

God's Word. God has called us to be a kingdom of priests (Ex. 19:6; Rev. 1:6), and baptism is vital in explaining this to us. This should, perhaps, be our conclusion: that there are some things that words cannot adequately describe. How can we comprehend God's love for us, or what it means to be completely surrounded and covered by Christ (Rom. 8:38,39; Eph. 3:17-19; 1 Cor. 2:9)? We are all familiar with Romans 6, but how can we understand what death and resurrection actually feel like? How can we understand what it means to be clothed with righteousness or to be washed from our sins? It is almost like trying to understand infinity.

And so we have this simple command; God asks us to experience this complete submersion

*"But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pet. 3:14,15).*

## Your Letters



### Joseph's "mother" in Genesis 37:10

In "["By faith . . . : Leah"](#) (Feb. 2005, p. 38), Sister Ray Walker states that the "mother" referred to in Genesis 37:10 "must have been Leah". I share the view of Brother Harry Whittaker (*Joseph the Saviour*, p. 10) that it is difficult to come to this conclusion since Leah apparently died in Hebron before Jacob went into Egypt (49:31) and would not have been in the company that went down into Egypt and bowed down to Joseph.

Old Testament words of relationship such as 'son', 'wife', 'brother', etc. often have a wider connotation. In Genesis 30 the handmaids of Leah and Rachel were both given to Jacob "to wife" (vv. 4,9). If, as is reasonable, we assume that Rachel's handmaid Bilhah was younger than her mistress, it is possible she could have lived to see Joseph in Egypt. Perhaps Genesis 37:2 reveals that Joseph had a special relationship with the sons of the handmaids, here called "wives".

Some woman had to nurse baby Benjamin and care for his brother. May not Genesis 37:2 be a clue that Rachel's handmaid became mother to the motherless boys of her dead mistress? Bilhah might by the time of Joseph's dream have been

in water to help describe all these things. Baptism is not a mystical act, nor can it save us on its own. Naaman was saved by Elisha's power, the Israelites by Moses' power, and the power of these two individuals came from God. It can, however, teach us.

It can teach us about humility and God's grace. It shows our faith and willingness to do God's will. It shows our desire for the spirit of God to dwell in us. We share these things with Noah, Israel, Naaman, Jonah, David, the priests, Jesus and others. Now it falls to us to make good the spiritual aspect of our baptism, the washing of the Word in our lives and our consciences. We can show the mind of Christ in our lives, with God's strength.

regarded by Jacob as Joseph's stepmother, as we would term her. She could have entered Egypt and fulfilled the dream.

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### Britain and Tarshish

I would like to comment on the article "Britain in Bible Prophecy" (Jan. 2005, p. 17). It was encouraging to see the author, Brother Nigel Bernard, observe that Tarshish had clear connections to the Phoenicians and Tyre, ancient trade powers. In my opinion, when it comes to identifying Tarshish and her role in prophecy, this is about the only thing we can say with certainty.

While Brother Bernard's premise was that Britain is included in Bible prophecy through a link with Tarshish/Phoenicia, in my view he struggled to present us with substantive evidence for a connection, admitting that the archaeological evidence for a trade link between them was "understandably sparse". Yet in the same paragraph he asserts, "there is little doubt that it [Tarshish] relates to Britain". I find this overstated and unconvincing.