

The Greatest Love Story Ever Told

and Then Some! – The Gospels Retold for Teenagers

by Rosie Rushton
publ by Kevin Mayhew Publishers
in Paperback
at £16.99 (978-1-848-67396-0) 2011

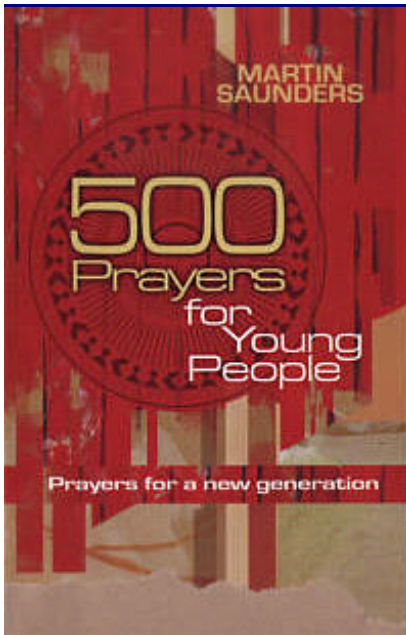
Paperback ISBN 978-1-848-67392-2, £12.99 -

Maybe this was written with teenagers in mind, but I was not too old to thoroughly enjoy it! (When I was a teenager I enjoyed adult books, so what!) -

The stories of Esther, Reuben, Caleb and Seth are woven into the Gospel stories so that the teenagers tell what is happening as observers and participants. They meet and talk with Jesus, they become part of the Gospel story without intruding into it. Not only do we get a new perspective on what is told in the Bible, we gain an insight into what it was like to be an orphaned youngster, one with severe disabilities, one who has been thrown out of home, and one with a privileged background that comes with it's own problems. -

A thoroughly good read, that you find hard to put down. Highly recommended.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



500 Prayers for Young People

Prayers for a New Generation

by Martin Saunders
publ by Monarch imprint of Lion Hudson
in Paperback
at £9.99 (978-0-857-21017-3) 19/08/2011

This attractively produced 250 page paperback has been compiled by Martin Saunders, a young man in his 30s, and father of 3 children. The 500 prayers, many written by Martin himself, are mainly in contemporary English, but some older prayers, such as those by St. Augustine of Hippo, St. Theresa of Avila and St. Gregory, are left in their original form. -

The writer considers the prayers suitable and relevant for 'people journeying through the alternately marvellous and agonizing teenage years'. -

Beware of flicking through this book from back to front, as I did. Initially I was off-put by some old and rather long prayers, and I could not imagine the appeal to a teenager of one labelled 'from the Gelarian Sacramentary (8th century)'. Also in this section is that wonderful prayer of John Henry Newman, containing the lines 'when the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over and our work is done...' It is entitled 'A blessing for the short of breath' – something teenagers rarely experience! -

However, if you start at the very beginning (a very good place to start) you will find a fine collection of prayers of thanks, forgiveness, growth, and coping with pain. The sub heading of this book – - Prayers for a New Generation - - is especially apt for the middle section of the book, where there are excellent prayers dealing with relationships, school life, bullying, starting at college, the environment, and ethics. These prayers are direct and very pertinent to the adolescent years and beyond. -

The blurb suggests giving - 500 Prayers for Young People - as a baptism or confirmation present. I view it as especially appropriate for those in the middle teens and upward. This collection of newly-written prayers, peppered with treasured prayers from the past, would also be a most valuable resource for clergy, teachers and youth workers.

Notes by [Margaret Walker](#)



S.O.S. Titanic

Faith Finders

by Jill Silverthorne
publ by Day One Publications
in Paperback
at £5.00

(978-1-846-25308-9)

Jan 2012

Chrissie with her younger brother Luke and her Father live above the Clock Shop in the London of 1912. The family are mourning the death of Chrissie's Mother, Chrissie has had to become the housekeeper, but an Aunt from America has announced that she is coming to England and will take the children back to America with her for a time. The children can't understand why their father has agreed to this, but now it is April, the Aunt is about to arrive and the mysteries and adventures are about to begin. -

They are booked to travel with their Aunt on the maiden voyage of the huge new liner the Titanic that everyone has been talking about. Luke is excited, Chrissie sad to leave her father, both are very puzzled by the attitude and behaviour of their Aunt! -

What is their Aunt up to? Why is she taking them to America when she appears to dislike children so much? -

They meet up with some good people on the ship, and make friends with some children of their own age. -

The youngsters find themselves in trouble of surprising seriousness, and then the unthinkable happens – the ship that was supposed to be unsinkable, does just that! - A gripping story which, despite the tragic end to the voyage, ends on a note of hope.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



Darla Jade And the Balance of the Universe

by D.J.Reynolds
publ by Xlibris distributed by Gardners
in Paperback
at £14.00 (978-1-462-88762-0) 2011

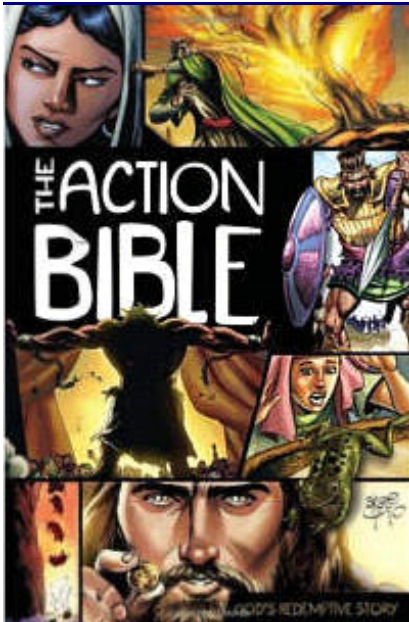
I'm really enthusiastic about this book and look forward to subsequent titles in the series – we are promised seven! -

I found the beginning very scary for my taste but soon got into it and couldn't put it down. -

From the first, we are in the realms of the dead, of Striker who summons souls to heaven or hell, of demons of every size, shape and strength and of angels of infinite variety. Soon we are in the company of teenagers from different centuries and locations training to be Guardians or as some would describe them guardian angels of individual human beings. -

Darla Jade and her new friends Marie and Katie are soon caught up in a very special adventure where it seems Darla Jade and her designated companion Christian are told to watch over and protect a pregnant young teenager and her boyfriend from a former friend now turned into a revengeful and evil antagonist. - I can't say more without spoiling the story but rest assured, from the moment you start to read you go on a roller coaster adventure yourself!

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



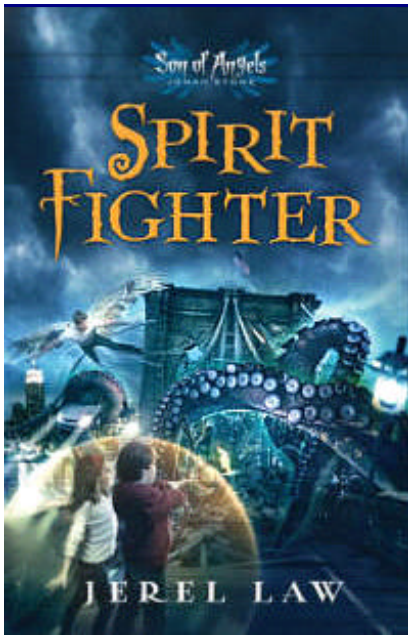
The Action Bible

God's Redemptive Story

Illustrations by Sergio Cariello, General editor Doug Mauss
publ by David C Cook/Kingsway
in Paperback
at £16.99 (978-0-781-44499-6)

Action indeed! The Bible stories are told in bright colours in comic strip fashion. Keeping close to the Bible, the stories are told with vigour and excitement enough to keep any young person on their toes. Familiar stories are re-vitalised in this format and with few words and vivid illustrations this is a book that can be read steadily through, or dipped into at random, repeatedly, as I have done. I particularly liked the non-Biblical link between the Old and New Testament that helped draw the two together.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



Son of Angels: Jonah Stone

Spirit Fighter: Book One

by Jerel Law
publ by Thomas Nelson
in Paperback
at £5.99 (978-1-400-31843-8) 10/04/2012

'Jonah Stone has always thought of himself as average but at thirteen he learns a fascinating family secret.....Jonah's mother is a Nephilim, the daughter of a human and a fallen angel, which makes Jonah (and his siblings) one quarter angel...' Publisher -

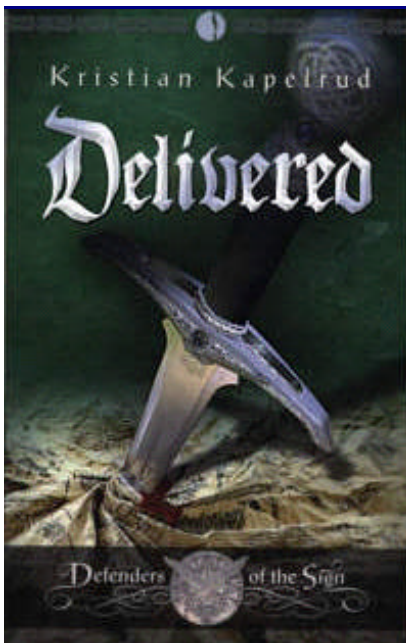
Having read that, I was ready for anything and was not disappointed! -

Jonah is the eldest of the three children of Eleanor and Benjamin Stone, his father a Methodist pastor has taught the children to turn to God, Elohim, with any problems, and although the opening pages start with a very normal scene of a family getting ready for school, very soon we are into happenings that are anything but normal! -

As you read on the excitement builds, Jonah is now able to see his guardian angel, Henry, and other angels good and bad. A dreadful thing happens which turns out to be part of something even worse and Jonah and his sister Eliza are told they are the only ones who can save the situation. -

It is a compulsive read, keeping you on the edge of your chair, till at last all is well. Whew.....!

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



Delivered

Defenders of the Sign Book Three

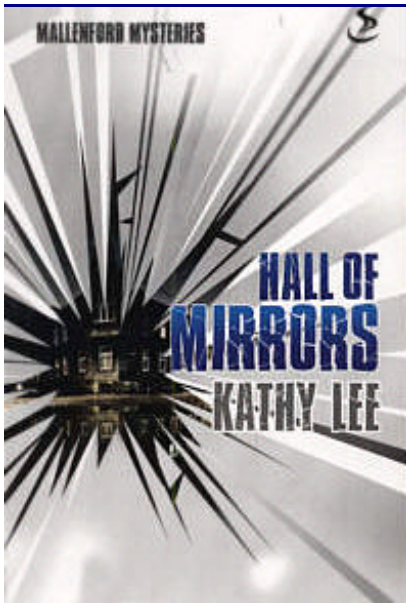
by Kristian Kapelrud
publ by Piquant Editions (Distributed by IVP)
in Paperback
at £11.99 (978-1-903-68967-7) 2011

I - have - enjoyed this trilogy! -

Louis the author, the Rightful One in the parallel story, is now an old man. He has written many books about his imagined land of Alphabetania, still divided into two lands by hatred fostered by the lies and deceit of evil men. Now he wants to bring the series to an end – and doesn't know how! -

In Betania, Sigma the wise is acting Regent till Omicron's son, Epsilon, comes of age. Sigma is convinced that he with a few others should venture into Alphania to rescue the Diatect, an object of great antiquity that Betanians as Defenders of the Sign believe holds great power created by the Rightful One. The Alphanians do not believe any such thing, they do not believe that they are the product of the written word or that they should live according to the directions of the Rightful One but they do believe that while they hold the Diatect they can hold the Betanians in contempt. While Louis resolves his problems with the help of his grandson and the editor assigned to his books by the publisher, Epsilon comes of age and is involved in struggles, sometimes bloody, with his perceived enemies – and there are more lies and intrigue before the happy ending.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



Hall of Mirrors

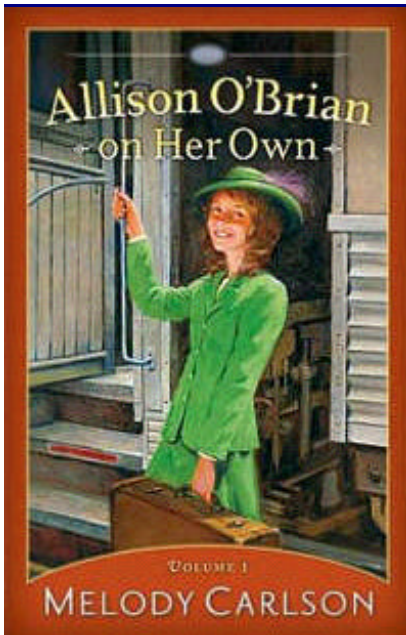
by Kathy Lee
publ by Scripture Union (SU)
in Paperback
at £4.99 (978-1-844-27506-9) 2011

Rebecca lives in a cottage next to Mallenford Hall where her father is gardener and her mother housekeeper. Rebecca feels trapped like her reflection in the room in the Hall with the ancient mirrors. Her parents belong to a strict religious group and television, computers and radios are banned. The religious leader's demands become more and more extreme until a final rule from him causes a rift between Rebecca's parents. It's as bad at school where she finds herself cast off as shy and odd because computers and television are banned. When discussions come up about chat rooms or the latest news, she doesn't have a clue what's being talked about. -

Then a classmate Dylan finds out that she has access to Mallenford Hall and according to his research there's treasure hidden up there. He persuades Rebecca to get him an invite, and the unraveling of a mystery and search for the treasure begins. -

- Hall of Mirrors - sits comfortably in a first person narrative and offers enough intrigue to keep the reader turning pages.

Notes by [Ruthie Thomas](#)



Allison O'Brian On Her Own

Allison Chronicles Volume One

by Melody Carlson
publ by Revell imprint of Baker Pub from Lion
in Paperback
at £7.99 (978-0-800-72014-8) Jul 2011

- Allison O'Brian on Her Own - has just been republished this year as a combined edition of two previously-published volumes entitled - On Hope's Wings - and - Cherished Wish - . Set in 1948, the book tells the story of fourteen year old Allison with her emotionally distant film star mother, Marsha Madison. Allison knows nothing about her father but, after an exciting adventure in New York, she makes a chance discovery which leads her on even more daring adventures as she crosses America alone in search of answers. -

Only the first volume of a whole series, this book is ideal for girls in their early teens or perhaps even confident pre-teen readers with its relaxed writing style and relatively well-developed main characters. The description of Allison's growing Christian faith is subtle and the author does not seem to be pushing an overtly Christian agenda; you can be confident that, whilst open about the centrality of faith, this book would not grate on a young person who is pushing at the boundaries of the faith which they have received from their parents. Finally, the pacey plot and dialogue-rich text means that young girls are sure to be keen to read the next book in the series!

Notes by [Chloe Lynch](#)



The Oncoming Storm

Dark Chapters: Noah

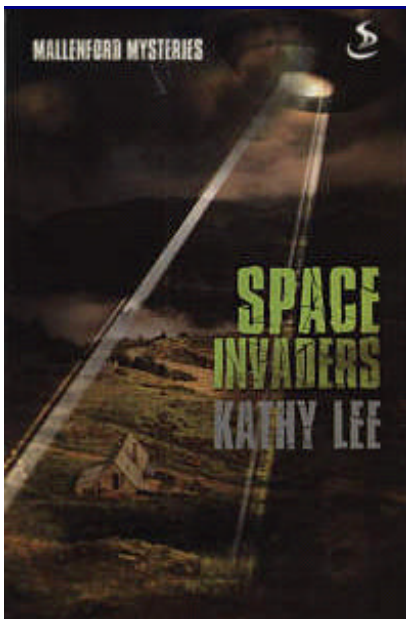
by Andrew R. Guyatt
publ by Scripture Union (SU)
in Paperback
at £5.99

(978-1-844-27619-6)

Sep 2011

This is not the first fictional re-telling of Noah's story I have read by this author. - The Day the Sky Opened - written for adults, made a lasting impression on me, and this, written for teenagers will do the same for them I'm sure. - The author has imagined what actually happened during the building of the ark, the time when the animals and provisions were being assembled and when the 'Holy One' shut the family and their collected animals into the ark. Not the happy plaything that toddlers are introduced to, but a real floating home/zoo, to be suffered for a year while all other living things were obliterated from the earth except those who could swim. A terrible punishment for the worlds wickedness that the 'Holy One' has promised never to repeat. - Scripture Union has deliberately brought out this series to 'help youngsters explore the difficult questions that the Bible texts raise.' For older teenagers I would suggest.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



Space Invaders

Mallenford Mysteries

by Kathy Lee
publ by Scripture Union (SU)
in Paperback
at £4.99 (978-1-844-27507-6)

Sep 2011

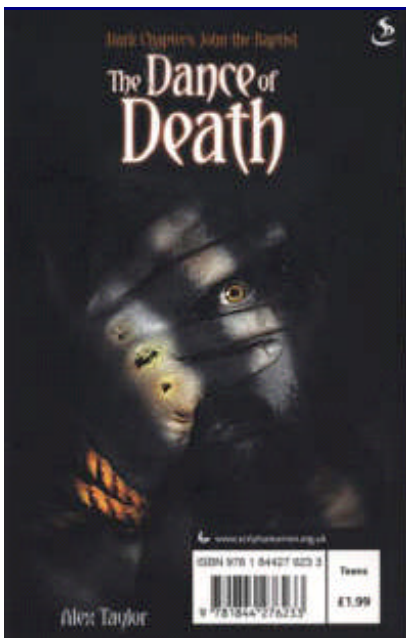
Paul's mum and dad have parted and his mum has gone off to America with her best friend's husband. His dad and the best friend, Rushani, become close and they marry. Rushani with her three children move in with Paul's family. Seven people squashed into a small house while the extension is being built – not an easy situation for any of them!

Paul has to share a bedroom with his newly acquired brother Danny and it is here that the adventure begins. Danny is keen on astronomy, watching the stars at night as often as he can. This particular night he had wanted to watch for a meteor storm at 2am but his mother had forbidden it. Paul, woken by Danny's snores decides to look out of the window to see if there is anything going on – and has the surprise of his life. -

Convinced that something is happening on the nearby moorland they go exploring..... -

This is a story of two families becoming one, of trouble at school, and what is it that is happening on the moor?

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



Legion – Dark Chapters: Demon Possessed Man/Dance of Death – Dark Chapt

by Andrew Smith/Alex Taylor
publ by Scripture Union (SU)
in Stapled Paperback
at £1.99 (978-1-844-27623-3)

09/09/2011

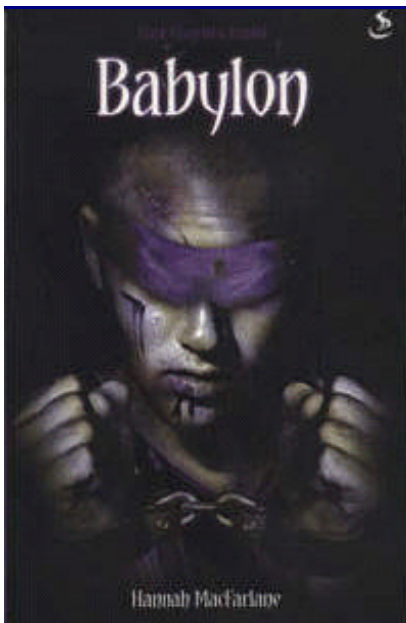
Two books in one slim volume. Read one title, than turn upside down and read the other. -

Both these stories bring to life that which is told in the gospels. Both describe in graphic detail the horror of the respective situations. -

'Enjoy' is not the appropriate word, but reading these re-tellings certainly held my attention and gave me pause for thought. -

Scripture Union has deliberately brought out this series to 'help youngsters explore the difficult questions that the Bible texts raise.'

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



Babylon

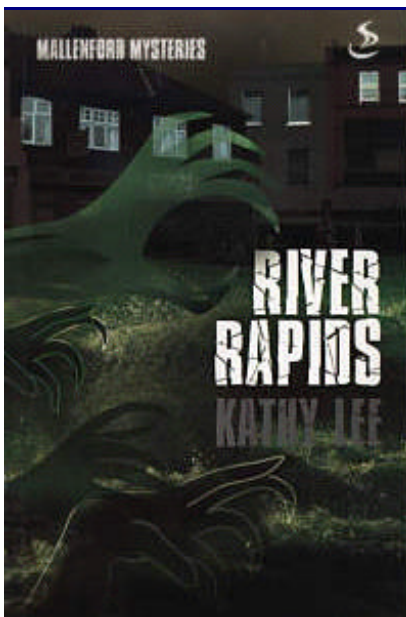
Dark Chapters: Daniel

by Hannah MacFarlane
publ by Scripture Union (SU)
in Paperback
at £5.99 (978-1-844-27618-9)

16/09/2011

Dark chapters indeed, this is not for the fainthearted. This is the re-telling in all its bloody detail of the Bible chapters from the Book of Daniel, Chapters 1-6 with episodes from Jeremiah. This brings into stark reality what it was like to live in those times, what it was like to be conquered by a foreign foe. The story follows closely what you can read in the Bible, using knowledge of those times discovered by archaeology and other historical evidence to make it harrowingly real. - It is a gripping and exciting read. Suitable I would suggest, for mid to older teens - Scripture Union has deliberately brought out this series to 'help youngsters explore the difficult questions that the Bible texts raise.'

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



River Rapids

Mallenford Mysteries

by Mallenford Mysteries
publ by Scripture Union (SU)
in Paperback
at £4.99 (978-1-844-27508-3)

Summer 2011

Intended for young people or not, I enjoyed it! - Adopted teenager Maya looks a bit Chinese, so when she and her mother pull a Chinese girl from the river raging in a torrent past their flooded home, unbeknown to them it is the start of a chain of events that becomes a little too exciting for comfort. - Fast moving and absorbing this is a story of people trafficking, bullying, unexpected friendships and the problems of being flooded out of a home and livelihood. - Sadly these are problems that can be only too real in our time, but rest assured - there is a happy ending.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)

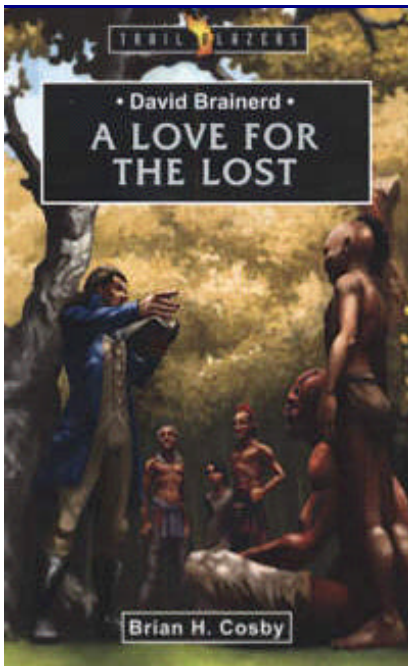


Beech Bank Girls - Christmas is Coming!

by Eleanor Watkins
 publ by Dernier Publishing
 in Paperback
 at £5.99 (978-0-956-90431-7) Sep 2011

The six friends tell the story from their own perspective as in the previous books. - Holly has returned from her fabulous holiday in Australia to unexpected family problems. In fact, as in real life, each girl has problems of one sort or another, all helped by the group of friends, and Sadie & Ron the leaders of the Beech Bank church youth club who help them to put their trust in a loving God. - The chapter names give a hint of what is to come, but Eleanor manages to weave into the stories all sorts of issues that young people meet these days, while still writing a thoroughly good and enjoyable read, and the final pages brought tears to my eyes.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



David Brainerd: A Love Lost for Ever

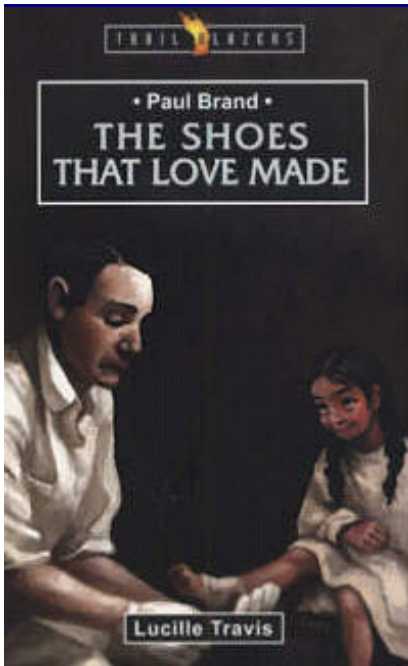
Trail Blazers

by Brian H. Cosby
 publ by CF4Kids imprint of Christian Focus
 in Paperback
 at £5.99 (978-1-845-50695-7) 2011

David Brainerd's life was short, but it was packed with adventure and incident. Anyone who worked among the Native Americans at a time when the white man was gradually encroaching on their territory needed to be brave and to have a real vocation for his mission, and Brainerd certainly had that. Despite constant ill health and a naturally depressive nature he persevered in trying to evangelise people who had no notion of the Almighty God, nor of his Son Jesus Christ; his death at the age of twenty-nine brought to an end a life that had been devoted to missionary work. -

This book, which is aimed at older children and young teens, tells the story of Brainerd's life. It is written by a pastor, which is reflected in the use of several "theological" terms that might make it harder to understand but which would give good opportunity to talk about what the words mean. At the end of the book a series of discussion topics based on the various chapters are also provided. - This is not an action-packed adventure story, even though many exciting and incredible things happen. It will however give a young reader cause to think about just what sacrifices may need to be made by those who give their lives to God.

Notes by [Paula Hill](#)



Paul Brand :The Shoes That Love Made

Trail Blazers

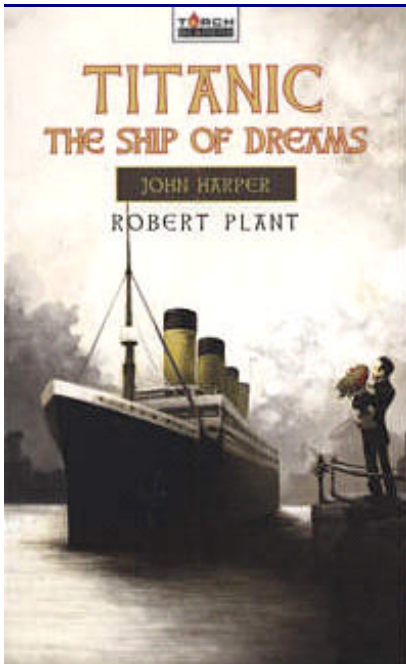
by Lucille Travis
publ by CF4Kids imprint of Christian Focus
in Paperback
at £5.99 (978-1-845-50630-8) 2011

In this fascinating book we are introduced to the life and work of a man whose love for the unlovely has led to the transformation of many lives. Leprosy was one of the most misunderstood and feared diseases in the world, but Brand's love for lepers coupled with his mechanical mind led to his discovery of the root cause of many of the symptoms and the development of effective treatment for the resulting disfigurement and eventually a cure. This book is not for the squeamish, but it will fascinate anyone with an interest in how God prepares his servants for the job he wants them to do. -

Towards the end of his life Paul Brand received many accolades for his work, but this book makes it clear that his focus was never on the praises of men, but rather on demonstrating the love of Jesus to the suffering men and women he saw all around him. At the end of the book a series of discussion topics based on the various chapters give opportunity to think further about the issues raised. -

This book is designed for children and young teens, but it does contain some details of the symptoms and treatment of leprosy, so it might not be appropriate for all readers. That being said, it is highly recommended.

Notes by [Paula Hill](#)



Titanic: The Ship of Dreams

John Harper of the Titanic – Torch bearers

by Robert Plant
publ by CF4Kids imprint of Christian Focus
in Paperback
at £5.99 (978-1-845-50641-4) 2011

Although this is a book designed for older children (9-12) to read to themselves or for adults to read to those who are younger, the account of what happened on the maiden voyage of the “unsinkable” ship is written in such a way that an adult can also appreciate and learn from it. -

The author tells the story from the point of view of John Harper and his daughter Nana. He was a preacher of the gospel, and the book is full of things both he and she say to the other passengers on the ship. In this way the author subtly turns the book into an evangelistic tool, even while telling a very exciting story. Much of the book deals with life aboard the Titanic, and some of its famous passengers are given speaking parts, so that the book will appeal to a wide audience. The details of the shipwreck are kept fairly brief, so a sensitive child will not be too distressed; above all the importance of being right with God before death is emphasised. - This is an excellent book to give to a child. Robert Plant has had a lot of experience in communicating with children and it shows.

Notes by Paula Hill



12 Hidden Heroes Book Two: N.T

More People Who Lived Behind the Scenes

by Rebecca Parkinson
publ by Day One Publications
in Paperback
at £5.00 (978-1-846-25274-7) Summer 2011

These short books contain the stories of some of the background characters in the Bible. Some of us have heard the names of Barzillai, Eliezer, Jairus and Onesiphorus, but Rebecca Parkinson has taken what little we know about these (and other) people and rewritten the Bible stories in which they appear from their perspective. The result is a fresh twist on familiar Bible passages which helps the reader to reconsider what they have to teach us. Each story is followed by a few questions, where the reader is encouraged to look up the relevant Bible passages and apply them to their own lives. -

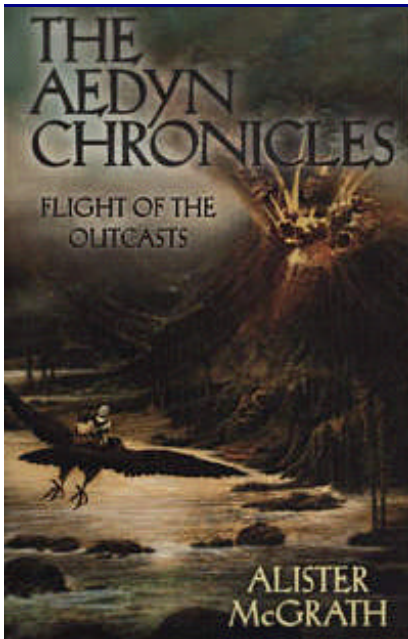
These books would make excellent Sunday School prizes, or they could equally be used in family devotions or as bedtime stories. A child of eight who is a confident reader would be able to read them alone, but they would also be suitable to give to 11-13 year olds. - -

12 Hidden Heroes Book One: N.T. – Bible People Who Did Brave Things For God. ISBN – 978-1-846-25211-2 -

12 Hidden Heroes Book One: O.T. – Bible People Who Did Brave Things For God. ISBN – 978-1-846-25210-5 -

12 Hidden Heroes Book Two: O.T. – More People Who Lived Behind the Scenes, ISBN – 978-1-846-25273-0

Notes by [Paula Hill](#)



Flight of the Outcasts

The Aedyn Chronicles: Book Two

by Alister McGrath illustrated by Wojciech Voytek Nowakowski

publ by Zondervan Publishing House

in Hardback

at £9.99

(978-0-310-71813-0)

Jan 2011

Peter and Julia start to run away from their Father, who doesn't seem to care for them anymore, and their dreadful step-mother and her ghastly children but Louisa has spied on them and is her usual tell-tale self - when all three children find themselves in a deserted Aedyn. Peter and Julia have been in Aedyn before but Louisa is totally shocked and overwhelmed. -

When a huge falcon descends from above and obviously expects them to climb onto its back, Louisa is freaked out and the falcon has no option than to pick her up in its talons and transport her that way. -

He takes them to another island, Khemia. Here dreadful things are happening, and Peter and Julia know that they have been brought here to help the poor captives from Aedyn, now enslaved by those wanting to control the world. Surprisingly, Louisa plays her part in all this. -

An exciting story with an inconclusive end that makes you want the next book in the series as quickly as possible! (Due Sept 2011)

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)