

# The Deaf Messenger

An Inspirational Magazine for Deaf People



**“Wolves will live with lambs. Leopards will lie down with goats. Calves and lions will eat together. And little children will lead them around.”**

**Isaiah 11:6, NIV**

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The purpose of this magazine is to inform the deaf reader about such topics as practical Christian living; basic Bible truths; and what the past, present, and future historical events mean to each of us. This magazine attempts to cover spiritual, mental, and physical aspects in its articles and columns.

# The Better Country

by Arthur Griffith

Did you ever have someone treat you badly? I guess all of us have had that happen to us. And did you wish you could move to a country where everyone was nice and never caused hurt feelings? It would be a wonderful place! Then maybe you had an accident and got hurt or got very sick. It was no fun. But you think it will always be that way.

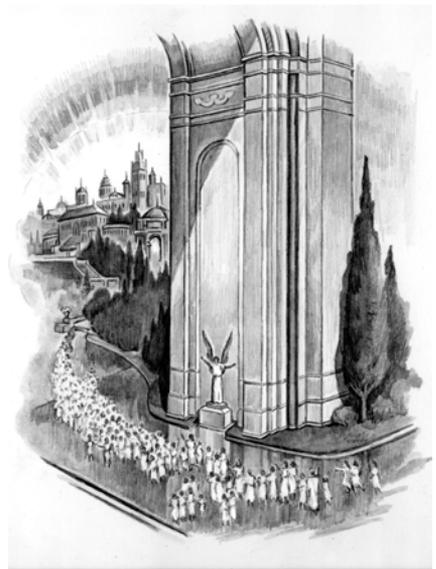
**GOOD NEWS!** There is a country like that. We can move there! The Bible tells about it in Revelation 21. No sickness, no death, no accidents, no pain, no unhappiness, as everyone is loving and kind. Jesus will be there to lead and protect His people. Does it sound like a fairy tale to you? But no, it is true! And there is more to tell you.

Maybe you wished you could ride the space shuttle (rocket) and look down on the blue ball that is your home planet (earth). I have wished I could.

**GUESS WHAT!** God plans to let the people who love Him go on space trips to other worlds in the universe with angel guides. They will not need a space ship. That would be way

too slow.

Do you know how far it is to the nearest star? It would take you 4-1/3 years to go that far if you could go as fast as a light beam. That is 186,000 miles a second. How do I know that God will let us do that? The Bible says in Daniel 7:27 "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him."



Now think about this! You know there are three kinds of "heaven."

1. **Our sky** where the birds and clouds fly.

2. **Space** where the stars and galaxies are.

3. **God's home.**

That is where Paul says he was caught up to in vision "to the third heaven" (2 Corinthians 12:2). But Daniel says, "kingdoms under the whole heaven." That cannot mean just our air because there will be only one kingdom on earth, ruled by Christ. And God's home belongs to Him. So that leaves us with space.

Did you think that our earth is the only place people live? No. The Bible says "God created worlds and more than one" (Hebrews 1:2). Also see Hebrews 11:3. Again the word is worlds in plural.

No one knows how many other worlds there are, but the Bible says that when God made our world, "the morning stars sang together. All of the angels shouted with joy" (Job 38:7). In the Bible the angels are often called "stars." The stars that we see at night don't sing.

Job 1:6 tells of a meeting in heaven (God's home) that all

the sons of God came to. "And Satan came also among them." He claimed Adam's seat. But who were the "sons of God" who came to this meeting, and why did Satan come too? What right did he claim?

The answer is that this was similar to a congress meeting. The first created person from each world came to represent his world. Adam was called "the son of God" (Luke 3:38).

But Adam could not come to that meeting because he had sinned. So Satan claimed the right to represent this earth. None of the others had sinned and they had a right to come.

God solved the problem when Jesus died on the cross without one sin. He bought the earth back from Satan and became the "Second Adam" (1 Corinthians 15:22).

Now Jesus represents all of us who give our hearts to Him. He has the right to give the earth back to us and let us help Him by telling other worlds of what He did for us. Glorious future!!

*Arthur Griffith is a retired deaf pastor who lives in Grants Pass, Oregon.*

# The Earth Is Pregnant

by Jeff Jordan

The earth is pregnant! You may ask, “What? How?” Let me explain what I mean.

When my wife was pregnant with our first son, we were thrilled and looked forward to Noah’s birth. We watched for the signs of his arrival. For the first few months, Melissa did not show on her tummy but we knew the baby was in her womb. Later, her stomach grew bigger and bigger because the baby was growing inside her. During that time, we were able to watch the baby grow.

At 9 months we were very excited to meet our newborn baby at anytime! When the water broke, we knew the baby would be coming out in a few hours later that morning!

Soon, the contradictions [labor] began. They started a little but later they became stronger and longer.

Finally, when it was time to push, we knew the baby would be coming out any minute. After a few minutes pushing, our first-born son came out to meet us. We cried with joy as we hugged him, kissed him,

touched him, and love him unconditionally. Noah was a healthy baby boy. (Three more boys were born later.)

The birth experience can be used as another way of comparing Jesus’ second coming. Jesus’ last words were “Yes, I am coming soon!” (Revelation 22:20) He promised that He is coming back again to get us and bring us home to heaven (John 14:1-3).

The earth is now “9 months pregnant” [not literally, but symbolically] because the “contractions” are increasing as many signs of Jesus’ soon coming are visible [clear] here. Jesus will be here anytime now. He gave us some signs to know the nearness of His coming just as labor pains warn the mother when it is almost time for the baby to come.



Matthew 24 shows the lists of some signs for us to watch for: false Christs, wars, famines [hunger], sickness, and earthquakes. Jesus warns us of false Christs (Matthew 24:5, 23-26). Jim Jones was a false leader who made his followers drink a poisoned drink. Almost 1,000 people died.

David Koresh declared that he was the Lamb of God. People believed he was Jesus Christ. We must watch out for false Christs.

Wars and rumors of wars (Matthew 24: 6 -7). There is war in Iraq and war on terrorism. Saddam Hussein was captured. Osama bin Laden is hiding somewhere.

There was World War 1 and 2, Korean War, Vietnam War, and several others. It was reported that the 20th century (1900-2000) is the bloodiest of all. That means more people were killed in these wars than in any century before. These are signs that Jesus is coming very soon.

Famines are another sign in Matthew 24:7. Approximately 57 million people die each year, or 156,000 die each day because of no food in the world. 60% are malnourished

[lack of healthy food] and 20% are starving in the world. About 2/3 children born do not have enough food and every minute 23 children (or everyday 35,000 kids) die in the world.

Sickness is another sign. Heart disease and cancer are some of the leading causes of death in North America. New diseases appear like SARS first found in China. Hundreds died from it in 2003. AIDS has already killed thousands of people. One country in Africa has the highest number (36%) of people who have AIDS.

Earthquakes are another sign. Before the year 1900, only ten major earthquakes were registered over 6.0. But during the 1990's there were more earthquakes that were over 6.0 than any previous decades [many years]! The number of earthquakes in the world has increased. In 1990, there were 16,612 earthquakes, but in 1999, there were 20,832 earthquakes! This is another sign that Jesus is coming soon.

Our moral conditions [knowing which is right or wrong] become worse as listed in 2 Timothy 3:1-5. Over 33 million violent crimes hap-

pen in North America each year. Kids are shooting and killing other kids at schools. This was unheard of several years ago. The divorce rate has increased. In the year 1900, only one out of 12 people got a divorce. In 1930, one out of six got a divorce. Today, one out of two (50%) get divorced. Most kids by the age of 12 have witnessed 14,000 murders on TV. These are a few examples that moral values are going down and getting worse. Jesus is coming soon.

The signs of Jesus' coming can also be compared to the mileage posts. For example, if I were to drive to Orlando, Florida from Atlanta, Georgia, I would drive south on I-75 for about 8 hours. In the beginning of my trip, there are no mileage signs telling me how many miles to Orlando, but I know I'm going the right way because I'm following the map. As I continue driving I see the first mileage sign telling me how many miles to Orlando (i.e. 250 miles). I am thrilled because I am getting closer to the city. Then, as I get closer, I get more mileage signs telling me how many

miles are left to Orlando. The mileage sign posts appear more often when I get closer to my destination is the same thing with the signs of Jesus' coming!

When Jesus comes, He will come on the clouds with thousands of His angels in the sky. It will be bright and glorious. (This Christ is real!) We will hear Jesus' voice and the blast from God's trumpet. Many people who died believing in Christ will rise first. Then those who are still alive will be caught up together in the air and go to heaven with Jesus and His angels. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17.

My friend, the earth is now "9 months pregnant" and is showing "labor pains." The contractions are getting stronger. Jesus will be here soon!

Are you ready for Him to come? Do you want to have eternal life? Let us share God's saving message of hope and love with our friends so that we can greet Him with tears of joy on that wonderful day!

*Jeff Jordan is a deaf pastor who lives in Dallas, Georgia.*

# Death: The Uninvited and Unwanted Visitor

by David M. Trexler

Have you ever experienced meeting Death when you answered the door? Have you heard of the legend [story] of Samara? Here is the legend.

On the streets of Baghdad a merchant (businessman) sent his servant to the market to purchase something.

But when the servant came back, his face was white and he was trembling.

The servant said to his master, "O Master, down in the market place I was bumped by a woman, and when I turned I saw it was Death that bumped me. She looked at me and made a threatening gesture [sign]. O Master, please, let me have your horse because I must run away from her. I will ride to Samara to hide from her so Death shall not find me."

The merchant felt sorry for his servant and let him have his horse. The frightened man left in a hurry.

A little later the merchant himself walked down to the marketplace and he saw

Death who was standing in the crowd. The merchant asked her, "Why did you scare my servant this morning? Why did you make that threatening gesture?"

Death told him, "Oh, that was NOT a threatening gesture. It was a gesture of surprise. I was surprised to see him in Baghdad because I HAVE AN APPOINTMENT WITH HIM TONIGHT IN SAMARA."

I do not believe that this legend is true, but it has a point about the fact that we cannot escape death. We hear news of deaths more than births everyday. Death is a popular subject in the media [newspaper/TV/radio].

It is interesting to note that the rough estimate of annual deaths in the world is 60,000,000, or about 2 deaths every second. But, in comparison, there are about 3 births every second. So it means that there are more births than deaths, but we hear more about deaths than births.

Death brings separation, unhappiness, depression, and loneliness. We cannot avoid the painful experience of death. I remember vividly the passing of my favorite great-aunt, when my mother told me the news. I cried.

But, the most impressive experience of death happened when I was about 11 years old in Maryland. I was chasing a beautiful butterfly. But, I was deeply disappointed that I failed to catch it in our backyard. With sadness I walked toward the front yard and saw many people standing around the ugly scene near our house.

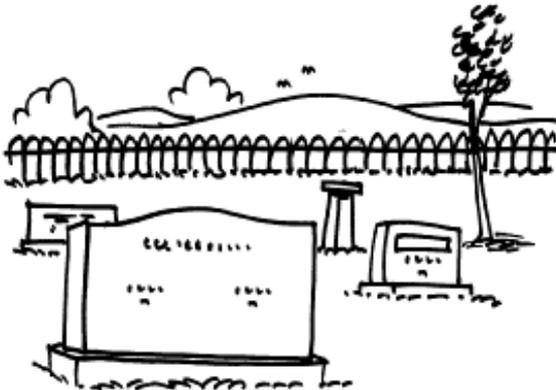
I was puzzled to what people were doing until I saw our neighbor was crying hard on the curb in front of her house. The other neighbors were trying to bring the mother

to her house to leave the scene.

Then my sister came and I asked her what happened. She said that the neighbor's daughter was crushed to death by a car driven by a young man. That young man did not see the little girl running onto the street when he drove around the corner. The accident upset the young man and the girl's family.

I knew that little girl who was born a few years ago. I saw her several times and then I did not see her anymore. That was what death really meant to me. I was afraid of death until I became a Christian.

All of us will die one day. We cannot stop it. Death has been in this world since the entrance of sin when Adam and Eve re-



belled against God.

“Sin entered the world because one man sinned. And death came because of sin. Everyone sinned, so death came to all people” (Romans 5:12, NIV). We are sinners so we all will die.

King Solomon tells the simple fact about life: “A time to be born and a time to die” (Ecclesiastes 3:2, NIV).

What happens when we die? Where do we go to at death?

Many people believe that good people go to heaven and bad people go to hell at death.

Some people believe that some good people who are not good enough will go directly to heaven and go through purgatory [punishment for doing wrong] to be purified before going to heaven.

Some people believe that we just die without any hope of life again.

Other people believe that when a person dies, he or she will be reincarnated [live another life in a different body] in person or animals.

Most people think that death is not really death at all. In other words, they believe that we all have a “spirit” or

“soul” that escape from our bodies at death.

Does the Bible support these beliefs? What does the Bible say about death? Let the Bible interpret itself the meaning of death. We need to study the Bible carefully and test different beliefs and ideas with the Bible.

At the beginning God created man out of dust of the earth. Then God gave him the breath of life. The man became a living being (“soul” in KJV). “The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being” (Genesis 2:7, NIV).

If a person stops breathing because of drowning, a rescuer would perform mouth-to-mouth to bring him back to breathing again. After God created Adam, He breathed the life-giving power into Adam’s nostril. Adam became alive.

Now, what happens when a person dies? Read Ecclesiastes 12:7, NIV: “And the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.”

Clearly, death is the reverse [opposite] of creation. Based

on the word, “spirit” in this verse is “breath” in Hebrew. Let me give an example of this process to help us to understand the true meaning of death. We have a light bulb but there is no light when the lamp is not plugged to the power source. When we plug the cord to the power, the light goes on. The light goes off when we unplug the cord. We are like the lamp that depends on the power for light. Without God’s power we are dead or nothing.

The truth is that the dead do not know what is happening in this world. They do not know that the loved ones have come to the grave to pray and bring flowers to honor them. In Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6, NIV: “For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing; they have no further reward, and even the memory of them is forgotten. Their love, their hate and their jealousy have long since vanished [disappeared]; never again will they have a part in anything that happens under the sun.” “The dead do not praise the LORD, Nor any who go down into silence” (Psalm 115:17, NKJV).

How could the teaching that the dead go to heaven with the Lord be correct when the Bible clearly says that they do not praise God or know what is happening in the world. They are just unconscious [not aware] when they are dead. When we sleep we are unconscious of what is happening around us.

When Jesus told the truth about his good friend, Lazarus, who died four days ago, He made it clear to His disciples that Lazarus’s death was sleep. Lazarus had died and he did not go anywhere at all. He was sleeping in the grave until Jesus woke him up from death.

“After He [Jesus] had said this, He went on to tell them, ‘Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up.’ His disciples replied, ‘Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better.’ Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep. So then he told them plainly, ‘Lazarus is dead’” (John 11:11-14, NIV).

So, all people, good and bad, are sleeping in the graves. Their death is sleep until the day of resurrection.

Jesus said about the dead who are still in the graves, “Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear His voice and come out — those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.”

Good news! We don't need to be afraid of death that will come to us someday if we have accepted Jesus Christ as our personal Savior.

The apostle Paul pointed out that through Christ we have life instead of death. In Romans 6:23, NIV, “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Adam brought death to all people in the world since the entrance of sin, but Christ has brought life to those who believe in Him. Jesus had died for us so we can have life through Him.

“But Christ really has been raised from the dead. He is the first of all those who will rise. Death came because of what a man [Adam] did. Rising from the dead also comes because of what a man [Christ] did. Because of Adam, all people

die. So because of Christ, all will be made alive. But here is the order of events. Christ is the first of those who rise from the dead. When He comes back, those who belong to Him will be raised” (1 Corinthians 15:20-23, NIV). It is a beautiful promise for us. Christ is our hope. He gives us eternal life.

Right now all dead people who are saved through God's plan of salvation are sleeping. They are waiting for the day when Jesus comes back again at the end of the world.

“Brothers and sisters, we want you to know what happens to those who die. We don't want you to be sad, as other people are. They don't have any hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again. When He returns, many who believe in Him will have died already. We believe that God will bring them back with Jesus. That agrees with what the Lord has said. When the Lord comes, many of us will still be alive. We tell you that we will certainly not go up before those who have died. The Lord Himself will come down from heaven. We will hear a loud command. We will hear the voice of the leader of the

angels. We will hear a blast from God's trumpet. Many who believe in Christ will have died already. They will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them. We will meet the Lord in the air. And we will be with Him forever" (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17, NIV).

I encourage you to invite Jesus into your life. Normally, we are sinners who have no hope in the future. But, Jesus had died to pay the penalty of sin that is death. Because of Jesus' perfect life without sin and death, He was raised up to live again to claim us as His children.

Remember God does not force us to be saved. Through the work of the Holy Spirit Jesus encourages us to accept and follow Him all the way. As a Christian you have the hope of eternal life through

Jesus who will come back again. ". . . we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good" (Titus 2:13, 14, NIV).

On the grave marker of a dead atheist (a person who does not believe in God) it says "Good-Bye Forever," but the Christian's marker gives the cheerful message, "Good-Bye Until We Meet Again."

I pray that you will have this hopeful and cheerful message in your heart. Let Jesus be your God and Lord forever.

*David M. Trexler is a deaf pastor who lives in Lanham, Maryland.*

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Your donations help us publish *The Deaf Messenger* magazine four (4) times a year. Your donations are appreciated and are tax-deductible in the USA.

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# What the Bible Says About Faith

## Faith

### 1. How does the Bible describe *faith*?

“Faith is being sure of what we hope for. It is being certain [sure] of what we do not see (Hebrews 11:1, NIV).

**NOTE:** If we can see something, hear it, and/or touch it, we do not have to believe it is real. That is because we know it is real. Faith is the confidence [belief or trust] that something is real even though we cannot tell it with our five senses [sight, touch, taste, smell, hearing].

## Faith in God

### 2. How do we know God is real?

“Without faith it isn’t [is not] possible to please God. Those who come to God must believe that He exists [is real]. And they must believe that He rewards those who look to Him” (Hebrews 11:6, NIV).

**NOTE:** We cannot prove that God is real by proving things the human or scientific way. We simply believe that He is real!

### 3. How close have humans ever come to seeing God?

“Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father.” “Here is what we announce [preach] to everyone about the Word of life [Jesus]. He was already here from the beginning. We have heard Him. We have seen Him with our eyes. We have looked at Him. Our hands have touched Him” (John 14:9, NIV; 1 John 1:1, NIV).

**NOTE:** Jesus claimed to be God (see John 8:58; 10:30). But, He came in human form. This is because sinful human beings could not look upon God in His divine glory. Those who were with Jesus saw God, not as a person, but as His character. This is because Jesus

was God's character.

**4. Today we have not seen Jesus in person. So, how do we know that He showed God's character?**

"Then Jesus told him [Thomas], 'Because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen Me but still have believed'" (John 20:29, Nlrv).

**NOTE:** Thomas was not at the meeting when Jesus first appeared to His disciples after He rose from the dead. Thomas refused to believe Jesus was alive until he could see Him and touches Him (see John 20:24, 25). When Thomas did see Jesus, he believed. But Jesus said that those who have not seen Him but still believe are even more blessed. Today we believe that Jesus was God who appeared in human form because we believe those who said they did see Him.

**Faith and Salvation**

**5. How did Paul say people are not saved from**

**sin?**

"So it can't [cannot] be said that anyone will be made right with God by obeying the law" (Romans 3:20, Nlrv).

**NOTE:** We cannot receive eternal life through obedience only, no matter how much we try to obey God's law.

**6. Then how are we saved?**

"We firmly [strongly] believe that people are made right with God because of their faith. They are not saved by obeying the law" (Romans 3:28, Nlrv).

**7. How did Paul tell a Roman jailer that he could be saved?**

"Believe in the Lord Jesus. Then you and your family will be saved" (Acts 16:31, Nlrv).

**8. What must we believe about Jesus so that we can be saved?**

“God gave Him [Jesus] as a sacrifice to pay for sins. So He forgives the sins of those who have faith in His [Jesus]’ blood.” “Believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead. Then you will be saved” (Romans 3:25, Nlrv; Romans 10:9, Nlrv).

**NOTE:** Faith in Jesus’ blood means faith in His death. Our eternal life depends on believing that Jesus died for our sins and that He had victory over death by rising from the grave.

## **Faith and Victory over Sin**

**9. Does it mean that obedience is not important in the life of the Christian?**

“My brothers and sisters, what good is it if people claim they have faith but don’t [do not] act like it? Can that kind of faith save them? Show me your faith that doesn’t do [does not do] good works. And I will show you my faith by what I do” (James 2:14-18, Nlrv).

**10. How did Paul explain that faith is related to living Christ’s life?**

“We died with Christ. So we believe that we will also live with Him [Jesus]” (Romans 6:8, Nlrv).

**NOTE:** To “live with Him” means to live His kind of life by obeying God. Paul said, “Consider [think] yourselves to be dead as far as sin is concerned” (Romans 6:11, Nlrv). It is the same as if Paul were saying, “Believe that you are dead to sin.” When we believe that we can have victory over sin, then we can.

**11. How much victory can the Christian have in this life?**

“I can do everything by the power of Christ. He gives me strength” (Philippians 4:13, Nlrv).

**NOTE:** We can never be perfect (see 1 John 1:8, 10). But a fully obedient life to God is possible for those who believe in Christ.

# A Whole Loaf, Please

by Arthur S. Maxwell



Many years ago many people in Russia suffered from the civil war. Thousands of people starved to death. Many rich people became poor and beggars. Many children did not understand why things went bad quickly.

There was one family that had a very difficult time. Father was killed. Mother died. The three children lived with their Grandma. In the past, the children had lived in a beautiful home and had many good things. Now they were very poor. Grandma knitted all day. She tried to earn enough

money to keep the children alive. But Grandma had a difficult time to find food.

One day Grandma and the three children ate their last meal. There was no more bread left in the house. Grandma was very, very sad. She tried not to let the children see she was worried. Finally she decided to tell the children that they had no more food. They all knelt to pray. Grandma told God that they had nothing to eat. She asked God to help them. If God did not answer Grandma's prayer, Grandma and the children would die of starvation. The

children also prayed for help.

The little girl's prayer was like this: "Dear Jesus, please send us something for supper. Please send us a whole loaf of bread, not just a crust, please."

The family had not seen a whole loaf of bread for many days. A whole loaf was the same as a birthday cake to the starving family.

When suppertime came, there was no food. Poor little children! They were hungry!

Then the little girl told Grandma, "You have not sharpened the bread knife." The girl still believed that her prayer would be answered.

So Grandma sharpened the knife. The evening came. The family was cold and hungry. When the children were ready to go to bed, there was a knock at the door.

Grandma opened the door and a man stood there. He was covered with snow. Grandma knew this man was an old friend of the family. She welcomed him. The man said that he

walked twenty miles to see her.

Grandma asked him, "Why did you come here?"

The man said, "About noon today something impressed me that you needed something to eat. So I came here."

Then the man told the children, "You can never guess what I have brought with me."

The little girl said, "I can!"

The man asked her, "What is it?"

The girl answered, "It is a whole big loaf of bread."

The man said, "You are right." He opened his overcoat and showed the loaf of bread. He asked, "How did you know?"

The family told the man about their prayer to Jesus. They asked Jesus to send a whole loaf, not a crust. They believed in Jesus, who loves to hear people's prayers.

That night the family had a wonderful supper.

*Adapted and used with permission from Uncle Arthur's Bedtime Stories.*

# Free Bible Course for Deaf People

God's Way is a 24-lesson Bible study course for Deaf people.



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