

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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## Chaim Herzog



*Herzog was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland in 1918. He immigrated to Palestine in 1935, and served in the Jewish paramilitary group Haganah during the Arab revolt of 1936–39. He joined the British army during World War II. He participated in the liberation of several concentration camps, including Bergen Belsen. In 1975 Herzog was appointed Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations, in which capacity he served until 1978.*

*On 22 March 1983, Herzog was elected by the Knesset to serve as the sixth President of Israel. He assumed office on 5 May 1983 and served two five-year terms (then the maximum permitted by Israeli basic law), retiring from political life in 1993. As president of Israel, Herzog made a number of visits abroad, being the first Israeli president to make an official visit to Germany, during*

*which he visited Bergen Belsen in April 1987. He died in 1997.*



Eva Schloss and Ed Silverberg, with live actors, recreating scenes from World War II. Eva Schloss features prominently: she is actually the stepsister of Anne Frank, as her mother married the widowed father of Anne Frank. Her father did not survive, nor did the mother of Anne Frank.

However, that was not all. At the close of the play, when the audience normally heads rapidly for the exit, an older lady walked onto the stage, quite unexpectedly, and we were introduced to Eva Schloss. As I listened to her accounts of those days, the reality of the terrors of old came home to me quite forcefully. As the ranks of the survivors of the Holocaust dwindle, we do need to remember the horrors of the time, and the way these horrors were primarily responsible for the emergence of the State of Israel in 1948.



### The relevance to us

To return to the phrase *“My sorrow is continually before me”*, the title of Psalm 38 is “A Psalm of David, to bring to Remembrance.” Quite apart from its obvious relevance to both the memorial offering, and the acknowledgment of our personal sins, as we read these words we must be reminded of the place of the Jewish nation in the purpose of God. And of the truth of the words of Chaim — “This is a call to rise above the depths to which humans can sink. The sorrow of our trials and tribulations sometimes threaten to overwhelm us, and sometimes we do not understand the reason for these adversities. But, as David did, we acknowledge our need for God’s mercy: *‘Forsake me not, O LORD: O my God, be not far from me. Make haste to help me, O LORD my salvation’*” (Psa 38:21-22).

Few of us have to experience the depth of sorrow of those who lost relatives in the Holocaust. But we see the outworking of God’s purpose every day as the land of Israel continuously dominates the news. We must never forget that this is a clear sign of the sureness of the return of our Lord, and to communicate this to our friends, colleagues, and indeed all those with whom we have the opportunity to discuss our faith. There are many occasions we can use, and topics of conversation, to make clear our belief in the reality of God working in the world today. I had no idea that I was going to hear from a Holocaust survivor when I went to see the play — but her presence and her words were a strong reminder to me of the often mysterious workings of God in our lives, and in the survival of the nation of Israel.

We do not often focus on the miracle of the survival of the nation of the Jews. Their history over the last two millennia is replete with persecution, banishment, and worse. Very few nations ever permitted their Jews to reside in peace: they

were banished from England in 1290 AD, and not re-admitted until 1656 AD. Banished from many other countries, Eastern Europe was for many centuries a place of refuge, until the advent of WWII, the events of which so largely facilitated the establishment of the modern State of Israel. The pride that many English express in the Balfour declaration of 1917, significant though it was, must be counter-balanced by the reluctance of the British to permit the re-settlement of Jews during their mandate.

So as the events of the Middle East work out in ways we find hard to understand, the only certainty we have is that the Jewish nation still has a significant part to play in the affairs of the world. Whether President Obama will succeed in establishing a lasting peace in the Middle East is not easy to predict with any certainty. We only have to think back a generation, when it was almost an accepted tenant among Christadelphians that Britain would not (and many said could not) join the EEC. Based as it was on the identification of Europe as part of the “Beast of the Earth”, many still look for signs that Britain will sever ties with the EEC. All we can be sure about is that our God is truly in charge of the affairs of man — and that indeed His ways are unsearchable.

But the persistence of the Jewish nation, and the widespread presence of Jews in North America, are a remarkable proof of the power of prophecy — for the restoration of the Jewish nation is one of the lynch pins of our faith. It was primarily because of his realization of the importance of the Hope of Israel that John Thomas was re-baptized in 1847, which really noted the start of the existence of our community. So as we see and meet the Jews among whom we live, their very existence demonstrates the power of God. (I thought there were a significant number of Jews in the county where I live — and indeed there are, to the tune of 70,000+, or 6.5% of the population. But this is dwarfed by Manhattan, New York, with 300,000+, or 20% of the population.)

In the last analysis, the fate of the Jews is almost too much for the world’s conscience. Even with our Scriptural insight, we may find the judgments visited upon the Jews still hard to comprehend. Paul, it seems, found God’s dealings with Israel beyond description: in a chapter dealing with the fall of Israel — and their grafting in again — he concludes: “*How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!*” (Rom 11:20–33). The way in which the Jewish nation has persisted is equally mysterious, but is also strong evidence of the outworking of his plan and purpose.

Unlike some other magazines, *The Tidings* has no section on “Signs of the Times.” But this does not mean we should be unaware of the work of our Heavenly Father in the affairs of men — and keenly follow the events of the world around us, especially as they relate to the Nation of Israel.

*Peter Hemingray*

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# Exhortation

## What's in a Name?

### Names

The Social Security Administration website has a section where the popularity of baby names is ranked by year, going back to 1879. For 2012, the top two boy names were Jacob and Mason, while girl names were Sophia and Emma. Much to our sadness, Kenneth and Joyce have never ranked in the top 20 in the last 50 years. There are lots of considerations when you're deciding on a name, such as appealing relatives, avoiding embarrassing initials or nicknames, and steering clear of what appears to be cute at the time but will wear thin over time. Choosing a child's name is a big decision — after all, it follows them for the rest of their life. The way it works for everyone is that when a child is born, the name reflects more on the parents than the child. Parents make the decision on a name because the child can't do it for themselves. But as a child gets older, the name will also reflect on them, especially when behavior, good or bad is associated with that name. Social behavior specialist, Dale Carnegie, said "Remember that a man's name is to him the sweetest and most important sound in any language." A response is sure to be had when speaking an individual's name, either using that name with a question, an answer, a compliment, an insult, a request, or a rebuke.

In John 10:1-3, Jesus tells us, "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.*"

In the Old Testament, the book of Isaiah reveals,

*"But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine" (Isa 43:1).*

### Double names

Scriptural references concerning names, knowing names, and speaking names are quite plentiful. However, we were quite surprised to find during one of our studies that importantly, but rarely, is placed in both the Old and New Testaments, an emphatic repetition of names, or a double salutation, that occurs specifically to get that person's attention. We hope then, by way of exhortation, to see that when a name is called twice, on each occasion not only was the attention called to of that individual, but also the truths associated with the occasion has significance for us as well.

Turn with me then to Gen 22. It is a well-known story, the sacrifice of the first born son of promise. Abraham is seen as deliberate in all his actions, rising early,

setting out to the place appointed, preparing the altar and in binding Isaac and taking the knife in which to kill the son that was 25 years in promise, all to show his absolute trust in the Heavenly Father and an abiding faith, both in resurrection and the surety that the promises would be kept.

*“By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure” (Heb 11:17-19).*

As he took the knife with which he would kill his son, an angel called out his name in what was in a double salutation, **“Abraham! Abraham!”** (see Gen 22:11); instructing him not to harm Isaac, and that his faith was recognized and received in heaven. The truth associated then was supreme for Abraham, but what about for us? Critics argue about the utter cruelty of expecting a parent to sacrifice, to kill a child in this manner. However, Bro. Mansfield very poignantly points out, in the Genesis expositor, that many parents are willing to offer their children on the altars of self-ambition and in the pursuit of self enhancement, that in the end do nothing for the eternal benefit of their children. To see the benefit of this double salutation in the life of someone else, consider David, when he numbered the people in 2Sam 24. Gad the seer came to him with three choices by which the LORD’s wrath could be turned away. He could choose seven years of famine, to flee before his enemies three months, or that for three days pestilence would be upon the land. David chose the pestilence, seeking to fall into the LORD’s hands, rather than into man’s, depending on the mercy of God. Seventy thousand died in the pestilence.

*And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the LORD; for his mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man. So the LORD sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time appointed: and there died of the people from Dan even to Beersheba seventy thousand men. And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD was by the threshing place of Araunah the Jebusite” (2Sam 24:14-16).*

This is the imagery, was a stretched out blade with which to slay, as Abraham had held a similar one over Isaac. David’s faith faltered in numbering Israel, and the way to overcome a lapse in faith is to seek to exhibit the absolute trust which Abraham showed upon mount Moriah. The double call of the name should garner our attention.

Later in Genesis, in his old age, Jacob having suffered the breakdown of his family, the death of Rachel and the believed death of Joseph, receives news that Joseph was not only alive, but a royal prince in Egypt, and that Joseph had sent a caravan of wagons to take Jacob into Egypt. The land of promise was not Egypt, in fact, his father Isaac was warned by God not to go into Egypt. Jacob then was in a struggle, should he leave the land of promise to see Joseph?

*“And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac. And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, **Jacob, Jacob**. And he said, Here am I. And he said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes” (Gen 46:1-4).*

With the double salutation Jacob is assured that the journey did have a purpose. Perhaps he recognized that the reason given is an echo of the first promise Abraham received when he first left Haran: *“Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation” (Gen 12:1-2).* Jacob’s journey and the subsequent time in Egypt would culminate in a great nation being delivered from Egypt. Life at times does present us with challenges we did not anticipate or even go looking for, but the salutation of Jacob should teach us that a working out of the divine purpose is going on with each of us, seeking to bring us to day of promise and the reuniting of loved ones such as Jacob and Joseph enjoyed.

### **Moses at the bush**

In the barren Sinai desert, Moses tended the sheep of his father-in-law, and did so in daily solitude and in obscurity. To his surprise he saw a bush burning, when he perceived no fire had started it, either from earth or heaven, and even stranger, the bush was not consumed. We know it was an extraordinary manifestation of the divine presence and glory. He saw a flame of fire and his inquisitive mind sought to know more. How true is it that divine things should be diligently enquired about.

God gave him a gracious call with the double stating of his name, Moses, Moses, to which he returned a ready answer, here am I.

*“And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, **Moses, Moses**. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God” (Exod 4:4-6).*

It was when Moses took notice of the burning bush, and turned aside to see it, AND left the business of his father-in-law, then God called to him. It is for those who seek to know divine things, that their approach should be with a committed mind. In those circumstances, those that diligently seek God shall find Him. *“Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you” (James 4:8).*

*“Wherever Lord thy people meet, there they behold the mercy seat, where e’re they seek thee, thou art found and every place is hallowed ground.” (Hymn 244)*

Attitude in the presence of God is marked by the encounter at the bush. Moses was cautioned about casual or an irreverent approach in the divine presence. We

should be keenly aware of the distance that exists between our God and ourselves. The privilege is that we have been invited to draw near, and care must be taken that familiarity does not lead to a lack of respect. Removal of shoes was an expression of our proper respect and submission to the God we worship.

## **Samuel**

When God called Samuel's name twice (1Sam 3:1-10): it happened after He had called out to him two other times, but Samuel had mistaken God's voice for that of Eli's.

*“And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And Eli perceived that the LORD had called the child. Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place. And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, **Samuel, Samuel**. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth” (1Sam 3:8-10).*

Young Samuel was quite diligent in his service to the tabernacle and in his devotion to Eli. The record portrays him in stark contrast to the wickedness of Eli's sons. The sons of Eli brought dishonor to the office of the high priest, but Samuel ministered to him; they showed no regard for their father's instruction but Samuel obeyed them. Samuel never showed that he was in any way influenced by their bad example. This early life was preparing him for much more later on, and stands as a lesson that it is never too early to learn respect for the things of God.

In Eli's day, the prophetic word was scarce, and those who sought divine counsel had very little recourse. The evil attributed to the tabernacle is those days lead to a corruption on a national scale. We are told that there was no open vision, and it is assumed that the immorality that was practiced in the tabernacle infected the whole nation. This caused the Spirit of prophecy to dry up, until a more suitable and faithful priest and prophet was revealed in time.

Somewhat amusing is the story is of Samuel running to Eli and twice being told to go lay down, with Eli's perception finally coming to the realization that something special is happening with Samuel. The old man could have harbored a grudge that the young boy was receiving a manifestation of word and power that he was not, and Samuel could have overreacted in fear. Neither is evident, the old man assured the young boy, and he did as Eli told him, to listen while God speaks, and receive the instruction when it is given. *“I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly. Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land.” (Psa 85:8).*

## **Summary**

In each of these instances, especially the last one, it is true the heavenly voice uses the double salutation because of a need to get that person's attention. The double calling of Abraham validated what the seed of Abraham must live to be like. The father of faithful was a leader by deeds not words. Jacob was given back the son

he thought he lost by allowing the circumstances of life to be in God's control, something he could not do earlier in life, when through his own strength and cunning sought control for himself with Esau and Laban.

Moses at the bush became the nation of Israel's deliverer and the giver of the Law; and at the bush an expansion of the revelation of the divine purpose was given in the memorial name. This was for the intention that a vast company of redeemed should rule the earth in righteousness, with holiness and obedience to the Law. Samuel would become the first in a line of prophets, who would faithfully bring God's World to His people. For sure, all four of these Old Testament individuals were key people in Israel's history, and this truth no doubt is why God's redoubling of their names happened at the key turning points in their lives.

In the New Testament, we find Jesus using the double salutation as well. When Martha was upset with Mary for not helping her prepare a meal for Jesus who was visiting with them, the Lord called out to her:

*“And Jesus answered and said unto her, **Martha, Martha**, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her” (Luke 10:41-42).*

How instructive is that episode for all of us in our service. When the work that we do, we value too highly, and the perceived lack of effort by others infects us — we would all do well to consider the double salutation here.

Space does not permit us to consider the other examples of repetition:

- After the institution of the memorial feast the Lord predicted Peter's denial. He called out to him, **“Simon, Simon”**: how crushing that reality was for Peter.
- When Christ was on the Cross and it was the ninth hour, just moments before the Lord said “it is finished,” he cried out to God, **“Eloi, Eloi”**.
- On the Damascus road, where Jesus called out **“Saul, Saul”**.
- When the Lord expressed his intense emotions for Jerusalem, which had become a wicked city, even though God intended for it to be His holy city. So Jesus called out, **“Jerusalem, Jerusalem”**.

The double salutation is used in a time and in a situation when it was urgent and something critically important was being taught, so let us stop and listen whenever we see it.

We should be comforted then, with the assurance that Moses had when he was told by God, *“I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight” (Exod 33:12).*

*Ken Comito (Detroit Royal Oak, MI)*

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**I Know Thee By Name**

# Bible Study

## The Way of Cain — (9) Lamech

### Seventy-seven times

When Lamech says, “*If Cain is avenged seven times...*” he is not referring to the number of times Cain was avenged, since one can only be avenged once, but rather the generation in which Cain was avenged. That generation was the 7th generation, for it is the generation in which Lamech attempted to murder Enoch, a descendant of Seth.

Likewise, if Lamech’s use of “time/s” refers to generations, then Lamech, according to his own prediction, would have been avenged in the 77th generation, for he says: “*I will be avenged seventy-seven times.*” The 77th generation is not a random generation. It is a very special generation, since it is the one in which Christ was born into, as demonstrated in Luke’s genealogy:

- |               |                   |                |                       |
|---------------|-------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| 1) Adam       | 21) Abraham       | 41) Jonan      | 61) Josech            |
| 2) Seth       | 22) Isaac         | 42) Joseph     | 62) Semein            |
| 3) Enos       | 23) Jacob         | 43) Judah      | 63) Mattathias        |
| 4) Kenan      | 24) Judah         | 44) Simeon     | 64) Maath             |
| 5) Mahalalel  | 25) Perez         | 45) Levi       | 65) Naggai            |
| 6) Jared      | 26) Hezron        | 46) Matthat    | 66) Esli              |
| 7) Enoch      | 27) Aram/Arni/Ram | 47) Jorim      | 67) Nahum             |
| 8) Methuselah | 28) Admin/Ram     | 48) Eliezer    | 68) Amos              |
| 9) Lamech     | 29) Amminadab     | 49) Jesus      | 69) Mattathias        |
| 10) Noah      | 30) Nahshon       | 50) Er         | 70) Joseph            |
| 11) Shem      | 31) Salmon        | 51) Elmadam    | 71) Jannai            |
| 12) Arphaxad  | 32) Boaz          | 52) Kosam      | 72) Melki             |
| 13) Kainan    | 33) Obed          | 53) Addi       | 73) Levi              |
| 14) Shelah    | 34) Jesse         | 54) Melki      | 74) Matthat           |
| 15) Eber      | 35) David         | 55) Neri       | 75) Eli               |
| 16) Peleg     | 36) Nathan        | 56) Shealtiel  | 76) Joseph            |
| 17) Reu       | 37) Mattatha      | 57) Zerubbabel | 77) Jesus of Nazareth |
| 18) Serug     | 38) Menna         | 58) Rhesa      |                       |
| 19) Nahor     | 39) Melea         | 59) Joanan     |                       |
| 20) Terah     | 40) Eliakim       | 60) Joda       |                       |

This genealogy in Luke 3:23-37<sup>1</sup> shows that Christ appeared in the 77th generation. Although it may seem odd that Christ and Lamech are connected, Matt 18:21-22 shows how they are related:

*“Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, ‘Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?’ Jesus answered, ‘I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.’”<sup>2</sup>*

The relationship between Christ and Lamech is this: Christ tells Peter to *forgive* seventy-seven times, while Lamech tells his wives that he will be *avenged* seventy-seven times. Just as vengeance and forgiveness are antithetical concepts, so too are the espousers of these respective notions: Lamech and Christ. This juxtaposition illustrates the stark contrast between the sons of God (Seth/Christ) and the sons of men (Cain/Lamech):

*“For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?” (2 Cor. 6:14).*

We might add, “For what does vengeance have in common with forgiveness?” It is true that they are antithetical, and although opposites, they are related in that forgiveness is the panacea for vengeance. For without forgiveness, vengeance has no end. In saying to Peter, “forgive seventy-seven times,” Christ was expressing — numerically — the idea of limitless or *eternal* forgiveness, since this number is a multiple of seven — a number that is consistently associated in Scripture with God, who is *eternal*.<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, Christ was born in the 77th generation. Prior to Christ, the Law, with its “eye for an eye” policy (Exod 21:24) did not allow for forgiveness. However, Christ’s sacrifice on the cross opened the way to forgiveness for the first time since the Law was enacted. He was raised to life ever-lasting, and as such became immortal or *eternal*. Thus Christ, a man born in the 77th generation; the first to espouse forgiveness; and the first man raised from the dead to everlasting life, represents *eternal* forgiveness.

This association with Christ, a man born in the 77th generation, and who was granted immortality; his use of the number seventy-seven in relation to forgiveness without end; and the number seven’s (and arguably its multiples) symbolic association with God, who is eternal; makes the number seven and its multiples symbolic of the eternal.

Given the number’s spiritual relationship to Christ and God, how is it that Lamech came to choose the number seventy-seven? What did this number mean to him, because surely we can’t presume that he had any spiritual foreknowledge to know that Christ, his opposite, would be born in the 77th generation to put an end to his cry for vengeance. Was it perhaps God speaking a prophecy through a wicked man?

This is certainly possible, since there are other instances where God has communicated through wicked men. Two such instances occurred when the LORD spoke through Balaam (Num 24:1-9), and through the high priest Caiaphas (John 11:49-52); the former who Jude lists among the wicked (Jude 11), and the latter who was responsible for crucifying Jesus.

Certainly, there is a spiritual component to Lamech’s words and, as has been shown, they are prophetic — of the coming of the Messiah in the 77th generation who would bring an end to vengeance through forgiveness.

But Lamech was unaware that the words he spoke were prophetic. Instead, he must have chosen that number based simply on the idea of a multiple. By intending to murder Enoch in the 7th generation, Lamech believed he was avenging his ancestor.

Like Cain, he would have understood that avenging his ancestor would have, in turn, created in others a desire for revenge (the mark of Cain). Thus Lamech knew that his vengeful actions in murdering Enoch would have spawned an avenger. And, as has also been noted, Lamech was a man of great pride. His ego, in relation to his own death at the hands of an avenger, would have, in turn, demanded that the act of avenging him to be great — greater than even his ancestor, Cain; seventy-seven times greater. As such, Lamech's use of the number seventy-seven was basically an egotistical expression, through multiplication, for the desire of his death to be exponentially more significant than Cain's.

So far, we've seen how God, speaking through Lamech, spoke a prophecy about the coming of Christ in the 77th generation, who would put an end to vengeance through eternal forgiveness; we've also seen how Lamech's use of that multiple was in relation to his ego's desire to be avenged even greater than his ancestor, Cain. But there is one final component to Lamech's expression of the number seventy-seven.

In wanting to be avenged seventy-seven times greater than his ancestor, Lamech was demanding to be avenged throughout seventy-seven generations, because that number was used in relation to generations. Unbeknownst to him, that number was also symbolic, in particular of the eternal (this was demonstrated by Christ's use of it in relation to forgiveness, Matt 18:21-22). So, by demanding to be avenged seventy-seven times, Lamech was, in a sense, making a declaration of war — a never-ending or *eternal* war, which would have been directed against his perceived enemy; namely Enoch, and all others who associated themselves with God. If God had not "removed" Enoch from the murderous hands of Lamech, his blood would surely have been spilt, and would have represented the second casualty in the war waged between the sons of men and the sons of God; the first casualty being Abel. Just because Lamech could not kill Enoch, does not mean that further bloodshed between the sons of God and the sons of men did not occur in the 7<sup>th</sup> generation and beyond. Christ confirms that righteous blood has been shed since the time of Abel, through the antediluvian age, into the post-Flood age, up until, and including the time of Christ:

*"And so upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Ber-kiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar" (Matt. 23:35).*

In his condemnation of the Pharisees, Jesus equated them with Cain, for they, like the world's first murderer, were responsible for an unbroken chain of violence perpetrated against the righteous — from the time of Abel through to his age.

But the war against the righteous did not end with Christ. For, as will be shown in the final chapter of this study, the cycle of conflict between the righteous and the unrighteous; between the spiritual descendants of Abel/Seth and Cain; between the sons of God and the sons of men; between Enoch and Lamech; and between Lamech and Christ, continued, unabated in the first century AD. Not only did the rulers and priests of that time attempt to murder the apostles and believers, but men arose within the ecclesias who, in time, would turn their hatred against their fellow brothers and sisters — to the point of murder. Jude warned the ecclesias

about such men when he wrote: “*certain men... who have secretly slipped in among you... [are] dreamers who pollute their own bodies, reject authority, and slander celestial beings*” (v. 4,8). Though these actions are obvious precursors to violence, they are not overt references to bloodshed in themselves. However, Jude makes reference to Cain in his epistle — a man who is associated with murder and who killed the first righteous man — and by doing so connects these “certain men” and their “wicked” actions with Cain, indicating that violence was inevitable. As we know from history, Jude’s prophecy about Christianity came true, since violence has become a hallmark characteristic of Christendom.

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**Notes:**

1. A footnote in the NIV states that, “some manuscripts have Amminadab, the son of Admin, the son of Arni; other manuscripts vary widely.”
2. All references are from the NIV.
3. The Bible, especially Revelations, is full of examples, too numerous to discuss here, that demonstrate God’s association with the number seven.

## **Life of Timothy:** **(3) “Behold, a certain disciple was there”**

### **God’s help to Lystra**

Paul went to Lystra, Timothy’s hometown, during his First Missionary Journey. As he prepared to leave, Paul told the members of Timothy’s ecclesia: “*We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God*” (Acts 14:22).

Paul’s message is quite different from the “prosperity gospel” preached in many churches today. That teaching about Christianity as a path to worldly success and enjoyment is in direct contrast to the experience of many first-century believers, as well as the Bible’s clear instruction about the necessity of trials for refining our characters. The Gospel is not intended to be a vehicle to make us financially prosperous or to fill our lives with ease. Its aim is to mold us into people who please God, which often requires the experience of trial. James writes: “*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*” (James 1: 2-4).

As the believers in Lystra listened to Paul speak about tribulation, they could see in the wounds on his battered frame an illustration of what he was talking about. He was not speaking to them about abstractions. His injuries were evidence of tribulation he had experienced (Gal 6: 17).

Paul’s injuries had come from the people living in the same town as those in the ecclesia. They had stoned him and dragged his body out of the city. Some in the meeting probably feared that something similar might happen to them or those they loved.

Paul spoke about tribulation in the nearby ecclesia at Iconium as well. The believers there, like those in Lystra, were new to the Truth, and they too lived among

violent opponents of the Gospel. After his visits to the ecclesias in Lystra and Iconium, Paul left and was away from them for about two years. That was the period between his First and Second Missionary Journeys.

While Paul was away, God provided help to the new ecclesias in Lystra and Iconium. Given their circumstances, they would have benefited from comfort, exhortation, and encouragement to remain steadfast in the faith during the early years following their conversion. The first few verses of Acts 16 identify one of the forms the help took.

Before examining those verses, it is worth taking a moment to think about the forms the help did not take. With such determined opposition facing them, God could have sent the ecclesias in Lystra and Iconium a skilled orator, like Apollos, who could “mightily convince” their opponents in public. Or God could have sent them someone who worked “special miracles” or a powerful, physically imposing man, like a converted former centurion, to calm their hearts. But there is no record of that happening.

God helped the believers in Lystra and Iconium. But the help came in a form that was probably somewhat unexpected. It came by way of a frail, shy young man who was probably just out of his teens. Corinthians says: “*But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty*” (1Cor 1: 27). Those words were certainly applicable in Lystra and Iconium where help to the young ecclesias came from Timothy.

God has promised that He will help us, and He will. But the help He provides may not always come in a way we expect. There is no record of the embattled ecclesias in Lystra and Iconium getting help from someone who exuded natural strength or leadership. But those ecclesias still embraced the help God gave them. They were not like the children of Israel in the Wilderness, who so often despised and rejected the help God offered.

It is important for us to recognize, accept, and appreciate God’s help when it comes. It may sometimes come in an unexpected form. But God’s help will always come in the right form. God is far wiser than we are, so the help He provides will always be exactly what we need — and come when we need it — to bring us through our trials.

Paul returned to Lystra and Iconium at the beginning of the Second Missionary Journey after having been away for about two years.<sup>1</sup> He made Lystra and Iconium early stops on his Second Missionary Journey. That may have been because he was particularly anxious to know how the believers there had fared during his absence with so many challenges confronting them.<sup>2</sup>

When Paul arrived in Lystra, he found faithful brothers and sisters. One member of the ecclesia stood out in particular: “*Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek*” (Acts 16:1).



### Timothy in Lystra

“Behold” is not a word that is used casually in the Bible. It is frequently used in the context of remarkable occurrences. For example, in Acts, it is used in the account of Christ’s ascension: *“And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, **behold**, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven (Acts 1: 10 - 11).* “Behold” is used when Stephen witnessed Christ standing at God’s right hand before he was stoned: *“But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, And said, **Behold**, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God” (Acts 7: 55-56).* It is also used when Ananias was instructed to go preach to Saul, the former persecutor, after he had been blinded on the road to Damascus: *“And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, **behold**, he prayeth” (Acts 9:11).*

The word “behold” is used when Timothy is mentioned in Acts 16:1 to highlight that there was something remarkable about him.<sup>3</sup> What stood out about him is identified in the next verse: *“Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium” (Acts 16: 2).*

Acts 16:2 reveals Timothy had made excellent use of the time Paul was away. The members of the ecclesia in **Lystra** spoke well of him. Timothy had also been an encouragement to the believers in the nearby city of Iconium. The fact that he

was “well reported of” by the brethren there indicates they knew Timothy well. He must have travelled to Iconium often.<sup>4</sup>

There are several aspects of Timothy’s service during the years Paul was away that are worth highlighting.

- 1) First, Timothy had evidently not made excuses and allowed them to impede his service to God and his brothers and sisters. He could have claimed his poor health, his youth and lack of experience, and/or the dangers associated with the work kept him from laboring in the Truth. But he did not. Timothy would have been familiar with the Bible’s warnings against excuse-making (e.g., Prov 22: 13). It seems Timothy was not looking for excuses; he was looking for opportunities to serve.
- 2) Second, although Timothy struggled with poor health, he still managed to travel the 18 miles back and forth between Lystra and Iconium. What he lacked in physical health, he made up for with determination to serve God.
- 3) Third, the work Timothy did was extremely dangerous and required a great deal of courage. Think of the number of times he must have passed the spot where Paul was stoned. The fact that the Apostle had been assaulted in his city did not deter him. Instead, he chose to carry on Paul’s work. The courage Timothy showed could not have been based on confidence in himself. He really had no grounds for self-confidence. Instead, the courage he displayed must have been based on his confidence in Christ and the strength he provides.

When we are doing something in service to our Lord that we find challenging and we fear we are not up to the task, we can encourage ourselves by remembering it is not our feeble strength we need to rely on. It is through Christ who strengthens us that we “*can do all things*” (Phil 4:13).

Fourth, in journeying to a dangerous place, like Iconium, to help an ecclesia in need, Timothy was following the example of the Apostle Paul. Timothy had seen Paul visit ecclesias in perilous places for the purpose of strengthening and encouraging them, and he would have known from his own experience — when Paul returned to Lystra after he had been stoned there — how helpful such visits could be. Let this be a reminder to us of the importance of setting a good example for others to follow. It can have a tremendous impact.

In our next article in the series, we will consider the change in Timothy’s life that occurred following Paul’s return to Lystra.

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**Notes:**

1. H.P. Mansfield. 2006. *The Story of the Bible*. Volume 8. (Findon, South Australia: Logos), pages 176, 202.
2. T. Benson. “Let No Man Despise Thy Youth’— A Study of the Life of Timothy (2) Chosen by the Apostle Paul.” *The Testimony*, page 396.
3. For further discussion, see S. Kingsbury. *Teenagers of the Bible: Growing Examples of Godliness*. (Findon, South Australia: Logos), pages 425-426.
4. H.P. Mansfield. 2006. *The Story of the Bible*. Volume 8. (Findon, South Australia: Logos), pages 203-204; T. Benson. “Let No Man Despise Thy Youth’— A Study of the Life of Timothy (2) Chosen by the Apostle Paul.” *The Testimony*, page 398.

## Youth Speaks

### Jonathan the Faithful Prince: (13) Faith Into Action

In the last article, we saw Jonathan put into a trying situation. His father, the one whom he sought to influence for good, had just told him and his servants to kill David. What would Jonathan do? He loved David. Yet, at the same time, he loved his father. In this article, we will see his faith put into action and watch him seek both the good of his father and his friend.

#### A conflict

As Jonathan heard his father's words, he was put into a frustrating position. The conflict which raged within him is aptly shown by the way that 1Sam 19 describes him — in verse 1 it already described him as Saul's "son," and then again, it said the same thing in next verse, but also emphasized his love for David:

*"But Jonathan Saul's son delighted much in David: and Jonathan told David, saying, Saul my father seeketh to kill thee: now therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself until the morning, and abide in a secret place, and hide thyself" (1Sam 19:2).*

Scripture called Jonathan "Saul's son," and referred to Saul as his "father" — yet in the same sentence, said that Jonathan "delighted much in David." What a choice this would have been for Jonathan! If he chose to stand with his best friend, he would be standing against his father. If he stood with his father, he would be standing against God's future king and his best friend — the one whom he sought to encourage!

With this awkward situation, Jonathan's least disruptive option probably would have been to simply ignore the issue — many of us would have likely followed that course of action. Jonathan could have just avoided David entirely for the next few days or weeks, so that Saul wouldn't suspect their friendship and wouldn't suspect Jonathan's protection of his friend. Jonathan knew that David was the promised king, so he knew that God's providence would watch over David — no matter what Saul tried to do, he wouldn't be able to kill him. Thus, the easiest course of action would have been for Jonathan to remove himself entirely from the situation — but that wouldn't have been the most faithful thing for him to do.

Instead, Jonathan knew that he had to act. He couldn't just sit back with the information that he had been given. His faith and his love for David compelled him to do something. But at the same time, his love for his father also demanded that he do whatever he could to try to help Saul out of his violent determination. Thus, in a beautiful application of God's principles, Jonathan decided what he was to do; he immediately went to David and warned him of the danger, then revealed his plan to try to change his father's heart.

## Results

It was a brilliant plan — yet it was one that required a solid faith in living by principles, rather than living by results. It required a faith that believed that God could work the impossible. If he had ignored the whole situation, his life would have been safe; but according to this plan, his life was in God's hands. How would Saul, a man who had previously wanted to kill his son, respond to Jonathan defending David — the man whom he feared? If Jonathan had been a man who was results-focused (as we so often are!), he would have quickly dismissed this plan and simply ignored the entire situation. But he wasn't — Jonathan was a man who lived upon principle, not results. Jonathan was a man who did what he needed to do, leaving the results to the One in Heaven.

It was just like the situation when he stood up against the Philistine garrison — when Jonathan and his armor bearer discovered themselves to the Philistines, they didn't know whether or not God would be for them. They knew what they needed to do, but they didn't know the outcome. So it was in this incident as well. Jonathan knew what he needed to do, and he did it, even if the likely results were unfavorable.

May this serve as an example to us — how often do we brush aside God's principles because we believe that the result will be unfavorable? How many times have you or I closed our mouths and refrained from preaching to someone because we believe that they won't listen to the Truth? How many times have we not tried to reach out to someone who has left the meeting because we are afraid that we are going to push them further away? How many times have we not prayed for something because we don't think that it will change the result? So often we make our decisions based off the results — but, as it would seem, the results aren't what are important! When we preach, the important thing is that we are preaching, not whether or not someone comes to the Truth — as the apostle said, he planted, Apollos watered, and *God gave the increase* (1Cor 3:6-7). God is the One who calls, and God is the One who touches hearts. God is the One who can do what we see to be an impossibility. Our job is to bring the message. We can't allow ourselves to be paralyzed because we are afraid that we won't use exact right word or because our preaching method might not be exactly right. Perhaps this isn't an issue that you have — but for me, over and over I find myself focusing on results, and because of that, I end up being *entirely inactive!*

Instead of looking at our results, it would appear as though God is concerned with the fact that we preach and we do our best to base our preaching off His Word! When we seek out the lost, the important thing is that we are seeking and trying to help them come back to their first love. When we pray, the important thing is that we are praying, not what the end result will be — that's up to God. God is the One who will effect a result, not us. The same is true in all kinds of situations. Throughout Scripture, God is seeking to change the way that we think. Instead of living for results, we need to recognize that those are His realm, and instead live by the principles of the Truth.

## Considering the effect

Nevertheless, in considering the way that our decisions need to be based on principle, we don't want to diminish our attempts to achieve favorable results. When we preach, if we simply cast off all care of how the preaching would be received, that wouldn't be helpful — though he recognized that God gave the increase, the apostle Paul *didn't* simply disregard results. As he wrote in Corinthians, he sought to be “*all things to all men*” (1Cor 9:22); thus, his method of preaching the gospel to Jews was different than his method of preaching the gospel to Gentiles. In fact, this can be seen in the preaching of all of the disciples. When Peter spoke to Jews on the day of Pentecost, he quoted a number of verses from the Old Testament (large pieces of Joel 2, Psa 16, and one verse from Psa 110). He did the same type of thing in Acts 3, as well as quoting the Old Testament in Acts 4. All of those speeches were presented to a Jewish audience; to a group for whom the Old Testament held a huge amount of weight. Nevertheless, when Peter sought to preach to Cornelius and his house — a group of Gentiles — his method was quite different. As he spoke to them, he never once quoted the Old Testament; instead, he preached the same message — the death and resurrection of Christ — but didn't quote any verses because the Old Testament wasn't important to Gentiles! Paul did the same thing in Acts 17 when he spoke to the Greeks on Mars Hills; he didn't quote any of the Old Testament, and in fact quoted one of the Greek poets (Acts 17:28)! Thus, in service to God, considering the method that will likely achieve the greatest results is *important*, but principle should come first and the possibility of unfavorable results shouldn't cause us to ignore one of God's principles.

In other words, when trying to make a decision, all of the principles should first be considered. In Jonathan's case, he did so. He recognized that in love for his father and in love for David, he needed to take action. He needed to seek to try to change his father's mind and he needed to warn David about Saul's evil intentions — even though the end result of this decision could have been his own death. Regardless of the results, Jonathan steadfastly made his choice and shared his plan with David. The next morning, David was to be on his guard and hide himself in a secret place out in the field — Jonathan would then approach David's hiding place with Saul, so that David could hear their conversation:

*“And I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where thou art, and I will commune with my father of thee; and what I see, that I will tell thee” (1Sam 19:3).*

David would hide out in the field, and Jonathan would plead with Saul only a short distance from David's hiding place. In this way, David could hear everything that Saul said about him — thus, if Saul was even more extreme than he had been the day before with Jonathan, then David could make plans to escape. Afterwards, since David could only hear the conversation, and not see it, Jonathan would share with him what he saw in his father's expression and body language.

## Conclusion

Truly, in looking at Jonathan's story, we see some of the critical pieces of decision-making. Though he had the opportunity to take the “easy way” and leave his father

to his own devices, Jonathan's love for both his friend and his father compelled him to act differently. Jonathan was a man of principle. Though the result of his decision might not be favorable, he was willing to accept that result as long as his principles were not compromised.

And yet, in a touching picture of God's mercy to one of His servants, the results were hardly what Jonathan would have expected...

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## **The Joy of Sunday Schooling**

### **Have you tried this? (5)**

Are you looking for something special to do with your children? Something that goes beyond the routine of their weekly Sunday school lessons? On two different occasions over the years I have asked brothers and sisters across North America to tell me what they do that's special. What kinds of extracurricular activities do they carry out that help make "belonging" special for their Sunday school children and families? On both occasions I received many good responses.

Here's a list, with the ideas stated as they were given to me. If you are looking for something special to do with your Sunday school children, take a few minutes to look at the list. You may not find exactly what you want, but you may find one or two things that fire your imagination: things you can run with. I hope so.

To organize the list, I grouped the activities into a few general categories. Clearly, some of them fit into more than one category. The categories themselves tell us something about the goals that ecclesias address when they provide extracurricular activities for their children.

#### **Ecclesial programs:**

- Junior and Senior CYCs.
- Open House for parents, with supper and plays.
- Pre-CYC for four- to 12-year-olds, every other Friday night, October to May: Bible study and crafts.
- Recognition Day / Open House to encourage parents to attend their child's class and keep in touch.
- Sunday school awards day, prize giving; Sunday school program (e.g., with skits, plays, presentations).
- Wednesday evening Bible Explorers.

#### **Educational programs:**

- Bible Day Camp (a one-week program).
- Bible school tuition funding for the children.
- Bible word puzzles, quiet activities for children to do at the midweek Bible class; classes for children on Bible class night.

- Children's Choir (two levels).
- Dramatic reading group = different ages get together to do dramatic Bible reading.
- Field trips; visiting a museum or an exhibit of something that has Biblical interest.
- Group classes with all ages involved in team-building activities.
- Hymn sings, scheduled semiannually.
- Music Program.
- Plays, skits.
- "Thought for the Week": children take turns preparing and presenting.
- Tour a Jewish synagogue.
- Whole-group summer projects (e.g., a Sunday school play, movie, newspaper).
- "Words from the Wise": personal testimonies about life before and after baptism.
- Younger children periodically participate in a worship service by singing songs they have learned during music praise time.
- Young people's study days, study weekends.
- 15-minute *Praise The Lord*<sup>1</sup> hymn sings with the Sunday school.

### **Interecclesial activities:**

- At least two ecclesias presently sponsor biennial Bible schools.
- Combined CYC activities.
- Informal get-togethers with other ecclesias.
- Joint Sunday school entertainment programs.
- Joint Sunday school picnics, outings.
- Planned trips to gatherings.
- Regional CYC activities (study and devotional time) hosted by the ecclesia (*Thanks to a small ecclesia for this big idea.*).
- Sunday school exchange visits.

### **Interpersonal activities and events:**

- Chili cook-off, soup and pie cook-off. (These can be carried out as fund raisers).
- CYC hosted in family homes.
- "Evening with the Teacher".
- Family days; family nights every six weeks: skating, bowling, tobogganing, etc. followed by a potluck supper. (Some assume you live in the North of America!)
- Get-togethers throughout the week.
- Mother's Day celebration.
- Secret friends (aunt/uncle and child).
- Social time with snacks between Sunday school and Meeting.
- Tribe Sundays. All members of the ecclesia are grouped in tribes, bridging the age levels. On "Tribe Sunday" members of a tribe get together to participate in a common activity.

### **Parties, picnics, and banquets:**

- Barbecues.
- Costume parties.
- Mother-Daughter Banquet.
- Pancake breakfasts.
- “Pizza and Readings” evenings.
- Potluck lunches / suppers on a regular basis.
- Sunday afternoon outings (e.g., picnics in the park).
- Sunday school kickoff breakfast each semester.
- Sunday school picnic.

### **Recreation:**

- Activity days (e.g., recreation in the afternoon followed by a theme dinner).
- Baking, biking, bonfires, bowling, camping trips, canoeing, carnivals, craft programs, hayrides, kite making and flying, minigolf, outside game days / inside game days, ping-pong, rocket launching, (ice) skating parties, sledding, sleepovers, summer swim parties, zoo trips.
- Fun days combined with dramatic presentations.
- Nature hikes to see God’s handiwork, trips to the mountains.
- Recreation day held at a local college facility or gym.

### **Service projects:**

- Card making and sending.
- CYC runs one or two days of activities for the younger kids.
- Fund raising for Agape-in-Action<sup>2</sup> (*Thanks to a young Granite State sister who told me about this project.*).
- Hall care day; work days that include the Sunday school children.
- Leaflet pushing, preaching efforts.
- Neighborhood barbecue as an outreach project.
- Organizing a special Mother’s Day luncheon (the children take charge of this).
- Preparing and distributing Thanksgiving baskets.
- Save the Children<sup>3</sup> bake sale.
- Taking the younger children on an outing or helping them in some other way.
- Visiting nursing homes.
- Visiting shut-ins.
- Volunteer work in the community.
- A Boy’s Club (This idea was proposed in *The Tidings* magazine in December, 1958, by our late Bro. Fred Buckler of California. It’s worth republishing. Does anyone know how this project turned out?):

“Our Sunday School is going to organize a Boy’s Club. We would be happy to have any boys from other Sunday Schools, between the ages of 8 and 12 attend. The main object of our club will be service to others. We hope to make things for people in Christadelphian homes for aged or any other project of serving others. By meeting other boys and working with

them, we hope to teach them that the Christadelphian way of life is a life of service to others and that serving others brings joy to our own lives.”

Bro. Buckler puts things into perspective for us. When all is said and done, we need to be wary of activity for activity’s sake. The point of extracurricular activities is not to have a calendar full of grand events and polished productions that do little more than entertain the children, if that. Spur-of-the-moment activities can often be as effective as well-planned ones. And in all the doing, we must not let the children lose sight of the fact that ecclesial life is not about “What can I get out of it?”, but, rather, “What can I put into it and what can I do to help?”

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**Notes:**

1. *Praise The Lord*, Hoddesdon Christadelphian Services, Reprinted 2010. E-mail: sales@hoddesdon.org. Also see Carol Linsenmeier, “Music – Part 1, A Valuable Teaching Tool”, *The Tidings*, September, 2013, pp.400-402.
2. *Agape in Action*. See [www.agapeinaction.com](http://www.agapeinaction.com).
3. *Save the Children*. See [www.christadelphianchildren.com](http://www.christadelphianchildren.com)

## Reflections

### Scriptural Discipline: (6) *Restoration!*

#### **The motivation that we must all share is to restore**

In our last article, we looked at the power of our Lord, as manifested in how he works with those who are unwilling to repent of sins unto death. We do not simply “throw the problem over the wall” when we must withdraw from our brother or sister. Rather, we prayerfully deliver them for the destruction of the flesh. The Lord is in command of this process and knows how to intimately work with erring saints.

This brings us to our final topic — restoration. It is important to note that restoration is a fundamental desire of our God, going all the way back to the Garden. We have the voice of the prophets to remind us of how God pleaded with Israel to repent — to turn from rebellion and sin to the sweet fellowship only He could offer them. It is essential for us to remember this point as we consider discipline in our ecclesias. The motivation that we must all share is to restore. It must never be punitive or out of exasperation. At no time does our brother stop being our brother whom our Lord died. Love must guide our thoughts, group deliberations and actions.

Therefore, all discipline, especially the action of withdrawal, must be taken with all soberness of mind. Bro. Carter wrote in 1950, “This step of withdrawal is not something to be lightly undertaken, for it is a gravely responsible action. Its gravity might deter some brethren from taking the step, but it should be remembered that it is equally grave to refrain from separation when that should take place. A man of a combative nature will emphasize the duty to withdraw when he should look well to the motives behind his contention; a man who finds controversy distasteful and strife a burden has to remember the duty of the defense of the faith and of loyalty to the command of Christ.”<sup>1</sup>

Bro. Carter illustrates a major point in these articles. Sound Scriptural discipline is not to be based on our personal preferences or those of one ecclesia versus another. These are the commands of our Lord! Sound Scriptural discipline, and particularly withdrawal, is to be approached with a deep sense of reverence. We are not to rush into it. We should not be pressured into moving faster than is appropriate. We should never desire such separation. Yet, to fail to follow the Master's commands and demonstrate our love for our brother, because we find the work unappealing, is just as unacceptable. Remember, our work is to either save by showing compassion or to fearfully pull them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. There is no place here for inaction.

Thankfully, most Scriptural discipline results in repentance long before we must exercise the full process of Matthew 18. Most of our service can be done through prevention! Paul wrote to Timothy, *“And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will”* (2Tim 2:24-26).

The phrase here, *“instructing those who oppose themselves”* is most illustrative of the real situation we face with Scriptural discipline. When our brother sins, when he continues in that sin and rebels, he is opposing HIMSELF. Our service to him in instruction is to help him with the battle he is facing with his own worst enemy — his deceitful and desperately wicked heart. The Divinely-appointed checks and balances of his life, self-examination and the engrafted Word are no longer operating as they should. Now, we wish to assist him in recovery from this snare. In most cases, this can be accomplished by the sound dividing of the Word of God. The Greek word for instructing here, *paideuo*, is translated as “chastening” in several places, including Heb 12, and doesn't involve simply providing education or classes, but the word also commands an active oversight. It is similar to the concept Paul uses in Gal 3:24, where the Law was our “schoolmaster” to bring us unto Christ. The RSV translates “schoolmaster” as “custodian”.

### **Involved in others lives**

Here's why these thoughts are so important for our consideration of Scriptural discipline. It is not sufficient for us to only offer formal classes for our ecclesial members and young people on the threats of the flesh. These have a significant place in the battle against sin, but they cannot be fully effective unless they include OVERSIGHT. This requires us to be involved in each other's lives, by literally going to war with one another in our collective battle against sin. But, let's not underestimate the value of a sound educational process in the ecclesia! This calls for our ecclesias to be watchmen, scanning the horizon for approaching threats. It would be to our great benefit to discuss these threats and couple them with sound Scriptural discussion long before the threat arrives at our gates. We need to identify the spiritual principles that believers should embrace in the governance of their lives. There can be little doubt that this is what the Apostle Peter meant when he wrote that the elders were to *“Feed the flock of God which is among you,*

taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind” (1Pet 5:2). This is an appeal to the elders of modern ecclesias to be regularly guarding against threats to the flock. What are the new threats that the flock may be experiencing? What are the Scriptural principles that should guide our future actions?

A last comment on Paul’s admonition in 2Tim. Did you notice HOW the instruction was to occur? It must be done with meekness. As you will recall, this is always an essential part of recovery. We must not “instruct” with a wagging finger or with an air that we ourselves would never fall to such temptations. Of course we could! The High Priest was always aware of the fact that while he was offering for the sins of the people, he too was “compassed with iniquity.” On this point, we too often approach the education on moral matters as if the main application of these is for “our young people.” When it comes to issues such as fornication, for example, we may be drawn to direct our instruction to them solely. But, recent research on fornication, associated with areas like internet pornography, show that this is NOT simply a “youth issue.” We need to stop positioning morality classes exclusively at our youth. Yes, the instruction is needed for our young people as they are progressively exposed to these threats as their life becomes increasingly independent. However, morality issues are topics of instruction and discussion for all ages. We must remember meekness when we are chastening!

The next passage I’d like to share is one that has deep personal meaning for me. Paul writes: “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of **meekness**; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ” (Gal 6:1-2). Notice here the similarity of message. Restore in **meekness**, considering thyself lest ye also be tempted. Restoration must be undertaken always with our own need in mind. However, the word I’d like to focus your attention on here is “restore.” The Greek word is *katartizo*. It is the same word used about the disciples “mending” their nets on the seaside in Galilee. It is a word that in Greek literature is for the setting of bones. Here’s where I can personally relate, as can anyone who has experienced a significant bone break. In my case, it was a spiral fracture of the tibia and fibula. The pain was pretty significant. The doctor asked me to drape my leg over the hospital bed and gently, but quickly he pulled my foot down and snapped the leg back into place. Instantly, 95% of the pain was eliminated.

When we restore, it truly is like gently putting bones back in place. It is about patiently removing the seaweed and filth from our nets and mending them so they will be useful for the next day. This is an important guide to us as we contemplate working with our brother or sister who has been overtaken in a fault. Don’t condemn or use a hammer! Gently help to restore, to put things back in working order.

### **Practical matters**

I’d like now to turn to a few practical matters associated with withdrawal, because they are often critical in the recovery process. **First, in most cases, the decision of the ecclesia about withdrawal should be communicated live and in person to the withdrawn brother or sister.** Preferably, the full ecclesia should deliver

this message in a special meeting with the brother or sister. However, in almost no case is it appropriate for such decisions to be communicated for the first time by post and certainly never by email! Letters are important to document decisions made, but they often rarely effectively communicate the true feelings and intents of the writer or the ecclesia. This is best done face to face. Years ago a faithful brother told me never to post such a letter. The letter should be written, but hand delivered, where one can personally communicate the action. In such cases, it is important to remember that we want to make the repentance and return of our brother or sister as easy as possible. This is a unique opportunity to express to the brother or sister our deep sorrow and the hope we have of quick restoration. It is important to let the brother or sister know that the whole ecclesia will be praying each day for their repentance. They will not be forgotten.

Another consideration is **how the ecclesia can stay engaged with the brother or sister** during a time that it is important for them not to be participating in our ongoing services. We indeed must deliver them to Satan for the destruction of the flesh and as we have seen previously, this requires a certain “censure” from the fellowship that we enjoy. One thought is for a brother and/or sister to serve as volunteers to keep in touch with the withdrawn member. It might even be advisable to let the withdrawn brother or sister know the names of the brother and sister who have lovingly volunteered to stay in touch. But, what does that really mean? Preferably, this should NOT be a family member. Families will likely be in touch and have more regular interactions with the brother or sister because they are a family. From personal experience, I can say that often the family is in the worst position to encourage and lovingly chasten one who has left. The volunteers should plan to regularly communicate. This is best if it is face-to-face. If not practical, a telephone call once a month (or minimally once per quarter) should be made. And what is the purpose of the call? Since the brother or sister expects the contact, the purpose should be understood. How are you doing? Have you been able to make changes in the matter that brought about the withdrawal? Do you need my help with anything? Minimally, it is to remind the withdrawn that they are at the top of our minds. We are praying for him or her specifically each week as an ecclesia and daily as individuals. We need them back!

I offer the suggestions above in all humility, recognizing how frequently I have failed to live up to such a standard. Generally, my experience is that we forget such brethren over time. Our prayers diminish and finally cease. Out of sight, out of mind. Yet, perhaps at the core of this issue is that I am limiting my Lord. In Psa 78:40-41, the rebuke of Israel was they had limited God. *“How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert! Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.”* Let’s not limit our God. Though our brother may be in the process of the destruction of the flesh for decades, the Lord has not abandoned him. He is powerful to save. We must never allow ourselves to forget our brother or to doubt that the Creator of the Universe can certainly heal the mind of our brother or sister.

The censure of the Bible is a far cry from the ecclesiastical excommunications practiced in other denominations. First, a brother or sister should not be with-

drawn from without the ecclesia knowing about the matter and giving its approval of the action. The power of the ecclesia itself in the recovery process is essential. The voice of many brothers and sisters, in one accord, communicates a powerful message to the rebellious brother or sister. Once withdrawn from, we must take steps to make clear the change in the brother or sisters life. Communications and interactions are not to remain the same. Yet, let us never be a people who will not acknowledge and greet our withdrawn brother or sister we see on the street. Such encounters offer an opportunity to confirm our love, remind the brother or sister that we are praying for them and to demonstrate the character of our Lord.

By the power and mercy of our Lord, change may begin to happen. If we have broken all contact, if they are no longer in our minds and hearts, we will not be likely to know that repentance and change has occurred. Again, this is where the volunteer brother or sister can be of such a service. That regular contact may uncover positive change, or at least a movement in the right direction. At that time the volunteer brother and sister may determine that increased contact is appropriate. Perhaps an invitation to come to their home for dinner and the readings? Maybe simply an invitation to meet for a cup of coffee or to get together for a shared interest in recreation. Remembering Paul's counsel in Corinth, we ought to go and confirm our love to our repentant brother — not wait until he walks back through the ecclesial doors. Let's reinforce the positive ground that has been made. Give the withdrawn brother or sister a renewed taste of how wonderful our fellowship is and the joy it can bring to aching hearts. But, until repentance is complete, we must stop short of full engagement.

## **Repentance**

Our last words will focus on the blessed day where our brother or sister has finally repented and desires restoration. Here, we know that even the angels in Heaven share in our joy. The angelic work with the brother or sister has brought them to a point where they have “come to themselves” and seen clearly once again the vision of returning to the Father's house.

For years, I've seen a number of ways that repentant brothers and sisters “come back” to meeting. I have also heard from those who've returned just how incredibly difficult that re-entry can be. It can conjure up deep feelings of guilt that were once quelled. Brothers and sisters, not intending anything but to be accepting, can say things that hurt rather than help. So, what can be done to make the re-entry and restoration a better process for our brother or sister?

First, it all begins with how we parted ways. Did we express love in our separation? Do they feel that the sin that they were holding onto was condemned or that they themselves were rejected and condemned? Did they feel the ongoing presence of faithful prayers? Were they encouraged by the volunteering brother and sister that stayed faithfully with them through the darkest hours?

But still, it is difficult to come through those doors after months or years away. How can this be made easier? Here again, the volunteering brother and sister can be of tremendous help. When return to the meeting is warranted, offer to be at their

home to pick them up that morning! The volunteer brother and sister should be there with them through the day to guide and cheer. I remember a brother gone for several decades who, after repenting, talked about coming back to meeting for nearly six months. What broke the stalemate? A brother called him and told him he would be picking him up for meeting that coming Sunday. It worked and the brother was back in the ecclesia for several years before falling asleep.

When we restore our brother or sister, let's not have them sheepishly "enter the back door." We have a need as a body to confirm our love to them, to welcome them back into the service of the ecclesia. A faithful brother in my home ecclesia made a recommendation several years ago that we adopted as a regular practice. When we restore fellowship, we once again extend the right hand of fellowship. This is done much the same way we offer it to our newly baptized. Up front, before the eyes of the entire ecclesia, we welcome our restored brother or sister. I have found this process to be a deeply spiritual experience and one that brings to the ecclesia a great sense of joy. Eyes are rarely dry! The words of the two hymns we sing afterward, "The Lord Bless Thee" and "Blessed be Jehovah" seem to capture the spirit of the moment. Our dear brother or sister is back! The Lord has worked mightily in his or her life. We are to be filled with praise!

Bro. Nicholls wrote in 1977, "There might well be fewer 'automatic' withdrawals, or less abandoning of those who have been withdrawn from, if there were in fact more true ecclesial discipline exercised in the spirit of helping one another towards a spiritual maturity, and a fuller realization that forgiveness and restoration are complete in God's sight for those who at least attempt to mortify the flesh."<sup>2</sup> May we renew a firm commitment to Scriptural discipline. The Lord delights in mercy. We can count on this.

In summary, there are many reasons for us to be committed to sound Scriptural discipline. Among the reasons are that the honor of God's Name is promoted; the integrity of the ecclesia is preserved; pure doctrine is protected; a rescue process is undertaken for wayward believers; and a warning is provided to the assembly about accountability. But for our ecclesias in this Dark Age, it promotes a culture of love and support that is consistent with the first century ecclesias. By God's grace, our ecclesial light on the hill will shine brighter. Our members will see the ecclesia as a place where real issues can be surfaced and loving support will be present in time of need. If I find myself at complete odds with God and overcome by sin, I can trust that my brothers and sisters will not turn away or abandon me. They are with me for life!

So, what can I do? I can labor to create an environment of trust and openness where real problems can be discussed and comfort and encouragement given. I can work to ensure my ecclesia is clear on Scriptural principles governing discipline. I can openly discuss and identify threats to holiness — the intrusions of Humanism in our thinking. I can work to locate the Lost Sheep of my ecclesia and make sincere attempts to restore. I can courageously face into any long-standing and festering issues that need to be addressed — in my ecclesia and certainly in my own life.

My grandmother's favorite verse in the Bible was Mal 3:16-17, "*Then they that*

*feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, says the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spares his own son that serves him.”* Perhaps this is a good place to close our consideration of Scriptural discipline. If we fear our LORD, if we talk about Him and his principles for living, if we think about his Name, we will not be lost in a world of darkness that is about to be judged, but rather, we will be His jewels, His special treasure. In a world that desires to own us, we will be His! May this be our joy and vision in these Last Days before our Lord’s return.

*David Jennings (Pamona, CA)*

**Notes:**

1. *The Christadelphian*, 1950, p 53.
2. *The Christadelphian*, 1977, p 340.

## **The Core Values of Our Faith**

One of the things that really impressed me when I was introduced to the Christadelphians over 30 years ago, was the fact that this group of men and women had been held together for over 150 years, not by a institutionalized type of religion, but by a common bond as found in the Scriptures. It was the recognition of a rediscovered truth, that held this little group of Bible students together from all around the world. And if there were no core value of truth among this group, it could never have held together so long, without a paid ministry. Core values have always been a critical piece of what keeps us together as brethren and sisters worldwide.

### **So what are core values?**

The MacMillan Dictionary defines it this way — core values are the most important beliefs of a person or a group, they form the foundation on which people perform work and conduct themselves. Core values are a person’s driving force, which influence all their actions and reactions. Core values are critical not only in our personal lives, but the life of our ecclesia and the brotherhood of whole.

### **The analogy of a three-legged stool**

The more I thought about it, the more the analogy of a Three-legged Stool came into mind. A three-legged stool is unique in that it has a special design feature that keeps it from falling over. The three legs ensure that it will never wobble even on uneven ground. That’s why farmers originally used the three-legged stool to milk their cows. It’s the dynamic integrated nature of these three legs that make it sturdy, even on uneven surfaces. All three legs play an integral part; take away one leg and the chair collapses. This three-legged stool also has something very critical in its design called the center securing piece. It is a ring or joining piece that “holds” the three legs together. The “Critical Link” in our analogy, is simply the “Bigger Picture” which holds our core values together. In everything that we do in the brotherhood, we need to be cognizant of the greater good of the brotherhood and it’s development as a family of God — that’s the BIGGER picture! Paul exhorts us: “*whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God*” (1Cor 10:31). Let us never

forget this principle in our dealings with each other.

So what are the core values that have held us together for so long?

For simplicity sake, I've boiled it down to three core values.

- 1) "The Royal Law of Love", as James calls it (James 2:8)
- 2) "The Great Commission" to which we've been called (Acts 1:8)
- 3) And our core beliefs, as summarized in our "Statement of Faith",

That's what has held this little group of Bible students together for over 150 years. So let's look at these core values a little closer.

### **Core Value #1 — "Royal Law of Love"**

James exhorts us: "*If ye fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself*" (James 2:8). Why is it called "The Royal Law" and what makes it one of the three pillars of our Christadelphian core values? The word "royal" is a Greek word which signifies "belonging to a king" and as a "royal law", it expressed a chief governing principle; in other words, it over-ruled all the other laws. Therefore love and not partiality should become the governing factor in a life in the truth. That's what James' argument is all about in this chapter.

There is a lovely string of verses I like to use when speaking about "The Royal Law of Love".

- "*Above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness*" (Col 3:14). The word "bond" is that which binds together in a bundle. Love is the binding power that holds the whole body of Christ together. The tendency of any body of people is sooner or later to fall apart. Love is the bond that will hold them together in an unbreakable fellowship.
- "*Above all things have fervent love among yourselves: for love shall cover the multitude of sins*" (1Pet 4:8). Love, says Peter, "*hides a multitude of sins*". John points out to us in that "*We love him (God), because he first loved us*" (1John 4:19). It's much easier to be patient with our own children than with the children of strangers, therefore we can forgive them because we love them. So it should be with our fellowmen. Our love should forgive others of their sin towards us, as we would have God forgive us. If we love others, God will overlook a multitude of sins in us.
- The Lord lays down another commandment — "*A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another*" (John 13:34-35). "By this love" shall all men know that you are my disciples. Jesus is laying down his farewell commandment to his disciples and he exhorts them that "By this love", people will recognize that they were the true disciples of the Lord. "*Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends*" (John 15:13).
- "*For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself*" (Gal.5:14), and it doing this, "*If ye fulfill the royal law according to the scripture*" (James 2:8).

## **Core Value #2 — “The Great Commission”**

The Lord lays down his final commission for his disciples, “*But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth*” (Acts 1:8). The commission of Acts extends unto us and contains Christ’s marching orders for his ecclesia.

Let us note certain things about a “witness”. A witness is a man or woman who says “I know this is true”. In a court of law, a man cannot give evidence by way of a carried story; it must be his or her own personal experience. A witness does not say “I think so”, but must say “I know so”. Isn’t it interesting that one of the Greek words for “know” is *ginosko*, which means “knowing by an experiential knowledge”. Jesus taught his disciples that “*this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent*” (John 17:3). Making God real in our lives makes us an effective witness. A real witness is not one of words, but of deeds. The best leaders lead by example. Finally the word “witness” is the Greek word *mar’-toos*, and that’s where the English word for “martyr” comes from. A witness has to be ready to become a martyr, loyal to the cause no matter what the cost. That’s the calling to which we’ve been called. We’ve been given a great commission to share our hope, and it’s one of the three core values that keep us together as a worldwide ecclesia.

## **Core Value #3 — our beliefs, as summarized in our “Statement of Faith”**

We learn that “*they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers*” (Acts 2:41-42). So how do we define our Christadelphian faith? The grounds of our beliefs are founded in the inspired word of God, and that’s what has kept our community together for over 150 years. But many churches around us who arrive at radically different conclusions have also quoted the Bible. So what we need to help us clarify what the Bible teaches, is our statement of faith. It’s taking scripture and putting it side by side with our understanding of it that makes up our statement of faith.

The doctrine of the apostles is described as “*the first principles of Christ*” and it is a sure foundation on which Christian lives can be built. “*Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God*” (Heb 6:1). No teacher would ever get anywhere if he had to lay the foundations all over again every time he began to teach. So the writer to the Hebrews says that people must use the “First principles” as a building block to go on to “perfection”. But you need the “First principles” in the first place. From the earliest days, Christadelphians have described their understanding of “first principle” Bible teachings as the basis of their fellowship together.

As the years passed in the history of our community, certain challenges arose to challenge our first principle Bible teachings, therefore the summaries of gospel truth were refined, usually with the object of clarifying our brotherhood’s beliefs.

For over 150 years, our “Statement of Faith” has been accepted as a faithful summary of Bible teaching “concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ” (Acts 8:12). This summary first formed the Statement of Faith of the ecclesia in Birmingham, England, and was quickly and widely used as a model by other ecclesias for their own statements of faith, and became known as the BASF (Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith). It was comprised of three parts: The first part lists the foundational Bible teachings believed by Christadelphians, the second part lists teachings widely accepted in the religious world that are not supported by the scriptures. And finally the third part contains the Lord’s commandments for daily living.

### **A faithful definition**

Even though each ecclesia has its own statement of faith (sometimes with wording produced locally), ecclesias are part of the Central fellowship because they recognize the BASF as a faithful description of the one faith. It is therefore a very serious matter if a brother or sister cannot accept the teachings listed in the statement of faith. We do not simply accept that these doctrines are based on the scriptures, but that they are first principle teachings, and therefore provide solid ground on which there can be fellowship with other believers. We do not fellowship:

- Anyone who believes differently about these critical teachings.
- Anyone who does not treat them as first principles.
- Anyone who wants to add further doctrines as tests of fellowship.

Our focus should be firmly based on the Bible teachings that are listed in the statement of faith, more than on the words that have been selected to describe those teachings.

In summary, hopefully our brief look at the core values that have driven our brotherhood over 150 years, may awake a response in all of us to appreciate the great value of the Christadelphian basis of fellowship, for it unites ecclesias and their members all over the globe. By living our lives according to the “royal law of love”, may we influence and help others towards God’s kingdom as our Lord did. By proclaiming the “*Good news of the kingdom and the name of Jesus Christ*”, may we be remembered in turn when our Lord returns. By adhering to our established and well documented set of fundamental teachings, as summarized in our statement of faith, there can be fruitful cooperation and joyous service as together we form one body made up of many different parts. “*By this all men will know that you are my disciples*”.

*Peter Dulis (Toronto West, ON)*

## **The Early Ecclesia in Jerusalem: A Template for Today**

The first disciples of Jesus enjoyed the unique benefit of being directly taught by the Master Teacher for a period of three and a half years. What a privilege it must have been to have access to the skilled and perceptive teaching of the Son of God.

Yet despite this special opportunity, the disciples were not prepared for events that took place when Jesus was arrested and condemned to death by crucifixion. They were confused, disillusioned and uncertain about the meaning of these startling developments.

Two disciples left Jerusalem shortly after the crucifixion. Clearly, they were saddened by the death of the One who they “...*thought should have redeemed Israel*” (Luke 24:21). Their sorrow and disappointment were evident when the Lord encountered them and questioned the reason for their sadness. “*And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?*” (Luke 24:17). As events unfolded Jesus rebuked them for being “...*slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken*” (Luke 24:25). With skill and patience, Jesus proceeded to teach matters they had not fully understood or connected with the current situation: “...*He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself*” (Luke 24:27). From the risen Lord they received new information, new understanding and new insights that would change their lives from that day forward.

Shortly after this dramatic encounter, the Lord appeared to the disciples that were assembled in the upper room. His presence confirmed his resurrection and Jesus then proceeded to eat with them and to teach them “...*that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me*” (Luke 24:44). By these Scriptures “...*opened he their understanding that they might understand the scriptures*” (Luke 24:45). These Scriptures spoke of the suffering of Messiah, His resurrection on the third day and “...*that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem*” (Luke 24:47). Again, Jesus’ followers were given new information, new understanding and new insights that would strengthen their personal faith and guide them in their mission as disciples.

Full conversion of the disciples was enabled by Jesus’ teaching after his resurrection. Six weeks later the same disciples who fled when Jesus was arrested were now speaking boldly to thousands of people in the temple square in Jerusalem. This amazing transformation was evidence of a rapid maturity of their faith and new courage to serve the Lord as each had originally pledged.

Their message was simple. Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the long-awaited Messiah. He was rejected and killed by the Jewish leaders. Peter said: “*This Jesus hath God raised up whereof we are witnesses*” (Acts 2:32). His speech was dramatically convincing. About 3,000 people were baptized as a result of the Apostles’ preaching.

These newly baptized disciples comprised the core of the new ecclesia in Jerusalem. They added substantially to the 120 disciples who gathered before Pentecost in Jerusalem. This remarkable growth and very rapid expansion must have presented a great challenge to the disciples as they commenced to guide and organize this assembly of new believers. For several reasons, they would not all be able to meet in one place. It is unlikely there was an assembly hall large enough to accommodate such a sizeable group. As well, it would have been dangerous for such a substantial number to congregate in one place — the followers of Jesus having

been threatened in a variety of ways when Jesus was among them. “...*The Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue*” (John 9:22).

What now takes place is a remarkable and thoughtful approach to guiding the formation of this new ecclesia. We are left in no doubt as to how the apostles proceeded with this daunting task. It is clearly stated that the new disciples “...*continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers*” (Acts 2:44). Let us now examine each of these four pillars of the first century ecclesia within the immediate context of their application.

### **The Apostles doctrine**

The three thousand Jews who were now disciples of Jesus living in Jerusalem and the surrounding area would have strong belief in the God of Israel, the promises to Abraham, a longing for Messiah and deliverance by God from Roman oppression. These were Godly, serious minded and devoted Jews. They were in Jerusalem, at the temple, for the annual Feast of Pentecost. When Peter gave his stirring and compelling speech that convinced them of the Messiah-ship of Jesus, there was immediate response and submission to baptism. We should not conclude, however, that these new believers had complete understanding of the new way of life they had just embraced. Indeed the apostles themselves had only six weeks earlier come to understand how Jesus of Nazareth fulfilled the prophetic teachings about Messiah.

The new Jewish converts had much to learn. They would need to understand in greater depth the wonderful message of Jesus, how redemption was obtained through His name and what daily life as a believer and follower of Jesus entailed. As well, they would need to understand how Jesus fulfilled the Law of Moses and in so doing how they must now abandon traditional worship as the Law prescribed. All was fulfilled in Christ and it would require a giant step of faith and understanding to lay aside Mosaic traditions that were central to the Jewish religious system. The Apostles’ doctrine (or more correctly, Apostles’ teaching) would center on Jesus as the head of their religious practice and the heart of their devotion and service to God.

### **The Apostles fellowship**

As an assembly of new believers there was also much to learn about fellowship with other believers. In his startling instruction, Jesus had redefined the household of God. It would no longer be comprised only of Jews but would soon embrace a multitude of Gentiles in many distant lands. Christian Jews would need to learn that the people of God were those who followed the commands of Jesus. Part of this new fellowship would require identification of individuals among the Jewish community that were baptized believers. It was dangerous to be a believer in Jesus. Affiliation with the synagogue was lost. Association with family and friends could be jeopardized. The ability to carry on life as previously lived would likely be seriously hindered. The fellowship of sharing, of Christ-like love and of caring for the practical and spiritual welfare of people not previously known as part of their religious family would constitute a momentous challenge. “*This is my com-*

*mandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you” (John 15:12).* The apostles would teach them the privileges and obligations of this new fellowship.

### **Breaking of bread**

It is very likely that the only people among the three thousand newly baptized Jewish believers, who had direct experience eating bread and drinking wine in memory of the Lord, were the immediate disciples of Jesus. The Lord taught them and instructed them how to remember him in his absence at the Passover Feast. This was just forty days prior to Pentecost. The Apostles may have shared this with a few believers but certainly not with the newly baptized believers in Jerusalem. It was the Apostles responsibility to teach these new disciples how to remember the Lord in his absence, to show them how bread represented his body and wine his poured out blood. This was a new religious observance. It would be taught from house to house on a daily basis, showing more and more people this simple, solemn way the Lord commanded His followers to remember Him. *“And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart” (Acts 2:46).*

### **Prayer**

Throughout their history Jews have prayed to God and no doubt God-fearing Jews in first century Judaea prayed fervently. What need was there for the Apostles to provide instruction about prayer to newly baptized Jews in Jerusalem? There are a number of important aspects they would need to learn about prayer. There was a new mediator between God and man, Jesus, our intercessor. *“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1Tim 2:5).* The Levitical Priesthood had fulfilled its purpose and was no longer needed for intercession by God’s people. Their High Priest and mediator was Jesus Christ. The next thing they would need to learn was that prayer to God would be made in the name of Jesus. Because of his work and because of his exalted position at the right hand of God, Jesus was the means by which prayer and intercession was made acceptable to God. These were new concepts and would need to be explained and discussed with these recently baptized disciples.

### **Putting this all together**

The work of the Apostles with new members of the Ecclesia in Jerusalem is a true example of stewardship and effective guidance. Their work was focused on four key matters that would equip new disciples to be faithful in their walk and to ensure continuity, stability and growth of the ecclesia.

Members of the new ecclesia in Jerusalem were taught doctrines and teachings about Jesus the Messiah and about Jesus their Savior. They would be given the “keys” to the kingdom from Peter and the other Apostles. This teaching would be enlarged and enriched in the coming years as Spirit guided letters were written to individuals and ecclesias by the Apostles.

<b>The Apostles' template for teaching individual and ecclesial life in Christ.</b>	<b>New Teachings for Converted Jews in Acts 2</b>
<b>Doctrine (Teaching)</b>	The Jews needed to understand and accept that Jesus was the Son of God and Messiah. Forgiveness of sins was found only with belief in and obedience to the Lord's commands. These teachings would require further instruction and development within the new ecclesia.
<b>Fellowship</b>	Jesus redefined the Household of God using family terms (Brother and Sister). The ecclesia was now comprised of baptized followers of Jesus Christ. Disciples must learn how to practice Christ's love and care for one another in this new fellowship of believers.
<b>Breaking of Bread</b>	The emblems of Bread and Wine were the way that Jesus taught his followers to remember him until he returns. New disciples had to be instructed in this observance and its meaning.
<b>Prayer</b>	Following the resurrection of Jesus, he became the mediator and High Priest of God's people. As Mediator, prayer was now made through the Name of Jesus. Animal sacrifices were to be abolished.

Newly baptized Jews would need to learn the parameters of a new fellowship defined by Jesus. Their spiritual brothers and sisters were no longer natural Jews by birth but were now spiritual Jews and Gentiles reborn in baptism. Their relationship with other believers should be considered a family relationship with all its obligations of love, care and support. Other believers were to be considered Brothers and Sisters and treated as family. As an ecclesia they were all Brethren of Jesus. New Jewish converts would need to learn how and why to remember the Lord Jesus in the Breaking of Bread. These symbols would replace their previous commitment and practice of Mosaic religious tradition, recognition of the Levitical priesthood and offering of regular animal sacrifices. And finally, they would need to acknowledge Jesus as their mediator and High Priest. They would come to understand the purpose and priority of offering prayer through the saving name of Christ Jesus their Lord.

Their conversion required complete rethinking and reevaluation of their approach to God and how they should now worship in a new relationship with fellow believers. All this they learned from men who had only themselves recently learned these concepts and practices.

What wonderful events are shown to us at the end of Acts 2. The Holy Spirit was in action on behalf of God's people and Christ's ecclesia. The Apostles carried out their work faithfully and many people responded positively. The message they preached was simple yet profound. Peter addressed "...men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem" (Acts 2:14), and many people were baptized the same day. This preaching was readily understood and accepted. It was not complex. The fundamental message was taught — belief in Jesus as the Son of God, the prophesied Messiah of the Old Testament, belief in his resurrection, his ascension, individual repentance and baptism in the name of Jesus.

The four pillars of individual and ecclesial life in Christ were now in place and provide for us the template to guide our service to God in this age. The four pillars have not changed. Basic doctrine (Apostolic teachings), Fellowship, Breaking of Bread and Prayer remain the same in concept and principle. For us, they continue as the foundation of our individual spiritual wellbeing and our ecclesial life together.

*Ken Curry (Toronto East, ON)*

## Letters

### Letter to the Editor

Bro. Harrison's article in *The Tidings* of January, 2014, raised a few questions in my mind. In citing Ryan and Pitman's suggestions about Noah's flood being confined to the Black Sea region and the climate conditions inherent to their theory, Bro. Harrison highlights their comment about "stone age hunters and gatherers" being forced to areas where fresh water could be found and temperatures would be more favorable.

In the context of this, Bro. Harrison places the "appearance" of Adam and Eve and the Garden of Eden in general, along with the possible reason that Cain's curse would have been viewed as greater than he could bear.

The question this raises for me is what exactly is Bro. Harrison suggesting about the Biblical account in Gen 1-4? Was the Earth only blessed with plenteous vegetation in Eden while the rest of the world languished in ice? Were there other humans around at this time? Were Adam and Eve just a subset of these "hunters and gatherers"? Were there other humans around outside the garden? Did these survive the postulated "local" flood?

If I have understood correctly the scenario suggested by this article, then this, in turn, raises other questions about the veracity of these early chapters in Genesis.

Might it just be possible that what Ryan and Pitman discovered is post-Noahaic flood glaciation, and what David Rohl mentions (cited by Bro. Harrison) about the location for the origins of civilization is actually the location of Noah and his family from whom all human life on earth and civilization branched out according to Genesis 10?

*Ted Sleeper (San Francisco Peninsula, CA)*



## Bible Mission News

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### El Salvador Bible School 2013

In late December we headed south once again for the annual Bible school in El Salvador. It is always the highlight of the year for the brethren and sisters and young people. Unfortunately, because the holidays fell mid-week, fewer people than normal were able to attend, but the enthusiasm of those present was palpable.

On this occasion the brethren had chosen a new venue in the town of San Julián, close to Sonsonate, where there is an ecclesia. The facility is just an hour west of San Salvador in a beautiful park-like setting full of flowers, shade trees and lots of birds. We were provided large rooms, a swimming pool that was well used, and abundant, delicious food.



Group photo of the El Salvador Bible School 2013

The adult classes focussed on the real meaning of Paul's proclamation of salvation by faith and some examples of how the concept should mould the believer's conduct. For their part the teens analysed four Biblical first principles and how they will impact our life style if we really believe them. In both groups there was great participation from the students.

The traditional evening Bible competition produced the usual noise and excitement, with one precocious 5-year-old answering several questions, to everyone's amazement (and much to the pride of her parents). The day before she had gone

crying to her father because the teenagers hadn't let her participate in a Bible quiz they were having! It is lovely to see such enthusiasm for learning the Scriptures!



### Young People's Games

The week after the school we visited the extended ecclesial family in Usulután. Only a few had been able to attend the Bible school due to work commitments, so it was very good to be able to spend a day with them. The brethren were eager to show us their newly-renovated (provisional) hall and had prepared a “chompi-pollo” (a “turkey/chicken”; i.e., a *very* large chicken) Salvadoran-style in an outdoor clay oven. After lunch Jim gave a class to the men and boys and Jean spoke to the ladies. There were about 30 of us altogether.

The Usulután ecclesia plans to hold a large campaign in April, God willing, by covering the area with leaflets, then offering talks and a Bible exposition in a big tent on municipal land. The brethren will be grateful if we keep this effort in our prayers.

*Written by Bro. Jim and Sis. Jean Hunter, Link Couple  
Submitted by Sis. Jan Berneau, CBMA/C Publicity*

## New Missionaries in La Paz — First Update

It has been nearly ten months since we moved to La Paz, we have had our work cut out adjusting to the culture, learning Spanish and working with the members and contacts.

La Paz is a colorful city. Blockades, demonstrations and street parades are all very much part of everyday life here, as well as street markets selling everything from fresh trout to cocoa leaves.

We live in a twelve story apartment in the city. Dallas, our 5 year old daughter, attends a small, all Spanish speaking kindergarten within a block of our apartment. Zander, our 2 year old son, spends his time in the apartment wishing he was out and running around! Within a few months Dallas was more or less ‘kinder’ fluent with her Spanish and now seems to have no trouble at all with the language, the advantage of learning a language young!

Our Spanish has not been quite as rapid but we can at least now understand most of what is being said and get our message across (eventually): a work in progress! If only the gift of tongues was still available! But, having at least functional Spanish is making everyday life like shopping, getting around and paying bills a lot easier and is also essential for preaching, exhortations, classes and continuing to get to know the brothers and sisters better. Fortunately we have a Spanish teacher who ensures that at least all our notes for classes, Sunday school lessons and exhortations are correct!



**New Years Day lunch**

The La Paz ecclesia currently consists of four sisters and one brother and we have a group of around eight regular, long term friends that come out almost every week for our public class on Sundays and to any social activity we hold. Public lectures usually attract a crowd of around 25-30. Being a religious country, though mainly Catholic, interest in the Bible is high and there is as

much preaching and teaching work here as you have time for! It's quite refreshing being able to have a Bible discussion with almost anyone.

The baptized members here always bring along as many of their friends and family that are willing, which is such an example of how valuable their Hope is to them.

On the 30th of November 2013 the ecclesia held the annual 'Run for the everlasting cure'. After a short talk on the Kingdom and a prayer for those struggling with illness, we headed off for a walk up 'Prado', the centre of town. Clad in our colorful t-shirts, we handed out 2,000 flyers about the Kingdom of God and the hope it provides as well as the correspondence course we offer, followed by lunch back at the ecclesial hall.



**Run for the Everlastin Cure**



**Above: Carla and Dallas at Sunday school. To the right: Dallas and friends after a kinder presentation.**

Personal classes have also commenced with one long term contact with two others expressing interest in starting personal classes also. It is particularly welcome for the ecclesia of La Paz considering all three expressing interest are men and the La Paz Ecclesia currently only has one local Brother.

With all this interest in the city of La Paz we can only pray that as always, God will give the increase.

*Written by Shimon and Jo Spina,  
La Paz, Bolivia*

*Submitted by Sis. Jan Berneau, CBMA  
Publicity*



## **Jamaica 2013 Yearend Bible School At the Lord's Table New Year's Eve**

Approximately 40 brothers, sisters and young people from ecclesias in Jamaica met at Kendal Camp and Conference Centre for a very peaceful time around God's Word at the annual Yearend Bible School. It was like an oasis of refreshing living water, while surrounded by a world in chaos. The four-day Bible School (December 29th to January 1st) theme was *Practical Lessons from the Law of Moses and the Book of Revelation*. We considered a number of "Principles" found in studies on the Cities of Refuge, the Sons of Kohath, the Daughters of Zelophehad and "An offering unto the Lord".

Time was spent during one class on the first three chapters of the Revelation reviewing the Lord's appeal letters to the seven ecclesias. Some of the main lessons for us are — he knows our works, asks us to repent, wants us to listen and encourages us to overcome as he did. One evening program was dedicated to a workshop on the *Importance & Need for Sound Leadership*, using "Who then is that faithful and wise steward" of Luke 12:42-44 as the focal point.

During the four days, there was a nice amount of time for daily readings and discussion, singing, prayer, recreation and rest. As in previous years, the physical food was ample and tasty! Once again, the CBMC set out tables of sample literature with sign-up sheets for each of the items, such as the Christadelphian Instructor, the Declaration, the Bible Reader's Companion, Preparing for Baptism, Living the Truth and the Study Guide on the Tabernacle. One of the high points to this Bible School is the 10:30 New Year's Eve Breaking of Bread Service. The exhortation topic was "A Soft Answer" (Prov 15:1) — we live in a sometimes loud, impatient and confrontational society — when things have to be done yesterday (not today or tomorrow), and there's no time to think and respond in a calm, proper manner. We hear harsh words, anger and hasty "come-backs" that cause great hurt and sometimes the wounds go deep, and never really heal. As the Apostle Paul states clearly — "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, . . .". It was sobering to realize how we have failed, and must follow our Lord's example (1Pet 2:18-25) in the home, ecclesia, neighborhood, school and workplace.



**Group photo of the Jamaican Year-end Bible School**

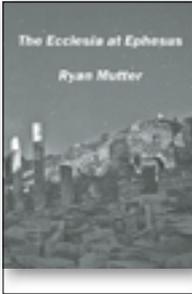
On the morning of January 1, 2014 after listening to one of the daily readings, we all left Kendal refreshed to begin a new year, re-dedicating ourselves in service to our Heavenly Father and His Son.

During the rest of our week-long stay in Jamaica we enjoyed Bible Classes with the Kingston and May Pen Ecclesias, as well as spending time in members' homes. We were much encouraged by the fellowship and hospitality extended to us by the members and youth — and look forward to returning!

*Written by Bro. Don Luff, CBMC Linkman  
Submitted by Sis. Jan Berneau CBMA/C Publicity*

## **Books from The Tidings**

### **The Ecclesia at Ephesus, by Ryan Mutter**



*Ephesus was one of the most advanced cities in the Roman Empire. Believers living there faced many of the same issues that confront followers of the Lord Jesus Christ today. The Bible captures more than four decades of the Ecclesia's history through the Acts and the numerous New Testament writings penned by or to believers living in Ephesus. The lessons the Bible provides about the causes and consequences of events in the Ecclesia remain relevant in today's ever-changing times. Since the Bible records the development of the Ecclesia as a whole and also certain of its individual members, studying the Ecclesia at Ephesus*

*provides powerful lessons in spiritual growth. \$9.00 US (264 pages, with color maps and images).*

#### **Bible Guidelines for a Happy Marriage, by John C. Bilello**

*Sound, proactive, Biblical advice on how to build and maintain a happy marriage. \$6.00 US (soft cover, 127 pages).*

#### **The Creation Text: Studies in Early Genesis, by David Levin**

*Forty-nine studies offer fresh insights into early Genesis by examining the text and structure of the first five chapters. \$12.00 US (364 pages).*

#### **My Journey in Faith, by Ronald Hicks**

*A brother shares his life experience in the Truth with Christadelphians around the world, and the joy of mission work. Special price: reduced from \$10.00 to \$5.00 US (372 pages).*

#### **Pictures of Redemption, by George Booker**

*Explores parables, analogies, and figures of speech used in Scripture to illustrate the many facets of redemption. \$6.00 US (soft cover, 192 pages).*

#### **The Whole Armor of God, by Ryan Mutter**

*This story takes place nearly 3,000 years ago, but the spiritual challenges are familiar to today's young people. \$6.00 US (110 pages).*

#### **How to Order**

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*The Ecclesia at Ephesus: Bible Guidelines for a Happy Marriage: Pictures of Redemption: The Whole Armor of God, The Creation Text (Studies in Early Genesis): My Journey in Faith.*

*Designed so ecclesias can sample these books. Offer extended through July 31, 2014.*

## 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.)

### BRANT COUNTY, ON

The ecclesia began the year with a New Year's hymn sing, readings and social activity at the home of Bro. Dan and Sis. Ashley Robinson. Soon after this on January 19, 2014, we were deeply saddened by the falling asleep in the Lord of Sis. Joan Newth, following open-heart surgery. She and her husband, Bro. Lloyd Newth, had just celebrated their sixty-eighth wedding anniversary a week previously. Our thoughts and prayers have been with Bro. Lloyd, and their sons Bro. Jeff, Bro. Mark and Bro. Carl, and their families. We long for the resurrection day when mortality will be swallowed up through the victory of our Lord, and all God's saints will be rewarded.

On February 12, 2014, Bro. Frank and Sis. Dorothy Abel (Hamilton Book Road, ON) were with us for the day. Frank showed a DVD to the whole Sunday school on metamorphosis, in particular, on the Monarch butterfly. This served as a basis for his exhortation. The photography of the DVD was spectacular and the beauty of the butterfly in God's creation was overwhelming. We enjoyed a hot meal together and then Frank gave a Bible Class on, "Accountability, Resurrection and Judgment," a sobering examination of Scripture.

Our public lecture on Tuesday, February 25, 2014, was delivered by Bro. Joel Robinson (Hamilton Book Road, ON). He dealt specifically with Daniel chapter 11 regarding the history of the king of the North and the king of the South, a very informative presentation! Bro. Peter and Sis. Karly Styles (Brantford, ON) visited us on Sunday, March 2, 2014. Peter led us in, "Studies on the Book of Jonah" for the entire Sunday school, the exhortation, and following lunch together, an afternoon Bible class as well. It really turned into a very informative and uplifting study day for the whole ecclesia!

The weekend of March 29-31, 2014, proved to be extra-special for the ecclesia. After good confessions of faith by ASHLEY and STEPHEN PRYER, daughter and son of



**The Pryer Family**

Bro. Grant and Sis. Rachel Pryer. We witnessed their baptisms on Saturday, March 30, 2014. Sunday, March 31, 2014, the Sunday school classes gave their annual presentation to the ecclesia. From one year olds to early twenty year olds, they all entertained the members with plays, memory work and hymn playing. The last presentation was by the teens/early twenties class on Esau and Jacob based on the book of Obadiah. It brought us to the judgment seat of Christ, where two sons had to answer for their actions. The youth left us with

a sobering message regarding our faith and works. The whole event lifted our spirits and encouraged us to serve better, together.

We will miss Sis. Joyce Webb, who has moved to the Hamilton area to live with family. She has faithfully attended the Brant County Ecclesia since its inception in July of 2011. Consequently, as of Sunday March 31, 2014, we commended her to the love and care of the Hamilton Greenaway, ON Ecclesia.

Lastly, we have added a new preaching initiative to our annual proclamation efforts, which was common in the past. We took out a monthly 1/6 page size advertisement for our Tuesday evening lectures in a local weekly newspaper with good circulation. We usually have one or two regular visitors each week, but we want to try and let the light of the gospel shine brighter in the area.

*David Wisniewski*

## **ORLANDO, FL**

We welcomed the following brothers and sisters as visitors to our meeting over the last few months: Brian and Sharon Adams and family, and Ken and Celia Green (Washington DC); Julian and Sandra Baseley (Guildford, UK); Michael and Pauline Walker (London, ON); Phil and Jean Hale (Castleford, UK); Samantha Markwith (Orlando, FL); Ken and Bonnie Burcaw (Ann Arbor, MI); Jack and Shirley Robinson, Mike Pearse, Lacey Robinson, Cassidy Robinson, and Paul and Bonnie Robinson (Cambridge, ON); David and Sue Brewer (Blackburn, Aust.); Alistair and Megan Fletcher (Clayton, Aust.); Jennifer Armitage and family (Carthage, NC); and Alan Markwith (Hamilton, ON). Our sincere thanks to those brothers who exhorted.

*Randy Davenport*

## **RICHMOND PETERSBURG, VA**

With sadness we report to the brotherhood the falling asleep in Christ of Bro. Buluma Luendo on March 19, 2014. Bro. Luendo was baptized August 27, 1996 and was a member of the LUGUFU Ecclesia in Tanzania. He came to this country with his family 10 years later in 2006, and joined the Richmond Petersburg Ecclesia. Bro. Luendo was a wonderful example for all of our members, traveling 60 miles to our ecclesia from his home in Charlottesville when his work schedule would allow. In spite of difficulties understanding English, Bro. Luendo would follow along in Sunday school and Memorial service in his Swahili Bible. Our brother faced many challenges in his life and service to his master, the last of which was lymphoma. But his challenges never dampened his enthusiasm for the truth or his love for the brethren. He will be greatly missed. Our prayers are with his wife, Salima, and children, Noella, Kaimba and Enoch.

We would also like to thank our visiting brothers who provided us with words of exhortation; recently, Bro. Andrew Fraser on, "The Day of Provocation", and Bro. David Mutter.

*David King*

## **SARASOTA, FL**

The Sarasota ecclesia extends its sympathy to the family of Sis. Chris Butts, who fell asleep in Christ on March 30, 2014. She now rests alongside her dear husband, Bro. Bill Butts, waiting for that great day when the trump of God shall sound, and the dead in Christ shall rise. Sis. Chris will be greatly missed. She has left an example of Christian love and piety for us to meditate on, and in some way emulate. She had lifelong challenges to her health, which she bore with great dignity and grace. The Apostle Paul's words, no doubt, gave our sister great encouragement: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather

glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then I am strong." (2 Corinthians 12: 9-10).

*James Wilkinson*

## **WICHITA FALLS, TX**

Since last reporting our ecclesial news, we have welcomed the following brothers and sisters around the table of our absent Lord: Linda Jones, Alex Cervantes (Los Angeles, CA); Justin Reich, and David and Erin Clubb (Simi Hills, CA); Max and Linda Wickham (San Diego County, CA); Bucky and Debi Wilhoit (Detroit Royal Oak, MI); Micah Hatch (Avon, IN); Megan McStravick (McKenzie, BC); Janet Link (Baltimore, MD); Maggie Howt (Comax Valley, BC), Matt Bryan, Steve Bryan, Phil Morgan, and Rachel Morgan (Kouts, IN); Samantha Fletcher (Heathmont, Aust.); Ronnie and Kristen Hefner, and Bethany Young (North Houston, TX); Miah Hefner, Andrea Banta, David Ishman (Austin Leander, TX); and Peter Trotte (Dallas, TX). We thank Bre.: M. Hefner, R. Hefner, P. Trotter and B. Wilhoit for their words of comfort and exhortation.

In January Bro. Jim Cowie (Brisbane, Aust.) led our weekday Bible class with a talk entitled, "Watchman — What of the night? Britain, Europe and Russia" tying many current world events to Bible prophecy, and heralding the return of our absent Lord. We thank our brother for his very encouraging class. We're pleased to share the blessing of the birth of Nathan to our Sis. Janet Sunday and her husband, Edwin, in February. We're thankful for our new Sunday school scholar!

It's with great sadness we report that our Bro. Aaron Clubb fell asleep in Christ, March 30, 2014, after a fourteen month battle with cancer and various complications. Our brother's pain and suffering has ended, and now he awaits the call of our Lord. We are so thankful for the overwhelming love and generosity of our brothers and sisters during this time of trial. We are certainly blessed to be a part of the body of Christ! May our Saviour return soon!

Over the weekend of April 18-20, 2014, we held our annual spring gathering. Our speaker this year was Bro. Frank Abel (Hamilton Book Road, ON), and his theme was, "The Ecclesia-A Place of Refuge". We were also very pleased that Sis. Dorothy was also able to come. We thank our brother for his exhortation to appreciate the value of the ecclesia and the importance of contributing to its edification. We also thank the support and valued contributions of all those who enjoyed this weekend around God's word with us this year.

*John A. Clubb*

## **CHRISTADELPHIAN INDIAN CHILDREN'S HOME (CICH)**

Please note that donations in US dollars can now be sent to CBMA and earmarked for CICH, c/o Jeff Gelineau, 567 Astorian Dr., Simi Valley, CA 93065-5941.

## Minute Meditation

### Don't do it.

An ancient Chinese proverb says, "If you won't want anyone to know, don't do it."

Most of us have done something that we do not want others to know about. Little children may sneak that cookie before dinner, older children may accidentally break something while rough housing and hide the evidence, and most adults have done certain things they hope do not become public knowledge. After a misdeed, peace of mind is disrupted. The thief and the murderer live in fear of being found out. We who may be guilty of lesser faults still worry about discovery. All of us can lose sleep from regretting our actions and a guilty conscience. Octavia E. Butler once said, "I have a huge and savage conscience that won't let me get away with things."

When we are tempted to do something we know is wrong, we should follow the Chinese proverb: — don't do it. Then there is no worry about others finding out. The apostle Paul tells Felix, "So I always take pains to have a clear conscience toward both God and man." Paul tried very hard not to do evil as he went about his daily living. We should do the same.

Although Paul earnestly tried to serve his God faithfully, he was afflicted with the same nature with which we all struggle. He despairingly admits, "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." We share his problem, as Paul reminds us, "for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." When we do something bad, we need to remember that our secret, while it may be hid from our friends, is not hid from the One who not only knows what we did but knows what we are thinking. David tells us "O LORD, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, But behold, O LORD, You know it altogether. You have hedged me behind and before, And laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is high, I cannot attain it."

David felt overwhelmed by God's omniscience and we should feel the same. Ishmael Vargas once said, "You can fool some of the people some of the time and all of the people some of the time. POSSIBLY you can fool all of the people all of the time, but you can't fool God, 'For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.' No, you can't fool Him my friend, not even once. He will bring every deed into judgment, EVERYTHING!"

How thankful we are for the forgiveness offered us by our heavenly Father. Although God knows about every one of our sins, He is a merciful God who has provided a way for forgiveness of sins through the sacrifice of his Son our Savior. Our Heavenly Father is willing to cast all our sins behind His back and remember

them no more, as Isaiah tells us, “Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.” What a wonderful blessing to realize that we can go to bed each night completely forgiven because, as John tells us, “If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

We are reminded by Paul that “We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” Thankfully those sins that the Lord has cast behind His back will not be brought up when we stand before His son in judgment. Our Heavenly Father is loving and forgiving to those who seek to serve him faithfully. We need to heed the wise advice not to do anything that would displease Him, and when we fail, we need to confess our sins to Him and be thankful that we will not be judged for the sins that He has forgiven.

We believe that the return of our Lord is near. As we read in Hebrews, “Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.” We take comfort knowing that “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

Robert J. Lloyd

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## Reseda Preaching Experience

*As we indicated in the May issue, The Simi Hills Preaching funds offer to help fund preaching efforts (ksommerville@unitedagencies.com). This account is extracted from that of The Tidings August, 2011 issue*

*Our ecclesia has been blessed with many baptisms from the seminars over the past many years. This has come from teaching that began with materials that were fuzzy, slanted on the page and were a copy of a copy of a copy and no one knew where the original was. This has progressed over the years, but with all this the consistent piece is brethren who understood their bible, encourage questions from the students, are enthusiastic about the message, and of the great Hope they have.*

*Our seminars start with an advertising effort sent multiple times (usually four) prior to the seminar. **Beginning Seminar:** This starts with two instructors who are dressed to teach. At the end of the 12 weeks we roll directly into the next section.*

***Intermediate Seminar:** Using the foundation of Genesis already laid, we discuss the promises to David, the Devil, Satan, Baptism, Resurrection, One God, The Son, The Holy Spirit and explain all the first principal doctrines of God's Truth. The approach avoids "the bible does not teach that..." but rather focuses on allowing the bible to speak for itself as the authority doing the instructing. **Advanced Seminar:** Having the first principals now taught, this portion takes them through the baptismal questions. Our seminar has developed by God's blessing with much prayer, just 'doing it', lessons learned, trial and error, sharing our experiences with each other and an enthusiasm to "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the Hope that is in you."*

# Coming Events (Lord Willing)

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

## JUNE, 2014

- 12-? Simi Valley, CA** Bible Reading Marathon Bring a friend to our Bible Reading Marathon, where guests will read the entire ESV Bible beginning at 10:00 AM Friday, June 12 night and day until finished. Follow along at [BibleReadingMarathon.com](http://BibleReadingMarathon.com). Want to join us? Email [cindy.and.doug@juno.com](mailto:cindy.and.doug@juno.com).
- 18-21 Houston North, TX** Texas Bible Day camp. Four wonderful days for 3-12 yr olds centered around God's word. The topic will be "Minor Prophet Links to the Kingdom". Please register at: [www.nhchristadelphians.org](http://www.nhchristadelphians.org).
- 20-22 New York Metropolitan Ecclesias** annual Sister's Retreat at the Homewood Suites, 2801 Papermill Road, Wyomissing, PA 19601. The speaker will be Sis. Cynthia (Cindy) Paiva (Guadalajara, Mexico). Her topic will be "Practical Aspects of Daily Living in the Truth". Contact Sis. Averil Ferguson at 718-881-8705 for more detailed information.
- 22-28 California Kids Camp.** The topic this year is "Revelation". Teachers: Bro. Stephen Hornhardt (Australia) and Bro. David Wisniewski (Canada). For registration go to [www.kidscampcalifornia.com](http://www.kidscampcalifornia.com) or contact Bro. Tom Graham at [tom@bigbrand.com](mailto:tom@bigbrand.com).
- 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 macbs@live.com) or check our website: [www.midatlanticbibleschool.com](http://www.midatlanticbibleschool.com).

## 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): "The Life and Times of Jehoiada the Priest"; "Events Subsequent to the Return of Christ" (teens); Bro. Stephen Palmer (Mumbles, Swansea, UK): "Gospel of John"; "Josiah" (teens); and Bro. Leen Ritmeyer (Cardiff, Museum Place, Wales, UK): "The Power of Bible Places in the Life of Christ"; "Tasting Biblical Hebrew" (teens). website: [www.swcbs.com](http://www.swcbs.com).
- 12-19 Manitoulin Family Bible Camp.** Bro. Andrew Johns (Cumberland, S. AUS): Adults "Arising out of Adversity" (The Man after God's own Heart in Trouble); and Teens "Staying Faithful to God under Pressure" (The lives of faithful young people under pressure). Bro. Jonathan Bowen (Brantford, ON): Adults "The Man of One"; Teens "Under Whose Wings thou are come to Trust." See the website for details [www.manitoulinfamilycamp.com](http://www.manitoulinfamilycamp.com).
- 19-27 Midwest Bible School** will be held at Trine University, Angola, IN. Speakers and their topics are: Bro. Jim Cowie (Moreton Bay, Brisbane, Australia): "Nazarites Unto God"; Bro. Matt Norton (Lismore, Australia): "Impressions of Christ" and Bro. Stan Isbell (Houston North, TX): "Discovering Disguises Through the Bible". 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](http://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](mailto:mail@gelineau.org). Register at the website: [www.californiabibleschool.org](http://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](mailto:cindynevers@verizon.net).

**26-Aug 2 Christadelphian Bible Camp**, Manitoulin Island. The speakers will be Bro. Joni Mannell (Walsall, UK) on "The Difference was Daniel!" and Bro. Gary Cousens (Cambridge, ON) on "James — My Beloved Brethren". More details on [www.christadelphianbiblecamp.ca](http://www.christadelphianbiblecamp.ca). For registration, contact Bro. Alex Browning at [jabrowning@rogers.com](mailto:jabrowning@rogers.com) or phone 1-416-284-0290.

**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](mailto:yoshida@cpros.com). For registration, contact Sis. Pat Posey — [robandpatposey@gmail.com](mailto:robandpatposey@gmail.com).

## AUGUST, 2014

**1-4 All-Mexico Bible School** 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 [davidrllloyd@earthlink.net](mailto:davidrllloyd@earthlink.net) 818-352-6486.

**16-24 Manitoulin Bible Camp**, Manitoulin Island, ON. The speaker will be Bro. Carl Parry on "Elijah". Register at [www.youthconference.com](http://www.youthconference.com).

**16-22 Winfield Bible School** Theme: "Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness" Teachers are Bro. Stephen Whitehouse (UK): "Isaiah: Visions of Our Lord"; Bro. David Jennings (USA): "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the Sons of God", Rom 8:14; and Bro. Jeff Gelineau (USA): "Forgiveness: Doing the Unthinkable". Concerning registration fees, call Bro. Don at 250-545-5988 [donzantingh@hotmail.com](mailto:donzantingh@hotmail.com). Concerning accommodation, call Bro. Harold at 250-478-0343 [hjcawston@gmail.com](mailto:hjcawston@gmail.com).

**17-22 Lakefield Bible School** (formerly Niagara Falls Bible School) at Lakefield College. The school is located east of Toronto near Peterborough, ON, on a beautiful lakeside campus. For information contact Bruce and Barbara Abel: [bnb69abel@hotmail.ca](mailto:bnb69abel@hotmail.ca) or call 519-925-5297. Website [www.lakefieldbibleschool.com](http://www.lakefieldbibleschool.com).

**23-29 Vancouver Island Bible Camp** will be held at Camp Pringle, Shawnigan Lake, Vancouver Island, BC. Speakers are Bro. Dennis Paggi (Verdugo Hills, CA): "Philippians

## **The CHRISTADELPHIAN TIDINGS of the Kingdom of God (USPS 107-060)**

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— Rejoice!"; and Bro. Ted Sleeper (San Francisco Peninsula, CA): "The King's Highway". The camp offers a beautiful environment for all ages to enjoy fellowship and study of God's Word. Contact Bro. Duncan Kenzie at [djkenzie@gmail.com](mailto:djkenzie@gmail.com). Register on-line at [www.vibiblecamp.com](http://www.vibiblecamp.com) or by email to Sis. Karen Grover at [karengrover@shaw.ca](mailto:karengrover@shaw.ca).

### **SEPTEMBER, 2014**

**13-14 Paris Avenue, OH** Fall Study Weekend with Bro. Michael Owen (UK) speaking on the topic: "Joy of Living the Truth". Bro. Michael will be doing several cottage classes prior to the weekend. Contact Bro. Derek Elder by phone at: 216-965-9763, or by email at: [delder1@kent.edu](mailto:delder1@kent.edu).

**13-14 Rogue Valley, OR** Southern Oregon Study Weekend. Study of Psalm 119 on theme of "Open Thou Mine Eyes, that I may behold wondrous things" by Bro. Dev Ramcharan (Toronto West). For registration, contact Bro. Randy Yoshida at [yoshida@cpros.com](mailto:yoshida@cpros.com) (541) 479-5358 or Bro. Tom Muniz at [tmuniz816@gmail.com](mailto:tmuniz816@gmail.com) (248) 561-1553. For accommodation, contact Bro. Henry Wisniewski at [hotmail.com](mailto:hotmail.com) (541) 956-5829.

**20-21 Bedford, NS** Study Weekend with Bro. Jonathan Bowen (Brantford, ON): "The Evidence of Things Hoped For". The classes will be held at the Masonic Hall, St. Margarets Bay, Nova Scotia. Contact Bro. Dale Crawford at [Bedfordchristadelphians@gmail.com](mailto:Bedfordchristadelphians@gmail.com) or 1-902-431-6650.

### **OCTOBER, 2014**

**11-12 Sussex, NB** Thanksgiving Gathering will be lead by Bro. Jim Sullivan (Boston, MA) on "The Sons of Zeruiah".

**11-12 Vancouver, BC** Fraternal Gathering with Bro. Mark Giordano (Norfolk, VA): "Wonders of the Kingdom". Contact Bro. Phil Snobelen at 604 881 4733 or [philsnobelen@shaw.ca](mailto:philsnobelen@shaw.ca) for a program.

**17-19 Women at the Well Sisters Retreat** at Palm Springs, CA. "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of Knowledge" Proverbs 1:7 will be our focus this year with Sis. Patty Reister leading the classes. Contact: Sis. Sandy McLeod [sandramcleod@gmail.com](mailto:sandramcleod@gmail.com). Registration: Sis. Bonnie Sommerville [kenandbonnie@simihills.org](mailto:kenandbonnie@simihills.org).

### **NOVEMBER, 2014**

**8-9 Largo, FL** Fall Study Weekend with Bro. David Jennings (Pomona, CA). Subject: "Led by the Spirit." Contact Bro. Walt Dodrill at [waltdodrill@msn.com](mailto:waltdodrill@msn.com) or 727-410-0896.

**14-16 Austin Leander, TX** Fall Gathering at the HEB Foundation camp near Leakey, TX. Bro. Jeff Gelineau (CA) will be speaking on "The Lord Raised Up Judges". Contact Sis. Maritta Terrell [mt-ct@swbell.net](mailto:mt-ct@swbell.net) or Bro. David Ishman [david.ishman@leanderisd.org](mailto:david.ishman@leanderisd.org).