



# PRAYERFUL MOUNTAIN BOOKS

**Andrew Fergusson**, in the first of a new regular *Triple Helix* feature, lists the books he would take with him to a retreat on a 'prayer mountain'.



**Andrew Fergusson** became a Christian at St Thomas's Hospital in 1972. After 10 years as a GP in a Christian Mission practice, he worked for CMF for 15 of the next 22 years, which included being the founding Editor of *Triple Helix*

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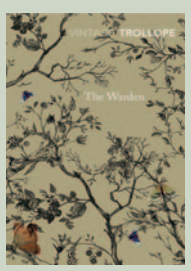
**o, here I am, returning to Mount Nebo in Jordan for this 40-day retreat.**

**Nebo has great significance in biblical history:** *'Then Moses climbed Mount Nebo...Then the Lord showed him the whole land...Then the Lord said to him, 'This is the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when I said,*

*"I will give it to your descendants." I have let you see it with your eyes, but you will not cross over into it.'*

Moses, the great pioneer of the Exodus, got no further: *'And Moses the servant of the Lord died there in Moab, as the Lord had said'*. (Deuteronomy 34:1-5)

Mount Nebo: a good place for solitude, reflection, and communion with God. But what books should I take with me from my shelves? In no particular order:



**The Warden**  
**Anthony Trollope**  
Everyman

I was made to study this for GCE O-Level in 1967. I loved it! Published in 1855, it was the first in the six-volume Barchester series of novels.

Anglican clergyman Septimus Harding is warden of a small 'hospital' for old men. Unfortunately, he receives a huge living for doing very little alongside his role as precentor at Barchester Cathedral, and a campaign against corruption in the Church of England is taken up. This book about justice and humanity has a sort of happy ending and is full of

wonderful characters. Over the years, I seem to have met them all.

I have now re-read *The Warden* five or six times. On my retirement at 60, my wife gave me a beautiful set of all six Barchester novels, and after re-reading the others, I am now catching up with *The Warden*. Trollope's Christian worldview is evident in all he writes, but he is never preachy.



**Sherlock Holmes: the complete short stories**  
**Sir Arthur Conan Doyle**  
John Murray

Another present from my wife, this time for our first Christmas. Books make great gifts, and she had already learned how to keep me quiet for ages. By the age of twelve, I had already read all the Holmes stories, including the 56 short ones in the five compendia. Written between 1892 and 1927, they feature the best-known detective in world literature, and his cases are mainly chronicled by his rather dim doctor companion 'my dear Watson'.

Doyle was a spiritualist and freemason with a very different worldview from Trollope's. He started writing Sherlock Holmes and other stories as an unsuccessful GP while waiting for patients to turn up. He had trained in Edinburgh under Dr Joseph Bell, and that man's combination of careful listening and meticulous examination inspired Holmes' model of detection. Our profession needs to return to it.



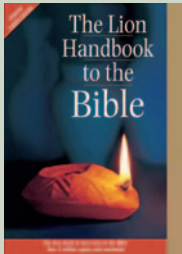


**Holy Bible. New International Version (NIV)**

Biblica, formerly International Bible Society

A Bible is a must-have! When first converted, I read the entire *Revised Standard Version*, then moved to the *Good News* before

starting with the *NIV* shortly after its launch in 1979. I've had my current copy for more than twenty years. It has bold print, which I increasingly appreciate as my eyes age, and great cross-referencing throughout. It now needs a lot of tape to hold it together, but as they say, 'Bibles that are falling apart are usually read by people who aren't'. I'm so grateful now for that early indoctrination to read something of Scripture every single day.



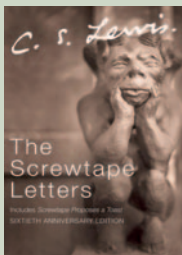
**The Lion Handbook to the Bible**

Fourth Edition

Lion Hudson PLC

For more than 30 years, my daily 'quiet time' could be a struggle to understand and assimilate

the content of that day's Scripture passage. Then, browsing in Waterstones for detective fiction, I found *The Lion Handbook* in the spirituality section. If only I'd found it and its previous edition earlier! With it alongside my NIV, the helpful colour illustrations, the historical background, and the gentle and balanced handling of controversies all serve to make God's truth even more alive. I do have several hundred heavier Christian books, but this is my go-to.



**The Screwtape Letters**

C S Lewis

Collins

Subtitled *Letters from a Senior to a Junior Devil*, this was first published as a single volume in 1942 and aimed to 'give all the

psychology of temptation from the other point of view'. It is still a glorious combination of laughter and learning; the blurb on my jacket tells me most readers still ask, 'How did Lewis know me so well?'

I have a beautiful edition with wicked cartoons by Papas on almost every page. It was given to me in the 1970s as a 'Thank You' by a radiographer colleague in a very small Hospital Christian Fellowship.

**a luxury item to take**

Some piece of electronic apparatus so I can daily follow everything about Millwall Football Club. ●

prayer  
walk for  
health



let's cover our work  
in prayer  
[cmf.li/walk75](http://cmf.li/walk75)

