During the month of May we were asked to pray for the nations of Asia and the theme of our prayers was that "God would send out workers to gather in His harvest". I found this lovely poem written by a man who had a dream. It is based on the story in Matt. 21:18-20 when Jesus looked for fruit on the fig tree and found nothing but leaves.

The time of the harvest was ended, And the summer of life was gone, When in from the fields came the reapers, Called home by the dip of the sun; I saw them each bearing a burden Of toilsomely ingathered sheaves; They brought them in love to the Master, But I could bring nothing but leaves. The years that He gave I had wasted, Nor thought I how soon they would fly, While others toiled for the harvest, I carelessly let them slip by; I idled about without purpose, Nor cared I, but now how it grieves; While others brought fruit to their Master, I found I had nothing but leaves.

Then soon from my dream I was wakened,
And sad was my heart, for I knew
That though my life's day was not over,
Ere long I should bid it adieu.
I started in shame and in sorrow,
I turned from the sin that deceives;
Henceforth I must toil for the Saviour
Or maybe bring nothing but leaves.

(by Jack Selfridge)

On the Sunday after Easter, Pete told us all about 'Doubting Thomas'. I found myself wondering what happened to Thomas. I discovered the following info on the internet.

#### THOMAS – AN APOSTLE OF JESUS

Thomas is traditionally believed to have sailed to India in 52 AD to spread the Christian faith among the Jews there, some of whom had migrated to Kerala. He is supposed to have landed at the ancient port of Muziris (modern-day North Paravur and Kodungalloor in Kerala state). He established *Ezharappallikal* or *Seven and half churches* in Kerala. These churches are at Kodungallur, Palayoor, Kottakkavu (Paravur), Kokkamangalam, Niranam, Nilackal (Chayal), Kollam and Thiruvithamcode (half church).

Eusebius of Caesarea quotes Origen (died mid-3rd century) as having stated that Thomas was the apostle to the Parthians, but Thomas is better known as the missionary to India through the *Acts of Thomas*, perhaps written as late as 200AD.

St. Ephrem, a doctor of Syriac Christianity, writes that the Apostle was put to death in India, and that his remains were subsequently buried in Edessa, brought there by an unnamed merchant. A Syrian ecclesiastical calendar of an early date confirms the above and gives the merchant a name. The entry reads: "3 July, St. Thomas who was pierced with a lance in 'India'. His body is in Urhai (Edessa) having been brought there by the merchant Khabin.

An early 3rd-century Syriac work known as the *Acts of Thomas* connects the apostle's Indian ministry with two kings, one in the north and the other in the south. According to the Acts of Thomas, the apostle's ministry resulted in many conversions throughout the kingdom, including the king and his brother.

Remains of some of his buildings, influenced by Greek architecture, indicate that he was a great builder. According to the

legend, Thomas was a skilled carpenter and was bidden to build a palace for the king. Although little is known of the immediate growth of the church, Bar-Daisan (154–223) reports that in his time there were Christian tribes in India which claimed to have been converted by Thomas and to have books and relics to prove it. But at least by the year of the establishment of the Second Persian Empire (226), there were bishops of the 'Church of the East' in northwest India (Afghanistan and Baluchistan), with laymen and clergy alike engaging in missionary activity.

It is most significant that, aside from a small remnant of the 'Church of the East' in Kurdistan, the only other church to maintain a distinctive identity are the *Saint Thomas Christian* congregations along the Malabar Coast (modern-day Kerala) in southwest India. According to the most ancient tradition of this church, Thomas evangelized this area and then crossed to the Coromandel Coast of southeast India, where, after carrying out a second mission, he died near Madras. Historian Vincent A. Smith says, "It must be admitted that a personal visit of the Apostle Thomas to South India was easily feasible in the traditional belief that he came by way of Socotra, where an ancient Christian settlement undoubtedly existed.

Thomas is believed to have left northwest India when invasion threatened and travelled by vessel to the Malabar coast and he is said to have preached the gospel throughout the Malabar coast. The various churches he founded were located mainly on the Periyar River and its tributaries and along the coast, where there were Jewish colonies. He reputedly preached to all classes of people and had about 17,000 converts, including members of the four principal castes. Later, stone crosses were erected at the places where churches were founded, and they became pilgrimage centres. In accordance with apostolic custom, Thomas ordained

teachers and leaders or elders, who were reported to be the earliest ministry of the Malabar Church.

According to tradition, Thomas was killed in 72 AD. Nasrani Churches from Kerala in South India state that Thomas died at Mylapore near Chennai in India and his body was interred there. The accounts of Marco Polo from the 13th century state that the Apostle had an accidental death outside his hermitage in Chennai by a badly aimed arrow of a fowler who, not seeing Thomas, shot at peacocks there. Since at least the 16th century, the St. Thomas Mount has been a common site revered by Hindus, Muslims and Christians. The records of Barbosa from early 16th century inform that the tomb was then maintained by a Muslim who kept a lamp burning there. The San Thome Basilica presently located at the tomb was first built in the 16th century and rebuilt in the 19th.

According to tradition, in 232 AD, the greater portion of relics of the Apostle Thomas are said to have been brought from India to the city of Edessa, Mesopotamia. In 1144, the city was conquered by the Zengids and the shrine destroyed. On 6 September 1258, the relics were transported to the West, and now rest in Ortona, Abruzzo, Italy.

#### The following is a reflection often used by Sandy Youngleson

Christ is the head of the Church
The Church is Christ's body
So go forth and be the hands that heal
Be the feet that stand with the oppressed
Be the eyes that see Holy in all God's people
Be the mouth that speaks the truth
Be the ears that listen with patience
Be the heart that is full of life
Go now, in peace

#### THE BOOK OF REVELATION

As promised in the last issue of The Grapevine I have attempted to put together a précis highlighting the key features of the Book of Revelation. I quote the following passage from a book written by Phil Moore called "Straight to the Heart of Revelation".

#### Chapter 1 – John's vision of Jesus and the start of the Revelation.

"The book of Revelation is about Jesus Christ. I know that some people will tell you that it's all about beasts, barcodes, timelines, trumpets and judgements, but they've missed the point. It's much more than an encrypted account of the last days of Planet Earth. It's a book about Jesus, and John starts it with words intended to clear that up once and for all. He entitles his book very simply, "the Revelation of Jesus Christ". He is also telling us that this is "the revelation about Jesus Christ", and that makes a massive difference. It turns Revelation into a book which can really change our lives.

"No one alive at that time knew more about Jesus – the baby, the child, the man. He knew Jesus crucified and raised to life, and yet Jesus knew that he needed more. Something was missing from John's view of Jesus, and we need it ourselves if we are to live as Christfollowers today. Knowing Jesus the baby, Jesus the man, Jesus the suffering sacrifice, and Jesus the risen Son of God is essential – that's why he is revealed in such detail in the four gospels – but our view of him is too small unless we also see him ascended and in heavenly glory. Without this view, John reclined happily on Jesus' chest at the Last Supper. When he saw Jesus in his post-ascension glory, however, he tells us in 1:17 that "I fell at his feet as though dead".

"We need to grasp that Revelation is as much a book about Jesus as the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Although "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever", he appeared humbly as a man at his incarnation and received glory and power at his ascension. There is a real danger that unless we see Jesus in the pages of Revelation, we will worship him as he walked on the earth

yesterday and not as he reigns in heaven today. That's the great tragedy when Christians treat this book like a fantasy novel or a secret code for someone other than themselves. They have missed the point as much as a person who watches the movie 'Jaws' and thinks it is about the seaside. 'Jaws' is a movie about a shark. Revelation is a book about Jesus Christ, the King of Glory.

"One of the great mysteries of the book of **Daniel** is the identity of the shadowy figure who appears in the middle of **chapter 7**. It's the year 553BC and Daniel dreams of four terrifying beasts, which represent the great empires of the next few centuries of history. First the Babylonian Empire, then the Persian Empire, then the Greek Empire and lastly, still in existence at the time of John, the Roman Empire. Then Daniel sees something unexpected in the midst of those rising and falling empires. It is not a fifth beast but a human being, one whose empire will be truly global, larger than all the empires put together. It will not simply last longer than its predecessors, it will last forever. Daniel tells us that:

"I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshipped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away; and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed."

"So who is this "One Like a Son of Man", whose empire will vastly exceed all its rivals? That's the great mystery. Jesus had often called himself "the Son of Man", but this had still not prepared John for what he saw. Jesus perfectly matched Daniel's identikit picture of the "One like a Son of Man", and that could only mean one thing. The carpenter's son from Galilee was the one greater than Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander and Caesar; and whose global empire would never end. Daniel saw "One like a Son of Man" for a second time up close and personal. He gave a detailed account of his appearance in Dan.10:5-6, which is startlingly similar to John's description of Jesus in the first chapter of Revelation. But John saw

three things which Daniel had not seen, which convinced him that it was true.

"Jesus held the keys of Death and Hades in his hand, because he had defeated these two great enemies through his death and resurrection. He wielded a sharp double-edged sword in his mouth, because his Gospel message had gone out to the nations with a command to submit to him as King. He held seven stars in his right hand, because he had founded the Church as the agent of his Kingdom whom even the gates of Hell could not resist. Daniel had seen a picture of the coming King, but John saw the reality of the King who had come. The rest of Revelation explains world history in the light of this glorious fact."

That's all we have room for now. Please read Daniel 7 and Revelation 1, you will be amazed! We will study further chapters of 'The Book of Revelation' in the next issue of the Grapevine.

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#### Weddings

Julia and Gaylen Swales – 15.03.2014
Angela and Bryan McNeilage – 05.04.2014
Mandy and Ryan Moan – 12.04.2014
Patricia and Knowledge Zinduru – 26.04.2014
Kirsten and Llewellyn Bryan – 03.05.2014
Jaimee and Ross MacDonell – 01.05.2014
Leona and Ivan Bellini – 02.05.2014
Renee and Alexander Hamilton – 10.05.2014
Brendon and Karen Judson – 31.05.2014

#### **BOOK REVIEW**

### THE FOUR BLOOD MOONS By John Hagee

This is a book about the Four Blood Moons and their significance to the Jews. However, it is also a book about the history of the Jews and also of Bible prophesy. We read about the incredible way God has been instrumental in preserving the lives of the Jewish nation. The moving verses in Psalm 126 are so applicable to Israel. "Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy. He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him." There is a strong message of deep sorrow and suffering in their lives but also of triumph. We only have to read some of the stories of their deliverance in the book of Exodus, Joshua, Esther as well as in 1967 during the Six Day War to see this.

Hagee describes how a series of blood moons in 2014 and 2015 will occur and have great significance for Israel and the whole world. These will appear over the two feasts of Passover and the feast of Tabernacle. NASA has confirmed that there will be these blood moons. One has already appeared this April. Although single blood moons occur fairly frequently, four appearing so closely together is extremely rare. A blood moon is when the earth comes between the sun and the moon. The sun is shining through the atmosphere of the Earth and casts up on the moon a red shadow. The moon appears to be red.

In the past, the rare appearance of 4 blood moons appearing over the Passover and Feast of Tabernacle has coincided with major events for Israel and its people. There were four blood moons in 1493-1494. These dates are close to what is known as the Spanish Inquisition, when thousands of Jews were killed and expelled from Spain. It was when Columbus discovered America which became a safe haven for so many Jews.

Between 1949\1950 there were another 4 blood moons. After the dreadful events of the holocaust, we have the rebirth of Israel. In 1967|1968 Israel triumphed against all odds and God lit up the heavens with 4 blood moons when Jerusalem was reclaimed!

Genesis says that God uses the sun, moon and stars for signs. We read about the wise men being led to Jesus. In the book of Joshua the sun stood still, enabling Israel to triumph over her enemies. In Joel 2:31it says, "The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the great and awesome day of the Lord." In the book of Revelation there are also references to Blood moons. In Revelation 6 we read that after the 6<sup>th</sup> seal was broken there was a great earthquake, "The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, the whole moon turned blood red.."

Hagee repeats what Jesus said about no one but the Father knowing when the end would come. However, he encourages all Christians to keep their eyes upwards! What exciting times we live in!

(by Jeannette Smith)

The nonbeliever says: "Show me God and I will believe in Him." The believer answers: "Believe in God and He will show himself to you."







Lord it's too heavy Please cut it short a little







Lord, please cut off a little more. I'll be able to carry it better











Awesome!! We complain about the cross we bear but don't realize it is preparing us for the dip in the

#### FROM THE EDITOR'S PEN

#### THE GIFT OF PROPHESY

Recently our home group have been reading 1 Corinthians and in chapter 14 Paul compares the gift of tongues with the gift of prophesy. He quite obviously placed a higher value on the ability to prophesy than on being able to talk in tongues. In verses 2-3 he says: "For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit. But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort."

For a long time now I have prayed for the gift of 'tongues' and been very disappointed that the Lord has not granted my prayer. I have quite a few friends who have this wonderful gift, and they tell me that it usually occurs when they are alone and in a spirit of prayer. I'm told it brings about a great sense of peace and oneness with God. However, they have no idea what the words mean. Once, our group had an elderly lady visiting us and when it came time for each one of us to pray she prayed in what, we presumed, was tongues. Not one of us understood her prayer! So any benefit from her prayer was only between her spirit and God. As Paul says: "If you are praising God with your spirit, how can one who finds himself among those who do not understand say 'Amen' to your thanksgiving since he does not know what you are saying?"

My Bible Concordance gives the meaning of 'prophesy' as:

"spoken or written communication from God, often but not always of a predictive nature." This interpretation of the word was quite an eye-opener for me. I have always associated 'prophesy' with being able to foretell the future. But when I began to really think about the prophets of the Old Testament I realised that warnings of things to come was only a small part of what God wanted to share with His people. Most of the Prophets' messages were telling the people what the Lord required from them. They were admonished for their sins and constantly assured of God's endless love and patience. In other words, they 'shared' their communication from God with others. In Paul's letter to the Corinthians he very definitely prizes this gift above the gift of tongues.

So, I have now changed my prayer to asking God for my gift of the Spirit to be one of 'prophesy' i.e. being able to share with others the things God has placed on my heart. There are so many times when the Lord has spoken clearly to me, either through prayer or, most often, through His Word and I, selfishly, keep these things hidden in my heart whereas, if I had the great gift of 'prophesy' I would be able to pass them on to others who might need encouragement and guidance. We have all enjoyed occasions when we have been able to get together with our brothers and sisters, sometimes in a group, often just two of us chatting over a cup of coffee, sharing God's Word one with the other. In this age of technology it is a simple thing to share our thoughts with others – when a verse speaks to me of encouragement or guidance I should reach for my cell phone and message it on to a friend.

I pray that the Lord will prompt me to do this more often, thereby not only strengthening others but also myself.

# Twas a thief said the last kind word to Christ. Christ took the kindness and forgave the theft (Robert Browning)

#### **HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW YOUR BIBLE?**

After watching the BBC programme "Who wants to be a Millionaire?" we have been amazed – actually shocked – at how many of those in the 'hot seat' have been unable to answer simple questions about the Bible (sometimes the audience did not know the answers either) and this in a country where Christianity used to be the predominant religion with the Queen being head of the Anglican Church. It got us wondering how Zimbabweans would do if placed in similar circumstances. So here goes, you are now in the hot seat. The first lot of questions are very simple, but they will get harder as we move forward.

- 1) The Bible is divided into 2 parts can you name them?
- 2) Do you know the collective name for the first 5 books of the Old Testament?
- 3) Can you name the first 5 books of the Old Testament?
- 4) Do you know the collective name for the first 4 books of the New Testament?
- 5) Can you name the first 4 books of the New Testament?
- 6) Do you know how many books, altogether, there are in the Bible?
- 7) What is the name of the last book in the Bible?
- 8) Do you know how many Psalms are contained in the Book of Psalms?
- 9) Do you know which is the longest of the Psalms?
- 10) What is the shortest book in the Bible?

#### ANSWERS TO THE BIBLE QUIZ

- 1) The Old and the New Testament.
- 2) Pentateuch.
- 3) Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus & Numbers.
- 4) The Gospels.
- 5) Matthew, Mark, Luke & John.
- 6) 66 (39 in the Old & 27 in the New Testaments).
- 7) The Book of Revelation.
- 8) 150 Psalms.
- 9) Psalm 119 (said to be in the middle of the whole Bible).
- 10) 2 John (1 chapter with 13 verses & 299 words).

You did brilliantly. God Bless and see you next time.

#### (by Denise Penman)

#### **Funerals**

Jass Chapman – 14.03.2014

David Manning – 17.03.2014

Tony Thomas – 18.03.2014

 $Robert\ Papenfus-22.03.2014$ 

 $George\ Ellway-24.03.2014$ 

Barend De Beer – 25.03.2014

Neil Chapman – 27.03.2014

Bradley Zelow – 28.03.2014 Helen Gemmil – 08.04.2014

Hennie Jooste – 17.04.2014

Michael Robinson – 23.04.2014

Liz Bonham – 14.05.2014

Marc Basson – 15.05.2014

Ian Fells Smith - 23.05.2014



You wonder what criteria is used to select people for the peace prize.

## WHAT A WOMAN Irena Sendler

Died: May 12, 2008 (aged 98) Warsaw , Poland

During WWII, Irena, got permission to work in the Warsaw ghetto, as a Plumbing/Sewer specialist. She had an ulterior motive. Irena smuggled Jewish infants out in the bottom of the tool box she carried. She also carried a burlap sack in the back of her truck, for larger kids. Irena kept a dog in the back that she trained to bark when the Nazi soldiers let her in and out of the ghetto. The soldiers, of course, wanted nothing to do with the dog and the barking covered the children and infants' noises.

During her time of doing this, she managed to smuggle out and save

2500 children and infants. Ultimately, she was caught, however, and the Nazis broke both of her legs and arms and beat her severely.

Irena kept a record of the names of all the kids she had smuggled out in a glass jar that she buried under a tree in her back yard. After the war, she tried to locate any parents that may have survived and tried to



reunite the families. Most had been gassed. Those kids she helped got placed into foster family homes or adopted.

In 2007 Irena was up for the Nobel Peace Prize.

She was not selected.

Al Gore won, for a slide show on Global Warming



#### SUNDAY BREAKFAST AT HIGHLANDS

Whoever it was who had the idea of serving breakfast in the gazebo after the Sunday services – well done! Your idea seems to be working brilliantly. The hot coffee and

egg and bacon rolls really go down a treat! The air fairly hums with chat and laughter as the folk of Highlands fellowship together, often sharing comments about the day's sermon and catching up with one another's news.

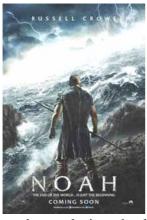
There is, however, one small criticism: because we all tend to sit together with our particular circle of friends and no longer circulate as we used to do when wandering around with a cup of

tea, we perhaps fail to chat with folk we don't know so well and we also fail to notice newcomers standing alone looking a bit lost. So, folks, there is a need to change places each





Sunday, sit with other groups and draw in those you see standing by themselves. A big thank you to Les and Ant Mellon, who have taken on the task of organising the Sunday breakfasts, and a big thank you to the wonderful team who willingly cook and serve us the delicious hot rolls and lovely coffee.



# Why Russell Crowe's film "Noah" has touched my heart for all the WRONG reasons (Sent in by Mike Shute)

Recently, my wife and I decided to catch the premier of Russell Crowe's latest film "Noah" now showing in 3D. The idea of having superstar actors Russell Crowe and Anthony Hopkins star in a film that tells one of the oldest stories of mankind definitely piqued my interest. I was keen to

see how today's technology could give a modern twist and share this beautiful story with a new generation of movie lovers.

Five minutes later, I regretted my decision. I wished I had done more research about the film, I wish we would have saved our money. 90 minutes later we did something I personally have never done in over 25 years of watching films in the theatre. We got out of our seats and left. My head was spinning and I was in utter shock and disbelief.



What has happened with America and how could they twist this movie so far from the truth?

### **Noah** fails as a movie for so many reasons but here is a list of 5 main reasons:

1. The film's cast wears clothing that would have been considered modern in the early 19th century! Seeing the characters walk around in shoes, use backpacks, and have fine stitched clothes was an immediate turn off for me from the first minutes of the film.

2. The film promotes Evolution instead of Creation!!! How is this



even possible in a Biblical movie? The film shows how creatures of the ocean appeared, eventually turned into lizards, dinosaurs, apes, and finally humans. Nowhere does it mention that man was created in God's own image.

- 3. The main builders of the ark are angels who fell from heaven and became giant rock creatures! I know it sounds ridiculous and it is! These 6 armed rock creatures are Noah's friends and help him build and defend the ark
- 4. While on the ark, Noah decides to end the human race by killing his family. In the film, Noah contemplates suicide.
- 5. The film's villain successfully sneaks onto the ark by using an axe to cut a hole and persuades Noah's son Ham to plot against his father and kill Noah

The true story of Noah is so powerful, so compelling, that you don't need all the Hollywood nonsense to enhance this film. Add a simple storyline using today's technology to engage modern day viewers and pique their interest in one of the world's oldest stories. Unfortunately film director Darren Aronofsky completely missed this point and the result is a cinematic disaster.

Watching this movie left a chilling effect on me as I left the theatre. I was outraged that a story of such epic proportions could be twisted around and retold in a way that leaves audiences completely void of the truth. I shouldn't be surprised though, the film's director Darren Aronofsky is a **self-proclaimed Atheist and yet this man directed the film!** But as I researched more to find out the truth I found his **self-proclaimed goal** was to make *Noah* the "least Biblical Biblical movie". Aronofsky seems to have done the impossible, he took a Biblical story and made it into a secular film that does not mention God once.

It saddens my heart to see a "Biblical" film twisted this much from the truth. Taking a story like Noah's and turning it into something like

this can only be considered blasphemy. As a Christian it hurts my heart to realize how many people will see this film and be lead astray because of it. In Matthew 5:44 Jesus instructs us to "love your enemy and pray for those who persecute you". My only hope is to pray for the people involved in this film.

For all those wanting to see *Noah*, please reconsider. If you value the Bible and walk with the Lord it will only leave your heart hurting and in utter disbelief.

A friend recently leant me a little book of quotations entitled

#### KEEP CALM YOU'RE ONLY 70

"To be 70 years young is sometimes far more cheerful and hopeful than to be 40 years old" (Oliver Wendell Holmes)

"Birthdays are good for you. Statistics show that the people who have the most live the longest" (Larry Lorenzoni)

"You know you are getting old when the candles cost more than the cake"
(Bob Hope)

"Youth is the gift of nature, but age is a work of art" (Garson Kanin) I still have a full deck; I just shuffle slower now" (Anon)

"Laughter doesn't require teeth" (Bill Newton) "One of the best parts of growing older? You can flirt all you like since you've become harmless" (Liz Smith)

"It's important to have a twinkle in your wrinkle" (Anon)

"The ageing process has you firmly in its grasp if you never get the urge to throw a snowball" (Doug Larson)

"Inside every older person is a younger person – wondering what the heck happened" (Cora Harvey Armstrong) "I have a warm feeling after playing with my grandchildren. It's the liniment working" (Anon) "Advanced old age is when you sit in a rocking chair and can't get it going" (Eliakim Katz)

#### **CHURCH COTTAGE, NYANGA**

The August school holidays are looming – why not spend a few nights at our lovely cottage in Juliasdale (Nyanga). It sleeps **8** people altogether. All linen, blankets, crockery, cutlery, etc. are provided. The very pleasant kitchen is equipped with all mod cons (fridge, 4-plate stove and microwave). A very friendly and helpful lady is there to clean and wash-up etc. At only \$30/night this is a real bargain.

Freide Erasmus recently stayed there with her family and sent us this report: "The cottage is perfect for anyone who just wants to get away, and spend quality time with the Lord and with His creation and savour the beauty that this country still has to offer. The price is way better than National Parks and it is kept so well by the dear Gogo who lives there. Thank you HPC for the lovely cottage where we can retreat to anytime."

(Issy do you still have the pics from the March 2013 issue – hope so)

#### THE MARKET PLACE

Here we can run Mike Blake's ad?

The last page will be a kids' colouring page

#### I think this makes 24 pages altogether