WHY ON EARTH A BOOK?

Posted on August 26, 2014 by Eddie

I tend to carry my bible around as an app on my phone; itâ€™s there (in numerous languages and versions) whenever I want it. But I know full well, that in a few years time, technology will have moved on an my app will be useless. Meanwhile, the battered paper Bible which sits on my desk and fits perfectly in my hand when Iâ€™m preaching, will still be there.

Category: Observations

God is a relational God; he wants to reach out to people and draw them too himself. So why on earthÂ did he use something as dry as the written word to communicate with humanity. It canâ€™t be beyond the capacity of the eternal God to come up with something more relational, more warm and fuzzy than a scrolls, parchment a book, or Â evan an app on a smartphone to talk to us.

Recently, I had the privilege of visiting the library at Hereford Cathedral. Itâ€™s a wonderful place for anyone who likes books and especially those who love the Bible. The librarian showed us a Wycliffe Bible which was over 500 years old. Wearing white gloves, she carefully opened the heavy book and allowed us to look inside. I could read it! I struggled with some of the old English terms, and the handwriting wasnâ€™t easy, but I could read it. It is half a millennium since some scribe penned those words and I live in a world that would have been unimaginable to him; but I could read his words. Meanwhile, I have a few floppy disks with data on, from ten or fifteen years ago and no way at all to read them.

The great thing about books, scrolls, parchments and carvings in stone is that they are durable and easily accessible. As long as you can read the language words are written in, you can find out what they are saying. Even with my limited Latin, I can be amused by graffiti that is two thousand years old. God knows this; he has chosen a medium which ensured that his communication, his message to us, would pass down through the centuries. These days, I tend to carry my bible around as an app on my phone; itâ€™s there (in numerous languages and versions) whenever I want it. But I know full well, that in a few years time, technology will have moved on an my app will be useless. Meanwhile, the battered paper Bible which sits on my desk and fits perfectly in my hand when Iâ€™m preaching, will still be there.

If you want an example of how this works, take a look at 1 Kings 21, 22. The people of Judah had drifted a long way from where God wanted them to be, but during a spring clean of the temple the high priest dug out some old scrolls and took them to king Josiah. It turns out that these forgotten scrolls were the books of the law and Josiah was able to use them to get the country back on track. Dry and dusty scrolls, may be dry and dusty, but people can read them, and God can breath life into them.