

ON THE SPOT

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OLD BLUE'S GOT THE BLUES

Today we threw out our blue bathroom cabinet. We'd bought it 2nd hand, 50 years ago, from an American lady whose husband was stationed at the American airbase near Madrid.

For all those years Old Blue served us well and survived 5 removals. But now, wobbly on its feet and looking rather rusty, we realized its time had run out, so we ordered a new one, made to exact measurements. Yes, we had been scouring all 2nd hand possibilities, but, no, nothing of the right size. Then we got to know a small family business - the father and his two sons who make furniture on demand and offer sharp prices, while the mother attends to the clients. Today the two sons delivered our new acquisition, and... it meant Old Blue had to go. Now 'the new' proudly replaces 'the old'.

If Old Blue had had a mind of its own, it might have fancied gracing our bathroom for all eternity. But, as Solomon could have said, there is a time to be acquired and a time to be retired.

However, here's a reflection on what One greater-than-Solomon discloses. We humans are more than furniture - infinitely more: the great Creator made us in his own image and gave us life - intelligent life, emotional life, physical life, and above all, spiritual life! This included the possibility to choose and decide things, even against our own best interests, which, of course, are centered purely in our Maker. And, sadly, that is what our first parents did. Historically it is called "The Fall". The results are there for all to see: degeneration, disease and death - not just Alzheimer's and atheism, but runaway corruption, crime, etc. Nothing is now permanent, or eternal!

When a baby is born, everybody knows that this new person will only be here for a while; it will age, it will die. Eternal life is not an option anymore - or is it...?

The New Testament actually mentions "eternal life" a lot, 43 times; the apostle John alone does so 22 times, even though he was perfectly aware that sooner or later he too would die. So how is that? It is because our Maker has one supreme desire for his broken-down and lost creatures. Rather than "trashing" us, he means to restore us. But how can that be?

The answer is replacement. Like "Old Blue", the "old man" can be replaced. God has a "new man" to take his place. Could that be any good for us then? It is where "faith" comes in: Jesus of Nazareth, deliberately, took that "old man's" place in death, which is why He is called "Last Adam". It means that Adam was "trashed". But then, on the third day, as He rose from the dead, He did so as a totally "new man". For that reason Jesus is also called "Second Man" (1 Co. 15:46-49).

This is the way God the Creator replaces the old, good-for-nothing 'me' (old man in Adam) with the new, redeemed 'me' (new man in Christ). That is, if I honestly flee to him in repentance and true surrender. Does that then make me feel "trashed"? It certainly does, but, of course, faith fully accepts that there was no other option. More than that, my redeemed heart is full of joy that in Christ, I have attained "eternal life", now never to be condemned or trashed!

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come!" (2 Co. 5:17).



JANET'S ANGLE

As many of you know, Janet has been at home since March 15. That was a great day, but, of course, it came much later than we had anticipated. She had had her big operation on Dec. 3 and was finally discharged from the hospital on Jan. 30. However, she was not ready to come home. Her two months in bed with several debilitating complications had left her completely without the use of her legs. She was not able to get up from her lying position, nor could she stand even for a moment, leave alone walk.

So this meant she would have to be in a home for the elderly where she could receive the necessary physiotherapy. This was duly arranged while still in hospital, and so, for another month and a half, that is where she stayed. Miguel, the physiotherapist there, patiently, got her to walk again, even to climb the stairs. And, generally, her body started to readjust to normal routines, though, of course, even now there is plenty of room for improvement.

One of the complications mentioned came about through a staple that in her 5-hour operation in December was inadvertently forgotten - it stopped her left kidney functioning. The urologists who found out want to operate again in order to correct the problem. By comparison, this should be a small operation, but she has to be strong enough for it. Although this could be done in the same hospital where she was before, she prefers to have it done in a Malaga city hospital where the surgeons are more experienced. So at this time we are awaiting the appropriate appointments. At 40 km from here, and being right in the city center, visiting will be a bit more complicated, but surely our faithful Lord will continue to guide every step.

We've had reforms done in the house that were necessary for Janet to be much better accommodated in her specific needs. One thing was the new shower, which had little space available for it - that meant that the builder had to proceed very cautiously; in other words, things took much longer to finish. We also got him to see to some other jobs around the house, that had been waiting. They too are done now and we are very pleased with the results.

There were good opportunities to share the Gospel with **Sergio**, the builder/plumber, who is Argentinean. We pray for the fruit of conversion. The same goes for **Simeon**, his Moroccan helper, who gratefully accepted a wonderful Gospel booklet in Arabic.

OTHER NEWS

Over 40 years ago, when we still made our home in the city of Granada, two youngsters of 17, **Carlos** and **Elizabeth**, highschool sweethearts, were converted. What a joy it was to also baptize them in the nearby lake. Later we moved to Vélez-Málaga and they, once they had gotten married, moved to the north of Spain, where they still are, at a distance of some 1000 kms. We hadn't heard from them for many years and so it was a red-letter day when, 'out of the blue', Carlos called us just the other day. God has wonderful ways to encourage you when you think that you're rowing against the tide. This couple, now nearly 60, have not been spared their trials, but God has been with them and Carlos just kept on repeating how thankful he is that God made our paths to cross so long ago.

But now a very different story. We have mentioned **Fernando** and **Juani** in the past. They are Gypsies. Now, it is very common around here for a Gypsy parent or youngster to suddenly disappear from view. Later you find out they are "doing time" because of drugs or violence. Fernando's mother, **Lola**, had come to the Lord many years ago in one of our meetings when Janet gave the Word. She then joined a starting group of mainly Gypsies, which by now has completely dried up. So Lola is often attending our meetings again. Through her encouragement Fernando and Juani, with their young girls, also started to meet with us. But in their case, although there was some profession of faith, we didn't have the full assurance they were really born-again.

Fernando has two younger brothers in jail and he himself has also done time. Then, just the other day, there was a big upset in their home, involving a son whom we haven't met yet. The result was that Juani got badly beaten up and went to the police. Now Fernando just told me that tomorrow he is going into prison again, for at least 2 years. I've been seeing him about all this, encouraging him to be totally honest and humble before the Lord and surrender his life and (violent) character to HIM, once and for all. I assured him of our prayers. You may be led to join us in that.

Toñi, her son **Jesús** and girlfriend **Amanda**, are attending meetings and opening up to the Good News. It gives us much joy, because Toñi, now in her forties, used to attend children's meetings we held in the Gypsy quarters 30 years ago. Moreover, **Myriam's** son, **Hubi**, and girlfriend, **Mariana**, have also come to some meetings. So thank you once again for faithfully praying behind the scenes, yours

Jim & Janet

PRESSING ON!

ISRAEL, GOD'S NATION, IN THE NEWS

- "ABRAHAM'S FAITH, KEY TO THE FUTURE"
- "ISRAEL'S TIMELINE THRU THE MILLENNIA"
- "The Promises that are Everlasting"
- "The Obedience that is Required"
- "The Exile that was Inevitable"
- "The Restoration that is Assured"

- JvH
- JvH
- Richard Gattier

IN THIS ISSUE:

★ Escaped from the Sword
Rose Warner's fascinating story



The Illustration

You may not (yet) be a fan of Ray Comfort. I don't know whether I should be considered one, but I must admit I follow his posts in Facebook, since they are very catchy and to the point. Today there was the following story with photograph. Let God shake you thoroughly, if He hasn't been allowed to do that before. It just might be that you're in time!

With that we leave you for now.

A woman's car broke down late one moonless night in an unfamiliar area. She was afraid, so she wound the vehicle's windows up tight, locked the doors, and turned on the car radio to keep her company. She decided that it would be wise to wait until the morning light before going for help.

A short time later a frantic man appeared at her window and began to yell at her. Frightened, she gestured for him to go away.

He left and then returned seconds later with a rock in his hand, smashed the window of her car, and pulled her out, much to the woman's horrified protests.

As they fell to the ground a massive train slammed into her car, causing it to burst into flames.

You may consider Christians to be raving lunatics, but all we are frantically trying to do is warn you that you are in terrible danger. The train of



God's moral Law is merciless. Your ignorance of the imminent peril doesn't make it disappear. Please, soften your heart and listen before it is too late.

Watch:

www.NoahTheMovie.com (award-winning, over one million views in 23 days). THIS IS NOT THE UNBIBLICAL RUSSELL CROWE VERSION.