

**Geoffrey:** Held up at knife-point in London, held up at gunpoint in Jerusalem, escorted off a plane at Kano by guards with machine-guns, and having a tank parked outside my bedroom window in Columbo – these are just a few of my scary moments enjoyed as a Christian. So how did it begin?

I was brought up in a Christian home but a life changing experience in my forties tore me out of a relatively comfortable lifestyle. Perhaps the Lord knew the particular tasks He had before me and knew I needed an assurance of faith that wouldn't be shaken!

The experience occurred on Easter Sunday morning. Margaret and I were members of a Christian fellowship in Sussex. Colin was preaching, and he said: 'Let's look at the evidence for the resurrection.'

In a moment I was taken in my mind to the tomb of Jesus in Jerusalem. The stone was rolled away from the entrance. The tomb was filled with the brightest light I had ever seen... millions of times brighter than the sun. Still listening to the speaker with one ear, I asked myself – had the disciples seen this? I began to leaf through the gospels while the picture and the light were still bright inside me.

The experience was so vivid I couldn't speak for some hours. It was so awesome that I prayed that God would not let me see His glory again until I was ready for heaven! That evening my wife rang the preacher. She said I had had an experience. 'What sort of experience?' he asked. 'He can't tell me', she replied. So he invited us both round to his house.

'Don't be afraid,' he said when we arrived. That was what I most needed to hear. Colin prayed with us. He felt the Lord had something special for me to do. Speech returned, but still I couldn't eat for three days. Surprisingly I could do my office work as normal, even though the colours around me seemed brighter than before. Then after a

few days a job vacancy my wife had been told about, working in a London church, came back to mind. It proved the beginning of a new life for us both.

We arrived in our new flat in London the weekend of the Brixton riots. That evening members of the church phoned as the riots reached their street. In the morning, burned-out cars were towed past the church. We lived at the junction of what used to be called 'Cut-throat Alley' and what the Daily Mail called 'Muggers Mile'. We began learning how to live in a very different community from what we were used to, but we asked the Lord to show us how it could become part of the Kingdom of Heaven. So he put the largest homeless squat in London right next door to the church to accelerate the learning process! M&S offered us their sell-by-date food so we quickly organised a hot midday meal for the squatters. We were there six years.

The Kingdom of God is more than food and shelter but there is a beginning. For me, the next step was discovering that when the Bible says Israel it means Israel! We went there in the middle of the Gulf War— to Jerusalem and to the tomb I had seen in my mind that Easter day. In the twenty years that followed we are still exploring what it means to build the Kingdom ... in Jerusalem and in Eastbourne. It is an adventure with God.