonymous, pen-named or non-copyrighted document, it's possible that another could claim copyright and alter the right to make copies. Therefore, I have also put my name to the copyright.

Finally,

I fervently hope that what I have written was indeed "drawn from the well". It has been tempting to make that the title - "Drawn From The Well". However, I do not want to presume that **it is** drawn from the well. On the other hand, "Draw from the well" is an instruction that I believe came to me through the Spirit. It's a safe exhortation and I would not want any reader to do be doing anything through reading these writings other than drawing from The Well. With that in mind, I hope that you will join with me in this prayer:

"Our Father in heaven, open the eyes, ears, hearts and minds of readers and listeners to all that is of yourself (Thyself) in this book. And close the eyes, ears, hearts and minds of readers and listeners to all that is not. We ask this blessing in Jesus' name. Amen."