

THE CHRISTADELPHIAN  
**TIDINGS**  
of the Kingdom of God

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No. 6

Editorial — The Ways of Destroying the Ecclesia are Many and Various .....	263
Exhortation — The Tabernacle of the Congregation, <i>Wesley Butler</i> .....	266
Bible Study:	
The Way of Cain, (10) Methuselah versus Jabal, Jubal, Tubal-Cain and Naamah, <i>Matthew Harrison</i> .....	273
Life of Timothy, (4) Leaving Lystra, <i>Ryan Mutter</i> .....	279
Youth Speaks — Jonathan the Faithful Prince:	
(14) Yahweh Wrought Salvation, <i>Jason Hensley</i> .....	284
The Joy of Sunday Schooling — Have you tried this? (6), <i>Jim Harper</i> ....	288
History — Forgotten Incidents — Megiddo Church, <i>Peter Hemingray</i> .....	291
Letters — The Disfellowship of Job .....	296
Reflections — Knowing Jesus, <i>Katie Dawes</i> .....	297
Bible Mission News — Jamaica — Stewardship Workshop at Round Hill Ecclesia; Full of Farewells — April 2013; Convivencia in Ecuador — March 1-4, 2014 .....	299
News & Notices .....	305
Minute Meditation — Take courage, <i>Robert J. Lloyd</i> .....	308
Coming Events .....	310

# The CHRISTADELPHIAN TIDINGS of the Kingdom of God

Peter Hemingray, Editor

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## Did Lamech Kill Cain?



*An article in the latest Biblical Archeology Review (May/June 2014) addresses this question. It was pointed out that ancient interpreters noticed that the Hebrew word for man, ish, only occurs twice in Genesis 4, once in 4:3 announcing the birth of Cain, and once in 4:23-24, where we read "And Lamech said to his wives, Ada and Sella, Hear my voice, ye wives of Lamech, consider my words, because I have slain a man to my sorrow and a youth to my grief. Because vengeance has been exacted seven times on Cain's behalf, on Lamech's it shall be*

*seventy times seven" (LXX). It is therefore possible, from the Septuagint, to infer Cain was the recipient of the vengeance.*

*This is illustrated by the frieze above from the Cathedral of Saint-Lazare, which shows blind Lamech hunting with his son Tubal-cain, who is pointing out a noisy target in the bushes. They accidentally kill Cain, mistaking him for a wild animal.*

## Editorial

### The Ways of Destroying the Ecclesia are Many and Various

*“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come... But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived”  
(2Tim 3:1,13).*

#### Introduction

There are indeed many ways of destroying the ecclesia, and unfortunately, we can truly see the prophecy of Paul coming to pass in these last days. Independent of the pressures from the world around us, all too often the problems we encounter within our ecclesias are inflicted from within. Although not a new phenomenon, the situation does appear to have gotten worse over the last few decades, even independent of the difficulties being occasioned by the situation in Ontario. It is clear that many ecclesias are under considerable stress. Some are relatively peaceful, growing in membership, concerned collectively with their attempt to walk in the steps of our Master. They worship in harmony, study collectively, spread the true gospel and reflect the Glory of God in their lives in some small way. Some ecclesias differ considerably from this ideal, in many ways and due to many causes.

#### Small children

Truly, the ways of harming our ecclesias are many and various. And there does not appear to be a magic bullet, or any readily available cure, that will prevent this happening. And the ways this happen seem to be rooted in out all too human natures.

We have all seen all too often. Take two young sibling children: one starts playing with a toy. The other almost inevitably decides he wants the same toy. There is rarely any prior discussion about the subject. One child just tries to snatch the toy away from his friend. The harder he tries to remove it, the more strongly and fiercely his sibling grips the desired object. Soon a veritable tug-of-war develops, the toy acting as the rope, and is likely to be destroyed or rendered useless by the undue pressure exerted on it.

If the toy breaks, it is immediately discarded, and the incident is over. Both children move on to something else. It is as if, during the struggle, their interest soon transferred from the toy to the objective of gaining the victory over their opponent. They started the day as friends. The relationship changed during the struggle to one where they were bitter enemies. Children might soon forget their quarrels: but unfortunately adults are not so ready to forgive, or forget.

#### The adult stage

Transfer this scene to the adult stage; to the things of the Truth and our worldwide Brotherhood. At different times — and sadly it is still true today — it is as if ecclesias are torn apart by opposing forces. Strong pressures exerted at the

extremes sometimes threaten the stability of all, as if the combatants are heedless of the collateral damage. No one seems to take stock of the situation, and total destruction is threatened. If this seems to be overstating the risks, perhaps we should note the Apostle's warning in the days of the early ecclesias: "*If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another*" (Gal 5:15).

Extreme positions can be adopted by just a few, leaving the rest of the ecclesia battered and bruised, like the broken toy destroyed in the conflict. This can occur whether the subject under discussion is important or trivial — either can result in serious damage. So we see many types of problems arise:

- Factionalism: deciding that one's view of an item is the only possible view
- Heresy, whether real or imagined (and it is more often imagined than real)
- Having one's focus on matters other than following in the footsteps of our Master
- Superficial conversion: either due to inadequate instruction, or the pressure of relationships that might not endure
- The failures of human nature: gossiping, lack of prayer, bitterness for minor reasons, sustained Biblical illiteracy, self-promotion, materialism.

The list can go on, without referring to any of the specific problems that commonly occur in our ecclesias. So what can we recommend as possible solutions? I believe there are some possibilities, although I would be the first to admit many situations resist any easy solution. I have come across many difficult situations in a journey which includes half a century of various countries, ecclesias, and situations. And some observations are the result of the interest I have had for several decades, which is the history of the origins and development of our Christadelphian community.

### **Possible solutions**

We all ought to look first into our own hearts, then look at the life of our own ecclesia and of the Brotherhood, since individual influences can destroy the spiritual life of an ecclesia, and ecclesial problems sometimes wreak world-wide havoc in an inter-linked community like ours. Do we nurse private grudges or help to drive wedges between brother and brother? Have we fully appreciated the fact that the very existence of a group within an ecclesia creates a gulf between brethren? Do our own activities help to build up the corporate life of the ecclesia, or destroy it? And do we assess those who refuse to be a party to our divisive activity as therefore belonging to another faction?

Sometimes the attempt is made to justify the unilateral activity of a brother, or a group, or an ecclesia, on the grounds that it is a defense of the faith, and others are then considered responsible for creating the division by their resistance to a particular attitude or approach. One of the dangers of party spirit is that it seeks to justify itself when the Scriptures have nothing but condemnation for it. When we begin to speak or think in terms of "we" and "they" instead of "we be men that are brethren" our case is desperate indeed. Nothing that is unrighteous or uncharitable in itself is ever truly done for the glory of God, however much we may persuade ourselves that it is so.

*“If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Let us have no self-conceit, no provoking of one another, no envy of one another. Brethren, if one is overtaken in a fault, you who are spiritual should restore him, in a spirit of gentleness. Look to yourself, lest you too be tempted” (Gal 5:25–6: 1, RSV).*

In addition, we often disregard the wise counsel of Bro. Robert Roberts. His ecclesial guide is the result of decades of helping the nascent community in its growing struggles, as he was involved in almost all the disputes that inevitably arose as individuals and ecclesias struggled in their pursuit of the Truth. To quote from the Ecclesial Guide, clause 39:

“If the matters of difference inclining to this course do not affect the question of the truth or the commandments, it is the duty of the lesser to submit to the greater number. There is no other practicable rule of action. In such a case the minority will bear their disappointment and conform to the decision of the majority. It is their duty to do so by every law of association — human and divine. They will be enabled to do it the more easily if they remember that it is a matter of apostolic command to submit one to another; to give place to disadvantage; to overcome evil with good; to bless, and curse not. Men of the apostolic stamp will not retort that this is equally binding on the others. Men of the apostolic stamp will be more bent on subjecting themselves to the apostolic law than imposing it on others.”

How many times have we seen the minority refusing to accept the will of the majority? They raise spurious objections, or threaten to leave the ecclesia and join another (and even worse, do so!) I admit it is often difficult to accept “majority rule”. As Churchill said “Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time.” And this was just after he had been voted out of power in 1947. Until our Lord comes to bring with him a perfect government, we have to abide by the will of the majority in most cases.

### **Forbearance**

We have the example of Paul, who found it necessary to beg Sisters Euodias and Syntyche to stop quarrelling. (Phil 4:2). Very often differences such as these are not solved, because no one is willing to give way, and disputants are prepared to jeopardize the ecclesia rather than yield. On such occasions principle was often invoked when no principle other than that of the self-assertiveness of human nature is involved. We need to remember the words of Paul: *“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph 4:3).*

*Peter Hemingray*

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## Exhortation

### The Tabernacle of the Congregation

#### Instructions

The instructions for making a sanctuary for God amongst the people was first given back in Exod 25 -28, and after a time of preparation, it was time for the building to begin. Israel was camped at Mount Horeb and had received the Law through Moses. The instructions to make the Tabernacle was part of the Law. God wanted to dwell amongst His people, but that could only be done under specific requirements, for people could not come near a perfect and Holy God in sin and presumption. The design of the Tabernacle and its ordinances were to teach the Israelites to aim high in their spiritual commitment in their collective worship. The provisions for personal sacrifices, not only sacrifices by the priests on behalf of the nation, were to teach the Israelites the values and attitudes they needed to have as individual men, women and families. The reason for the Tabernacle and its ordinances is summarized in Exodus:

*“Then I will dwell among the Israelites and be their God. They will know that I am the LORD their God, who brought them out of Egypt so that I might dwell among them. I am the LORD their God” (Exod 29:45-46).*

God wanted to dwell with His people, but the only way that could succeed is if there was agreement between them. The implied challenge that makes, to the people whom God wants to dwell, is picked up by David.

*“LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour. In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not. He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved” (Psa 15)*

This Psalm starts by asking who is able to dwell with God, and the answer is the one with the highest practice of righteousness and morality in deed, word and thought. The bar for who can abide with God is set very high.

While divine presence is not represented by any physical place at our time in history, God is said to dwell the hearts of those who are faithful. So we must ask ourselves how well is that cohabitation in our lives and hearts? Are our lives in agreement with these divine standards, or do we find ourselves falling short? If we are honest with ourselves, we find ourselves falling short, as would any Israelite who contemplated the implications of the instructions given as to how to make a sanctuary for God.

There are a number of places in the New Testament that expound this theme, highlighting the similarities between our relationship with God and that of the Israelites. Paul, in one of these passages, adds some practical instructions to people about things they must make corrections to in their lives for God to dwell them.

*“And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the LORD, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the LORD Almighty” (2Cor 6:15-18).*

John in his letters links the need for Christian love and the indwelling of the spirit of God, to the spirit of Christ in us. We are reminded that perfect love casts out fear. Indeed, the Israelites had great reason to fear their God, and many died in the decades in the wilderness when they failed to uphold His laws. They tried to live next to God but were not in agreement about how they should live, but instead focussed on their own needs and pleasure, and did not trust in God. There is also in this a warning to us, but the Apostle John is able to provide an answer to the question about who can dwell with God: the answer is the individual who loves God, and therefore loves His mercy and justice while reflecting this back to others.

*“Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us” (1John 4:15-19).*

### **The application to ourselves**

The principle for us to understand when reading the Law and its ordinances, is to understand that these are types and shadows of greater things to come. Thereby we can understand how these things from such a long time ago have relevance for us. They are not the end in themselves, but are laid out in accordance with divine wisdom. This is true for whenever God has sought to dwell in the hearts and minds of the people He has made. Our basis to understand the Law of Moses this way is expounded in the letter to the Hebrews. Even though the writer says very little about the Tabernacle itself, he had much to say about the priesthood, the succession of the priests after Aaron, and the greater priesthood to come in Christ. At the beginning of Heb 9 he mentions some of the furniture of the Tabernacle, but does not take the time to expound their meaning. He goes on to remind the reader that the tabernacle was made by human hands as a place to offer animal sacrifices to God. However, the final plan of God does not involve human craft, or the offering of animals, but instead the life and obedience of one who was perfect.

*“But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us” (Heb 9:11-12).*

These things were the copies or representations of greater things to come, as expounded in Heb 9:24. However, we can learn much from the way God set out to have the Israelites in the wilderness make a sanctuary. We will study some of the themes from these chapters in Exodus, with the mind that these are all lessons for us to teach about our relationship with God and how these things are types and shadows for us to learn about Christ.

### **The plundering of the Egyptians**

The first instruction regarding the making of a Tabernacle for God’s dwelling amongst the people was a collection of materials and wealth from the people. At the time of this commandment in Exod 25, the Israelites had been freed from slavery and out of Egypt for only three months. It is explained twice, earlier in the narrative of the Exodus, that the Israelites were to ask of their Egyptian neighbours to “borrow” clothes and other items of wealth for their use, and the Egyptians would be quite willing to give them whatever they asked. This was the unorthodox means by which God allowed the Israelites to plunder the Egyptians, to receive wages for two centuries of hard labour. Clearly the providential hand of God was in this, otherwise this plan would not work. Why would any Egyptian willingly give their wealth to households of slaves that lived among them? Perhaps we could imagine the humbler Egyptian peasants being sympathetic to the oppression of their Israelite neighbours and being willing to help them. However, it is hard to imagine that many of the wealthy and powerful Egyptians, who had the kind of fine luxury items that the Israelites acquired in great abundance, being eager to give to a group of agitating slaves. Despite this, that is how God planned the plundering of the Egyptians. A spirit was put on the Egyptians that made them willing to give whatever was asked of them, and the end result is that the Israelites left Egypt with a vast amount of fine fabrics, also metals such as gold, silver and bronze, jewels and wood, all items that recently freed slaves would not normally possess. The principle behind this fact that the raw materials for the Tabernacle of the Congregation came from Egypt, is that the source of the people for God’s household are from out of the world. Just as the Israelites were drawn out of Egypt, we are drawn out of the races of humanity living in various nations. The problem that created for Israel, is that since the Israelites developed into a nation while in Egypt, the people learned much of the thinking of Egypt. Even though they could physically be removed by God’s power and separated from the rest of the peoples of the world, it was much harder to remove and unlearn the thinking of Egypt from them. We are no different from them, and we are deceiving ourselves if we think we somehow are not influenced by the thinking of the people of the place and times in which we live.

## **Significance of the building materials**

Therefore, the cloth, the metals, the wood, the incense, and all the other precious items that the Israelites had at Sinai represent peoples drawn out of the nations, and we could think of ourselves as simply one of these items. The gold and silver could be to make furniture for the Tabernacle to worship God, representing faith, or it could be fashioned into idols. The cloth could be for curtains around the Holy and Most Holy Place, to mark a separation between the Holy and the common, or instead these fine things could be used to adorn the body or house of an Egyptian noble, perhaps the very ones who were enslaving God's people. The incense could be prepared in a way to be a sweet smelling aroma from the altar of incense before the veil, symbolizing the prayers of the faithful, or it could be used on the mummy of some Egyptian or in a temple of any number of false deities along the Nile. The oil could be used to provide light from the seven part lamp stand, symbolizing divine light, or this oil could be used for simple daily life. There was nothing inherently holy in these materials, and there is nothing inherent in us as disciples that makes us valuable in God's sight. We are just raw materials taken out of the world, that could be fashioned and used by God's wisdom into things that please God, or we could be fashioned and used by the world conforming to the things of the world.

After Israel would come into the land and offerings of animals, grain, oil and other goods would need to be provided for the continuous operation of the sanctuary, and this would come from the agricultural production of the land that God had given to His people. Thus the things needed to maintain God's house were given by God to people, and they were asked to simply give back some of what they had been first given. This is the same principle that we have already read out of 1 John, that God loved us and gave to us, therefore He wants us to give back the same way.

Moses was instructed to ask the people for willing contributions from their plunder to make a sanctuary. Most of these items were essentially useless in the desert, most would have been heavy or awkward to carry. Their only value to the Israelites would have been for what they could be used for once they settled in a new land. More than that, any Israelite who thought about it would have realized that the only reason they had this wealth is because God set it up for them to get it. If not for divine power, they would still be slaves toiling away or dead at the hands of the Pharaoh and his people. The Israelites were being taught that everything they had was given to them, and it only made sense to give it back to God when asked for it. This is the same for us as well. It is not just material wealth, but our entire lives are likewise given to us, and nothing we have or can do is really from us. When we are asked to give something back and serve in some way, we should feel a moral obligation to give. Clearly many of the Israelites felt this need to give, and there was an abundance provided in likely heaps of expensive materials for the task for building a sanctuary for God, with all its associated items of worship. However, it is emphasized at the beginning of Exod 25 that the call to contribute was for anyone with a willing heart. Likewise, our worship is a willing giving of ourselves, it is not something that should be forced by one upon another.

*“Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering. And this is the offering which ye shall take of them; gold, and silver, and brass, And blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats’ hair, And rams’ skins dyed red, and badgers’ skins, and shittim wood, Oil for the light, spices for anointing oil, and for sweet incense, Onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod, and in the breastplate. And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them” (Exod 25:2-8).*

## **The design**

The design for the Tabernacle and its ordinances was given by God to Moses, and given to chosen people to carry it out and make the items. It was not a design created by the Israelites, for a short time later when the Israelites had the opportunity to make things by their own design for their religious and social needs, they made a Golden Calf and danced around it, delighting in their own cleverness and passions. This was in accordance with the thinking and behaviours they knew from Egypt. This was a religion for the masses of humanity that indulged them and distracted them, not taught them to look back to the promises to their ancestors and look forward in faith, but to think of themselves here and now. Our society, with its mass media and diverse kinds of distractions and indulgences is doing the same thing as this Golden Calf did for the Israelites. While Moses was on the mountain receiving the instructions as to how to make a sanctuary for God to dwell in, his people had all but given up on his message of hope for the future and wanted something to gratify their needs and hopes in the short term. The message for us is likewise to not get distracted. Both the Israelites and ourselves have been delivered from slavery, the Israelites from bondage and labour to Pharaoh, and we have been delivered from sin. However we can very easily turn back in our hearts, even while thinking that we are acting religiously and rightly, just as the Israelites who made a Golden Calf for their religious needs, claimed that this was the god who brought them out of Egypt. We struggle with the sin in our minds and bodies, just as the Israelites who came out Egypt did, and we are prone to all the same mistakes they made in their lives and their collective worship, even though we may not immediately recognize the false thinking.

The manner in which the work was done, was by men and woman who were given the skills to do the work. Moses could not possibly have written out everything needed to make the tabernacle and its associated items. If this had been a project done by people under normal circumstances, it would have required teams of highly trained specialists in various crafts, including working with fabrics, wood, metal, jewellery, and perfumes, with an infrastructure of supervisors, with levels of management and design staff. All these people would have different skills to contribute to the project, and they all would have put their own ideas along with their efforts into the whole. God’s project management for the making of the Tabernacle was based on two men, who seem to have led the task over a period of about a year. Perhaps they had some of these skills from their lives in Egypt, but most of what they needed to do this was given to them by God. These two were called specifically by name, as they were vessels prepared for this work, and their

names and their assignments are given to them.

*“And Moses said unto the children of Israel, See, the LORD hath called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; And he hath filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship; And to devise curious works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, And in the cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of wood, to make any manner of cunning work. And he hath put in his heart that he may teach, both he, and Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. Them hath he filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work, of the engraver, and of the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen, and of the weaver, even of them that do any work, and of those that devise cunning work” (Exod 35:30-35).*

They were given by the God ability to teach, so there were others involved as well, whom we know less about. Verse 25 mentions women who were skilled in weaving preparing the yarn from the raw materials. Verses 4 and 8 of chapter 36 mention other artisans contributing. By the metaphor from the New Testament, the building of the sanctuary for God is the building of the ecclesia. There was a place for all to contribute to this effort, according to the abilities given to each. Bezalel and Aholiab serve in a role analogous to that of the Apostles who were specially called and prepared, and who in the New Testament times had the ability to teach and pass on skills to others, by the means of laying on of hands and the transferring of the Holy Spirit. The structure of the building of the tabernacle, and the manner in which work was divided up, is similar to how different Holy Spirit gifts were given to individuals to contribute to the ecclesia, all under the guidance and leadership of the Apostles. The gifts in Exodus were weaving, engraving, metal work and other trades, while the gifts in the time of the Apostles were speaking in tongues, prophesying and teaching, but the structure is similar, because God was behind both projects.

Levites were appointed with the job of assembling and moving the elements of the Tabernacle. It needed to be assembled in the correct way, it had to be put together with labour and skill of faithful people so it could perform the function it was intended. Otherwise it would be just a collection of curtains, furniture and gold covered wood poles, not a dwelling place and focus of true worship. Its poles had to be set up, holding up curtains up and it all tied together, teaching a lesson many parts with one purpose and unity. Priests were appointed to serve in it, and all had a role to play to contribute to a common goal.

We have seen that the Tabernacle was made of materials taken from Egypt, the world, willingly offered by a thankful people who had been delivered from slavery, and who were eager to give back to God who orchestrated it so they would have those materials when they were needed. The design of the God's Sanctuary came from God through Moses: it was not something devised by man to serve human needs and wants, but was a type and shadow of God's purpose to come in the future. The making of all the pieces was implemented by craftsmen specially ap-

pointed and inspired with the necessary skills, who led others who also were given the skills, by either providence or inspiration. These are warnings about getting distracted and wanting to indulge our own needs and wants instead, or of trusting in our own cleverness and devising items to add to God's worship to suit our own opinions. The making of a place for God to dwell in is one of the Bible's great metaphors. These are principles that are introduced in the writings of Moses with the Tabernacle, and are developed through subsequent Biblical events in building and maintaining the Temple by faithful kings and skilled craftsmen. The failings of the flesh and the opposition of sin is typified by wicked kings plundering the temple for its wealth, and the setting up of idols in and around it, culminating with its destruction by Gentiles. As Israel's history continues, we read of God's working by providence to allow the faithful to return and the temple being modestly rebuilt by hopeful people despite the poverty and trials of their times, teaching that there is a hope for the future for God's remnant. The Tabernacle and Temple, God's purpose of making a dwelling place, is a seed bed of principles and types for us to learn from. All of this provides an example of how we are to conduct and contribute to our worship, for though we do not have a physical sanctuary to focus our attention to worship God, we believe in the return of Christ to the earth. All these principles, types and shadows are fulfilled in the person and purpose of Christ, together with need to work together and contribute to our common worship, to be united just as are curtains being drawn tight together by ropes.

As we come to the emblems before us, the bread and wine, the symbols of Christ's body and life given to us, we are commanded to contemplate our own lives in comparison to his.

While speaking in the bluntest possible language about the enmity between the mind of sin and the mind of God, Paul reminds the believers that if the mind of Christ, and the mind of God who raised Christ could come to dwell in us, then we are promised to share also in that Resurrection. So the lesson of the Tabernacle and the dwelling of God with us speaks directly to the reason we have assembled this morning, to remember the death and resurrection of Christ, and our promise to share in it, and to become the sons of God. Finally, Paul teaches some of the principles of God's dwelling place in believers, the ultimate place in which God intends to dwell.

*“So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God” (Rom 8:8-14)*

*Wesley Butler (Vancouver, BC)*

## Bible Study

### The Way of Cain —(10) Methuselah versus Jubal, Jubal, Tubal-Cain and Naamah

*“When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah. When Methuselah had lived 187 years, he became the father of Lamech. And after he became the father of Lamech, Methuselah lived 782 years and had other sons and daughters. Altogether, Methuselah lived 969 years, and then he died” (Gen 5:21, 25-27).<sup>1</sup>*

#### Methuselah

Methuselah, the son of Enoch, born in the 8th generation, is credited with being the longest living man *ever* — 969 years. His name is composed of two parts, *mat* or *meth* meaning “man,” and *shelah*, which refers to a non-specific missile weapon, such as a dart, javelin, or spear. Thus, his name has often been translated as “the man of the spear.” And yet, it is difficult to imagine that “man of the spear” is the correct meaning of Methuselah’s name, given that Seth’s genealogy chronicles men of faith, not violence. Moreover, what makes Methuselah unique is his longevity, and as such one ought to expect that his name in some way reflects that extraordinary fact. Therefore, a better explanation for the meaning of his name is needed.

The Hebrew word, *mat*, which refers to man, is derived from the root word, *mathay*, which may mean “When?” or “How long?” or “After how long?” Regardless of which interrogative phrase is used, the question it asks is surely related to Methuselah’s longevity, since his great age would have been the subject of much curiosity in the antediluvian age. It may have given rise to speculation on when he would die, if ever. With this in mind, his name could be translated as: “How long will the man (*mat*) live?” or “When will the man (*mat*) die?” As noted, the latter portion of Methuselah’s name, *shelah*, refers to a non-specific missile weapon. Missile weapons are projectiles and as such they must be *sent forth* from the user’s hands. Thus *shelah* could be translated as the *action* or *verb* associated with the weapon or object, not the object itself. As such, *shelah* would translate as: “sent forth, let go, released.” When the two parts of Methuselah’s name are combined, the full meaning of his name is revealed: *mat/meth*, “How long until he dies?” and *shelah*, “Until it is sent forth” or “Until it is released.” It is a name that is unique in that it poses a question and answers it.

The last remaining riddle concerning Methuselah’s name is identifying what the “it” in his name refers to: “Until *it* is sent forth” or “Until *it* is released.” Depending upon which version of the Bible is used, Masoretic, Septuagint (Alexandrinus), or Samaritan, Methuselah died *before the Flood*. The Masoretic and Samaritan calculate that he died in the exact year of the Flood, while the Septuagint (Alexandrinus) indicates that he died six years before the Flood. Thus, the “it” in “until it is sent forth” or “until it is released” signifies the Flood.

Therefore, Methuselah's name should be translated as follows: "How long until Methuselah dies? Until the Flood is sent forth," or "God will not send forth the waters of the Flood until Methuselah is dead."

But why would God spare Methuselah from the Flood? One possibility is that God did not wish to condemn a righteous man with the wicked:

*"Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. So the LORD said, 'I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth' "* (Gen 6:5-7).

That Methuselah was a righteous man is evident from the fact that he was included in Seth's genealogy, and that his name refers to God sparing him from a death with the wicked. Recall also that Enoch, a prophet of God, was Methuselah's father. Doubtless Methuselah grew up listening to his father preach against wickedness and prophesying about the coming Messiah (Jude 14-15), which surely inspired his own faith. These factors combine to give a picture of a faithful man who, despite the omission, also "walked with God" (Gen 5:22).

Why then wasn't he included on the ark? The simple answer is that he was far too old. Due to his age, he would not have lived for long after the Flood, nor would he have survived the traumatic experience of being on the ark for such a long time, the effects of the great storm, or the difficult process of starting over in the post-Flood age.

In considering Methuselah, we might imagine that his great age was a blessing. In his lifetime, however, he witnessed several tragic events: Lamech's attempt to murder his father; his father's subsequent disappearance; the decline of the ecclesia and the rise of corruption and violence, which spread across the ancient earth (Gen 6:1-11). And yet Methuselah also lived to see the joyful birth of Noah and the construction of the ark,<sup>2</sup> a vessel that represented a new beginning and a new hope.

### **The mothers of human "progress"**

*"Lamech married two women, one named Adah and the other Zillah" (Gen 4:19).*

In relation to Lamech's polygamy, Genesis could have simply said that he had more than one wife. Given that so few women are referred to at all in the early chapters of Genesis — including wives — we might wonder why the author bothered to mention the names of Lamech's wives at all.

As discussed, the Bible is a very economical text. It does not include superfluous information. Far from being superfluous, the inclusion of the wives' names, Adah and Zillah, illustrates how polygamy works and why God considers it a sin.

Adah's name means "ornament" or "jewel." As her name attests, she was precious in Lamech's eyes. In contrast, Zillah's name, "shadow," emphasizes the subordinate role she played in relation to Adah; Zillah was like a shadow in relation to the bedazzling light cast by Adah, the jewel.<sup>3</sup>

Thus Adah and Zillah's names illustrate the nature of polyamory: however well-intentioned, participants in a polygamous relationship do not share equality; someone will always be favored. Since inequality does not create oneness, it violates the unity God intended for marriage: *"A man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh"* (Gen 2:24).

Moreover, polygamy creates division, strife, and jealousy, which is demonstrated in the marital lives of Abraham and Jacob. Abraham's wife Sarah was jealous of Hagar and treated her unkindly until Hagar fled (Gen 16). Likewise Leah was not Jacob's first choice — Rachel was — and as such, she was consistently feeling unloved by her husband (Gen 9:30-35). Therefore, the inclusion of Adah and Zillah's names in Genesis is meant to show how polygamy creates inequality, which leads to strife, division, and jealousy — qualities which are the antithesis of what God desires in us. It is also to reinforce why God decided that only one man and one woman represented a good and equal partnership.

### **Jabal: father of nomadic peoples and the great migration**

*"Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the father of those who live in tents and raise livestock"* (Gen 4:20).

The phrase "live in tents" refers to a nomadic people. As the "father of those who live in tents," Jabal is associated with its popularization. Moreover his name means "to move," which emphasizes his migratory activity. Thus the meaning of his name and the reference in Gen 4:20 to "living in tents," suggests that Jabal was responsible for initiating the first widespread "move" or migration upon the earth.

Jabal's migration was a significant event in antediluvian history. Prior to the 8th generation, humans more or less dwelt in a small geographical space relative to the rest of the earth: the well-watered lands of Eden and within proximity of the eastern cities of Nod — Enoch and Irad. However in the 8th generation, humans began to migrate. The cause of this mass migration was likely due to a population explosion, which is confirmed by several passages in Gen 6:<sup>4</sup> *"men began to increase on the face of the earth,"* and, *"for the earth is filled."*<sup>5</sup> Accompanying a growth in population, there was also an increase in the number of livestock. This was also a motivating factor in causing the mass migration. As the antediluvian population increased, so too did their animals. Just as Abraham and Lot were forced to separate due to the increase in their respective flocks (Gen 13:2-11), so too did Jabal and his fellow herdsman. Thus, in addition to a population explosion, there was also increased competition for pasture.

Not only was Jabal the "father of those who live in tents," but he was also the father of those who "raise livestock." The Hebrew word for livestock, *mikneh*, refers to an unspecified herd, such as cattle, sheep, or goats. Our first inclination might be to argue against this notion. Wasn't Abel was the first shepherd (Gen 4:2)? Although Abel was the first shepherd, his untimely death prevented him from instructing others. Thus he cannot be thought of as a "father." Jabal surely was not the first to raise livestock, but Genesis states that he was the first to widely

promote or teach others the practice of raising livestock, thereby making him the “father” of husbandry.

Jabal’s life as a herdsman was intimately related to his “living in tents.” Tents are used by people who lack permanency, because they move about the land. Jabal dwelt in tents because his home was where his herds grazed and slept. Thus Jabal’s activities as a tent dweller and herdsman are intimately connected, since they explain how the earth came to be “filled” (Gen 6:16).

### **Jubal: father of music, mnemonics, and myth-making**

*“Jubal was the father of all who play the harp and flute” (Gen 4:21).*

Jubal was the father of those who play the harp and flute (or ancient versions thereof), although it is unclear whether he invented these musical instruments or whether he merely popularized their use. These two musical instruments are not arbitrary: the flute is a wind instrument, while the harp is a string instrument. The two major classes of instruments are thus represented in Jubal.

The flute is a wind instrument and as such requires breath to make music. It is not surprising then that Jubal’s name means “breath.” The word Jubal is also the root word for “jubilee,” which is associated with celebration and exaltation, both of which require breath to vocalize joy or excitement. His name and the association with the word *jubilee* suggests that the 8th generation was a celebrated era. But of what? Surely not the state of the ecclesia, since it was well in decline by this point. Rather it is likely that his name, in association with “jubilation,” refers to a celebration of the great civilizing advances made by him, his brothers, and his sister (and possibly others) in the 8th generation.

Speculating on what this age may have looked like: the population explosion suggests that humans were adapting well to their environment. The cities of Enoch and Irad were surely crucibles for knowledge and invention, where arts, culture, and entertainment could be found — a climate in which both Jabal’s musical inventions/discoveries contributed to hero-worship, myth-making, and oral history, and where (as we shall see) Naamah’s skills in cosmetology and/or seduction/pleasure contributed to the beautification/sexualisation of women towards — perhaps — ancient rites of marriage and procreation, and the creation of prostitution. The first mass migration upon the earth brought about new discoveries, and with it increased trade and commerce. Those inroads into the rest of the world could not have been as successful without Tubal-Cain’s tools, which were used to subdue, explore, and extract minerals and other resources from the earth.

Given these presumed developments, Jubal’s name, “jubilee,” is an apt description of a celebrated time in human history, at least from a worldly perspective.

But Jubal wasn’t just a musician; he was also the first bard. Since writing was only established in around 3,000 BC, oral history was the only way for antediluvians to record and share experiences. Oral history requires mnemonic devices to aid in the storytelling process. With its rhyming, meter, and structure, music is one such mnemonic device.<sup>6</sup> Through music, Jubal gave Jabal’s nomadic people a mnemonic tool, useful for sharing and preserving history as they travelled through the earth.

As they migrated further away from the cradle of civilization — Enoch and Irad — their stories, preserved through song, would have been a vital link to their past.

What might the bard's tales entail? Doubtless their repertoire included songs of Creation, of Adam and Eve and the Garden of Eden, and of Cain and Abel, since these were foundational stories. But due to the decline in faith, we must assume that, gradually, the bard's version of these events underwent significant transformation — the result of time, memory, and bias — so much so that they no longer represented true accounts. In particular, it isn't difficult to imagine that bards who were descendants of Cain reinterpreted the events surrounding their ancestor in a more favorable light; perhaps even exonerating him, while casting God as an unfair deity<sup>7</sup> and Abel as a usurper of his brother's hierarchical status within the family. They did this without fear, since they were “unafraid to slander celestial beings” (Jude 8). As a result, their versions of the truth “corrupted the earth” (Gen 6:11). Moreover, in the process of reinterpreting events, “men of renown” were worshipped as heroes and, in the course of time, deified:

*“The Nephilim were on the earth in those days — and also afterward — when the sons of God went to the daughters of men and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown” (Gen 6:4).*

Men cannot be “renowned” unless they and their deeds are spoken of/sung by others. Likewise, “mighty men” or “heroes” are only “mighty” and “heroic” if they are remembered as such. Thus the reference in Gen 6:4 to “heroes of old, men of renown” illustrates the mind-set of the antediluvian people: they did not worship God and pursue righteousness, but rather they discarded God in favor of worshipping man and his achievements. As time passed, these heroes<sup>8</sup> were mythologized and deified. Genesis refers to them as “giants,” which is not a description of their physicality, but rather a comment concerning the esteem others had for them. To the great majority of people at that time, these men or heroes loomed so large that they were giants on the earth — Titans.<sup>9</sup>

As has been shown, Jubal's discoveries in music cultivated culture, produced entertainment and merriment, and provided the means by which to record oral history. However it also led to the distortion of truth, to hero-worshipping, myth-making, and the worship of men.

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**Notes:**

1. All references are from the NIV
2. The construction of the ark was completed within 35 years. This is deduced in the following way: Noah was told to build the ark after his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japeth, were born (Gen 6:10). Noah was 500 years old when he became a father (Gen 5:32). The Flood did occur until he was 600 years old (Gen 7:6). Thus, the maximum number of years for Noah to build the ark was 100 years. However the command to build the ark was not given until after his sons had already taken wives: “*But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark — you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you*” (Gen 6:18). According to the list of ages given in Gen 5, men became fathers no earlier than 65 years old, based on Gen 4 and 5. Thus if 65 is used for the earliest age that antediluvian men married and had children, this leaves approximately 35 years or less for the construction of the ark.
3. The order that Lamech's wives are listed in Gen 4:23 need not dictate the order in which

he married his wives: Adah may have been Lamech's first wife, which explains why she is mentioned before Zillah, but it is also possible that Zillah was Lamech's first wife and she is listed after Adah because she was not his favorite. In the Bible, the favored wife, not the first wife, is routinely listed or mentioned first. For example, Jacob married Leah first, then her sister, Rachel. However, Rachel was his favorite. Thus, in Gen 31, whenever Jacob calls to his wives, he refers to Rachel first, then Leah: *"So Jacob sent word to Rachel and Leah to come out to the fields where his flocks were"* (Gen 31:4). Genesis mirrors Jacob's favoritism by also giving precedence to the Rachel over Leah: *"Then Rachel and Leah replied, 'Do we still have any share in the inheritance of our father's estate?'"* (Gen 31:14). Moreover, when Jacob feared Esau's revenge for having stolen his birthright, he sent out, wave after wave, gifts and servants to meet Esau. Those he valued the most were kept until last. Thus, he sent out Leah and her children before he sent Rachel and her children (Gen 33:2). Even the book of Ruth, which was written centuries later, gives Rachel precedence: *"May the Lord make the woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah"* (Ruth 4:11).

4. Gen 6:1,11,16.
5. This "filling" of the earth may simply refer to the known portions of the earth at the time when Genesis was written or received, i.e. the known portions of the earth in the days of Moses — if Moses was its author. This "filling" of the earth was initiated by Jabal's mass migration, which began in the 8th generation.
6. From studying the bardic tradition in the Balkans in the early part of the 19th century, Harvard Professor, Milman Parry, discovered that songs (and poems) sung/recited by guslars (Yugoslavian bards) contained a mnemonic formula: "A group of words regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea" (Ryan and Pitman 1998:220-221). This formula aided the guslar (bard) in remembering/retelling the story, either through song or poem. This ancient linguistic formula likely had its origins in Jubal's musical discoveries.
7. Cain's words, *"My punishment is more than I can bear,"* likely contributed to the view that God had unfairly treated him.
8. Adam and Eve, Cain, Lamech, Jabal, Jubal, and Tubal-Cain, perhaps even Naamah, were considered *"heroes of old, men [and women] of renown."* For example, the significant event in Lamech's life survived in the form of a poem or a song (Gen 4:18-24), which as has been shown was the way in which ancient bards passed on oral history.
9. I've deliberately referred to these *"men of renown, heroes of old"* as "Titans" to suggest a connection between the Bible and Greek mythology. Is it possible that these unknown men, heroes, may have been remembered, centuries later, in Greek mythology as the Titans, a primeval race of powerful deities that ruled during a legendary golden age — possibly the antediluvian age or, more specifically, the 8th generation? The Greeks believed that the Titans were "overthrown" by a younger race of Olympian gods (newer gods) — a reference to the post-Flood heroes (men of renown) who were deified and who replaced the old gods of the antediluvian age?

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## Special Invitation

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

*39th annual Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith Gathering  
at Denison University in Granville, Ohio, July 21-27, 2014.*

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

*Contact Bro. Brad Rek (330) 609-6957 or [brad.rek@gmail.com](mailto:brad.rek@gmail.com).*

*Visit our website at <http://abrahamicfaithgathering.org/>*

## Life of Timothy (4): Leaving Lystra

### Introduction

In the previous article in this series, we considered an episode in Timothy's life that is a reminder of the importance of following our absent leader and role model, the Lord Jesus Christ. While Paul was away from Lystra, Timothy's hometown, between the First and Second Missionary Journeys, Timothy faithfully followed Paul's example even though Paul was not physically present with him. After Paul returned to Lystra at the beginning of the Second Missionary Journey, he was pleased with how Timothy had acted, and he invited the young man to travel with him and Silas.

Paul's response to Timothy when he came back is a small foreshadowing of what will occur with us at the return of Christ.

- If we labor without excuse despite the obstacles that are before us,
- If we look past our natural limitations and place our trust in God,
- If we are aware of the spiritual needs of those around us and work to do our part to address them,
- If we follow in the footsteps of Christ, our absent leader, and put the needs of our brothers and sisters above our own,
- If we do as Timothy did:

We will then be pleasing to the Lord at his return, and we will be given greater opportunity to serve in the Kingdom.

In these last days, as we await the return of the Lord, it is important that we develop the mindset Timothy had when he was in Lystra. Those early years in his life were foundational to his later work.

### Perspectives on Timothy's early role

Timothy accepted Paul's offer to accompany him on the Second Missionary Journey. The year was approximately 51 AD. Timothy was probably about 20.<sup>1</sup>

Paul and Barnabas had previously a young brother travel with them on the First Missionary Journey. His name was John Mark, but he had abandoned Paul and Barnabas. It appears that Timothy was selected to fill the role on the Second Missionary Journey that John Mark had once had on the First Missionary Journey.

Why did Paul want a young person to accompany him on his missionary journeys? There were probably a number of reasons, and it can be instructive to think about them.

Although it is not recorded in the Bible, there was probably a need for routine tasks, like getting supplies, arranging meetings, and delivering messages, to be done faithfully. Those would be ideal jobs for a reliable young brother to perform.

As we consider our own service in the Truth, it is important to remember the need for mundane, sometimes thankless tasks — like printing fliers, washing dishes at the hall, and setting up equipment — to be done well. We need to keep our eye

out for those kinds of jobs, make ourselves available for them, and give them our best effort. They can be so important to a well-functioning ecclesial event.

Also, a young person could have been particularly useful for reaching out to other young people that the missionaries met. Outreach efforts benefit from having people from a wide range of backgrounds involved. Even if we feel that we do not have the ideal aptitudes for preaching efforts, we should still try to involve ourselves in them. We might end up encountering someone who is very similar to us and turn out to be the exact person who is best suited to connect with that particular individual. People sometimes shy away from participation in outreach efforts because of who they are. “I’m short and shy,” they might reason. But who better to engage with a short and shy person than another short and shy person! Everyone’s participation is needed in Gospel proclamation efforts.

Finally, bringing a young person along gave Paul the opportunity to provide tremendously valuable on-the-job training to a future leader of the ecclesia. Paul was probably in his mid-40s during the Second Missionary Journey. He was in one of the most active stages of his work in the Truth. Yet he was already preparing the next generation to continue the work when he would no longer be around. It is important that we follow his example. We should strive to share whatever talents we possess with people who are younger than us so that they can continue the work that we are doing should age, illness, or death stop our labors before the Lord’s return.

### **Circumcision**

Acts 16 records Paul circumcised Timothy before they left Lystra: *“Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek”* (Acts 16: 3).

Paul and Timothy knew preaching the Gospel in synagogues was challenging. Doing so with an uncircumcised person who had a Greek father would have been even harder. Paul circumcised Timothy to avoid that obstacle to their preaching work. But the fact he did so was remarkable, given what was occurring in the ecclesial world at the time.

The previous chapter, Acts 15, describes events that took place at a conference in Jerusalem prior to the Second Missionary Journey. Certain brethren from Judea had been teaching circumcision was necessary for salvation. Paul and Barnabas had opposed them, and they decided to take the matter before the apostles and elders in Jerusalem: *“And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question”* (Acts 15: 1-2).

Acts 15 records that at the conference in Jerusalem that followed, the apostles and elders declared circumcision was not necessary for salvation. They then asked Paul, Barnabas, and certain other brethren to carry decrees with that message to the ecclesias (Acts 15:22-29). One of Paul’s activities during the Second Missionary

Journey was delivering those decrees. In fact, Paul, Timothy, and Silas shared those decrees — about circumcision not being necessary for salvation — with the other ecclesias of Galatia just after he circumcised Timothy. The very next verse after Timothy’s circumcision is recorded describes the missionaries’ work delivering the decrees about circumcision not being necessary for salvation: “*And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem*” (Acts 16:4).

It says a great deal about Timothy’s character that he was willing to undergo circumcision. He could have offered a shallow argument about doctrinal correctness and refused to undergo the procedure. If he done so, he would have saved himself the considerable physical pain associated with adult circumcision. But instead he humbled himself and willingly endured the pain so the Gospel message could be furthered.

Timothy was willing to sacrifice of himself so that other people could more easily learn the Truth and bring glory to God. His choice illustrates the mindset we need to have. The Truth must always come before our own pride and comfort.

In the years following Timothy’s circumcision, it appears that Judaizing elements in the Galatian ecclesias used Paul’s circumcision of Timothy to erroneously claim that Paul taught that circumcision was necessary for salvation. (Remember that Timothy was Galatian.) Paul addressed the issue in his Epistle to the Galatians: “*And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased*” (Gal 5: 11). Paul reasoned that the persecution he suffered from those who stressed the importance of circumcision was proof he was not preaching the same message that they were.

### **“Before many witnesses”**

There is evidence that there was a gathering of Timothy’s ecclesia to commend him on his journey before he left Lystra. Paul later made reference to it: “*Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses*” (1 Tim 6:12).

Paul wrote 1Tim to help Timothy at a spiritual low point in his life. Although it is not obvious from the text what the exact purpose of the gathering Paul referred to was, it is clear it was something that had positive associations in Timothy’s mind. Paul later mentioned it to strengthen and encourage Timothy when he was down.

It appears that whatever isolation Timothy may have experienced in Lystra prior to learning the Truth had become a thing of his past. The ecclesia in Lystra clearly meant a great deal to Timothy. They had embraced him, and he loved and labored for them. But Timothy was willing to leave them behind, along with his faithful mother and grandmother and whatever career he had embarked upon, for the rigors of missionary work with the Apostle Paul.

Timothy knew full well the trials and dangers that travelling with Paul could entail. But he embraced the wonderful opportunity for service to God it offered.

## **“Servants of the most high God”**

Accompanied by Paul and Silas, Timothy left Lystra. One of their first major stops was Philippi. An ecclesia was formed there as a result of their preaching efforts.

One day Paul healed a mentally ill slave girl in Philippi who made her masters a lot of money by fortune telling.

*“And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by sooth-saying: The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour” (Acts 16:16-18).*

The events that followed reveal a great deal about Timothy’s character. After she was healed, the girl’s masters were enraged because they could no longer make money off her. They seized Paul and Silas and dragged them before the authorities (Acts 16:19, ESV). What followed was a scene of intense violence:

*“The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely. Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks” (Acts 16:22-24, ESV).*

That night, while they were in prison, Paul and Silas prayed and sang hymns to God: *“And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them” (Acts 16:25).* It is interesting to consider the Scriptures’ evidence about why they might have done that.

They might have been *“rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame”* for the Lord’s name (Acts 6:41). It might also have been that they were doing what they usually did at night. Perhaps they sang hymns every evening.

It is certainly evident from Paul’s writings — and in his writings to Timothy in particular — that singing hymns was a very important part of their spiritual life. Both of Paul’s epistles to Timothy contain what many commentators agree must be excerpts from hymns. The following passage is believed to be from a hymn of praise:

*“Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen” (1Tim 6:15-16).<sup>2</sup>*

One of the “faithful sayings” in 2Tim is in metrical Greek, which suggests it was also an extract from a hymn: *“For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him. If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us. If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful” (2Tim 2:11-13).<sup>3</sup>*

Paul wrote 1 and 2 Timothy to help Timothy, his *“son in the faith”* (1Tim 1:2), during times when Timothy was struggling. The fact that Paul quoted from

hymns in each of his epistles to Timothy indicates that Timothy must have loved and been greatly encouraged by spiritual music. Perhaps there were many nights where Paul, Timothy, and other faithful brothers and sisters concluded the day's activities and prepared for the next day's events by singing hymns together and offering prayers to God.

As we look for ways to improve our service to God, strengthen our families, and provide godly alternatives to this world's entertainment and distractions, we might wish to consider dedicating time every night to singing listening to, and being encouraged by hymns and spiritual music.

Timothy was not with Paul and Silas the night they were imprisoned. But he was a faithful servant to the Lord in Philippi and in the cities he went to thereafter. We will consider the form his service in Philippi took in the next article in the series.

Ryan Mutter (Baltimore, MD)

**Notes:**

1. D. Smith. "Young People Who Put God First: Timothy – Role Model for the Believer." *The Testimony*, page 316.
2. A. Nicholls. 1991. *Letters to Timothy and Titus*. (Birmingham, United Kingdom: The Christadelphian), page 215-219.
3. Brother A. Nicholls provides a fascinating discussion of the connection between this passage and the Epistle to the Romans. He suggests that someone in the Roman ecclesia (or perhaps Paul himself) turned the exposition into a hymn. See A. Nicholls. 1991. *Letters to Timothy and Titus*. (Birmingham, United Kingdom: The Christadelphian), page 290-292.

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## **The Circumcision of Timothy**

*There is no contradiction between Paul's act in circumcising Timothy (Acts 16:3) and his doctrine that circumcision invalidated a Gentile's standing in the faith. Timothy was a Jew, and as such, stood in a natural relation to circumcision, which was enjoined upon Abraham as a token of the covenant under which his seed, after the flesh, were nationally chosen. Paul's doctrine and Paul's general course were misunderstood by the Jews. They represented him as a destroyer of the law, and a preacher of Mosaic disobedience, whereas his great contention was that it was the Gentiles who had nothing to do with Mosaic institutions, and that any justified Gentile seeking justification by the law or by circumcision, had "fallen from grace." Paul circumcised Timothy at Lystra, "because of the Jews who were in that quarter," — not to gain their favour, but to deprive them of the occasion of helping the slander that was current elsewhere, that he "taught all the Jews which were among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs" (Acts 21:21). Afterwards, the Jewish brethren at Jerusalem, who knew the nature of Paul's objections to the law as affecting only Gentile believers, gave him this advice: "We have four men who have a vow on them: them take and purify thyself with them . . . and all may know that those things whereof they were informed concerning thee are nothing, BUT THAT THOU THYSELF WALKEST ORDERLY AND KEEPEST THE LAW" (Acts 21:23, 24). Paul acted on this advice, and thus gave public illustration of the true nature of his attitude. (Robert Roberts, *The Christadelphian* 1882 p 128)*

## Youth Speaks

### Jonathan the Faithful Prince: (14) Yahweh Wrought Salvation

#### The call to kill David

When Jonathan heard Saul's command to kill David, he didn't know what to do. Indeed, he loved David as he loved his own soul, but he also couldn't simply abandon his father — he loved him too and longed to see him repent. Thus, Jonathan found himself in a quandary. How could he devote himself to his friend and devote himself to his father at the same time? And, even more, how could he do that *safely*?

After much consideration, Jonathan — a man who lived by principle and not by results — knew what he had to do. He had to warn David, and he had to try to persuade his father to abandon the plan. He had to convince Saul that attempting to kill David was a heinous sin. It was an extremely dangerous undertaking, but again, Jonathan was concerned about principle, and his principles dictated that he live in self-sacrificing love for his father and his friend.

But at the same time, Jonathan was practical. While his focus on principle overrode his focus on results, he didn't simply *ignore* the results. He didn't throw them out and pretend as though he didn't care about them. Instead, while his principles dictated his overall choices, the results dictated how he put those principles into play. Thus, while his principles determined that he would talk to Saul and defend David, the results determined *the way in which* he would talk to Saul. In this article, we'll see Jonathan's carefully chosen words, and we'll notice that while he didn't allow results to cripple him, he did whatever he could to placate the vengeful spirit of his father. In all of this, Jonathan again gives us a powerful example of what it means to be a true and loving friend.

#### Carefully chosen words

The next morning, as Jonathan went to speak to his father, he didn't come to him haphazardly. He had likely spent a long time that night thinking about how to best confront Saul and how to sway his thinking. Thus, his words were not an attack or a harsh criticism of Saul's feelings; instead, they were a carefully calculated and reasoned appeal to Saul to reconsider his ways:

*“And Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father, and said unto him, Let not the king sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his works have been to thee-ward very good” (1Sam 19:4).*

Just imagine how Jonathan would have felt as he led his father out into the field and began to speak these words to him! With heart pounding, he was speaking to one who was full of suspicion and paranoia.

His plea began with a reference which Jonathan had likely chosen very carefully: “Let not the king...” It wasn’t an accident that Jonathan referred to Saul here as “the king.” Jonathan was well aware of what it was that Saul feared; so he didn’t simply call him “father” or just begin to speak to him without addressing him. Instead he called him “the king,” and with this title applied to him, Saul would be reminded of his son’s loyalty to his throne.

Yet there was more. Not only did Jonathan refer to Saul as “the king,” but notice the way in which he referred to David — there was a purposeful contrast in Jonathan’s description of the two men. Saul was “the king” and David was “his servant.” Again, Jonathan didn’t speak about David as Saul’s son-in-law or as his army commander — positions which exalted David — but called him Saul’s “servant,” in a deliberate reference to David’s loyalty and faithfulness to Saul.

Thus, Jonathan’s plea to Saul was to the king about the king’s servant — but again, notice that it wasn’t for the servant’s sake. Jonathan didn’t speak to Saul about David on David’s behalf, but rather for Saul’s own sake. If Saul were to truly try to kill David, it would be a “sin” against David — once more, this specific word was chosen with great care. The word “sin” is generally a word which is filled with connotations, all of them being negative. Sin means death, sin means the wrath of God, sin means that *we have done something that is terribly wrong*. Such would be the case if Saul tried to kill David — and it was almost as if Jonathan was using this word specifically because he wanted to wake Saul up to what a terrible thing it would be if he followed his feelings in this case. It was one of Jonathan’s attempts to help his father come back to a realization of God’s presence in their lives and His care for all of their actions.

But even further, Saul’s murder of David wouldn’t only be a sin — it would also be entirely impractical. Here was where Jonathan’s argument would have truly taken force with the faithless king. David’s works toward Saul had been good! When the Philistines arose up in the south, David was able to go over and subdue them! David was one of Saul’s most loyal soldiers — and Saul had even acknowledged that when he had promoted David all through the ranks of the army. When Saul became upset, David was able to play music to soothe him! All throughout his time in the courts of Saul, David’s presence had been a huge benefit to Saul! How could Saul want to kill someone who was willing to give up their life for his sake?

*“For he did put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine, and the LORD wrought a great salvation for all Israel: thou sawest it, and didst rejoice: wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause?” (1Sam 19:5).*

Jonathan took his father’s mind back to the past — reminding him of the terror that Saul had felt as the giant presented himself to Israel for forty days. All of Israel had looked to Saul to fight against Goliath, and Saul simply couldn’t muster up the strength. Thus, the army had awkwardly and fearfully encamped against the army of the Philistines, waiting to see if anyone from their ranks would take up the challenge, and hearing the giant’s taunts for over a month. But then, the entire situation changed when the son of Jesse visited the camp. He had been filled with

faith and had risked his life to fight against Goliath — making it so that Saul didn't have to. How could Saul want to kill a man like that? Had not David effectively saved Saul and the entire nation from being filled with shame?

### **Yahweh wrought salvation**

But even more so, the victory wasn't won by David! Surely, David had gone out to fight the giant in faith, but it was Yahweh who was with David and who had won the battle that day — and Jonathan's specific phrase "*the LORD wrought a great salvation for all Israel*" would have really struck a chord with Saul here. In fact, it was one which he had used himself at the end of a previous battle. Saul, just after being made king, had won a mighty victory over the Ammonites — and after the battle, some of the Israelites wanted to find the men who had protested about Saul being their king and slay them. Upon hearing those words, Saul stopped the men in their evil plans by telling them that God had wrought a great salvation that day:

*"And the people said unto Samuel, Who is he that said, Shall Saul reign over us? bring the men, that we may put them to death. And Saul said, There shall not a man be put to death this day: for to day the LORD hath wrought salvation in Israel"* (1Sam 11:12-13).

In a happier and more faithful time, Saul had stood against the men who wanted to murder his opponents — what a different attitude than he held at the present time! It was almost as if Jonathan sought to use this specific phrase in order to bring Saul's thoughts back to that battle and back to his time of faith. He sought to remind Saul of how he had felt when he trusted in God and when he lived as though God were active in his life! At that time, he had those who were threatening his reign and those who sought to dethrone him (1Sam 10:26-27), but he *spared* their lives and even prevented others from killing them.

How different was his attitude at the present time! And sadly, it didn't need to be — that was Jonathan's point! Back during his time of faith, Saul's reign was secure and God worked through him to accomplish victories. But things were different now, and Jonathan's phrase would have likely reminded Saul of that as well — because though Jonathan used the same phrase as Saul in the battle against the Ammonites, Jonathan wasn't speaking about God working through Saul. Instead of working through *Saul* to crush His enemies, God had wrought salvation through *David*. Such had been the change as time passed; the spirit of God had left Saul and had gone to David. This change was something which was very much on Saul's mind and Jonathan's reference to God working through David would have likely pricked his attention. Just notice what was said of Saul in the previous chapter:

*"And Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, and was departed from Saul"* (1Sam 18:12).

God had effectively stopped working through Saul, and instead accomplished His victories through David — this was a fact which Saul knew and was essentially the fact which caused Saul to want David dead. Jonathan's plea to Saul offered Saul an alternative. David didn't need to die — God had wrought salvation through Saul before and Saul hadn't been plagued by insecurity. If only he could go back

to how he had lived and acted before during that time of faith, then things could be different.

If Saul was willing to turn around and once again worship God in sincerity and truth, things could change. Though the end of his kingdom was prophesied, if Saul repented, things would change — such is the mercy of God. Throughout the prophets, God explicitly explained this concept to the people: even though He prophesied the demise of a kingdom, if they repented, they would be spared:

*“At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them” (Jer 18:7-8).*

Despite the prophecy of destruction, if a nation turns from their wickedness, God would turn from the destruction which He promised. Again, this was the reason that Jeremiah was told to write down all of God’s indictments against Israel and Judah — so that they might turn and God would not have to destroy them:

*“Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day that I spake unto thee, from the days of Josiah, even unto this day. It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin” (Jer 36:2-3).*

God is constantly looking for the repentance of His people — and when they repent, He withdraws His wrath and often withdraws His promised punishments. This is God’s prerogative! He can do what He so desires with His own (Matt 20:15). Though He has stated that a kingdom will come to its end, if they repent, He can reverse that promise. Such was the case with the city of Nineveh; when Jonah prophesied that they had forty days until their complete destruction, they repented, and God withdrew the prophecy.

The same could have been the case with Saul — and perhaps Jonathan sought to help him realize and remember. In times past, God had been with him — it wasn’t as though God had always turned His face against him and forsaken him forever. Nevertheless, at this point, God sought to work through another, because Saul refused to follow Him in faith. But if he turned and repented, things could be different.

Thus, Jonathan’s speech was filled with a powerful argument — not only for Saul to ignore his violent feelings towards David, but if Saul pondered the depth of his son’s words, he would see that there was also a powerful argument for him to humbly turn to his God in repentance. It was a beautiful application of Jonathan’s commitment to following the principle of serving both his father and his friend, and yet at the same time, trying to achieve the best possible results. Jonathan didn’t rush towards his father, fervently rebuke his immaturity, and seek to force his repentance. Instead, Jonathan’s words were carefully chosen and were presented in gentleness. As such, they were perhaps the most effective plea which Jonathan could have presented to his father.

But, regardless of their potential effectiveness, Jonathan had no idea how Saul's embittered mind would react. And so there he stood, palms sweating and heart pounding, waiting for his father's next word.

*Jason Hensley (Simi Hills, CA)*

## The Joy of Sunday Schooling

### Have you tried this? (6)

Go online. There is a wealth of Christadelphian Sunday school material waiting to be discovered and put to use. Three Sunday school programs in the brotherhood now offer at least some material online:

- 1) The Christadelphian Sunday School Union (UK)
- 2) The Australian Christadelphian Sunday School Union
- 3) The Christadelphian Sunday School Association (Australia)

Simply put, these committees have posted teaching material on their websites that can be downloaded and used for free. All three sites can be accessed from the Sunday School Lessons board on my Pinterest site ([www.pinterest.com/2harps4u/](http://www.pinterest.com/2harps4u/)) or at the web addresses given below.<sup>1</sup> The sites are worth exploring.

**Christadelphian Sunday School Union (UK) – <http://www.cssu.org.uk/>**



If you are looking for a source of Sunday school lessons for all ages, you will find it on the Christadelphian Sunday School Union (UK) website. Nearly all the CSSU lessons — for pre-readers up to teens — are now posted on the site and can be downloaded for free. Over 500 lessons are available. They provide teacher notes and student activities for most of the lessons that used to be available only in book form.<sup>2</sup> The CSSU site is also a collecting point for Sunday school plays that feature a wide variety of Bible themes. Many of these can be downloaded and printed, ready to use. The site is easy to navigate.



The Australian Christadelphian Sunday School Union is beginning to make its lessons available for download. Much of the Kindergarten (ages 4-5) material is now online, and Senior (ages 15 and up) material is coming online.<sup>3</sup> ACSSU is embedding active resource links in its teacher notes. This is a unique feature of the site, and the links are very useful. They not only take you to outside sources of free teaching materials for any given lesson; they provide direct access to Christadelphian resources as well. A set of Sunday school projects for all ages and several Sunday school plays are available for download from the ACSSU site.

**Christadelphian Sunday School Association (Australia) – <http://www.cssa.asn.au/>**



The Christadelphian Sunday School Association, Australia, has updated its website and added some attractive new features. While lesson books must still be ordered

separately, virtually all of the CSSA activity sheets, for all age levels, are available for free download.<sup>4</sup> This represents a lot of teaching material. In addition, more than 160 Sunday school plays are available, covering a complete range of Bible themes. Don't be put off by the User login box that appears on the CSSA home page. You do not have to log in to access the free materials and download them.

And here is a fourth site to explore with Sunday school in mind ...

### **This Is Your Bible – <http://www.thisisyourbible.com/>**



“This Is Your Bible” is the English language website of the Christadelphian Bible Missions (ACBM, CBM, CBMA and CBMC). Its purposes are educational. If you have been wracking your brain what to do with an older teen class, why not enroll them in one of the online Bible courses that TIYB offers? *Exploring the Bible* and *Learn to Read the Bible Effectively* are two of the courses available, each with something different to offer. As online students, your teens will interact with a Christadelphian tutor and you become their learning facilitator, monitoring their progress and discussing the lessons with them.<sup>5</sup>

The TIYB site can also be used by your students as a research site. It has a large library of pamphlets on Bible subjects. It also provides answers to many commonly asked Bible questions. Here is something to do: assign a Bible research question to your older students and encourage them to use the TIYB website for information.

*Jim Harper (Meriden, CT) [sundayschool@tidings.org](mailto:sundayschool@tidings.org)*

#### **Notes:**

1. My Pinterest site is entirely devoted to Christadelphian Sunday schooling. More will be said about it in the September issue of *The Tidings*.
2. Hardcopies of most CSSU materials are still available and can be ordered online, prices listed.
3. A 2014 order form for hardcopies of the ACSSU materials can be printed from the website, prices listed.
4. A full range of CSSA products can be ordered directly from the website, prices listed.
5. Hard copies of *Exploring the Bible* and *Learn to Read the Bible Effectively* materials can be downloaded and printed by Sunday school teachers who are registered TIYB tutors. Four other Bible Mission courses and *Exploring the Bible* can be downloaded and printed from the Sunday School Lessons board on my Pinterest site.

# History

## Forgotten Incidents — Megiddo Church

### Introduction

Few have ever heard of the Megiddo Church, and even fewer know that its origins start with the Christadelphians in 1870, and have been intertwined to a greater or lesser extent ever since. Some readers might remember a debate between Ruth Sisson and Duncan Heaster held in the pages of *The Tidings* in 1992: and a few (and I am one) might recall seeing a copy of a magazine called *Megiddo Message* in your doctor's office. But the whole account of this little denomination is quite fascinating, replete with ship wrecks, "gospel cars", band wagons and somewhat strange beliefs. Now a tiny group of no more than 35 members of the one church in Rochester, NY, they still publish their magazine, with a claimed circulation of 15,000. They still appear to have scattered adherents elsewhere, but even so the total numbers are quite small, and apparently decreasing: reported visits to their services recently show only 25 or so attendees, mostly elderly.

### L. T. Nichols



L. T. (Lemuel Truesdale) Nichols was born October 1, 1844 in Elkhart County, Indiana. When he was about five years old, his family moved to Wisconsin. As an adolescent, he became skeptical of the established Protestant tradition in which he had been raised and began an intense study of the Bible. His views were often controversial and were ridiculed by his school classmates and others in the community.

In 1864 he was married, and two weeks later was drafted into the army. In the army he refused to bear arms and was transferred to service in a military hospital. After the war, he returned home to his wife to farm and to begin his ministerial career as an itinerant preacher in the Fox River Valley region of Wisconsin, northwest of Milwaukee.

In 1874, L. T. Nichols, accompanied by his family, including his wife, his parents, and his sister, as well as several other followers, moved to McMinnville, Oregon. There he established a church which he called "Christadelphian," because of the similarity between his views of the Bible and those of Dr. Thomas, leader of the Christadelphians. Nichols held a popular annual camp meeting, published religious tracts, engaged in public debates on religious issues, and gained many additional followers.

For a while in the 1870's the pages of *The Christadelphian* were replete with accounts written by this L. T. Nichols, with accounts of baptizing at least 70 into the Truth, and his fame spread quite widely in the Pacific north-west. (McMinnville is a little town about 30 miles Southwest of Portland.)

In 1880, Nichols' concluded that "no man could be saved apart from knowing and keeping every commandment of God." This discovery has led the Megiddo Church to identify 1880 as the year of its founding because at this point Nichols called his followers to lead lives that set them apart from their contemporaries. It also led to his departure from the Christadelphian community.

The controversial doctrines preached by L. T. Nichols resulted in considerable persecution and in 1883 he decided to leave Oregon, settling himself and his followers in Dodge County in southeastern Minnesota. Here Nichols established a small church and preached in nearby communities. It was here also that he began his career as an inventor, patenting such inventions as a harness for four-horse hitches and a coupler for railroad cars. The profits from these inventions became a major source of support for the church.

One fundamental issue concerned how to achieve salvation. Nichols believed that people must live holy lives, while the Christadelphians accepted the concept of atonement by grace. In 1891 Nichols visited England and the histories of his church claims he debated Robert Roberts. (There is no other record I can find of this.) Nichols then largely abandoned his attempts to convince the Christadelphians and renamed his body the "Christian Brethren." He did debate Thomas Williams in 1892, with no success from his point of view, and from then on there are very few references to him in the literature of our community. He is claimed to have visited England again in 1897, but made no attempt as far as I can tell to contact Christadelphians, but concentrated on those he had previously converted. *The Advocate* records his death in 1912, but it is clear he had not troubled the Christadelphian community for many years. However, the later history of the community he founded is fascinating, if a little strange.



## The Megiddo boat

Nichols predicted that the Second Coming of Christ would occur sometime between 1896 and 1901. As 1901 approached, Nichols felt compelled to carry the Brethren's message to a wider audience. Ordering the construction of a large steamboat, which he named the "Megiddo," he closed all his churches and gathered between eighty and ninety of his followers on the boat, which plied the Mississippi and Ohio River systems during the navigation seasons of 1901 through 1903, stopping at ports along the way where the Brethren held meetings. While on the rivers, Nichols continued to publish tracts, as well as flyers for distribution to announce meetings.

The ship excited much curiosity, and the newspapers along the Mississippi and Ohio rivers published front-page stories describing the marvelous craft. The boat cost \$22,000 to build. It was red, white, and blue in color, had a complete machine shop for manufacturing and repair work, a carpenter shop, and a flour mill. Although the brethren, like members of the Megiddo Church today, were characterized by a high level of participation and a high degree of cooperation, they were committed to the principle of private property. Each family had its own living quarters and its own dining area, storage locker, and cupboards. Women cooked for their own families in the ship's kitchen, and there were often as many as 30 meals being prepared at one time.

Wherever the boat went, the men on board sought work while the women took care of housekeeping and knitted woolen goods for sale to support their families and the mission. The children attended school aboard the boat. A handbill distributed to the public announced: "We manufacture acetylene gasometers and windmills and are agents for a first-class automobile." The members also earned money from houses they built and rented in Nashville where the boat spent its first winter.

Upon arrival in a new port, if it were possible to borrow some horses, the uniformed Christian Brethren band would travel through the streets in their bandwagon, playing music and distributing handbills to publicize their meetings. They either arranged to meet in a public auditorium or pitched their 40 x 80-foot tent in a prominent location. The services consisted of songs, prayers, Scripture readings, and sermons by either L. T. Nichols or Maud Hembree, "the lady preacher." The services were well attended, and the press reported Captain Nichols' messages at length.

After two years on the water, the Megiddo experienced navigational problems while returning to the Mississippi from Cincinnati in the fall of 1903. Nichols had hired a captain who landed the boat on a sandbar. The next boat captain did the same thing. These mishaps resulted in expensive repairs and emphasized the danger of operating the Megiddo in those Midwest waterways. Besides, there were considerable risks from ice floating down the river. Feeling responsible for the many lives on board, Nichols decided that the river ministry was no longer practical, and the Megiddo was sold. The Christian Brethren relocated to Rochester where the Nichols' had relatives. At about this time Nichols changed the name of his denomination to Megiddo Mission (or Church): no-one knows why.



### Further work

Once in Rochester, they carried on an active mission work locally. Initially it was by such methods as a band wagon, which showed their fascination with band music (which still continues today). When Nichols died in 1912, it was by special dispensation that the band played at his gravesite.

It was not before long they realized how close they were to the Great Lakes, so the group acquired a series of motor launches, the last they called “Megiddo III”. They cruised the waters for eight years from 1916, and was replaced by a “mission car.” In both cases, six or so young men lived and peached from their conveyance, and the mission work proceeded.



By the 1920, the travelling missionaries were replaced by a publishing operation. As I already mentioned, they continue distributing their “Megiddo Message” quite widely, as well as a

number of tracts and books. It is amazing that such a small congregation can distribute so widely a magazine, which is quite attractive in its layout, and some of the content is quite acceptable.

### The Megiddo Church today

Each year on October 1st, members of the Megiddo Church gather in Mount Hope Cemetery at the grave of the church’s founder, L. T. Nichols. They gather not only

to celebrate the founder's life and his contributions to the church but also to affirm their belief that he and others who are buried in the Megiddo plot will one day rise to be judged and rewarded by Jesus when he returns to establish his kingdom.

L. T. Nichols and the members of the group arrived in Rochester on January 27, 1904. Within a couple of months, Nichols purchased five acres on the southwest edge of Rochester, then outside the city limits. In 1907, the members of the group constructed their own church building. The church cost about \$5,000 and seated 400 people. It was dedicated on March 22, 1908 with about 250 people in attendance. Today, the Megiddo Church still owns the complex of buildings across the street from the church and about 35 people live there.

Megiddos have long been recognized for the distinctive dress of the women which is characterized by long skirts, long sleeves, and high necklines. Women also use no makeup and gather their hair into buns, but unlike members of some conservative religious groups, they do cut their hair when it becomes inconveniently long. Colors of clothing are a matter of personal choice, and several of the women wear bright colors. The men, whose clothing styles are more likely to be dictated by the dress requirements of their employers, wear conservative suits and functional work clothes. The one requirement of clothing is that it conform to the Bible's principal of "modest apparel". While many observers tend to characterize Megiddo attire as old-fashioned, the Megiddos themselves consider their dress to be merely conservative.

### **Their beliefs**

The original cause of separation from the Christadelphians was that Nichols believed that it was works that saved, not grace. The Megiddo Church still denies the Trinity, and believes in a personal devil: they also have similar beliefs on the soul and the millennial reign of Christ.

However, apart from the role of grace in a Christian life, they differ from our community in that they

- Members of the Megiddo Church eagerly await the arrival of Elijah, who, they believe, is presently living on another planet in God's vast universe, awaiting the time when he will return to earth to prepare the way for Christ.
- They deny the role of water baptism.
- They celebrate Christmas — but on the first of Abib, in the spring.
- They venerate Nichols, remembering his death every year.
- They discourage marriage and child-bearing, holding these take away from the focus on waiting for the return of Elijah.

There has been no real contact between the Megiddo Church and the Christadelphians for over a hundred years, and only one or two members have joined our community from the group in the past century. And I wonder if the Church will even survive: like the Shakers before them, discouraging marriage and children is not a prescription for survival, even although, like them, we do expect the return of our Lord before long.

*Peter Hemingray*

# Letters

## Disfellowship of Job

Dear Bro. Hemingray,

An article last month in *The Tidings* (May 2014: article #5 on Spiritual Discipline: p 184) troubled me somewhat, for it suggested that Job was “disfellowshipped”. It was said in the brother’s argument about “withdrawal from those whose walk has compromised the truth” without repentance.

The written record of Job, (probably written down by Moses when he fled Egypt to Midian), does not tell us that Job was disfellowshipped. In fact God praises Job for his integrity, and God challenges the “adversary”, a man, maybe Amalek, who obviously had not attended the ecclesia for some time and who just visited the ecclesia — for he was asked why HE, the adversary, was there!

We must not attribute to the “declared righteous” Job, (by God) who we know was not “sinless” — which amounts to is slandering his name — or we become just like Job’s friends to whom God said in Ch. 42 had not spoken RIGHT. The friends were the ones that needed to repent (also the adversary) they must go to Job and have him pray for THEM. The “Satan”, was probably an envious relative — that may have only attended to stir up trouble — or to cause Job to stumble. God allowed the trial to make a point, to not only prove that Job was righteous, but to vindicate God Almighty’s name as well. The adversary was challenging God — as if God didn’t know Job’s heart? We think this adversary very well could have been uncle Amalek, half-brother to Teman, Eliphaz’s father. We believe Amalek didn’t change, but perhaps the friends did. Job was restored.

*Anonymous*

### **Comment from Bro. David Jennings**

Thank you for your comments about the fifth article on Scriptural Discipline. I believe that you may have misunderstood my reference to Job and the activities of the “Satan” in Job. It was never intended to imply that Job was disfellowshipped. In fact, it is quite clear that Job was an upright man. The intent of the reference was to demonstrate the way that God works with men and women in some circumstances to bring them to a change of heart, or a better spiritual mind. In Job’s case, the adversity he faced was not brought upon him because of sin, but was nevertheless it was ultimately helpful to bring Job to a closer understanding of the Almighty and his position before Him.

When we read references about being delivered “unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh” in Corinthians, what is clear to us is that the LORD and his angels will work in the life of those who have had fellowship removed to bring them to a sound mind, a renewed commitment to their life in the Truth. The point made was that our LORD may indeed employ similar methods to bring about the conversion of one who is lost. Consider the prodigal son example for a moment. He too saw

the loss of his wealth (and at the most inopportune time) and intense danger and dejection before he came to himself. What we do when we deliver one to Satan is to acknowledge that we put them in the care of the Lord. He will employ whatever is needed to crush pride and bring one to a sound mind.

I hope this explanation is helpful. God bless.

## Reflections

### Knowing Jesus

“To know and be known by Jesus.” This was the answer a friend of mine gave when asked in a devotion what she wanted to accomplish in this life. Profound, I thought, but what do those two concepts mean?

As far as “being known by Jesus”, we can look to parables about his return. I remember a statement in Matt 25, which is spoken by the bridegroom to the five foolish virgins when they pleaded with him “*Lord, lord, open up for us. But he answered, ‘Truly I say to you, I do not know you’*” (Matt 25:11-12 NASB). These virgins did not reflect the qualities of Jesus so as to be identified by him and known by him. This forces us to look seriously at ourselves and ask, how much of Jesus would he be able to see in us?

But what of “knowing Jesus”? Paul had a clear sense of who Jesus was, and his relationship with Jesus gave him the strength to continually choose spiritual things over fleshly things. He states, “*I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ*” (Phil 3:8 NASB).

I think when it comes to knowing Jesus we need a real familiarity with the Biblical record of how he lived and what he taught. So much so, that we can recall the things Jesus said and the things he did, as if we had been witness to them in person. For example, when we see fresh flowers we can think of Jesus’ words to his disciples,

*“And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith! Do not worry then... for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you”* (Matt 6:28-33 NASB).

The flowers we see can serve as a reminder of Jesus’ words, but more importantly of the principle he was trying to impress upon his disciples of daily trust in our Heavenly Father.

A second example could be when we are discouraged with our preaching efforts, and as we think of Jesus speaking to his disciples,

*“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matt 28:19-20 NASB).*

Jesus’ words and example should be near enough to our hearts and minds that his influence can be a living force in our life, as it was in the lives of his disciples. In this regard, it is like recalling experiences with a loved one who has passed away, who we loved so much, and meant so much to us, that we still feel their presence with us each day. Their life continues to impact ours even after they have passed away. This is very similar to the relationship we can develop with Jesus; his life can and must impact our lives each day. However, Jesus is not dead; he is alive and active and aware of our struggles as we walk toward the Kingdom. He actively serves as our mediator, bridging the gap between us and our God. How much more then should he be a fixture in our lives!

Another component that can help us get to know Jesus is our common fight against sin. Just as going through a similar experience or struggle in life can make us feel closer to one another, our fight against sin can help us identify with events in Jesus’ life. Paul refers to this when he says, *“that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to his death” (Phil:10 NASB).* This common fight against the flesh is one central aspect to our life which links us not only to Jesus and his fight, but also to all those faithful individuals who have fought against the flesh.

How wonderful then to be given the opportunity to come to know Jesus, through the words of Scripture and by aligning ourselves with this goal of overcoming the flesh. God willing, when he does return, we will have taken the time provided to study his life, and his fight against sin, which can help us to develop characters which are reflective of his. And to develop a relationship with Jesus, so that when we finally do see him, it is as our faithful Shepherd who we have come to not only know, but love.

*Katie Dawes (Toronto East, ON)*





## Bible Mission News

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### Jamaica — Stewardship Workshop at Round Hill Ecclesia

In a number of our Lord's parables we find an emphasis on the importance of the "faithful and wise steward". For several reasons, the CBMJ decided to hold a Stewardship Workshop and the Round Hill Ecclesia hosted it on Saturday, February 15th. This was follow-up on an evening session at the Yearend Bible School, and an extra activity on the CBMJ 2014 Calendar of Events, which already had 15 items scheduled for this year. It was therefore uncertain how many would be able to attend. Communication went out to all the ecclesias, transportation was arranged and an appeal was made to brothers, sisters and unbaptized youth to attend — since service in the ecclesia should be encouraged at an early age. The Workshop was attended by approximately 70! — and over half were children, teens and those in their twenties — who participated well, as they listened keenly, took notes and were very eager to assist with the readings.

There were handout summary notes and worksheets available for the three interactive presentations. The three topics dealt with were — *Examples of Stewards in the Bible*, *Stewardship begins at Home* and *An Appeal to the Younger Members and Unbaptized*. A list of characteristics was put together as to how we would describe a steward, in the Biblical sense. In summary, we found that a steward was absolutely trustworthy, full of integrity, a servant overseeing and looking to the needs of others, and blameless. Although stewards in the Bible were mainly men, it is evident that women also fulfilled steward-like roles, such as Deborah — providing leadership in Israel when men of courage and conviction were scarce! Tabitha also faithfully served the needs of others, as a type of the virtuous woman of Proverbs 31. And then there is Phebe in Romans 16, ministering to others as a nurse-like helper — she is described as a sister (first), a servant, saint-like and a succorer of many. However, our Heavenly Father is seen as the model of stewardship. He oversees and cares for all, providing meat in due season — as found by reading Psalm 145:8-20 — and His son followed his Father's example. The appeal to the youth was to follow the example of our Lord at 12 years old — "about my Father's business". They were challenged to bear three yokes, but in the proper order: 1) The yoke of service when they are young (Lam 3:27); 2) To be yoked with Christ in baptism (Matt 11:28-30); and 3) To be (equally) yoked in marriage (1Cor 6:14).

We were thankful to the Round Hill Ecclesia for welcoming with refreshments, those who travelled several hours from different locations across the Island to arrive at 10:30 am. We were also served a delicious hot meal at noon. It was encouraging for all of us to be together and support each other in these difficult



**Meal preparation at Round Hill**

from three ecclesias held a mini-fraternal — White Horses, Spanish Town and Kingston. A DVD on the metamorphosis of the butterfly (especially the monarch) was also viewed, as it related to Rom 12:2 and the word “transformed” (metamorphoo). On Tuesday evening, February 18th, a Bible class was held at the May Pen Ecclesial Hall on the topic *Lessons from the Wilderness Wanderings*, with about 30 in attendance. We were also pleased to be able to spend time in members’ homes and enjoy their friendship and fellowship — and good Jamaican food!

If there is an interest in supporting the Annual Calendar of Events sponsored by the CBMJ, please contact the CBMC chairman, Bro. Phil Snobelen — [philsnobelen@shaw.ca](mailto:philsnobelen@shaw.ca)

*Don Luff, CBMC Linkman*



**The White Horse Ecclesia Sunday school children and Mary an interested friend.**



**Those present (32) from White Horses, Spanish Town and Kingston after the Breaking of Bread.**

times, and promote dedicated service among the members of the Body of Christ.

During the rest of our time in Jamaica, we attended Bible class at the Broughton Ecclesia on February 12th, and had a special Remembrance service with the Harvey River Ecclesia on Thursday, February 13th. On Sunday, February 16th we enjoyed a Breaking of Bread service at the Kingston Ecclesial Hall, when 32 members

## Full of Farewells — April 2014



I am told that time passes faster as you get older. Although I don't feel any older than I was when I first arrived in Córdoba six months ago, the time has passed more quickly than I could have imagined. I feel that just now I am beginning to understand the culture,

beginning to know the people. It's the little things, like hoarding small bills because you know that half of the people won't be able to make change: learning which stores have the best croissant-like medialunas; and knowing which of the hundreds of buses that pass every day will lead to where you want to go, that really make a foreign country feel more like home. It's the chance to connect, to build bridges that haphazardly span the language and culture barrier, the really makes you feel blessed. I am often reminded of the apostle Paul's statement, how he planted, Apollos watered, but God grants the increase as I leave Córdoba, with their small but lovely ecclesia, to move on to Bolivia. And somehow, like so many others who have travelled, I find myself coming away feeling richer, knowing that I have been given so much by my time here.

On my way out of Córdoba and into Bolivia, I had the pleasure of stopping by for visits, always too short, in Santiago, Chile and Lima, Peru. I have decided that I will never understand why a flight between Argentina and Bolivia, that share a border, is so much more economical if I travel through two other countries first. I don't understand, but am more than happy to have a chance to greet brethren from other parts of the world.

They send their love and wonder when you are coming for a visit, maybe to stay for a month or six? With the brethren in Chile, we shared some lovely fellowship with our Bro. Robert Alderson from New Zealand, and he encouraged us and exhorted us. We welcomed Eva,





just moved to Santiago from La Paz, and explored the city a little bit.

Lima was a bit of a whirlwind visit, but in my day there I had the pleasure of breaking bread with the small ecclesia that meets in a second floor room of the house of one of the members set aside for that purpose. That evening, one of the families with their three children and I met for a lovely dinner and Bible readings, and then I was off early the next morning, always wishing for more time, but happy to see the fruits of the faithful work of local and foreign brethren over time.

Right now as I write this, once again I'm sitting in

an airport, watching the people pass by, thinking back on my past experiences and wondering what adventures will be coming next. Good-byes are always sad, but in our faith they are less so, as I look forward to the day when all the faithful will be gathered from the four corners of this



round earth to meet the son at his appearing. May we all be found faithful in him at that day. Until next time, God be with you until we meet again.

*Sis. Coleen Uiga, Spanish Truth Corps  
Submitted by Sis. Jan Berneau, CBMA/C Publicity*

## **Convivencia in Ecuador — March 1-4, 2014**

As we grow and develop in our families and ecclesias, communication and behavior is never perfect, with the evitable outcome of minor annoyances, significant, heart-breaking hurt, and everything in between. One of the principal themes of the Bible — if not the most important of all — is the healing of these rifts in our relationships. And of course, our most important, most enduring relationship is the one we have with our Father in Heaven, who demonstrates his love for us in sending his son, his only son, to show us the way to forgiveness and healing.

At this year's annual 'convivencia' (gathering) in Ecuador on March 1-4, Bro. David Lloyd (San Diego, US) led several talks, on that most important of things — *Forgiveness*. The studies were held at a new location for us, just outside the town of Atuntaqui, two hours north of Quito. As we have done since the second

convivencia five years ago, we took advantage of the only Ecuadorian four-day weekend, at Carnaval. On Saturday morning many of us gathered bright and early at the ecclesial hall and loaded the Bibles, hymn books, electric piano, SS supplies — and ourselves! — into the bus and set out. Along the way we picked up other brothers and sisters who live along a corridor towards the North of the city, and at our last stop, we collected Bro. Wilson and his wife Sandra in the town of Cayambe, about halfway to our destination.

Atuntaqui is a small town known for the quality and workmanship of its leather products, nestled in a valley between the spectacular Imbabura and Cotacachi volcanos. The hostel where we stayed was just a few blocks outside the center of town and in our free time in the afternoons most of us went for walks together, either into town or up into the hills and fields above us. In a small ecclesia where many of the members live significant distances away from each other these opportunities to relax and be together for hours on end are tremendously valuable times of quiet conversation, where we can really get to know each other and strengthen our bonds in not only the Truth, but in the many life experiences and challenges we all share in this life.

Bro. David devoted six hours of interactive classes to exploring the Bible's message surrounding forgiveness, healing, and some of the more practical, day to day aspects of resolving relationship breakdowns amongst ourselves and with God. One of the most important principles we learned is that forgiveness is like breathing — it is life giving only if it happens in both directions — flowing out of us towards others, and into us from God. In the context of Lord's Prayer we are told that indefinitely holding our breath — not allowing forgiveness to flow out from ourselves to others — is just as fatal as not breathing at all. The principle is simple to verbalize, but can be incredibly challenging to actually live — day in, day out, year in, year out — with our families, neighbors, and ecclesias. Over the course of our meetings together we explored a wide range of situations in which we can suffer hurt, and also spent hours discussing the practical obligations we have in both forgiving and seeking forgiveness from others. For example, when we ask forgiveness of others, we must do so wisely, as we may be imposing an additional burden on them if they are not yet ready or able to fully forgive, and if we aggressively pursue an expression of forgiveness from someone else, in an inappropriate way or at a bad time, we can add even more injury and hurt.

After four days immersed in studying, singing, praying, reading, playing and talking together, we came home to Quito on Tuesday afternoon, in awe of the love our Father and his son Jesus Christ, who are willing to set aside an incalculable debt to teach us how much they value us and their relationship with us. God willing, our Lord will give us all the strength and courage to practice these principles with everyone around us.

*Kevin and Rebekah Hunter*

## Addresses for Bequests and Donations

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

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

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

## News & Notices

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

### **BEDFORD, NS**

Over the past number of months we have enjoyed visits from many brothers and sisters and their families, as well as the exhortations we received from a number of the visiting brothers. We are thankful for the visits and fellowship of Ron Hicks (Washington DC); Ken and Gloria Charlton (Southport Queensland, AUS); Graham and Sarah Baldock (Mississauga West, ON); Clyde and Evelyn Snobelen (Victoria, BC); and Nathan Crawford (Kingston, ON).

We commend to the care of the Kingston, ON Ecclesia, by way of transfer, Bro. Nathan and Sis. Sarah Crawford. We will miss them but know they will be an asset to and receive strength from the brothers and sisters in Kingston.

Bro. John Ching has had surgery on one eye to repair tears to his retina and it is healing well. He will be scheduled for surgery on the other eye. We pray for our Father's healing hand to be upon him.

The Bedford Ecclesia is inviting brothers and sisters to consider assisting us over the next year in preaching the gospel message in the Halifax area of Nova Scotia. We are planning to run a number of seminars, starting in September 2014 with follow up classes. Brothers and sisters who would like to come for a week or more, or even consider moving here, can assist with seminars, follow-up classes, Bible readings and discussion for interested friends during the days, as well as other activities. If you are interested, please contact Bro. Dale Crawford by email at: [Bedfordchristadelphians@gmail.com](mailto:Bedfordchristadelphians@gmail.com), or by phone at: 1-902-431-6650.

*Dale Crawford*

### **BROOKLYN, NY**

Three notable events have occurred recently. Bro. Dillon Gittens and Sis. Anastacia Duesbury were united in marriage; Sis. Asha Drepaal of the Kilcoy Ecclesia in Guyana was able to join her husband, Bro. Gideon; and the NY Metro Fraternal had a remarkable series on "Seeking the Lost", by Bro. Jason Hensley (Simi Hills, CA). We thank Bro. Jason for his labors on our behalf.

*Clive Drepaal*

### **COACHELLA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA**

Over the past few years, our small ecclesia has grown from four members including: Sis. Daisy Gray, Sis. June Thompson, and Bro. Eric and Sis. Jen Vortriede, to our current number of thirteen. Bro. Dennis and Sis. Mary Bazant transferred their membership from the Los Angeles, CA Ecclesia a few years ago. My mother-in-law, Sis. Grace Cooper, transferred her membership from the Jackson County, OR Ecclesia to our ecclesia in 2012, and Bro. Robert and Sis. Joanna Alexander recently transferred their membership from the Pomona, CA Ecclesia.

Sis. Corky Emmett and Bro. Don Graybill returned to the Christadelphian community after an absence of some years, and we were very happy to welcome them back. Bro.

David and Sis. Norma Stevens, who are members of the Los Angeles Ecclesia but live in Morongo Valley, are regular participants in our ecclesia, and we are very happy whenever we see them.

We are happy to announce that CRAIG NANKERVIS was baptized on February 14, 2012, and ERLINDA IRIGAYEN was baptized on August 16, 2012. We wish God's blessings upon our new brother and sister.

If you are travelling through the Palm Desert/Palm Springs area, we would be very happy to have your fellowship. We are grateful to the brothers and sisters who have visited our ecclesia over the past few years and especially thank the brothers who have given us words of exhortation.

Sis. Daisy Gray, who has lived in this area all her life, has recently stepped down after being the Ecclesial Secretary of the Coachella Valley Ecclesia for many faithful years. We are very grateful to Sis. Daisy for her dedicated service. The undersigned is now the Ecclesial Secretary/Recording Brother of the Coachella Valley Ecclesia.

*Eric Vortriede*

### **HONESDALE, PA**

We were glad to have Bro. Steve Cheetham (Moorsetown, NJ) visit us on May 4, 2014, and exhort us. After his excellent exhortation the sisters hosted a wonderful luncheon. We also began having a Wednesday night Holy Bible reading and study meeting in May.

*Stephen J. DeMarco*

### **VICTORIA, BC**

We continue to be blessed with numerous visitors, coming from near and far. The list is, happily, too long to accurately record. We welcome them all to meet with us.

We were saddened by the loss of our dear Sis. Joan Highton on April 25, 2014. Sis. Joan and husband, Bro. Joe, were part of a major migration to Victoria of British brothers and sisters in the late 1940's and early 1950's. Sis. Joan's parents were John William and Elizabeth Anna Clover who were members of the Oldham Ecclesia in the 1930's and 40's. Joan, Mavis, and Jack attended Sunday school there. Joan was baptized in 1942 in Blackpool. Joan Clover and Joe Highton were married in Oldham at the Bridge St. ecclesial hall in 1943. The Clover family moved to Blackpool in 1948. Joan and Joe, with their sons, Beverley, and Kenneth, immigrated to Canada in 1952. Jack followed six months later and was baptized at the Victoria meeting hall in 1954. We mourn her falling asleep, but not as others. We rejoice in the blessed assurance that the saints will not be abandoned in the grave as we all continue in the hope of the resurrection.

Lord willing, our fraternal gathering will be held Labor Day weekend August 30-31, 2014. Bro. Dennis Paggi will be the speaker on the subject, "The Potter and Clay-God's Hand in the Lives of the Believers." Our fall study weekend will be held November 8-9, 2014, with Bro. Stephen Snobelen speaking on, "Bible Perspectives on the Environment". Our spring study weekend, Lord willing, will be held the weekend of March 15, 2014, with Bro. Jim Harper.

For further information about any of these events, please contact the undersigned at [victoria@csll.ca](mailto:victoria@csll.ca).

*Clyde Snobelen*

## WASHINGTON, DC

The Washington DC Ecclesia has enjoyed the visits of many brothers and sisters in 2013 and wish to thank the following brothers for their words of exhortation: Dennis Bevans, Andy Bilello, and David Kerr (Baltimore, MD); Craig McInturff (Shenandoah, VA); Jayson Bright (North Virginia, VA); Richard Palmer (Kings Norton, UK), David King (Richmond-Petersburg, VA); Garnet Alchin (Boolaroo, Aust.), Ken Crane (Bedford, UK); and Neville Clark (Tea Tree Gully, Aust.). In addition the following brethren gave Bible classes: Ryan Mutter and Allen Laben (Baltimore, MD); and Jim Cowie (Morten Bay, Aust.).

In January, we welcomed by way of transfer, Sis. Beth DeSouza, previously a member of the London, Finsbury Park, UK Ecclesia.

In February, Bro. Andrew and Sis. Erin Amis and their three children transferred their membership to the Northern Virginia, VA Christadelphian Ecclesia. They will be greatly missed.

We were saddened by the news that our Bro. Jonathan (Jack) Walker fell asleep in the Lord on February 23, 2013, at the age of ninety-four. He was born May 2, 1919, and was baptized in January 1959. He was a long time member of the Washington DC Ecclesia. Due to failing health, Bro. Jack moved to Orlando, FL in February 2010 to live with his daughter Sis. Debbie Fenn. While there he attended the Orlando Ecclesia as his health permitted but never officially transferred his membership from Washington. He now sleeps in the Lord awaiting the second coming of Jesus and the resurrection of the dead.

In April, we enjoyed fellowship with the members of the Baltimore Ecclesia, and many more visitors to our Semi-annual Baltimore/Washington Gathering weekend. We would like to thank Bro. Tim Lange (Norfolk, VA) who gave classes for the weekend on the subject, “The Miracle of the English Bible”.

In May, we hosted the Mid-Atlantic Fraternal Gathering and Study Weekend in Mt. Laurel, NJ on the theme, “Thou Shalt Not Covet.” We wish to thank Bro. Frank Abel (Hamilton Book Road, ON) for all his efforts in preparing for and leading the study weekend, and the Moorestown, NJ Ecclesia for hosting the study day at their hall.

In November, we had our annual Family Bible Camp Hashawha. We would like to thank Bro. Jason Hensley (Simi Hills, CA) for his studies on, “The Second Exodus and the Work of Elijah”.

In December we rejoiced in the marriage of Bro. Matt Link to Sis. Ruth Perry. We welcome Sis. Ruth to the Washington Ecclesia by letter of transfer from Handsworth, her former ecclesia in the UK.

We have worked with the Baltimore, MD Ecclesia on a new preaching effort with Learn to Read the Bible Effectively seminars at both ecclesias and have also begun a series of Mutual Improvement classes for brothers in both ecclesias.

Our Heavenly Father has blessed our ecclesia with the birth of Miles Xavier Lara on June 20, 2013, to Bro. Roberto and Sis. Megan Lara; the birth of Colton Robert Perry on July 23, 2013, to Bro. Jon and Sis. Katy Perry; and the birth of Zara DeSouza on December 30, 2013 to Malcolm and Sis. Beth DeSouza.

*Bob Kling*

## Minute Meditation

### Take courage

Confucius said, “To see what is right, and to not do it, is want of courage, or of principle.”

We know that our God always does right, as Abraham said in his prayer, “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” The children of Israel were commanded to do right, as we read in Deuteronomy, “And thou shalt do that which is right and good in the sight of the LORD: that it may be well with thee.” As disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ, we need to do right, as we read in the book of James, “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” If we understand and recognize what is right, why are we not doing what we know we should be doing? According to Confucius, is it because we lack courage or are we lacking principles?

For most of us it surely is the lack of courage. We know we should be doing right, but it seems more than we feel we are able to do. Sometimes we don't know how to begin, but often, we are afraid. As Oliver Wendell Holmes once said, “Courage is about doing what you're afraid to do. There can be no courage unless you're scared. Have the courage to act instead of react.”

We are thankful that we serve a merciful Father who will not give us more than we can handle. As Paul tells us, “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” Our duty is to do the right thing when we see that something should be done. We begin the job and do the best we can do with what we have right where we are. We may feel inadequate to the task, but we can assure ourselves, as Paul did, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

Helen Keller, who was born blind and deaf, wisely realized, “I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something. I will not refuse to do the something I can do.” Few of us are as handicapped as she was. She recognized that there were some things that she could do, and so she proceeded to do what she could using those abilities she had.

John Wooden, a famous basketball coach, had good advice when he said, “Don't let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do.” All too often we use the excuse we cannot do everything, so we do nothing. Truly there is much we cannot do, but, as John Wooden notes, we should not let that stop us. Whenever there is the opportunity, we need to take action and do the right thing, because we know with Christ strengthening us, we can.

The second reason why we do not do what we know is right according to Confucius is want of principle. What does it mean to be unprincipled? By definition, an

unprincipled person follows no moral code, has no integrity and should not be trusted. An unprincipled person is not living a life doing what is right.

Let us hope that “unprincipled” does not describe any of us. Perhaps Confucius’s first suggestion that we are not doing what we should be doing is because we lack the courage.

Many of God’s chosen leaders lacked courage. God tells Abram after he battled the kings, “Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.” God tells Moses when he was facing a battle, “Fear him not: for I have delivered him into thy hand.” After Moses had died and the millions of Israelites were under the command of Joshua, Joshua no doubt lacked courage, because God reassures him several times, “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.” We know that Joshua obeyed in spite of his fears and led the children of Israel across the Jordan River into the Promised Land.

When King Asa needed courage, we read, “Now the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded. And he went out to meet Asa, and said to him: ‘Hear me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin. The LORD is with you while you are with Him. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you. But you, be strong and do not let your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded!’ And when Asa heard these words and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage.” God knows that sometimes we lack the courage we should have and often He sends someone to us to help us.

When Jesus was in his final hours in Gethsemane, God sent an angel to strengthen him. When the apostle Paul was travelling to Rome as a prisoner, we read, “And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii forum, and the three taverns: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.”

How thankful we are to know that the Lord knows all about us, and when we are lacking courage, He will strengthen us. Sometimes the messengers He sends are other weak mortals, but we can help each other by words of encouragement. Also, we can get strength from our own personal study of the Scriptures where we read how others took courage and did do right.

Let us each keep quoting the words of Paul to ourselves, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” He could and so can we.

*Robert J. Lloyd*

*“To see what is right,  
and to not do it,  
is want of courage,  
or of principle.”*

# Coming Events (Lord Willing)

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

## JUNE, 2014

**28-July 6 Mid-Atlantic 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 "Comeos 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 macbys@live.com or check our website: [www.midatlanticbibleschool.com](http://www.midatlanticbibleschool.com).

## JULY, 2014

**6-12 Southwest 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): "Nazaries 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](mailto: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 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.

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

**27-Aug 2 Rogue River Bible School** Topics and teachers are: "The Divided Kingdom" by Bro. Peter King (Worcester, UK); "The Days of Ahab" by Bro. Richard Morgan (Hamilton Book Road, ON); "The Faithful Kings: Rebuilding the Ecclesia" by Bro. Greg Robinson (Thousand Oaks, CA). Contact Bro. Randy Yoshida for further information — yoshida@propos.com. For registration, contact Sis. Pat Posey — 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 davidrlloyd@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". For registration, call Bro. Don at 250-545-5988 donzantingh@hotmail.com, and accommodations, call Bro. Harold at 250-478-0343 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 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 — 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).

**30-31 Victoria, BC** Fraternal gathering. Bro. Dennis Paggi will be the speaker on the subject, "The Potter and Clay-God's Hand in the Lives of the Believers." Contact: Bro. Clyde Snobelen at [victoria@csll.ca](mailto:victoria@csll.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

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

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(Toronto West). For registration, contact Bro. Randy Yoshida at yoshida@cpros.com (541) 479-5358 or Bro. Tom Muniz at tmuniz816@gmail.com (248) 561-1553. For accommodation, contact Bro. Henry Wisniewski@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 or 1-902-431-6650.

**20-21 London, ON** Fraternal Gathering. Our speaker will be Bro. Andrew Bramhill, (Shirley, UK): "Themes from Luke's Record". Bro. Andrew will also be giving a Bible Class on Wednesday, September 17th on the subject "The Year of Jubilee".

### **OCTOBER, 2014**

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

**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 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 sandrarmcleod@gmail.com. Registration: Sis. Bonnie Sommerville kenandbonnie@simihills.org.

### **NOVEMBER, 2014**

**1-2 Kouts, IN** Fall Study Weekend at Woodland Park Community Center, 2100 Willowcreek Rd., Portage, IN. Beginning at 10:00 A.M. Bro. Jeff Gelineau (Simi Hills Ecclesia, CA): "Forgiveness: Doing the Unthinkable". Please contact Bro. Joe Bennett at (219) 762-2704 or jkb8275@comcast.net.

**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 or 727-410-0896.

**8-9 Victoria, BC** Fall study weekend with Bro. Stephen Snobelen speaking on, "Bible Perspectives on the Environment". Contact: Bro. Clyde Snobelen at victoria@csll.ca.

**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 or Bro. David Ishman david.ishman@leanderisd.org.

**28-30 Washington, DC** Family Bible study weekend at Camp Hashawha, Westminster, MD. Bro. Brad Butts (Denver, CO) will speak. Contact: Bro. Ken Green, 443-497-3497 or e-mail Bro. Ken at Hashawha@gmail.com for additional information.

### **MARCH 2015**

**15 Victoria, BC** Spring study weekend with Bro. Jim Harper. Contact: Bro. Clyde Snobelen at victoria@csll.ca.