

THE CHRISTADELPHIAN
TIDINGS
of the Kingdom of God

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The CHRISTADELPHIAN TIDINGS of the Kingdom of God

Peter Hemingray, Editor

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Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbal communication represents two-thirds of all communication. Nonverbal communication can portray a message both verbally and with the correct body signals. Body signals comprise physical features, conscious and unconscious gestures and signals, and the mediation of personal space. The wrong message can be established if the body language conveyed does not match a verbal message.

Nonverbal communication strengthens a first impression in common situations like attracting a partner or in a business interview: impressions are on average formed within the first four seconds of contact. First encounters or interactions with another person strongly affect a person's perception. When the other person or group is absorbing the message they are focused on the entire environment around them, meaning the other person uses all five senses in the interaction: 83% sight, 11% hearing, 3% smell, 2% touch and 1% taste.

From Wikipedia article on Nonverbal Communication

Editorial

Communication

“Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man” (Col 4:6).

“A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver” (Prov 25:11).

Introduction

All too often, our modern communications are seasoned with venom, not salt. Waging war by e-mail, Facebook, Twitter or any other of the electronic tools spawned by the Internet has become routine, even, unfortunately, sometimes within our community. And this is only one of the problems we see today. The proliferation of these rapid, or even instantaneous, means of transmission of information, true or false, largely with little thought of the consequences, can overwhelm the Truth. Not only this, the very nature of transmission via the Internet leaves a permanent trail. Not only does the NSA¹ keep track of communications worldwide, but almost anything put on the Internet remains there almost indefinitely.

The world has been slow to adjust to this reality. It is a reality that when the communication is face to face, much of the information that is transmitted is non-verbal. A shrug, the intonation, facial expressions, and body language — they all provide context and additional information. But in electronic communications these additional channels are lost. How often has one written something, convinced of its meaning — only to find the recipient has misunderstood what you meant. Too often, in case of any ambiguity, the worst possible interpretation is placed on the writing.

Speed of communication

For the largest period of human existence, most communication was oral. Although writing was known quite early, the very slowness of producing hand written letters etc. did not really affect this. The invention of printing led to much more effective mass forms of communication, and indeed the printing press was vital in the spreading of the early gospel by the forbears of our community. (John Thomas had his own printing press, which he used to produce his early magazines, and which in fact included the first Newspaper in St Charles, Illinois, where he was residing around 1842.) Up until the middle of the 19th century, communication was delivered no faster than the speed of a horse: then first the railway (up to 60 mph) and then the electric telegraph (almost speed of light, but very limited bandwidth) changed it. Still, printed media and public addresses were still the main forms of mass communication, until the radio and film industries arrived in the 1920's. The telephone gradually made its impact in the early 20th century and became a major form of voice communication, but was by no means universal until the 1970's. One per household was the norm! The radio was widely used by the Christadelphians in the USA to spread the truth almost from its inception:

likewise the television not long after its introduction in the 1950's. All these electronic forms of communication sped up mass communication, but the letter and the telephone still were the rule for person to person communication.

The Internet changed all that: indeed its start was to facilitate the exchange of electronic mail: it became widely used in the early 1990's, and its growth has been phenomenal. There are now almost 1 billion web sites, with well over 20 billion pages and perhaps 2.5 billion e-mail users. So a very significant fraction of the world's population is connected to the internet, as are the vast majority of Christadelphians in North America.

Communication in the internet world

Despite the advent of the internet, the Biblical principles still apply.

- Speak often to each other (Mal 3:16-18)
- Exhort one another daily (Heb 3:13)
- Face to face is better than written (3John 13-14)
- Disagreements are to be handled firstly face to face: not by remote communications, nor in public (Matt 18:15)
 - This principle is repeated in Prov 25:9-10

There are several other tendencies of our modern forms of communication that are discouraged by these Biblical instructions

- Any form of rebuke or correction should always be face to face. Paul might have recorded his rebuke of Peter for all believers, but he performed his rebuke in person: *“But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed”* (Gal 2:11).
- We should never communicate sensitive information via e-mail. First of all, such communication is permanent, and secondly, your e-mail is often read by others. This particularly, I believe, applies to communications by or between members of ecclesial arranging boards.
- We should always avoid, as far as we can, discussing any controversial topics in any fashion other than face to face.
- And above all, think twice (at least!) before hitting the “send” button
 - Would I say this in person?
 - Is it helpful?
 - Do all the addressees need to see this?

Social Media²

The whole world seemed at one stage to be present on Facebook, but it now seems about to be superseded by a whole raft of similar sites. (You either have to be a true techie, or obsessed by such sites, to identify all the sites shown — I cannot!) However, we should clearly recognize their utility as well as drawbacks

- It is a rapid way of communicating information to one's circle of friends (and as a grandparent, information about grandchildren is always of interest!)
- It can reach an audience which is somewhat resistant to traditional communication means: many young people seem to rely only on their smart phones



as their sole method of interaction. Many are reluctant to do anything as old fashioned as talk on their device.

- However we are advised by Paul to focus on: *“Redeeming the time, because the days are evil”* (Eph 5:16). After all, time is perhaps the most valuable, as well as the most perishable of our possessions, and the abuse of social media and its often accompanying on line game playing are together one of the most abused time-wasting activities of our day.

- We are told *“In all toil there is profit, but*

mere talk tends only to poverty” (Prov 14:23 ESV). To broadcast your daily activities is surely mere talk. Few are interested in what you had for lunch.

The fundamental advice is that given by James:

“But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be” (James 3:8-10).

After all *“But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment”* (Matt 12:36). The idle words we speak ought not to be for self-aggrandizement, or prideful, but as befitting the ambassadors for Christ, which we ought to be.

Peter Hemingray

Notes:

1. The National Security Agency: as of the date of this editorial, it has been revealed they collect and store vast amounts of e-mails, telephone calls and other electronic information. And of course web-sites like Facebook archive all the communications that pass across its servers,
2. Some of these thoughts are derived from a talk given by Bro. David Wisniewski (Brant County, ON) at the Shippensburg Bible School 2013.

Letters to the editor can be sent to letters@tidings.org. Please include your name, address, e-mail, and phone. Submissions under 300 words are encouraged — the magazine reserves the right to edit all submissions for length and clarity.

Exhortation

The Two Pillars

The building of the temple

Seven years was the time it took Solomon to complete the Temple and the House of God. It must have been seven long years, and it was a massive undertaking: you have these monumental stones which had to be quarried in another place and hauled to the site without the use of any of our modern day mechanical means. Then they went to the mountains of Lebanon, to gigantic Cedar trees, and they sawed them down by hand, floated them down the coast line where they had to be dragged up back up on shore, cut and chiseled, and put in the different places where they were used in the Temple.

In addition, think of all the gold inside of the temple: everything was overlaid with gold. And then there was all those articles of brass as well. Solomon got the best man for the job (Hiram of Tyre: 1Kgs 7:13). For the Israelites whether it was the Tabernacle or the Temple, this was this place that symbolized that God dwelt among them, because this was the place where the Ark of the Covenant was kept. This was made obvious by the cloud that filled the Temple when it was inaugurated.

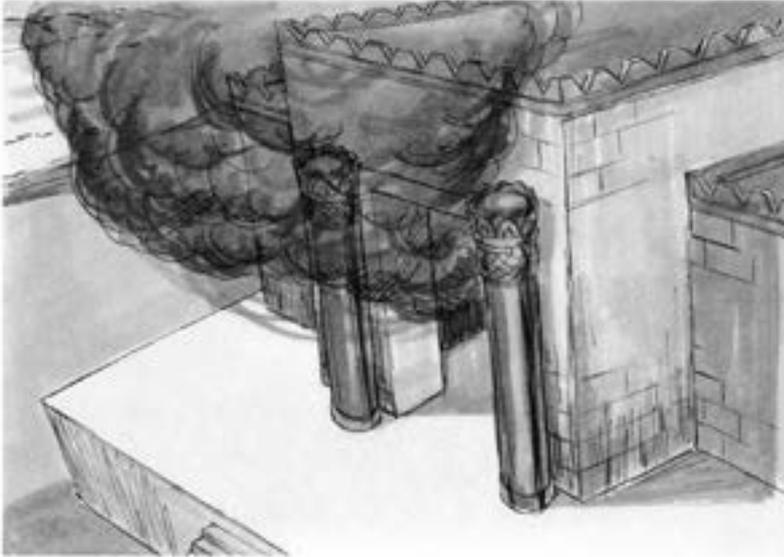
Just imagine yourself there amongst the Courts. Walk amongst the Priests giving sacrifices upon the altar. Would you have the same feeling of the Psalmist who said, "*How amiable are thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God*" (Psa 84:2-3).

We have nothing like a Temple in our service do we? Or perhaps we do. Paul writes "*In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit*" (Eph 2:21-22). We can compare that to the actual temple, and then we realize the deep impact of his words. We think of Peter's words: "*Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*" (1Pet 2:5).

God does not dwell in a house made of stones, made with hands, but in you and me. And when we think about the Ecclesia it is supposed to be as glorious as that Temple of Solomon because we have somebody greater than Solomon dwelling in our hearts. Are we sanctified for the master's use? When we approach God together, do we do it with the same reverence and fear that you would have coming into God's temple in Jerusalem? Before the meeting starts our hymnist customarily plays hymn 168 which I think is very appropriate. "*The LORD is in his holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before him*" (Hab 2:20).

The pillars of bronze

Quite appropriately, then, we come before Him in silence before we offer up song and prayer and exhortation. And we will focus on one aspect of the temple: on the first item Hiram made for Solomon. It was not, as perhaps we might expect, the laver, or even the altar. We read *“And King Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre. He was a widow’s son of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a worker in brass: and he was filled with wisdom, and understanding, and cunning to work all works in brass. And he came to King Solomon, and wrought all his work. For he cast two pillars of brass, of eighteen cubits high apiece: and a line of twelve cubits did compass either of them about”* (1Kgs 7:13-15).



So before he made the lavers, and before he made the altar, he cast two pillars of brass. These pillars represent the upholding of the house of God in truth and righteousness. A modern translation reads *“He fashioned two bronze pillars, each one 27 feet high, with a circumference of 18 feet”* (1Kgs 7:15 ISV). Then later on in the chapter it says they were polished bronze, so I imagine if you walked up to them you could see your reflection in these pillars. Not only that, but the text continues:

“He also crafted two capitals of cast bronze and set them on top of the pillars. The height of one capital was seven and a half feet, and the height of the other capital was seven and a half feet... That’s how he designed the pillars at the portico of the sanctuary. When he set up the right pillar, he named it Jachin. When he set up the left pillar, he named it Boaz. The work on the pillars was finished with a lily design on top of the pillars.” (1Kgs 7:16-22 ISV).

So if we could just get a sense of the enormity of these pillars we can see how much they dominated the whole courtyard of Solomon’s Temple. And they were so important that they were given names. Jachin means, *“he shall establish”* and

Boaz means “*in it is strength*”: some people see this as forming one sentence, “He shall establish it in strength”. They stood as two sentinels of the Temple, Testaments to God’s promises on which this house stood.

The covenants of promise

“I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually. And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and will keep my statutes and my judgments: Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel” (1Kgs 9:3-5).

At the beginning of verse 5 that word “I will establish” is related to the same Hebrew word that the name Jachin is built on. “*I will establish the throne of thy kingdom forever*”: so I see these pillars as representing the promises of God upon which this palace stood. The pillars stood for erectness and uprightness: if the people walked God’s ways, they would be established in God’s house as long as they kept His judgments. If they did not, if they were lacking in these things, then this Temple, including the pillars, would be cast out of His sight. To emphasize this point a little bit more on how these pillars were important in connection with the Kings, let us consider two other accounts involving these pillars.

*“And he [Jehoiada] brought forth the king’s son, and put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony; and they made him king, and anointed him; and they clapped their hands, and said, God save the king. And when Athaliah heard the noise of the guard and of the people, she came to the people into the temple of the LORD. And when she looked, behold, the king stood by **a pillar**, as the manner was, and the princes and the trumpeters by the king, and all the people of the land rejoiced, and blew with trumpets: and Athaliah rent her clothes, and cried, Treason, Treason” (2Kgs 11:12-14)*

So Athaliah comes into the Temple of the Lord and she sees Joash by a pillar “*as the manner was.*” Athaliah knew what it meant.

*“And the king sent, and they gathered unto him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem... And the king stood by **a pillar**, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all their heart and all their soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people stood to the covenant” (2Kgs 23:1,3).*

So put yourself there in the Courts of the LORD. It is jam packed with people, everybody is there and the King has a reserved spot. Again, which pillar do you think this was? I happen to think it was Jachin, “he shall establish”, and the very fact that he’s standing by one in particular was significant. (And it does say “standing by it” not between them.) A pillar means that which stands. And the people stood to the covenant as the King stood by the pillar.

“And the pillars of brass that were in the house of the LORD, and the bases, and the brasen sea that was in the house of the LORD, did the Chaldees break in pieces, and carried the brass of them to Babylon. And the pots, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass where-with they ministered, took they away” (2Kgs 25:13-14).

As if they emphasize the depth of what happened to Israel there is one piece of furniture that is described the most, and that’s the pillars. It goes to describe them again, how beautiful they were and elaborate, and just bemoaning the fact that they were hewn into pieces, cut into pieces and carried off to Babylon. These pillars really represented the nation. To the Babylonians they were just loot, but to the Israelites it was so dreadful to see these pillars taken down and carried off.

The symbology of pillars

So it’s not surprising that pillars get used as symbols in Scripture.

*“The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the **pillars of the earth** are the LORD’s, and he hath set the world upon them. He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail. The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed. (1Sam 2:7-10).*

The picture we get here is of the pillars of the earth. The earth is seen as a house (or maybe just the inhabitants), being born up by pillars. These pillars represent the true judgments of God, for they are associated with the throne of glory among princes. So before there was a human King for the Israelites, Hannah recognized that the Messiah would come, and that God would give His strength unto His King.

**The Church of the living God, the
Pillar and ground of the truth.**

In the New Testament

*“And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be **pillars**, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision” (Gal 2:9).*

Under the New Testament, the believers become the new Israel, and therefore they become the foundation and pillars of God’s earth. They are the Temple of God in which the spirit dwells, and they’re pillars in the Temple. In Galatians, the security and the firmness of the foundation depends upon its leaders and upon its

members to be steadfast in the faith and to judge with righteous judgments: the Apostles James, Cephas and John are said to be pillars in the Ecclesia. They were pillars because it was upon their teaching and upon their leadership by the Holy Spirit that the Ecclesia would be established, and would grow, and would become strengthened in the Lord. It's no wonder that they are called pillars in the Ecclesia.

Do we have pillars in the Ecclesia now? We have to have such pillars in the Ecclesia. In order for the House to stand there has to be pillars in our Ecclesias. Do you recognize the pillars in your Ecclesia? It's a mistake not to recognize them, because when God takes away those pillars and the House starts to fall, we might have to be trying to continue what they were doing in the Household of God: trying to keep the House up and baring their burdens. We have to recognize the pillars in our Ecclesia. As we grow in the Truth, do we see ourselves as pillars in the Ecclesia, able to take on these burdens? Or if we went away would it really matter to the House of God?

*“But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the **pillar** and ground of the truth” (1Tim 3:15).*

In writing to Timothy, now the Ecclesia is the pillar and ground of the truth. So it is the Ecclesia which bears up on its back the pillars of the Truth. It is up to you and I, as brothers and sisters, to uphold the Truth that is in the Scriptures. God is expecting us to be pillars that will defend His Truth. When the Ecclesia doesn't have any pillars what does the world have to hope for? They can only turn to corruptness.

*“Him that overcometh will I make a **pillar** in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name” (Rev 3:12).*

In final passage that mentions pillars, it is our Lord speaking to the Philadelphia Ecclesia, which the Lord had nothing against. The allusion to Jachin and Boaz seems strong here: they are the only two Temple pillars that are given names. And here it says in this Revelation passage that there will be a name written upon those in the Temple of God who are made pillars. It makes me wonder if the original pillars had names inscribed on them: one Jachin and the other Boaz. These were carried away, but we find the ones in Revelation shall go no more out. They will never be carried away, they will be established in the Temple of my God forever.

This is our promise, that if we are pillars now, that we will be made pillars in the Kingdom to come. We will be made into Kings and Priests. Monumental responsibility stands before us as we look at the lessons and story behind the pillars. Let us take these to heart, let us stand fast to the covenants and the promises that God has given us, and follow His statutes and uphold His judgments. Let us make a new conviction that we will be pillars of God now, so that when our faith overcomes comes the world, we may be made pillars in the Temple of our God.

Tim Young (Hamilton Book Rd, ON)

Bible Study

The Way of Cain, (6) Cain: The Legacy

“When human beings began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of humans [men] were beautiful” (Gen 6:2).

The history of the antediluvian world can be viewed as a struggle between two groups: the sons of God versus the sons of men. These two groups emerged from the conflict between Cain and Abel. When, in relation to the offerings Abel “*did what was right*” by presenting the LORD with an acceptable offering (Gen 4:4), he distinguished himself from the ignorant worship of his brother. In that moment, God divided the two brothers — hitherto indistinguishable from one another with regard to the outward expression of their faith — into two groups: Abel came to represent those who worship God in a spirit of reverence and understanding, while Cain came to represent those who worship out of fear and ignorance.

Genesis does not initially refer to these two groups as the sons of God and the sons of men, but rather the occurrence of the phrase “sons of God” appears much later in the antediluvian narrative, especially Gen 6:2: “*The sons of God saw that the daughters of humans [men] were beautiful.*” This passage concerns the period prior to the Flood and is part of the 11 verses in total in Gen 6 that chronicle key antediluvian events, but not occurring earlier than the fifth generation. Although Genesis doesn’t refer to these two groups by these particular names — sons of God, sons of men — prior to the fifth generation, nevertheless they did exist in the first four generations; they were simply referred to as those who “*called upon the name of the LORD*” (Gen 4:26). And in that regard: if there was a group that called on the name of God, there must also have been a group that did not; hence “the sons of men.”

Yet Gen 6:2 does not refer to “sons of men,” but rather “daughters of men.” However, the expression, “sons of men,” can be extrapolated from the phrase “daughters of men,” since it is reasonable to conclude that if there were daughters of men there must also have been sons of men. And because Gen 4 and 5 chronicle only males,¹ it is evident that the struggle is meant to be portrayed in Genesis as one between the sons of God and the sons of men — not the sons of God and the daughters of men. That said, women most certainly played a role in this struggle, as we shall see specifically in the character of Naamah (Gen 4:22).

Heavenly Father / earthly father

The title “sons of God” in Gen 6:2 does not refer to a specific genealogy. Rather, it describes anyone, regardless of their lineage, who by their behavior demonstrates that God is their spiritual Father. Likewise, God considers anyone who calls Him “Father” to be His son. This relationship is described by Paul in his letter to the Galatians:

“Because you are His sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, ‘Abba, Father’. So you are no longer a slave, but God’s child; and since you are His child, God has made you also an heir” (Gal 4:6-7).

Similarly anyone who does not call God “Father” is not His son. It then stands to reason that if we do not consider God our Father, then we must limit our definition of “father” to one of mere mortal descent. Ergo, sons (daughters) of men.

Since the designation of “sons of God” is not biological but spiritual, it cannot refer to a particular genealogy. And yet, Gen 5 chronicles a specific branch of Seth’s descendants who were faithful. This gives the impression that the reference to “sons of God” in Gen 6:2 concerns only this particular branch of Seth’s descendants. However, Gen 4:26 states that, *“at that time people began to call on the name of the LORD.”* The plurality of the word “people” suggests more than one “called on the name of the LORD.” Since Seth only had one son when this “calling” occurred, “people” must refer to others — Seth’s parents, and any other children (sisters) born to them before and/or after his birth.

Therefore, there were many genealogical strands of the faithful that Genesis could have focused on. But because none of these lineages produced any faithful men or women down to the 10th generation (they had, by this point become corrupted and wicked), their lineages were doomed to be wiped out in the Flood. Chronicling their lineages would thus have been pointless.

In comparison, only Seth’s genealogy — and only that branch that extended from Seth to Noah — remained faithful to the 10th generation, or the generation in which the Flood occurred. Thus Seth’s genealogy represents both a complete biological and — importantly — spiritually faithful lineage. And it is for this reason that Genesis chose to focus solely on his particular genealogy.

Seth’s genealogy

While the title, “sons of God,” is unrelated to a specific lineage, Gen 5 nevertheless focuses on a particular branch of Seth’s descendants. Genesis does so for the following reasons:

- To provide narrative continuity from Adam to Noah;
- When in contrast with a specific branch of Cain’s descendants, it illustrates the difference between the faithful and the unfaithful;
- It provides an explanation for God’s decision to destroy the earth in the Flood;
- It is, most importantly, the branch from which Christ is descended from.

Cain’s genealogy

Similarly, Gen 4 focuses on a specific branch of Cain’s descendants for two similar reasons: to illustrate the stark contrast between the faithful and the unfaithful, and to provide an explanation for God’s decision to destroy the earth in the Flood.

The sons of God versus the sons of men

“What fellowship can light have with darkness? ... What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?” (2Cor 6:14-15)

As noted in the beginning of this chapter, the relationship between the sons of God and the sons of men is defined as a struggle. Cain's murder of Abel represented the first antagonistic act by the sons of men against the sons of God, or the righteous. As time progressed, acts by the sons of men against the sons of God would continue. It would not always take the form of violence, but would come to include corruption or general wickedness.

The following examination of these two genealogies juxtaposes two specific branches of Seth and Cain in Gen 4 and 5 within a framework that presents Cain's descendants in the context of earthly matters, while presenting Seth's descendants in the context of heavenly matters; hence the use of the titles, sons of men versus the sons of God.

Seth versus Cain

Seth, the third son of Adam and Eve, brother to Cain and a number of unidentified sisters, was born in the second generation. He was given the name "appointed" or "granted," a name that refers to Eve's proclamation, "*God has granted me another child in the place of Abel since Cain killed him*" (Gen 4:25). His name is derived from the Hebrew word *shet*, which also means "foundation." This alludes to Christ, since he is the foundation upon which our hope rests: "*For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ*" (1Cor 3:11). Moreover, Luke traces Christ's lineage through Seth.² Thus in relation to Christ, Seth represents one of the first stones upon which our spiritual foundation rests. The name "foundation" is also befitting of someone who was instrumental in founding the first collective worship of the Lord: "*Seth also had a son and he named him Enosh. At that time, men began to call upon the name of the Lord*" (Gen 4:26). This verse associates Seth with a key antediluvian event, for at the time that his son, Enosh, was born, people began to call upon or proclaim God's name. In doing so, they represent the first ecclesia. The Greek word *ecclesia* can be translated as "assembly," which is a word that describes a gathering of people, usually for a specific purpose. The focus of the antediluvian's calling was on the "name of the Lord." But to what end? Why did they call on His name?

The antediluvian ecclesia

It might seem to us strange to inquire about the nature of the ecclesia's purpose or focus, since it's obvious, week-to-week, what our focus/purpose of worship is. In the antediluvian world, however, the gathering of people who called on the name of the LORD appears vaguer. For, as far as we know, they received little heavenly instruction (few commands, laws, ordinances). Thus, in wondering about this first gathering of believers, it is entirely reasonable to ask: What was the nature of the first ecclesia's worship? Did they assemble purely to revere the Creator or did they also meet to address a particular facet of the human experience in relation to God? The answer to this question may lie in the name Seth chose for his son. Enosh's name means "mortal," which echoes the words God spoke to Adam: "*Dust you are and to dust you will return*" (Gen 3:19). In choosing this name for his son, Seth acknowledged that he was painfully aware of his ephemeral nature.

Moreover, the birth of Enosh is associated with the birth of the ecclesia (Gen 4:26). Thus the two are related. In Gen 4:26, the Hebrew word *qara*, “to call out” or “to proclaim,” can also mean “to cry out.” Enosh’s name, “mortality,” reveals that, in addition to revering the Creator, worshippers also “cried out” to Him for salvation from death (mortality). In speaking of these “ancients,” Hebrews confirms that the substance of their faith was indeed a hope based on salvation from death.

“But we do not belong to those who shrink back and are destroyed, but to those who have faith and are saved. Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for” (Heb 10:39-11:1).

Among the many promises God has made to us, and the ancients, resurrection from the dead is chief.

Thus the ecclesia’s purpose for calling, proclaiming, or crying out to the LORD was the hope of being saved from death — the same hope that we share, approximately 6,000 years later.

Heavenly versus earthly foundations

The antediluvian ecclesia was in all probability led by Seth, for, as has been shown, his name means “foundation.” In contrast, Cain — like Seth — was also a founder, but what he founded was altogether different and related, of course, to the earth.

When his son Enoch was born, Cain was in the midst of constructing the world’s first city: “Cain was then building a city and he named it after his son Enoch” (Gen 4:17). The “city” or in the Hebrew, *iyr*, could really be thought of as a settlement. In particular, it was, as has already been noted, a guarded place, perhaps containing a wall or like defenses. This was to keep out the avenger, the result of having murdered Abel. (Murder creates in others a desire for vengeance.)

It was also a dwelling place that brought people together; where resources and skills were shared; where tasks were divided up amongst the inhabitants; and where, in this process, the time for leisure eventually arose, out of which grew entertainment and culture. This settlement/city was, in essence, the genesis for society, and thus Cain should not only be thought of as a murderer, but also as a founder of ancient civilization.

In this way, both of Adam’s sons were founders; whereas Cain laid the foundations for ancient civilization, which were impermanent and doomed to ruin, Seth laid the foundations for God’s spiritual house, which is everlasting.

(In the next chapter, God willing, we will continue our study of contrasts in the descendants of Adam).

Matthew Harrison (Quebec, ON)

Notes:

1. Cain’s genealogy includes the reference to a single female descendant, Naamah, who was born in the eighth generation (Gen 4:22).
2. Luke 3:23-38

Youth Speaks

Jonathan the Faithful Prince: (10) Recognizing the King

The Philistines attack

As David served in Saul's court, the king loved him. All seemed to be going well — David could calm Saul's outbursts, and the king appreciated the affect that the music had upon him. Nevertheless, something was about to happen that would change the dynamic between Saul and David — and David and Jonathan — forever.

One day, the message came to Saul's court that the Philistines had rearmed themselves and were preparing an invasion into the land of Israel. The court would have been in a flurry as preparations were made to engage with the former enemy before they made it far into the land. David, likely because he was too young, was sent back home to be with his father, while his three oldest brothers were sent to the front lines (1Sam 17:13-15). Saul and Jonathan — with Saul still likely holding suspicions towards his firstborn — went together to the battle (cp. 1Sam 18:1).

For a few days, the armies faced each other, and no one dared to attack. Both camps were on a hill, with a valley in between them. Whoever chose to attack would be the one who was at a disadvantage. Finally, a champion from the camp of the Philistines came forth and offered a challenge — he would fight anyone in the camp of Israel. If they were able to slay him, then the Philistines would be Saul's servants, but if he won, then the Israelites would be their servants. His name was Goliath, and he was a giant.

Goliath's challenge would have shot fear into the hearts of the men of Israel. This man was huge! No one could stand up against him! Yet out of all of the men in the Israelite camp, it likely brought more fear to the heart of one man than it did to the others. When Saul heard the challenge, the pressure for him to fight must have been enormous. Who else could Goliath truly have been challenging? He even mentioned Saul's name in his taunt (1Sam 17:9) — and hadn't the children of Israel said that they wanted the king to go before them and fight their battles (1Sam 8:20)? Saul was much taller than many of the other Israelites, so even his stature was closer to Goliath's than anyone else's (1Sam 9:2). Truly, all eyes would have been on Saul.

Every day for forty days, morning and evening, Goliath stood before the armies of Israel and issued his challenge. Every day for forty days, morning and evening, no one from the camp of Israel did anything.

Waiting

How difficult this time would have been for Jonathan — the man who was filled with zeal to slay an entire garrison of the uncircumcised Philistines! Every morning and evening as he heard the blasphemy of the giant he would have burned

with anger — longing to go out and face him himself. Yet he never did — and one is left to wonder exactly why that was. How was it possible that Goliath defied Yahweh before Jonathan so many times, and the prince never made a move against him? Could Jonathan have been frozen by fear? Hardly. That didn't seem to inhibit him in any of his other endeavors. But then why did he not do anything? Why did he stand there next to his father and hear the mockery every morning and every evening?

Perhaps again the context of the story helps to explain Jonathan's actions. Just as in the battle against the Amalekites, Jonathan likely saw that it was prudent for him to stay in the background. All eyes were focused on Saul — and if Jonathan were to stand in Saul's place and do what Saul should have been doing *again*, the end result would not be pleasant in Saul's house.

To add to that, Jonathan *knew* that he was not the promised king who was to come (that king had already been called; 1Sam 13:14). There was another — and it appears as though Jonathan, while he waited for those forty days, was actively hoping and praying that the successor would reveal himself through this opportunity. His actions after the battle demonstrate this — soon after Jonathan heard David speak to his father about the battle, Jonathan took off his robe, his girdle, his armor, and his weaponry and gave them to David! Jonathan's actions were a sign of his deference to the one whom he knew was destined to take the throne of Israel. Truly, he must have been watching and waiting in anticipation for the new king to appear and stand against the blasphemer.

Yet perhaps there was even another motive — and this would help to explain why Jonathan *expected* the new king to accept the challenge. When he had gone to fight against the Philistines before, Jonathan was certain that God wanted him to fight; he simply didn't know how he was supposed to do so. Thus, in order to find out, he prayed for a sign. The sign revealed God's will and Jonathan followed it. Is it possible that a similar type of thing happened as Jonathan heard the Philistine's taunts those forty days? As his blood boiled within him and as he longed to go face the Philistine himself, perhaps Jonathan — knowing the impact that another attack like this would have upon his father — prayed for a sign from God so that he might know what he was to do. Should he attack or should he stay? Maybe the response came back that he was to stay — and that there was someone else who would take up the challenge, someone else who would be the captain of Yahweh's people.

Thus, for whatever reason it was, Jonathan stayed with his father in the camp of Israel, listening to the giant's blasphemous words, and waiting for the deliverer of Israel to reveal himself.

First encounter

Finally, he did — and just imagine the joy that would have filled Jonathan as he listened to the conversation going on between his father and David. David told Saul of his miraculous battles with the lion and with the bear. How his heart would have thrilled to hear of David's courage and faith! Just picture Jonathan standing behind his father, eagerly listening to David's tales of God's power:

“And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father’s sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: and I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him” (1Sam 17:34-35).

The stories which David told to Saul and Jonathan were stories which would have been utterly impossible — unless God were truly with David. Only a miracle would have allowed this young man to take a lion by his mane and slay him! There’s truly no comparison between a lion and a man — a lion could simply tear a man apart. Yet David had done the complete opposite and God had filled him with strength and power to do so.

As Jonathan heard these words, he would have recognized that here was a man who had God working in his life, in the same way that God had worked in his. Just as he and his armor bearer had come up against the Philistine garrison with seemingly impossible odds, Yahweh strengthened them and worked a miracle. It was the same type of event — one man versus a lion or a bear and two men against twenty Philistine soldiers. Could this be the one of whom Samuel had spoken? But David’s words continued:

“Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God” (1Sam 17:36).

David continued his words to Saul by telling him that just as he had been able to slay the lion and the bear, God would be with him in this endeavor. He was certain that God would strengthen him to slay the uncircumcised Philistine — Goliath had defied the armies of the living God, and that defiance would not go unchallenged.

As David spoke these words, almost undoubtedly, one of his words would have immediately caught Jonathan’s attention — because it was the same word which he too had used when he had charged against the Philistine garrison:

“And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armor, Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the LORD will work for us: for there is no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few” (1Sam 14:6).

Uncircumcised. This was the way in which both Jonathan and David saw the Philistines. They were enemies of the covenant and were destined for destruction — and as Jonathan heard David use this word to describe Goliath, he would have realized that he was looking at a kindred spirit. He was looking at a man who held God’s covenant with His people in high esteem and who cherished God’s name. Yet not only so, just as Jonathan had said to his armor bearer *“there is no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few,”* David had uttered his belief in the same thing. David recognized that though he was just a young man and Goliath had been a warrior from his youth, if God was with him, he could slay the giant. Even more, just as Jonathan was prepared to fight not only the twenty men in the garrison, but the whole innumerable multitude of the Philistines, David was resolved to do the

same. As he stood before Goliath, he taunted that not only would he kill Goliath, but he would singlehandedly kill all of the Philistines! Over and over, Jonathan would have seen in David the same mind which he had!

As the battle began and David stood before the Philistine, this connection between the two men was reinforced. Jonathan, standing by his father and looking over the valley where David and Goliath stood, heard David confess that he was fighting so that the whole Israelite army might recognize God's ability to save, and acknowledge that the victory wouldn't be for his own honor, but for the nation's.

“And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD's and He will give you into our hands” (1Sam 17:47).

When David slew the Philistine, he wanted all of Israel to know that it wasn't by his own might that he had won. Yahweh was the One who won the battle. He was the One who had the power. David fought against Goliath so that he might show all of Israel the power of their God — and his victory accomplished that goal. That day, the trembling troops of Israel were inspired and chased the Philistines back into their land — exactly as they had done when Jonathan had courageously attacked the Philistine garrison. At that time, the situation was the same. The army of Israel was full of fear and felt as though they were in a hopeless situation; but Jonathan's faithful attack inspired the people to come out of their hiding place and chase the Philistines back.

Yet not only so, but David had also proclaimed that this victory would be a victory for Israel, not for him — *“and he will give you into **our** hands.”* David was fighting on behalf of the nation and for the nation's honor. It wasn't for his own name. Such was the same thinking which Jonathan had held when he went against the Philistine garrison:

“And the men of the garrison answered Jonathan and his armor bearer, and said, Come up to us, and we will shew you a thing. And Jonathan said unto his armor bearer, Come up after me: for the LORD hath delivered them into the hand of Israel” (1Sam 14:12).

Jonathan's attack against the Philistine garrison was for the sake of Israel — not for his own name. Thus, as Jonathan heard David's words, he would have been impressed with how remarkably similar the mind of this court musician and shepherd was to his own. He had seen the boy playing for his father and he had noticed him before, but he had never had a chance to really get an insight into his mind. Now, as he heard David speak, he suddenly realized that there was a perfect harmony between them:

- Both of them filled the void for leadership in Israel — Jonathan went up against the Philistines when Israel was trembling and his father was doing nothing; David came when all of Israel was petrified and no soldier had been willing to fight
- Both of them had experienced God's mighty power working miracles in their lives

- Both of them had a love for the covenant and recognized that the Philistines were uncircumcised
- Both of them believed that God could save regardless of the odds
- Both of them desired to inspire Israel
- Both of them sought to fight for the nation rather than for their own glory
- Both of them chose to look upon Saul with respect and deference — their words towards him were almost always honorable, even though they could have straightly criticized him

Living in a court where this type of spiritual perception and love for the Truth was not held in high esteem by the king, Jonathan would have been overjoyed to see another man who thought in the same way. He would have already felt a deep affection for him. But his joy would have been even greater — he had refrained from fighting the battle because he was looking for the next king, and here was someone who was a man after God’s own heart and who had just demonstrated that he had the ability to be the captain over God’s people. All of the characteristics seemed to fit. Could he be the one?

As the battle ended, Saul looked on David with astonishment. He couldn’t believe what he had seen — this young man who had played for him in his court had just slain the giant. Turning to Abner, he asked Abner what family it was that David came from — he likely wanted to know the details because his daughter was now pledged to David (1Sam 17:25). Yet Abner didn’t know. Thus, David was called before the king himself — with Jonathan likely by his side.

“And as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand. And Saul said to him, Whose son art thou, thou young man? And David answered, I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Bethlehemite” (1Sam 17:57-58).

It was a short and simple conversation — but it may have made all of the difference to Jonathan. He had seen David’s faith and seen into David’s thinking, but he hadn’t known anything about David’s lineage. But then he knew. David was from Bethlehem, meaning that he was from the tribe of Judah — he was from the kingly tribe. When Jacob had given his blessings to all of his children, he specifically blessed Judah by saying *“the scepter shall not depart from Judah”* (Gen 49:10) — and a man from the tribe of Judah was standing before Jonathan. He was from the kingly tribe.

With that, Jonathan knew that he was in the presence of the next king.

Jason Hensley (Simi Hills, CA)

*“The people is greater and taller than we;... and moreover we have seen the sons of the **Anakims** there” (Deut 1:28).*

*“There was none of the **Anakims** left in the land of the children of Israel: only in Gaza, in **Gath**, and in Ashdod, there remained” (Josh 11:21).*

*“And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of **Gath**, whose height was six cubits and a span” (1Sam 17:4).*

The Joy of Sunday Schooling

Have you tried this? (2)

Here are some more good ideas. A word of thanks is extended to the Sunday school teachers who have shared these with me over the years. In passing them along to you, I hope you will see something that gets you thinking about new and different ways to effectively engage your children in the learning process.

There is a common theme of student creativity in the ideas that are offered this month. Creative activities go beyond the routine accumulation of Bible knowledge. They allow the children to demonstrate learning through the use of personal interests and talents. These kinds of activities can tell us a lot about our children and their understanding of the Bible.

Visual creations

Set up a permanent flannel graph in your kindergarten or primary class area (i.e., for your pre-readers and beginning readers). A good-sized bulletin board that is mounted low to the ground is ideal for this. Get a large piece of flannel at a fabric store and back the bulletin board with it. Make a big pocket for storing lots of stick-on figures. (One way to do this is to fold up the bottom of the flannel and tack it into a long shallow trough.) Let the children use the stick-on figures to retell the Bible story they have learned. They can easily put figures on the flannel, move them around, and take them off. Leave their creations up from week to week for review purposes or to add to as a Bible story unfolds. Any time you want to use the bulletin board for something else, the flannel backing can be left in place and other things mounted on it. *(Thanks to Diane Sabean, Meriden, CT)*

Copy and cut coloring book pictures into separate pieces, each piece being a complete person, animal, building, Bible object, etc. Give each child a set of pieces and let them create their own Bible picture. Have the children color/decorate their pictures, add titles, make up captions, find and copy appropriate Bible verses, etc. This makes a good lesson reinforcement activity. It allows your children to express their understanding of the lesson better than an ordinary coloring activity can.

Make Styrofoam mosaics. Buy a package of Styrofoam trays or plates at a grocery store, spray them different colors and cut them into small squares with a knife or razor blade. In Sunday school, the children glue the colorful squares onto a foam board to create their own Bible picture or saying. *(Thanks to Peter Dixon, Southern New Hampshire, NH)*

More visual creations

Get your students thinking about the topographic features of Bible lands. Have them create a relief map of Israel or another Bible region using homemade modeling clay. You can find recipes for homemade clay online. A simple clay, made with flour, salt, and water, can be painted when it is dry. Stick flags on the map to

identify key places. Have your students use the map to retell the story of important events that happened at these places. (*Thanks to Carol Link, Baltimore, MD*)

To help with a project like this, you might want to get a copy of Islip Collyer's book, *Where It Happened*. In this little book, Bro. Collyer connects Bible events with the geography of the land. The book was published by The Christadelphian Office in 1946. Some brothers and sisters or ecclesias may still own a copy. The Office currently has copies available in its secondhand book supply.

Creating three-dimensional contour maps is another way to visualize the topographic features of Bible lands. Foam board works well for making contour maps. Draw and cut individual contours from the foam board, then glue the contours in layers to represent the elevation of the land. Paint the map, label it, and use it to tell what happened there in Bible times.

Illustrated story telling

Do you have students who like to draw? How about students who like to write? And do you have any budding orators? Let them put their talents together to create an illustrated Bible story. Then have them present their story to the rest of the Sunday school or the ecclesia. One older Sunday school class did this as a culminating activity after their studies of the life of the apostle Paul. They presented their story, complete with thirty colorful pencil drawings and maps projected on a screen, a full narration, and background music. The students did everything from start to finish. They also recorded their presentation. (*Thanks to June Cawston, Victoria, BC. The project was done with a Sunday school class in Vernon, BC, several years ago.*)

A variation of this idea is to have students create comic-strip depictions of Bible stories. Let them share their work with the rest of the class. This is also the kind of thing that can be easily published and credited in a Sunday school newsletter.

One teacher had her little ones create their own Bible story books. Each page was a visual representation of some part of the story. For example, the sun, moon, and stars, cut from gold and silver foils and mounted on construction paper to depict the fourth day of Creation. When all the pages were finished, they were punched and bound together with colorful yarns and ribbons. The children used their completed books in Sunday school to review the Bible story. Parents were also encouraged to have the children use their books at home to retell the Bible story to their families. (*Thanks to Janice Baines, Sussex, NB*)

Song writing

Children do not have to be musicians in order to write their own Bible songs. Let them write words to go with a familiar melody. Some might like to write songs that incorporate body movements as well (bowing, praying, etc.). Have the entire Sunday school learn to sing the songs that the children create.

Familiar melodies can be found in many Sunday school song books. Simple tunes and meters work best for this kind of creative activity. (*Thanks to Mary Jane Farrah, Mountain Grove, ON*)

Other student creations

Some children like to create word puzzles as well as solve them. Word searches are a big favorite. Have your students identify several key words in a Bible story and make a word search out of them. Others might like to try their hand at making a crossword puzzle, a cryptogram, or a jumble word puzzle. Let them try out their puzzles on each other. Student work of this kind can also be published and credited in a Sunday school newsletter.

Get some blank jigsaw puzzles at a craft store. Have the children make their own Bible jigsaw puzzles. When they are finished, some might like to donate their puzzles to the Sunday school for later use as a Bible learning center activity.¹

Revisiting Sunday school goals²

Sunday school is about more than imparting Bible knowledge to children. By allowing the children to be creative and put their interests and talents to work, we can help them develop positive attitudes toward the vital things they are learning in Sunday school. That is what this month's ideas are about. If you haven't tried any of them before, give some thought to doing so. And send me your good ideas, too, please!

Jim Harper (Meriden, CT): sundayschool@tidings.org

Notes:

1. See "Using Bible Learning Centers," *The Tidings*, February, 2012, pp.72-75.
2. See "What's the Goal? – Part 1," *The Tidings*, February, 2011, pp. 79-81; "Part 2," March-April, 2011, pp.135-139.

Special Invitation

For some years, unity discussions have been taking place with Churches of God of the Abrahamic Faith. In the interest of promoting friendship and mutual understanding, we print the following invitation:

*You, your family and friends are invited to the
39th annual Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith Gathering
at Denison University in Granville, Ohio, July 21-27, 2014.*

Main Speakers:

- Bro. Mark Drabenstott: "The Seven Great 'I Ams': Our Abundant Life"
- Bro. Doug Davis: "Christ in the Jewish Feasts"
- Bro. John Pople: "Wearing the Name"

*Contact Bro. Brad Rek (330) 609-6957 or brad.rek@gmail.com.
Visit our website at <http://abrahamicfaithgathering.org/> for more
information and to view talks from last year.*

Prophecy

“Those Round About” — Ezekiel 35

Introduction

The nations around Israel have been very much in the news, especially the Palestinians. As this is being edited, in late 2013, US Secretary of State John Kerry will return to the Palestinian territories and Israel to engage in peace talks at Ramallah on January 1 for an additional round of shuttle diplomacy with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. The United States is seeking to broker an agreement on a “two-state solution” in which Israel would exist peacefully alongside a new Palestinian state. Previously, the Palestinians’ September 2011 submission at the UN to be formally recognized as a nation-state in its own right had been much in the news. The current head of this state-in-formation, Mahmood Abbas (President of Fatah), travelled all over Europe and in contact with China, Russia and other nations to persuade them to support the Palestinian application. All this in the face of clear Israeli opposition and a US veto in the Security Council. And in November 2012, the UN recognized the status of the Palestinians as a nation state. There were 138 votes in favor, nine against and 41 abstentions in a vote to upgrade the Palestinian Authority’s observer status at the United Nations to “non-member state” from “entity”.

What relevance does Ezek 35 and 36 have to all of this? Simply this: The Arab attitude reflected in this ancient prophecy is being replayed in *our* day, bringing about the full and complete fulfillment of these prophecies. So who is Mt. Seir in Ezekiel? Mt. Seir was the ancient/historical homeland of Edom (cp. Ezek 35:13). And Edom is the nation descended from Esau, the twin brother of Jacob.

Just as Esau hated his brother Jacob for taking from him his birthright and inheritance of the land (the blessing), *and* continually sought to reclaim it, so his descendants to this very day *still* seek to take back the land that was given to the descendants of Jacob.

Listen to the language of Ezek 35:

- v.5: “*perpetual hatred*” — an historical, and almost cultural characteristic of the Middle Eastern Arab/Palestinians. They are well known for holding onto grievances generationally.
- v.10: “*these TWO nations and TWO these countries shall be MINE and WE will possess them (although the LORD was there).*” The goal these descendants of Esau are very clear. And the language remarkably similar to the stated goals of the Palestinians!
- 36:2: “*the ancient high places have become our possession.*” High places = holy places of the Jewish people. Interestingly, almost all of Israel’s ancient holy places are found in the West Bank, and many are occupied by the Palestinians.
- 36:5: Edom with other nations “*gave my land to THEMSELVES as a possession.*”

Here is the same thinking, the same attitude, the same determination that is found in the descendants of Esau today (the Palestinians). So it is very much worth our time to think about what is going on now before our eyes and to see in this what God is seeking to accomplish.

What do the Palestinians want?

They want to be recognized as a nation with all its rights and privileges and protections afforded those recognized by the international community. They want this state to consist of the West Bank and Gaza.

This sounds fair enough, but it is not all. In November 2010, a major investigative poll of the West Bank and Gaza Palestinians was released by Greenburg Quinlan Rosner Research. The results were very interesting. The results indicated that ~60% of those polled from the West Bank and Gaza were very much in favor of a two-state solution. *But* the poll went on to uncover that the same 60% saw the two-state solution only as a *first step* towards a *one* state solution, one Palestinian state occupying all the land from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River. Additionally, almost 70% believed that an armed struggle is ultimately the only way they will gain back “their land”.

This is why every map in Palestinian textbooks and hanging in Palestinian homes have a glaring omission: Israel is nowhere to be found of these maps! As Ezek 35:10 says, “*These two nations and these two countries shall be mine!*”

But where are the “mountains of Israel” and why does Ezek 35 talk about “Mt. Seir” and not simply Edom or Esau? The reason becomes abundantly clear when one superimposes a map of the West Bank over the ancient mountains of Israel. *They are identical.* The “West Bank” is simply the modern term for Ezekiel’s “Mountains of Israel.”

And why Mt. Seir? Because we are being asked to see these two mountains, Mt. Seir and the Mountains of Israel, as being in bitter conflict, with Mt. Seir trying to reclaim the Mountains of Israel as their ancient homeland! This is nothing short of a prescription for a devastating war!

God's purpose

Step back from this picture. Why is God allowing all this to happen? What is *His* purpose in all this?

Consider what Joel 3:1-2 puts before us. God’s intention is to bring the nations of the earth to judgment. For what reason? Because they scattered His people and divided His land. Note the critical emphasis of these words: Israel is *HIS* people. The land is *HIS* land. The nations are being judged for their presumption and arrogance in assigning to themselves what belongs solely to God!

And how will God judge them? He will “gather all nations to Israel for the purpose of war” (v.2). “Prepare for war! ... Let all the men of war draw near ... Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks in spears ... Let the nations be wakened and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; For there I will sit to judge all the surround nations” (Joel 3:9-14).

It is startling to discover that the Young's Literal translation in v. 9 of "prepare for war" is "sanctify a war", that is, declare a *holy war*. (The same Hebrew word is translated sanctify in Joel 2:16.) In our modern day we hear that very cry coming from the Palestinians — "Jihad!" It means "holy war". And this "holy war" will begin with the Palestinians.

Consider carefully Zech 12:2-3. What is a siege? "Anything that blocks or limits movement of people and goods (cf. Israel's "siege" of Gaza). The Palestinians have a different word: "Intifada", "The use of violence, struggle and martyrdom...for the liberation of our (Palestinian) lands from the Zionist occupation." The Palestinians are on their third intifada which they define as "Diplomatic struggle, designed to isolate Israel in the International arena and force it to submit to all Palestinians." It is only a matter of time before intifada and siege become interchangeable as the Palestinians begin to engage in a violent struggle to prevent Israel from occupying Palestinian territory.

Now consider the implications of v.2: A man that is reeling from drunkenness is the extreme example of uncoordinated movements. They are unable to achieve any success in their aggressive, physical disputes. God is making very plain that the Palestinian intifada/siege will fail again and again!

You might want to ponder the significance of the international intervention in Libya in 2011. On March 19, 2011, the United Nations Security Council approved resolution 1973 and authorized the use of "all necessary measures to... protect civilians". This authorization was based on a new policy adopted by the international community, "The Responsibility to Protect." In essence, this policy sets aside the sovereignty of states to handle their own internal conflicts when "a State is manifestly failing to protect its citizens from mass atrocities." Does this new policy, coupled with the Libyan precedent, set in place the foundation for the international action indicated by Zech 14:2? Now ponder this passage. Where once they failed, now this enemy succeeds! What is the difference? "*For I will gather all nations to battle against Jerusalem.*" (v. 2). **It is only through international help that the Palestinians can at last achieve their goal.**

The suffering of Israel

The unmistakable implication of all these prophecies is that Israel will eventually suffer greatly in their conflict with the Palestinians. Zechariah says the two-thirds of the Jewish population in the land will die (Zech 13:8). Daniel tells us that these devastating conditions for his beloved people Israel will not end until "*the power of the holy people has been completely shattered*" (Zech 12:7).

And it will break God's heart: "*As I live, says the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?*"

We can sometimes be a bit cavalier about the loss of life indicated by Zechariah. God isn't. He doesn't want to redeem only one-third of His people, *He wants to redeem all of them!*

What God wants

So what does God want? He wants His people's *repentance*; He wants them to return to Him:

"I will return again to my place till they acknowledge their offense. Then they will seek my face; in their affliction they will earnestly seek me." (Hosea 5:15)

"Now, therefore, says the LORD, turn to me with all your heart...rend your heart and not your garments; Return to the LORD your God, for He is gracious and merciful..." (Joel 2:12-13)

"And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance. As the LORD has said, among the remnant whom the LORD calls." (Joel 2:32)

And there will be a remnant from among His people, a people who will hear and repent and turn to their God in their time of crisis. And God will hear them and have compassion on them "when He sees that their power is gone, and there is no one remaining bond or free." (Deut 32:36)

Then "the LORD will roar from Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; The heavens and earth will shake; but the LORD will be a shelter for His people, and the strength of the children of Israel." (Joel 3:16)

The end of the matter

"And there shall no longer be a pricking brier or a painful thorn for the house of Israel from among all who are around them, who despise them. ... And they will dwell safely there, build houses, and plant vineyards; yes, they will dwell securely, when I execute judgments on all those around them who despise them" (Ezek 28:24-26).

"And they shall no longer be a prey for the nations, nor shall beasts of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and no one shall make them afraid. ... Thus they shall know that I, the LORD their God, am with them, and they, the house of Israel, are My people, says the Lord GOD" (Ezek 34:28).

Here is seen the enduring passion of God for His people Israel. Despite all their turning away, their centuries of faithlessness and treachery, God *will* fulfill His abiding love — the Jewish people *will* finally become "*My people*", and Yahweh will become "*their God*" forever. Why should we be concerned with all this?

Why be concerned? Because the nexus or meeting point of Israel's redemption and our redemption is found in the man who finally delivers Israel from their enemies: *"They will look on me whom they have pierced. Yes, they will mourn for him as one mourns for his only son..."* (Zech. 12:10).

Only one man fits this description, bearing in his body the marks of crucifixion, the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the one in whom we have placed our confidence; the one in whom God will bring to completion all He has promised for the Jewish people *and* for us who have been adopted into this divine family through Jesus Christ.

Ted Sleeper (San Francisco Peninsula, CA)

Reflections

Scriptural Discipline

(3) Forgiveness as a Foundation to Discipline

In our last article we discussed how the ecclesia is Divinely designed to be a powerful tool in the fight against sin. We are all engaged in a personal and communal battle against wickedness. Our goal is to give honor and glory to God by exhibiting His holiness in our lives.

Forgiveness

In order for us to meet this challenge, we must understand how to forgive. If our ecclesias are to be beacons of openness and support, there will be times when we are called to forgive when there initially is repentance — and when it is not. But, as we'll see, there is a difference!

I would like to refer you back to a wonderful series of articles on Forgiveness that was written by Bro. David Lloyd and Bro. Joe Hill in the Tidings¹. These articles provide a valuable insight into how to forgive, and also some of the myths associated with forgiveness.

Our survey of forgiveness is similar, but with a slightly different focus. We would like to examine how forgiveness is an important element in the Scriptural discipline process. Specifically, what are the types of sins that **MUST** be addressed with my brother? When is reconciliation optional and when is it required? What can I do when there is no initial repentance expressed? What is the Divine expectation for me toward my brother when he is entangled in sin?

So, in this article, we will briefly comment on

- The Divine standard for forgiveness,
- The purpose of human forgiveness,
- Forgiveness and reconciliation.

While there can be no doubt that we are to strive to forgive as our Heavenly Father forgives, it is a standard that is not common to man. Micah wrote, *“Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea”* (Mic 7:18-19).

God delights in mercy. Think about that. It gives Him pleasure to forgive — it is not done grudgingly. He chooses not to retain His anger. Further, He not only has compassion on us but He subdues our iniquities. The Septuagint has a nice way of putting this — *“he will sink our iniquities, and they shall be cast into the depths of the sea, even all our sins.”*

Listen to what God says about David's life when he counsels Solomon.

“And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgments: Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel” (1Kgs 9:4).

Would you have described David’s life this way? Scripture openly exposes us to David’s terrible failures. Many times he failed to be the upright man that was required. Yet, God includes none of that in the Divine eulogy. In God’s view, the sins were put away. Because He delights in mercy, He chose not to look at David’s shortcomings and sins, but rather provide Solomon with a portrait of a man who walked with God in integrity of heart.

This is the Divine standard for forgiveness. Can we put away the failings of one another when sin is repented of and see our brother the way God chooses? Ask yourself if you feel less love, less compassion for the great characters of the Bible as their weaknesses are exposed? Do you feel less love for Peter when the cock crows twice? Is your view of Jacob, the Prince with God, diminished when we see in his early life deceptiveness and lying? Many would say that it is our exposure to these faults that makes them more intimate to us. We are encouraged when we see that even these great men and women of faith had trials and weakness of faith, just as we do.

So, why would we ever feel that knowing about our brother’s sins and faults would taint our perception of him? There must never be such a falseness in our ecclesias that would presume that to be “solid” believers we must all be in perfect control of our sins. We aren’t. The ecclesia is designed to allow for frankness and openness in the battle against sin. When it goes silent, we are in great peril.

The instruction this provides to us is important because it addresses our attitude toward forgiveness. Forgiveness is what we must long for. It must give us great pleasure to choose mercy and to see our repentant brother the way the Lord does.

A few introductory points are to be made here.

- The topic of Forgiveness is about a process of restoration — for **BOTH** the **offended** and **offender**
- Forgiveness, to be effective, must fundamentally acknowledge that the Lord is the Master of our lives
- There is no offence that he does not understand — he alone knows how to deliver
- Forgiveness is a process that frees the offended by acknowledging that the Lord is in control

This then permits us to exhibit righteous behavior toward the offender so that we might be reconciled

In our Scriptural review of discipline, it is essential that we are able to distinguish between sins. God does. True, *“all unrighteousness is sin...” (1John 5:17)*. There are no “good sins.” However, it is clear in Scripture that God sees a difference in sins.

When Moses was on the Mount he received a revelation of the character of God and the Name of the LORD.

“And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, unto the third and to the fourth generation” (Exod 34:5-7).

Often I have read right over those words, *“iniquity and transgression and sin”* as if they were three ways of describing the same thing. However a review of the Hebrew for these words paints a very different picture. The word for iniquity is also translated as perversity and evil. We recall Isaiah’s words about how the nation of Israel were continuously sinful, such that they were *“laden in iniquity.”* So, the first word is for people who are no longer struggling with sin, but are overcome by it. Their lives are filled with perversity. The second word is transgression. This word might be thought of as a single sin, but that would be incorrect. The Hebrew word, *pescha*, is used for revolt and rebellion. This is not about disciples who are struggling through sin either — they are rebellious. They will not submit to God and His righteousness. God pleads through His prophets for Israel to stop being stiff-necked and rebellious to Him. The last word is the word for an offence. As opposed to the first two definitions, it could very well be applied to a person who has fallen in a sin due to weakness. This is not a person whose life is filled with sin or one who is rebellious. This is the brother or sister that is aware of their sin and attempting to overcome.

These three definitions are critical for our review of Scriptural discipline. God views each separately and in our application of discipline, so must we. In our current review of forgiveness, this must be embraced.

Jesus and later the Apostle Paul both helped us with these differentiations about sin. In Mark 7, Jesus listed a number of sins that, when they *“proceed from the heart”* defile the man. Paul speaks of a similar list of sins associated with the Gentiles in Rom 1. His conclusion is that they that commit such things (and take pleasure with those who do) are worthy of death. To the Corinthians and Galatians, Paul provides a listing of sins that would keep a non-repentant brother or sister from inheriting the Kingdom of God (1Cor 6:9-10, Gal 5:19-20). The importance of Paul’s listing is that he says that these works of the flesh are *“manifest”* or made apparent. In other words, these are observable and not restricted to the final judgment of the hearts. They are all tangible behaviors — fornication, adultery, idolatry.

We must acknowledge that there are many sins in Scripture that are NOT listed as sins unto death in such a way. Brethren not working and being busybodies in Thessalonica. Those that cause divisions by poor use of Scripture. Those that are involved in genealogies, foolish questions, contentions about the Law. The unruly, the proud. Those lacking love. It’s not that these are not sins, however, the way that we must deal with them is different.

Bro. Roberts wrote about this distinction in 1895, “For the present it will suffice to note that the sin or trespass that Christ alludes to is a palpable, obvious, fatal sin. When doubt exists on this point, let us not apply Matt 18:15–17. ‘Some men’s sins are open beforehand. Some are not, and therefore, we have to wait for later circumstances, or Christ’s infallible judgment, to disclose them.’”

The application of Matt 18, which we will further deal with in our next article, is for these sins unto death. Other sins may require correction and rebuke, but what is in the hearts of those so involved is reserved for the Final Judgment of our Lord.

Review of forgiveness

So how does this impact our review of Forgiveness?

There are times when offences occur to us or within the ecclesia that require us to seek restoration and repentance. We must do all we can to bring this about because eternal life is at stake. However, there are other offences where we may need to guide, correct and show compassion, but restoration is not required. As we move through life, all of us are scarred by offences against us. None are spared. Perhaps you have been emotionally abused, unfairly maligned by a brother, double-crossed by business associates, betrayed by a loved one, deceived by one in whom you trusted? When these happen to us, it is never pleasant and if we permit it, they can disable us for years.

How is it, then, that I can be more like my Lord when such sins occur? When he was wrongly accused, physically abused, betrayed by a disciple, guile was not found in his mouth. When reviled, he reviled not. When threatened, he threatened not. How was the Lord able to live to such a standard when my natural inclination is to fight back and look for “justice?” Peter brings us to the answer. For during this ordeal, indeed throughout his life, he **“committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously” (1Pet 2:23).**

This is a key to unlocking our understanding of forgiveness. Jesus could have prevented these wrongdoings, having the capability to summon twelve legions of angels. But, instead, he committed his cause to Him that judgeth righteously. He accepted that his Father was in control. He could hand this situation over to his Father and He would make things right.

What a challenge this is to our faith, especially when we are feeling hurt and victimized! Do we fundamentally trust that the Lord controls our lives? Can we entrust our worst problems to *“him that judgeth righteously?”*

Here again is a clue from the New Testament Greek. In the New Testament, there are two separate words associated with the translated word, “forgive” or “forgiveness.” The second is *charizomai*, which is used of unconditional forgiveness. This is associated with a brother who has resolved his conflict with his brother and they are restored. The sin is to be forgotten, put away. It calls for us to forgive as we call upon our Lord to forgive — to remove the sin forever, as if it never occurred. This is the word used about the incestuous man in Corinth, who had repented. They were to unconditionally forgive him and to confirm their love to him.

But the first word is different. It is the word *aphiemi*, which is to send forth or cast away. This word is used by our Lord at his crucifixion, “*Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.*” Stephen, as he was being stoned to death, asked the Lord not to lay this sin to their charge. How, then, can one forgive when reconciliation has not yet been realized? In fact, for some being prayed for, reconciliation would never be achieved.

This is the power of *aphiemi*. It means to cast it up, to send it forth. I would like to suggest that this is exactly what The Apostle Peter meant when he said that Jesus “*committed his cause to him that judgeth righteously.*” Forgiveness, then, can be extended to those who have sinned a sin unto death, whether against us or our Lord. Until there is repentance, it cannot be *charizomai* forgiveness (unconditional), but *aphiemi* forgiveness provides the outlet of a fundamental acknowledgement that we are handing this situation over to him that judgeth righteously.

Here’s the power of this concept. When someone sins against us, we can easily become victims. We hold on to the feeling of pain, the sorrow of separation. If we must wait for full restoration and reconciliation before we can forgive, we are stuck — we are unable to move forward. Our interactions with our brother are greatly strained. It will be very difficult for us to be Christ-like to one who is hurting us so badly.

But the Lord instead tells us to give the problem to him. Cast it up, send it forth. I need not be victimized by this offence because I have asked the Lord to solve the problem for me!

In the fine articles on Forgiveness by Bre. Lloyd and Hill, a number of myths were identified about forgiveness. I once again refer you to those articles. However, let me just remind you that when we “*aphiemi*” forgive someone by giving the problem to the Lord, you are not blind to the consequences of the sin. Here’s a brief list they provided of some of the myths about forgiveness.

- If they do not repent, I should not forgive
- They need to show change before I should forgive
- Forgiveness means rebuilding the relationship
- Forgiving someone means allowing them to hurt you over and over
- Forgiveness requires release from consequences
- Forgiveness is ignoring sin
- The result of forgiveness is we can now trust the offender

This initial step for forgiveness is essential for freeing us from being stuck in our interactions with the offending brother. It jettisons the feelings of revenge or anger. We know that there are issues to be resolved if we are to get to *charizomai* forgiveness, but *aphiemi* enables us to move forward without mouths filled with guile, threats or reviling.

So, what have we seen about Forgiveness that will instruct us about Scriptural discipline? First, offences against us and our Lord are NOT to be swept under the rug or harbored inside us. In cases that are sins unto death, the focus must move from being about OUR need for justice to OUR BROTHER’S need for restoration.

It is a matter of life and death. In matters that are sins, but not sins unto death, we are called on to *apheimi* our brother. If reconciliation is not realized, we put this in the Lord's care and move forward. If reconciliation is realized (in both cases), we forgive unconditionally (*charizomai*).

Our next article will take a fresh look at Matt 18 and it's essential guidelines for Scriptural discipline. However, it is important that we take these foundations for forgiveness with us to that discussion.

David Jennings (Pomona, CA)

Notes:

1. *The Tidings*, Feb 2012, p 81 on.

Escape from the Matrix

Some time ago, 1999 to be exact, a science fiction movie came out that was both innovative and disturbing; intelligently complex, yet filled with violence. The film was ahead of its time in both subject matter and in special effects. There was nothing ever made like it. It went on to become extremely successful artistically, commercially and culturally. Enter the world of "the Matrix". The movie's writers/directors certainly had an imaginative vision of the world of tomorrow as they wove an exciting, futuristic tale unheard of until now, with its original characters and plot...or was it really that original? In a bleak, man-made landscape a century or two from now, man's inventions have taken over the world and society is completely oblivious to the fact of this role reversal. The hero of the story is presented as a loner, soon contacted by a mysterious fugitive known by the world to be a wanted criminal, considered highly dangerous. When they finally meet, a shocking revelation of life-changing proportions is presented with the proviso that: once enlightened, the hero cannot go back to his old existence; life would never be the same again for him. He is told that there has always been something gnawing at his mind, not knowing exactly what it is, but strongly desiring to know the truth.

Again, we ask, is this original? This past September, many ecclesias undertook to present the annual "Learn to Read the Bible Effectively" seminars, a now traditional witnessing effort these past nearly 20 years, starting typically in autumn of each year. The brotherhood has put a lot of time, labor and funding into these exciting seminars, benefiting hundreds of students with a better understanding of Scripture and, God willing, hopefully a wisdom that will lead to salvation. Besides the blessing to our various audiences, it provides inestimable experience to our presenting brethren. Our first night of the seminar brought out a cross-section of the multi-ethnic diversity that is Toronto.

As in years past and in many locations throughout the province of Ontario and around the world, advertisement and venues were booked, registrants were processed, workbooks were handed out, introductions were made as the foundation was begun to be laid. And so it was upon this first night of our journey together, we replayed the scene from the story which every yearning Bible student has for centuries encountered: of his or her introduction to the world that "truly is" versus the one the world "thinks" is, one from which most will never awaken. They were

told that the message is very much as the film portrays — only better, as it is God's Word which came first and will outlast all others who only borrow heavily (and often without due credit) from the One Source. But, like all the best stories, the film lifts this parable of the “world” right out of the pages of Scripture, portraying a society which we already know too well to be containing only “the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life.” The Biblical theme of a wondrous hope for tomorrow is never touched upon, however, as the man-made facsimile offers nothing better than freedom in a world bleak, cold and immoral, a sad commentary on mankind whose future view holds none of the Biblical promises of peace, joy and fulfillment. And so the hero is told: “*You accept what you see only because you're expecting to wake up...*” Our audience was then asked: “*Do you believe in Providence?*” “*You're here because you know something. You can't explain it, but you've felt it your entire life... Have you ever had a dream that you were so sure was real?*” The messenger went on... “*There's something wrong with the world, like a splinter in your mind. Everywhere. All around you the world has been pulled over your eyes to blind you to the truth... That you are a slave... Born into a prison for your mind.*” And so the messenger offers one of two choices: (where we offer only one!) 1) “*To go back to sleep and wake up again and believe whatever you want to believe*” or 2) “*Follow the passage and see where it takes you. All we're offering is the truth...nothing more*”. But to this we would add: “Consequently, the Truth brings with it a joy unspeakable, of a life blessed now and an endless one to come!” All WE offer is the Truth. Without them knowing, almost every human heart yearns for something better than himself, to know in Whose image he was made: to touch and embrace that which defines freedom and Truth, purpose and love, security and hope, a longing for the unseen and as yet unrealized.

“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal” (2Cor 4:17-18).

Yes, the world is hungry for Truth, but often does not know it. We are the lights of the world, the salt of the earth. We are a city set upon a hill that cannot be hid and we must seek to lift the veil from their eyes. Having salt within us, in our speech and in our actions, we ought to make our hearers thirsty for more, to develop a taste for righteousness, to fill an ever empty and aching soul. Our message must continue as so often we are the only Bibles most people will ever read. And it's our daily duty to lead them to life; our commission to help them “escape from the ‘Matrix’”.

Peter Wisniowski (ASK Newsletter, ON)

On the book “Escaping the Matrix” by Richard Moore

“Richard is both a gifted writer and wise seer. In *Escaping the Matrix*, he helps us really take the red pill and examine the awful tragedy of our current world situation. More importantly, he then shows us an exciting path we can actually take to create a world that works for everyone.” **[But the path is faulty!]**

Jim Rough, author of Society's Breakthrough

David and Goliath (1Sam 17)

The story of David's victory over the Philistine giant Goliath was real, of course, but it is also an acted-out parable of the promise of Gen 3:15. It symbolizes the work of Christ in two different, though related, aspects:

- Christ's moral victory over the power of sin in its personal form, in himself and for us, through his life, death and resurrection; and
- Christ's coming military victory over sin in its governmental forms, when he returns to set up God's Kingdom.

It was necessary that Christ first conquer the "world" in himself, by subduing the desires of the flesh, so that he might be qualified to conquer the nations and rule over them. Both these victories — one now past, the other still future — are beautifully outlined in the stirring drama of 1Sam 17. In this epic encounter between faith and force, spirit and flesh, the godly and the earthly, we see all the redemptive purpose of God, unfolding from Eden onward.

"The Philistines gathered their forces for war" (1Sam 17:1). The name "Philistine" has found a place in the English language as a common noun, describing those who are ignorant and uncultured, those who are *"of the earth, earthy"* (1Cor 15:47), without any aspirations toward higher things.

The Philistines pitched their tents in "Ephes Dammim", which signifies "the border of blood". This site was a little south of Jerusalem and halfway over toward the Mediterranean Sea, at the border between the Israelite hills and the Philistine plain. In this vicinity, in and around Jerusalem, the City of the great King, Christ and the saints will fight the last battles to establish the Kingdom of God.

The "border of blood" marked the crest, or high point, of human power — the point where it was broken and turned back. It symbolizes both Golgotha in the past, and Armageddon in the future. "Ephes Dammim" is closely related in meaning to Acel-dama ("the field of blood"), where the traitor Judas met his fate (Acts 1:19).

"The Philistines occupied one hill and the Israelites another, with the valley between them" (1Sam 17:3). Mountains in Scripture often represent military powers (Zech 6:1), while valleys are places of sorrow, humiliation, and trial — and sometimes of destruction. The prophet Joel says the serpent-power of the Gentiles will be broken in the valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:12). Like David, Jesus had to go into *"the valley of the shadow of death"* (Psa 23:4) to conquer the "giant" of sin.

"Goliath" (vs. 4) means "exile"; "Gath" means "winepress" — a place where grapes are trodden underfoot. The Philistine giant was, like Cain (Gen 4:14, 16), an exile from God because of sin. He was trampled down by David, even as all human power and pride will be trodden down by Christ in the great winepress of the wrath of God (Rev 14:19). Goliath's height was six cubits (the number of man (cp. the number "666" in Rev 13:18) and a short span. Perhaps this "span" represents the brief transition period between the long years of human rule and the kingdom.

Goliath was covered with brass, the symbol of flesh. He was the human equivalent of the brass, or brazen, serpent of Num 21 — the power of sin destroyed by Christ

on the cross. He was arrayed in armor and weapons of the flesh, in contrast to the spiritual arsenal of Eph 6:13-17, in which David trusted (1Sam 17:45), as did Jesus.

This mighty champion of the flesh came out into the valley between the two armies, every day for forty days, to defy the God of Israel. It was a sad, shameful spectacle; not a man of Israel, not even Saul, himself a giant (1Sam 10:23), had the faith and courage to confront this blasphemer (17:11).

Now comes a sudden break in the narrative (vs. 12), introducing the second principal warrior in this great struggle. David was a young man, a shepherd of Bethlehem (vs. 15), who had been sent by his father to take provisions to his three older brothers serving in Saul's army (vv 17-19).

When he came to his brethren, David was met with scorn and derision (vs. 28). Likewise Jesus, when he came to save his brethren from the "giant" of sin, met the same ridicule. How much natural man needs salvation; yet how little he realizes it!

The young man David could not understand the inaction of Saul's men:

"Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" (vs. 26).

The words of this young shepherd came to the ears of the distressed king, who was so desperate that he sent for him. And the poor shepherd said to the mighty king:

"Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him" (vs. 32).

Saul reasons according to the flesh, which is fatally obsessed with size and natural advantage: *"You are not able..." (vs. 33).*

But why not, if God is with him? How often do we forget the strength of faith, and make the same mistake — being tentative, timid, and even fearful? How often we forget that, if God is for us, no man or nothing can stand in our way!

David wisely refused Saul's offer of armor. The children of the Spirit are no match for the children of the flesh if they attempt to meet them on their own ground and do battle with their own weapons. The "seed of the woman" will always be outclassed by the "seed of the serpent" — whether it be in numbers, experience, prestige or education. Their defense and offence must be in the "shield" of faith and the "sword" of the Spirit (Eph 6:16,17)!

For his weapon, David took his sling and then chose five smooth stones out of the brook. (Why five? Was it because Goliath had four brothers, also giants?) The sling, made of animal skin, would require a death for its preparation. Like the garments that God prepared to cover Adam and Eve's nakedness after their sin, the sling also pointed to a sacrificial death.

This sling (symbolizing a sacrificial death) gave all the power to the stone which David hurled against the giant. The stone which brought down Goliath symbolizes Christ: He is the stone rejected by the builders, but later made the cornerstone of God's building (Psa 118:22). He is also the stone cut out of the mountain of human flesh without hands (i.e., born of a woman, but without a human father:

Gen 3:15), which struck and destroyed Nebuchadnezzar's image (Dan 2:34), and then filled the whole earth.

The smiting of the "dream" image in Daniel 2 is parallel to David's smiting of Goliath, with one significant difference: One stone struck Goliath in the head (cp. Gen 3:15), which symbolizes the center of life, and thought. The other struck the image on the feet, which (as the image is constructed) symbolizes the time when its destruction is accomplished. But the end result is the same: the image is destroyed, and Israel is saved.

The Nebuchadnezzar image represents the accumulated history of the four great empires that collectively make up the "serpent-power" of the Kingdom of Men, which oppressed God's kingdom of Israel. David's selection of five stones relates his victory to the fifth great Kingdom, the Kingdom of God that will finally conquer all and fill the earth with His glory.

"The stone sank into Goliath's forehead" (1Sam 17:49). This is a pattern of the fulfillment of God's promise in the Garden of Eden, that the woman's seed should bruise the serpent's head. The complete fulfillment of this picture stretches from the cross to the military destruction of the last pieces of human rule and oppression, when Christ returns.

So *"David ran... and drew out Goliath's sword... and cut off his head" (vs. 51).* And he brought the head to Jerusalem (vs. 54). David's act symbolized the destruction of the head of sin, accomplished by Jesus in his own body, and finalized at Golgotha (the place of the skull!) just outside the walls of Jerusalem. (Hebrew tradition suggests that Golgotha was so named because it was the burial place of Goliath's head.)

David's act also pointed forward to the cutting off of all mortal ruling power, and the transferring of all the world's power to Jerusalem, *"the city of the great king" (Matt 5:35).*

David's wonderful victory revitalized the army of Israel, which then went on to totally defeat the Philistines. Those who were powerless and afraid to face Goliath received new strength and courage from David's victory. Like David, Jesus was the only one capable of winning the special victory over the "serpent". And his victory over the "devil", like David's over Goliath, delivered his brethren who *"through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb 2:15).*

"O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?... But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1Cor 15:55,57).

It is this victory, which Christ won for us, that we remember as we take the bread and the wine.

And it is the final portion of this victory, to which we look forward, when we pray, "May your kingdom come!" "For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

George Booker (Austin Leander, TX)



Bible Mission News

Jamaica — Heroes' Day Fraternal Gathering

Surely, every day with Jesus is sweeter than the day before. This experience is a great one. The greetings were friendly. The smiles were real and the hugs were warm. There was spontaneous expression of happiness all over the faces. The joy of meeting together as one in the Lord could be felt — *“Come ye that love the Lord and let your joys be known”*. This was exactly the mood that about 100 brethren, sisters, friends and young people exhibited at the annual Fraternal Gathering on October 21, 2013, in the May Pen Ecclesial hall. We were in one accord to exalt the name of our Lord God.



The tent at the front was as close as it could be to the hall. This was necessary to assist in accommodation for the day. The windows and doors of the meeting room were wide open so the cool westerly winds came in with great delight. The sun peeped in for a short while, but was no match for the continued coolness of the welcomed winds. The theme for the day was, *“The Ways of Righteousness”*.

The Righteousness of Elijah

Bro. Marlon Jackson of Round Hill Ecclesia interestingly drew our attention to

the righteousness of Elijah — I Kings 17:1-6. God used the prophet as an answer to Ahab's and Jezebel's wicked deeds. Baalism was very rampant in those days and God sent His righteous servant to eradicate such a vile, cruel religion. Elijah showed undaunted courage, zealotry, calmness and uprightness which placed him among the most outstanding characters produced by Israel.

Elijah loved God greatly. God used him to stop rain from falling for some years. He proved who was the true and living God on Mount Carmel, when he had an encounter with the worshippers of Baal. God fed Elijah by a raven and a widow from Zarephath when a jar of meal and a cruise of oil never failed because of his righteous life style.

For God to use us, we have to avail ourselves. Show trust and confidence in the living God and exhibit a full life of righteousness. Display the characteristics of the "Fruit of the Spirit" in Galatians 5:22-23. Follow the marvelous example of Elijah. He stood for righteousness in all circumstances. Let us be vigilant and become servants of Elijah's God.

The Righteousness of Daniel

Bro. Ray Arthurs from Broughton excitingly gave the second talk. Reading was from Daniel chapter 1. Daniel was a remarkable man, absolutely unwavering in his own conviction. King Nebuchadnezzar tried very hard to change Daniel and his friends. The Lord gave them firm determination to be true, whatever the situation.

Daniel refused to eat the king's food, knowing from the law that it might have been offered to idols. He kept his righteousness. Although Daniel's three (3) friends knew the terrible punishment if they refused to bow down to Nebuchadnezzar's image, they stood firm to their righteousness. The angel of God protected them in the fiery furnace and there was not a scorch on them. The Lord sent His angel and shut the lions' mouth. Darius realized that no other God could deliver after that sort and that only Daniel's God should be worshipped.

It is also clear that we carry our religion wherever we go. Read the Bible and pray every day. Trust the Lord in all things. Always make our decisions with God in our hearts and He will see us through. The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and His ears are open to their prayers.

Group Discussions

The essence of the group discussions showed that walking, standing or sitting in the way of righteousness is the only acceptable way forward to the kingdom of God. These options should be taken seriously, as



God is a righteous Father and if we would follow Him, we have to be doers of righteousness. Don't take lightly what God has done for us — Eph. 2:8-9. If we purpose in our hearts to not sin against God and to stay in the way of righteousness, God's grace is sufficient to keep us there.

God wants us to share the good news right where we are so that when we stand before Him one day, He can say, "Mission accomplished!" True believers need to adhere to the righteousness of Elijah, Daniel and other sincere servants of God. They were inclined to doing the purpose of the Lord God. These examples were written for our admonition and learning.

Let us go where Jesus would have us go, do what he would have us do. Remember that faith & works walk hand in hand. We should visit the sick, support the activities of the ecclesias, communicate with those in isolation, be strong and do works of righteousness.

Deliverance of the Righteous

Bro. Keith Kinlocke of Spanish Town was emphatic in giving his exhortation about how God uses different strategies to deliver the righteous. He will certainly deliver us but we have to do our part. There is an outstanding principle throughout the Scriptures that we work out our salvation with trembling and fear. We have the assurance that God works with and through us to carry out His plan and purpose. Never doubt the promises of God. There are too many evidence of His power.

There are times when the offender behaves in such a way as to bring about his own destruction and deliverance to the people of God (Deut 2:30). When the King of Syria realized that Elisha was the informer in the camp, he ordered his governors to camp around the city by night in preparation to attack and destroy Israel. Elisha's servants were afraid but he assured them that the Lord would be their deliverer. The Syrians were smitten with blindness — 2Kings 6:1-25, while Israel was delivered. Elisha knew that there was greater strength in the unseen reality of the host of heaven than in the visible situation in the Syrian camp.

Again, in Isaiah 36:14&15, the Assyrian king challenged God's greatness when he told the people not to trust in Hezekiah's God for He couldn't deliver them. But in chapter 37:36, God smote them and brought deliverance to His people. Do we show faith in the God we serve? Daniel showed extraordinary faith in the God he served. He is our God too. Let us endeavour to live an acceptable life before God so that He finds it pleasurable to deliver us in times of trouble and eventually enter us into eternal life. The right hand of God and His loving arms will carry us through.

During the day we enjoyed the well appreciated convenience of two female wash rooms and one for the male, thanks to the CBMC through the CBMJ. Previously there was only one washroom for all. Attending this Fraternal Gathering was a real blessing to us. We were refreshed and motivated to let our light shine even brighter, so that our righteousness can be seen in our actions.

*Sis. Gerzel Gordon, May Pen Ecclesia
Submitted by Sis. Jan Berneau, CBMA/CBMC Publicity*

Trinidad Baptisms



Bro. Brad Butts let us know that two lovely young Sunday School teenagers have been baptized in the Erin Ecclesia. While only 15 and 16 they have been strong students of Scripture for a number of years and were anxious to make the commitment to Christ. Bro. Colin and Sis. Kathy Badger worked with them as young girls. Bro. Colin would have been thrilled to see these developments. There were a number of brothers and sisters who traveled to Erin

for the occasion and enjoyed the use of the new hall.

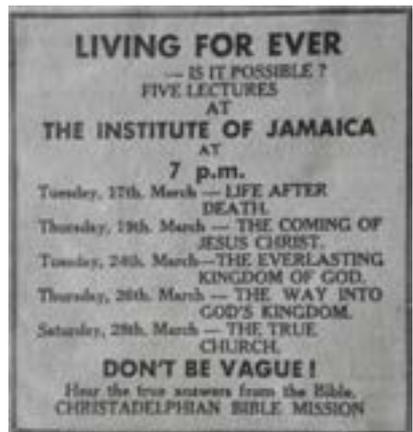
Our new sister's names are Angel Ramsaroop (16) and Raveena Sedath (15). They took on the name of Christ on December 8, 2013 and will be members of the Erin ecclesia.

Submitted by Sis. Jan Berneau, CBMA/C Publicity

The Message Does Not Change!

In looking through an old diary, two advertisements for Christadelphian Bible Mission lectures caught my attention. They announced a series of public lectures to be held at the Institute of Jamaica in downtown Kingston in March 1959. These ads appeared in Jamaica's national newspaper then called "The Daily Gleaner".

What is particularly interesting are the topics and how similar they are to subjects we may use today. These ads are over 50 years old but the message remains the same. This is as it should be. Regardless of time and place in this world, the wonderful message of God's purpose and God's call



to salvation continues to be the the same in content and appeal. The sowing of the good seed of the Word of God is the constant work of the followers of Jesus. May God's blessing be upon all faithful preaching of His Word.

Ken Curry (Toronto East, ON)

Addresses for Bequests and Donations

Christadelphian Bible Mission of the Americas (CBMA) supports preaching work throughout the Americas, Truth Corps, etc. Visit www.cbma.net for current activities as well as to make US dollar donations. Donations by check should be sent c/o Jeff Gelineau, 567 Astorian Dr., Simi Valley, CA 93065-5941, or contact jeffandkellie@gelineau.org

Christadelphian Bible Mission Canada (CBMC) supports preaching work throughout the Caribbean and bequests for similar activity. Visit www.cbma.net for an update on current activities as well as to make Canadian dollar online donations. Donations by cheque should be sent to Box 55541, Unit 119, 15280 101 Ave., Surrey, BC, V3R 0J7

CBMA Overseas Book Service welcomes gifts of used Bibles, reference books, and Christadelphian books. Please contact Jan Berneau, 1221 N. Whitnall Hwy., Burbank, CA 91505-2110.
Phone: 818-842-2868
jberneau@earthlink.net

Christadelphian Tidings Publishing Committee publishes this magazine and other works on the Truth. P.O. Box 530696, Livonia, MI 48153-0696, www.tidings.org

Williamsburg Christadelphian Foundation (WCF) supports pastoral and preaching activities throughout the world. c/o Ray Pratt, P.O. Box 88, Deland, IL 61839-0086. Website: wcfoundation.org

Christadelphian Tape Library. Contact Reuben E. Washington, 196 E. Stearns St., Rahway, NJ 07065-4923.
Phone: 732-381-4590 Fax: 732-499-8415
christadelphiantapelibrary@verizon.net

Spanish language literature is available at P.O. Box 947, Monrovia, CA 91017-0947. 626-303-2222, e-mail: jdhunter@gte.net

Christadelphian Heritage College c/o Brantford Ecclesia, 442 Dunsdon St., Brantford, ON, N3P 2B1

Agape in Action provides help for Christadelphian families and children living in extreme poverty. Donations may be sent to 39 Manor Park Cres., Guelph, ON, N1G 1A2 or 521 Valmont Dr., Monrovia, CA 91016 or via website www.agapeinaction.com
E-mail: agapeinaction@rogers.com

Christadelphian Save the Children Fund provides Bible learning materials, personal items, and scholarships to needy mission areas.
www.christadelphianchildren.com

Christadelphian Indian Children's Homes (CICH) donations in US dollars can be sent to CICH, c/o David & Connie Stiles, 3 Blue Acre Rd., Middletown, CT 06457. For info e-mail daconstiles@att.net

Karolyn Andrews Memorial Fund (KAMF) provides help in cases where brethren or families have been victims of persecution because of their faith. Checks in any currency to KAMF, c/o P.O. Box 87371, Canton, MI 48187-0371

Joy Fund, Inc., provides grants to ecclesias, individuals, and families to assist with basic needs. c/o Stan Newton, 6861 Skyview Dr., Huntington Beach, CA 92647-2938

Christadelphian Care Line fully confidential help with emotional and spiritual problems as well as family issues. 866-823-1039

Alcohol Help Line fully confidential help for overcoming alcohol dependency. 866-823-1039

Fairhaven Christadelphian Charitable Foundation provides assistance to Canadian ecclesias dealing with the health and welfare issues of senior members. Donations can be sent c/o Clive Daniel, 8583 Sansum Park Dr., North Saanich, BC, V8L 4V7

News & Notices

(Please send in news and notices by the 5th of the preceding month;
please include full name of ecclesia and recording brother.
Word files or e-mail in text-only format are preferred.)

BALTIMORE, MD

We very much appreciate the help of the following brothers in giving lectures for our ecclesia: Ben Link (Meriden, CT), Jason Hensley (Simi Hills, CA) and Tim Lange (Norfolk, VA). We also thank our Bro. Dennis Bevans. Each lecture was preceded by a CYC leafleting effort in the neighborhood of our hall.

Once again we had a Vacation Bible School this summer. It was very much enjoyed by children from both the Baltimore and Washington Ecclesias, as well as some children from the neighborhood. The Baltimore CYC has hosted several study weekends. Bro. Jim Cowie gave classes at their Frisbie challenge. They also held a beach camping trip for the young men in our group. The CYC's annual boat challenge was enjoyed by many young people. Classes were given at both of these weekends too. There were a number of out-of-town visitors at these events. Bro. Nathan Badger (Cambridge, ON) presented a helpful series of classes at a study day in September. The talks were entitled "Jacob: In His Strength He Struggled with God."

In October the Baltimore Ecclesia hosted our semi annual Baltimore/Washington gathering. Bro. Steve Davis (Boston, MA) was our guest speaker. We very much enjoyed his talks on, "Gleanings from Ruth".

Our ecclesia was delighted to welcome a baby daughter, Shaina, born to Bro. Josiah and Sis. Jenny Hewitson on July 1, 2013. Shaina is baby sister to Skylar and Victoria. We rejoiced with the Bevans family as their daughter, Sis. Hailey Bevans, married Bro. Brian Moore on November 9, 2013. May God bless their marriage as they walk together toward God's kingdom.

We are currently presenting a series of seminars on Learning to Read the Bible Effectively. These talks are being held at our ecclesial hall, instead of at a library as we have done previously. Having it at the hall seems to be an advantage. We have been blessed to have ten or eleven visitors at each talk. They are an enthusiastic group and remain after each class to chat and ask questions. We also have a number of our young people attending. We are planning to continue, God willing, with another series when the current classes end in January. This is a cooperative effort with our Washington brethren. Bro. Dennis Bevans and Bro. John Woodward (Baltimore) are presenters with Bro. David Perry (Washington).

We have begun a Mutual Improvement class for brethren of all ages as well as brethren-to-be. Our goal is to promote excellence in service, with attention to study, presentation, presiding, reading and prayer. These classes are also a joint effort with the Washington Ecclesia.

Andy Bilello

BRANTFORD, ON

We are happy to welcome back our Sis Ona Lawton by way of transfer from the Barrie Ecclesia as of September 8, 2013 and look forward to our continued fellowship together.

We rejoice with our family in heaven that after giving a good confession of his faith, SAMUEL RIDDLE, the son of Bro. Paul Riddle and Sis. Pauline Van Every, was baptized on October 26, 2013. It is encouraging to us all to see another of our young people commit their way to our Lord. We thank our Bro. David Griffin (Kings Norton, UK) for his ministrations and studies at our October Thanksgiving Gathering including "From Gifts to Gratitude" a presentation on the Christadelphian Jewish Relief program. We also thank our Bro. Neville Clark (Tea Tree Gully, AUS) for visiting us following winter Bible school and giving the exhortation and Bible Class on the prophecy of Daniel. God willing our annual Brantford Junior CYC & Little Disciples Winter Gathering is to again be held on February 8th, 2014 at Camp Trillium under the theme of Peter.

Bro. Daniel Billington

DETROIT ROYAL OAK, MI

Since the last report from the Royal Oak Ecclesia, there have been many happy events to report from this lightstand. We are pleased to report the following baptisms into the saving name of Christ: STEPHANIE RAMIREZ (July 2012) and DAVID STYLES (March 2013). David is the son of our Bro. Ken and Sis. Diane Styles.

Some of our young people have been united in marriage recently: In August 2013, Sis. Stephanie Ramirez was married to Bro. Michael Jackson. In July 2012 Bro. Davy Morgan and Sis. Jakki Beckerson were united in marriage and we welcome them into our ecclesia by way of transfer from the Ann Arbor ecclesia. We wish all our young couples well in their united walk towards the Kingdom.

We welcome by transfer from the Kouts, IN ecclesia Sis. Heather Kehn. By way of transfer, we commend Bro. Peter and Sis. Karly Styles to Brantford ecclesia. We also commend Bro. David and Sis. Joanne Haltom, and Bro. Ryan and Sis. Jerusha Vaughn to the San Luis Obispo, CA ecclesia, and also Sis. Sarah Wilhoit to the Detroit (Milford Road) ecclesia. We are sure all these Brethren and Sisters will be of great assistance in their new ecclesias, as they were in ours.

We are also pleased to note the following potential additions to our Sunday school. Thomas Ryan (born August 2011) to Bro. and Sis. Jeremy and Sarah Wilhoit. Amelia Ruth (October 2012) to Bro. and Sis. Matthew and Samantha Jackson.

With great sadness we announce the falling asleep of two of our most much loved sisters. Sis. Isabel Comito fell asleep in the Lord September 2010. She was the wife of our Bro. Tony Comito, and mother and grandmother to several members of our ecclesia. Sis. Isabel will be remembered for her cheerful disposition and willingness to help others.

Sis. Ruth Rankin, beloved mother of our Sis. Joyce Comito, fell asleep in February 2013 during her 94th year. She will be remembered for her long service to the Lord, having contributed in many ways, including, with her late husband Bro. Curtis, as agent for the Christadelphian. She loved to tell the story of having been instrumental in the holding of the first Eastern Bible School at Wilbraham Academy in 1947, as she was employed at the school.

Our sympathy is with our Sis. Susan in the death of her husband, Bro. Arthur Armstrong (Livonia) during August, 2013. Bro Arthur was baptized in 1953, and during his long walk in the Truth he was a tireless preacher. We share with all these faithful the sure hope of our future resurrection in the Kingdom.

We announce that Bro. Mark Newth has resigned from the Christadelphian Fellowship.

Bro. Greg Muniz has assumed the duties of recording brother. Please direct all correspondence to romi.christadelphians@gmail.com.

Bucky Wilhoit

HONESDALE, PA

We welcomed Sis. Anne and Bro. Dave Cheetham at our ecclesia when Bro. Dave gave us his wonderful exhortation. Our sisters celebrated their visit with a tasty luncheon. Our ecclesia is very thankful and blessed for the many years of visiting brother service provided to us by the Moorestown, NJ Ecclesia.

Stephen J. DeMarco

MERIDEN, CT

During 2013 we enjoyed the company of many visiting brothers and sisters from ecclesias across the US and Canada including: Abington, MA; Atlanta North, GA; Austin-Leander, TX; Boston, MA; Cranston, RI; Echo Lake, NJ; Honesdale, PA; Kingston, ON; Largo, FL; Manhattan, NY; Moorestown, NJ; Pittsburgh, PA; Portland, OR; Detroit Royal Oak, MI; Shelburne, ON; Southern New Hampshire; Wachusett, MA; and Westerly, RI. We want to thank all who joined us at the Lord's table, and also the visiting brothers who exhorted us including: Chris Sales (Shelburne, ON), Jim McKelvie (Moorestown, NJ), Peter Hemingray (Detroit Royal Oak, MI) and Jim Barton (Kingston, ON).

It has been a monumental year for us. After ten years of prayers, planning, progress, delays, concerns, and answered prayers, the Meriden Ecclesia moved into a lovely new ecclesial hall in August. Our new address is: 145 Evansville Avenue, Meriden, CT, 06451-5155. Construction was completed in mid-July. The timing was perfect. We held the last meeting at our old hall on July 21, 2013. For the next two Sundays we met with the brothers and sisters at the Eastern Christadelphian Bible School in New London, CT. During this time we scurried to get the new hall ready for occupancy. On Sunday, August 11, 2013, we held our first Memorial service in the new hall. It was a very happy occasion. It is difficult to extend adequate thanks to the many brothers and sisters whose prayers, generosity, and hard work have supported us in this project. And we are thankful to the worldwide brotherhood for its generous response to the building appeal that we made in 2013.

Bro. Mark and Sis. Ngaere O'Grady (Tawa, Wellington, NZ) were among the participants at this year's Eastern Bible School. Their itinerary brought them directly to Meriden after the school, and they joined us for dinner at the new hall on August 6, 2013. Afterward, Bro. Mark led our inaugural service: a midweek Bible class on, "The Lamb's Book of Life". Many visitors from around southern New England joined us for dinner and Bible class that evening. It was a very special occasion.

The year has been memorable for us in other ways, too. In January, Bro. Chris Sales led a Bible study weekend on, "The Life of Joseph". His classes rounded off the Genesis studies we were having with Bible seminar attendees. The classes were very well received and we thank Bro. Chris for them. In February, the ecclesia enjoyed a tasty "Soup Off". Everyone made donations for the privilege of sampling the many soups and, at the end, voted for their favorites. The winning soup maker chose to have the proceeds sent to the Christadelphian Save the Children Fund.

In May, our brother and sister, Brad Sabeau and Alyssa Tuck were united in marriage. Our prayers and best wishes are with the newlyweds. They now serve the ecclesia

very effectively together. In October, we enjoyed a visit from Bro. Peter and Sis. Pat Hemingray. It was like old times again, since Bro. Peter, Sis. Pat and their children were an integral part of the Meriden Ecclesia from 1984 to 1996. Bro. Peter led a study weekend and exhorted us during their visit.

We are happy to report that Bro. Bryan Camarillo transferred his ecclesial membership from Austin Leander, TX, to Meriden in August. He is a welcome addition to our meeting. Late last year, 2012, Sis. Sarah Waite changed jobs and transferred her membership from Meriden to the Atlanta North Ecclesia. We commend her to the love of the brothers and sisters there. In November 2013, Sis. Rosamond Smith transferred from Meriden to Worcester, MA. Sis. Ros grew up in the Worcester Ecclesia many years ago, and she returns to the support and care of the brothers and sisters there.

Several of our members have been hospitalized during the past year. These include Bro. Everett Wight, Bro. Rob Hammond, Bro. David Stiles, Sis. Helen Sweet, Sis. Camelia Harvey, and Sis. Norma Papandrea. Thankfully, they are all home at the present time and managing fairly well. Sis. Faith Wight was quite sick earlier in the year. Sis. Debbie Ferraiolo has been very ill all year. And our aged Sis. Edythe Skinner has been in and out of hospital and rehab facilities several times during the year. We are reminded how much we need the healing touch of the Lord Jesus.

Our hearts go out to Sis. Faith Marra who lost a young daughter-in-law, Michelle, to cancer in August. Our prayers are also with her son, Danny, who was a member of the Meriden Sunday School when he was growing up. Danny is left with four children, the youngest of which was born just before Michelle died.

Stephen Harper

PARIS AVENUE, OH

The members of the Paris Avenue Ecclesia (OH) have enjoyed fellowship with brothers and sisters from other ecclesias during the Second Semester of 2013. Words of exhortation were given on October 6th by Bro. Henry Ternent of the Pittsburgh Ecclesia.

For our Fall 2013 Study Weekend we were led in classes dealing with the temple of Ezekiel entitled "Enter into His Gates with Thanksgiving and into His Courts with Praise" by Bro. Stan Isbell (North Houston, TX). Nearly two hundred were in attendance with visitors from Ontario, Newfoundland, Virginia, Michigan, Indiana, South Carolina, Texas, Washington and Pennsylvania.

We are pleased to report the addition of Sis. Ashley Harris to our ecclesia and her subsequent marriage to Bro. Phillip Prater on August 3, 2013. One week later, on August 10, 2013, we celebrated the marriage of Bro. Mike Cooper and Sis. Danielle Walker. We wish both couples God's blessing on their new lives together.

We acknowledge Sis. Victoria Bates' decision to separate from fellowship and the breaking of bread. With great joy we welcome back into fellowship Sis. Jennifer (Snyder) Needs. Another event of great joy was the celebration of the ninety-seventh birthday of Sis. Louise McDonald on September 17, 2013.

Our annual ecclesial picnic was held at Snyder Lake on August 17, 2013, with visitors joining us from Ontario and Pittsburgh. Our ecclesia hosted a Preaching Campaign on the topic, "Signs of the Times" at the Foltz Center in East Canton on three Thursday evenings in October. On Saturday afternoon, October 19, 2013, all three lectures were presented at a shopping mall in Alliance, OH. Then from October 24-December 19,

2013, a follow-up seminar was presented back at the Foltz Center dealing with the topic, “Fundamentals of Bible Prophecy” for which the attendance was heartening.

Upcoming events this year, Lord willing and if our Lord and Master has not returned, will be our Spring Study Weekend on March 8-9, 2014, with Bro. Ken Styles (Detroit Royal Oak, MI). The topic of that weekend will be announced later. Lord willing, our Fall Study Weekend is planned for September 13-14, 2014, with Bro. Michael Owen (UK). For further information on either of these study weekends, contact Bro. Derek Elder by phone at: 216-965-9763, or by email at: delder1@kent.edu. We ask that, if you plan to attend either event, that you register with Bro. Derek for purposes of planning.

SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CA

We're delighted and thankful to report that on July 14, 2013 we rejoiced in the baptism of LANCE STICKNEY, son of Bro. Mike and Sis. Myra Stickney. On December 15, 2013, JOSHUA TUNNELL was baptized; Josh is the son of Bro. Ethan and Sis. Shawna Tunnell. Both young men grew up in our Sunday School. We pray for the Father's continued blessings on our young brothers as we walk together toward the Kingdom.

We were blessed with a natural birth as well: Zoe Lawrence was born on December 1, 2013. She is the daughter of Bro. Drew and Sis. Kelley. Zoe was born with a cataract to her left eye and surgery has been scheduled. We pray for our Father to bless the outcome. We share the sorrow of our Sis. Diane O'Kelley whose brother (Bro. Mark O'Kelley of Little Rock, AR) fell asleep in Christ in December.

In September, by way of transfer we welcomed Bro. David and Sis. Gerry Ann Lloyd from Simi Hills, CA following their relocation to the nearby community of Ramona. We have also enjoyed the presence of Sis. Sarah Bilello, from the Detroit area, who now attends the University of San Diego. We appreciate the many brothers and sisters who have visited us and especially thank those who provided exhortations and classes.

Bro. Kent Ellis

SARASOTA, FL

The Sarasota ecclesia is pleased to announce the baptism into the saving name of Christ of TABITHA HALL, daughter of the late Sister Marge Forbes and the late Ted Forbes. Our prayer is that Sister Tabitha feel the presence of the Lord in her new walk in Christ.

James Wilkinson

SUSSEX, NB

We have been blessed by visits during the summer from several brethren and sisters: Phil and Barb Wilton (Toronto West, ON); Eugene, Rose and Ben Deadman (Australia); Jason and Maryann Deadman and family (Mississauga West, ON); and Peter and Norma Forbes (Glenfield, UK). We thank brethren Peter and Jason for their exhortations and Bible Class study.

Our Thanksgiving gathering last October was led by Bro. Ron Hicks (Washington, DC) and we thank him for his uplifting studies and fellowship. At this time we also had several brethren and sisters from Nova Scotia and the New England States.

We are looking forward to the visit of Bro. Martin Webster (Kitchener/Waterloo, ON) on April 26-27, 2014. He will lead a study weekend on “1 John – Epistle of Sublime Truth & Love”. Our Spring Youth Camp will be held May 16-18, to be led by Bro. John Mannell (Toronto West, ON) and the Thanksgiving Gathering October 11-12 which

will be lead by Bro. Jim Sullivan (Boston, MA) on “The Sons of Zeruiah”. We are pleased to have the Kabangu family from Tanzania who are now living in Moncton, NB.

Cliff Baines

TORONTO EAST, ON

We rejoice in the baptisms of AMANDA CURRY, daughter of Bro. Steve and Sis. Marie-Lynn Curry, and CAROLINA ARCHIBALD, daughter of Bro. Dan and Sis. Maribel Archibald into the household of faith on November 24, 2013. We pray for God’s blessing on them both as they commit their lives to Christ.

Andrew Webb

VICTORIA, BC

We continue to be blessed with numerous visitors, coming from near and far. The list is, happily, too long to accurately record. We welcome them all to meet with us. We have received by transfer from the Saanich Ecclesia, Bro. Kevin and Sis. Rebecca Hunter, as well as Bro. Casey Brown and his sister in the flesh, Sis. Becky Brown. From the Southern New Hampshire Ecclesia, we have received Bre. Micah and Philip Quindazzi. From the Vernon Ecclesia, we received Bro. Alex Harper. Bro. Dave and Sis. Kessia Higgs have been transferred with our love to the Comox Valley Ecclesia. Our Sister Rebekah Dixon has resigned from the ecclesia.

We rejoiced with our new sister, ANDREA CERON at her baptism into the saving name of Jesus on October 12, 2013. Our new sister came to us following a campaign surrounding a public lecture on Israel a few years ago.

We held our second Bible Mission Fundraiser on February 9, 2013. It was a great success, with over \$10,000.00 being raised for mission activities. Bro. Jim Styles (Simi Hills, CA) spoke on the subject, “God’s Wonderful Plan of Redemption” at our 2013 fraternal gathering in September 2013.

Bro. Chris Sales spoke at our fall 2013 study weekend held on November 9, 2013. His subject for the weekend was, “Pictures of Redemption.” We thank our brethren for their work among us.

We are looking forward to a spring 2014 visit from Bro. Jason Hensley. Our brother will be speaking at our Spring study weekend to be held March 15-16, 2014. His topic will be, “And I Will Send You the Comforter.”

Our annual Pacific Northwest CYC Conference is scheduled for the Easter weekend, April 18, 2014. Speaking will be Bro. Jay Mayock (Hamilton Book Road, ON). Our fraternal gathering, God willing, will be held: Labor Day, 2014. For further information please contact the undersigned by email at: victoria@csll.ca.

Clyde Snobelen

BRO. GORDON DANGERFIELD

At 7:20 am on Saturday November 2, 2013, in Victoria, BC, Canada, our dearly loved Bro. Gordon Dangerfield fell asleep in Christ. He was born in Adelaide, Aust. on July 2, 1946, and was baptised into Christ in that same city on April 4, 1965.

Gordon leaves his beloved wife, Sis. Beth, and his three children, Sis. Leanne, Sis. Karen and Bro. Mark as well as their spouses and three grandchildren. Our brother died in the hope of the resurrection and the coming kingdom and because of this we do not mourn as others mourn who do not have a hope. However, we do feel



sadness in our hearts as we think of Gordon. He lived a life which has left us many good memories.

Gordon was known throughout the worldwide brotherhood for his friendly character, his sense of humour, his Bible studies and talks, and his direct and practical advice. His Bible knowledge was shown equally in Spanish and in English. He was guided and motivated by spiritual principles which he not only preached but also practised. He had a genuine interest in others and could talk with people from all backgrounds. In meetings with young people, formal meetings with the elders of the ecclesia and private conversations with his friends, he showed his energy and enthusiasm.

Gordon died of a brain tumour. During the last months this caused him problems in forming words and communicating his thoughts. The last thing he lost was his capacity to pray to his heavenly Father. Beth and Karen said a prayer was one of the very final things he said.

Gordon now sleeps in Christ, awaiting the moment of the trumpet call, when by God's grace he will be transformed.

"Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain." (1 Corinthians 15:58)

Clyde Snobelen

Early Intelligence from Victoria

VICTORIA (B.C.)— *Brother Heritage writes: — "We have been encouraged in falling in with two fellow-travelers to the Kingdom in the persons of brother and sister Nelson, who were contemporary with Dr. Thomas, in New York. They have held on to the truth through many years and many changes. There are six of us here now; we sometimes wish some of our brethren who are travelling, and can preach the Word of God and His Kingdom, would make this their home. The climate is good, and the opportunity to make a living, we think, is as good as most other places. Your efforts on the 'Life of Christ' are appreciated here."*

The Christadelphian, 1890 p 39

Minute Meditation

Are We Learning From Our Experiences?

“Experience is a hard teacher because she gives the test first, the lesson afterward,” major league pitcher Vernon Saunders Law observed. The test may not be enjoyable, but the important part is learning from the experience.

While it is possible to have grown in wisdom from 20 years of experience, it is also possible not to have benefited from one year of experience even if repeated 20 times over. Do we learn from our experiences or do we repeat the same mistakes over and over again? The thing about the school of experience is that it will repeat the lesson if we flunk the first time. As Archibald McLeish observed, “There is only one thing more painful than learning from experience and that is not learning from experience.”

We each are given 24 hours a day during which we make choices, things happen, and we busy ourselves with our activities. How do we deal with the challenges that come our way, the calamities that may befall us, the illnesses, the miserableness of human nature in ourselves and others? What lessons are we learning from our day-to-day experiences? Are we learning the lessons that the Lord wants us to learn?

Paul tells the believers in Rome, “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ . . . and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope.”

What does Paul mean, that we glory in tribulations? Because, as he explains, we benefit from them. We may find it hard to actually thank God for our troubles, but we can bear them with a better spirit when we realize that our loving heavenly Father is sending them our way with a good purpose: so that we learn patience, gain experience, and become full of hope for the coming age of glory. Paul continues his explanation, “And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts.” We learn to love God more because we are so thankful for the hope of the kingdom that God is lovingly preparing us for.

James also encourages us to rejoice in our troubles: “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” He helps us to recognize, as Paul did, that we learn patience from our troubles, and this learning is essential to our development towards perfection.

We read in Hebrews that we should be “looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” The trials Jesus endured are much more than what we have to face, as the book of Hebrews

explains: “For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.”

Although we may not relish pain or trouble, we read in Hebrews that we should be pleased that it is happening and learn from it: “And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: ‘My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; For whom the Lord loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives. If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.’ ”

Chastening is difficult while it is happening, but we need to look past it and realize that God is using it to teach us valuable lessons for our eternal welfare. The section from Hebrews continues, “Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness.”

What a wonderful privilege, to be partakers of his holiness! We flawed, weak creatures can be granted this gift only after our characters are refined. We know that Jesus, God’s own beloved son, learned by hardships: “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.” How did Jesus deal with it? As we just read, “for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross and despised the shame.”

We know all his suffering was worthwhile for our Savior because his loving father, God, was training him, and we need to accept the trials we are now enduring by realizing that we also are being trained. We must learn the lessons God is teaching us and follow the example of our Lord, looking beyond our present troubles. As he did, we can visualize in our mind’s eye the glorious time soon to come when Jesus will bestow upon his faithful that crown of righteousness. Paul summed up the benefits of the hardships in his life when he said, “Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.”

Robert J. Lloyd

Coming Events (Lord Willing)

(Please send in notices at least two months before the date of the event.
Three months is preferable.)

FEBRUARY, 2014

8 Brantford, ON Junior CYC & Little Disciples Winter Gathering is again to be held at Camp Trillium under the theme of Peter.

23-28 Palm Springs Bible School The speakers this year will be Bro. Wilfred Alleyne (Birmingham, UK), and Bro. David Jennings (Pomona, CA). The school offers a wonderful environment for the mature adult to study God's word and enjoy fellowship. To register, contact Bro. Jeff Gelineau at register@christadelphianbibleschool.org, or visit our website www.californiabibleschool.org.

MARCH, 2014

1 New England Little Disciples at Barton Center, North Oxford, Ma. A day of Bible study and activities for children pre-K to 7th grade. Students are expected to complete a workbook(available online) in advance. See website www.nelittledisciples.com. Contact Sis. Tammy Rundle nelittledisciples@hotmail.com or 781-829-4410.

8-9 Paris Avenue, OH Spring Study Weekend with Bro. Ken Styles (Detroit Royal Oak, MI). The topic will be announced later. Contact Bro. Derek Elder by phone at: 216-965-9763, or by email at: delder1@kent.edu.

15-16 Victoria, BC Spring study weekend with Bro. Jason Hensley. His topic will be, "And I Will Send You the Comforter." Contact Bro. Clyde Snobelen victoria@csl.ca.

APRIL, 2014

5-6 Boston, MA 23rd Annual Spring Study Weekend. Boston Ecclesia, 48 Freeman Street, Stoughton, MA. Bro. Aaron MacAdams (Worcester, MA) "Hear Now, You Sons of Levi!" Registration and coffee at 10:30AM Saturday with three classes beginning at 11:00AM. Lunch provided. The fourth class is scheduled for Sunday morning at 9:30AM, followed by Memorial Service. Contact Bro. Jim Sullivan at 781-837-8865 or jimsulliv@aol.com.

18-20 New England Brothers' Weekend "Being a 21st Century Man of God" by Bro. Chris Sales at Camp Joslin, Charlton, MA. Contact Bro. Jason Dineen newengbros@gmail.com, 617-697-7717.

18 Victoria, BC Pacific Northwest CYC Conference. Speaking will be Bro. Jay Mayock (Hamilton Book Road, ON). Contact Bro. Clyde Snobelen victoria@csl.ca

18-20 Wichita Falls, TX Annual Spring Gathering at T4C. Bro. Frank Abel (Hamilton Book Road, ON) will lead us in a study entitled "The Ecclesia — A Place of Refuge." For registration contact Bro. Larry Beutel at lbeutel@alsco.com.

26-27 Sussex, NB Study weekend lead by Bro. Martin Webster (Kitchener/Waterloo, ON). His topic will be "1 John – Epistle of Sublime Truth & Love".

MAY, 2014

16-18 Sussex, NB Spring Youth Camp will be led by Bro. John Mannell (Toronto West, ON).

JUNE, 2014

28-July 6 Mid-Atlantic Christadelphian Bible School at Shippensburg University, Shippensburg, PA. Theme: "O Lord God of Israel, there is no God like thee" (2Chron 6:14). The teachers will be Bro. Jim Cowie (Moreton Bay, Queensland, Australia): "Contending Earnestly for the Faith" (adults) and "Cameos of the Kingdom" (teens); Bro. Jay Mayock, Jr. (Hamilton, Book Road, ON): "All in All (A Study of Psalm 8)" (both); and Bro. Stephen Palmer (Mumbles, Swansea, UK): "Simon Peter: Learning Lessons in Discipleship" (adults) and "Digging for Treasure in the Epistle of Peter" (teens). Contact by e-mail [Robin Colby macbs@live.com](mailto:Robin.Colby@live.com) or check our website: www.midatlanticbibleschool.com.

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JULY, 2014

6-12 Southwest Christadelphian Bible School at Schreiner University in Kerrville, TX.

The teachers will be Bro. Jim Cowie (Moreton Bay, Brisbane, Australia), Bro. Stephen Palmer (Mumbles, Swansea, UK), and Bro. Leen Ritmeyer (Cardiff, Museum Place, Wales, UK) Information will be posted on the website: www.swcbs.com.

19-27 Midwest Bible School will be held at Hanover College, Hanover, IN. Speakers and their topics are: Bro. Jim Cowie (Moreton Bay, Brisbane, Australia) "Nazaries Unto God" and Bro. Matt Norton, (Lismore, Australia) "Impressions of Christ." For registration information, contact Bro. Mike Livermore, 44943 Yorkshire Dr., Novi, MI, 48375; 248-462-5740, e-mail: mike.live@gmail.com or visit www.midwestbibleschool.com.

20-26 Pacific Coast Bible School will be held at the Idyllwild Pines Camp in Idyllwild, CA. The speakers for this year are: Bro. Mark Vincent (UK), Bro. Rob Oosthuizen (Invercargill, New Zealand), and Bro. Joseph Palmer (San Diego County, CA). The school offers a wonderful environment for the whole family to study God's word and enjoy the fellowship of other brethren and sisters. For registration and more information contact Bro. Jeff Gelineau, 567 Astorian Dr., Simi Valley, CA 93065. E-mail: mail@gelineau.org. Register at the website: www.californiabibleschool.org.

26-Aug 3 Eastern Bible School Connecticut College, New London, CT; Theme: "That We May Know Him." Bro. Ted Sleeper (San Francisco Peninsula, CA): "That I May Know Him" (adults), and "Challenges to God and Faith" (teens); Bro. Andrew Bramhill (Shirley, UK): "The Lord's Encounters With Women" (adults), and "Questions, Questions, Questions" (teens); Bro. Tec Morgan (Birmingham, UK): "God Has Spoken" (adults), and "The Kingdom of God" (teens). For registration information contact Sis. Cindy Nevers at 18 Sibley St., Auburn, MA 01501 or cindynevers@verizon.net.

27-Aug 2 Rogue River Bible School Topics and teachers are: "The Divided Kingdom" by Bro. Peter King (Worcester, UK); "The Days of Ahab" by Bro. Richard Morgan (Hamilton Book Road, ON); "The Faithful Kings: Rebuilding the Ecclesia" by Bro. Greg Robinson (Thousand Oaks, CA). Contact Bro. Randy Yoshida for further information — yoshida@cpros.com. For registration, contact Sis. Pat Posey — robandpatposey@gmail.com.

AUGUST, 2014

1-4 All-Mexico Bible School first ever! Come help start an annual event at a beautiful location at Hotel Perico in the hills overlooking Lake Chapala near Guadalajara. Speaker: Bro Bill Rawson. Contact Bro. David Lloyd davidrlloyd@earthlink.net 818-352-6486.

17-22 Lakefield Bible School (formerly Niagara Falls Bible School) at Lakefield College. The school is located east of Toronto near Peterborough, Ontario, on a beautiful lakeside campus. For information contact Bruce and Barbara Abel: bnb69abel@hotmail.ca or call 519-925-5297. Web site www.nfcbs.com.

SEPTEMBER, 2014

13-14 Paris Avenue, OH Fall Study Weekend with Bro. Michael Owen (UK). Contact Bro. Derek Elder by phone at: 216-965-9763, or by email at: delder1@kent.edu.