

THE CHRISTADELPHIAN
TIDINGS
of the Kingdom of God

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The CHRISTADELPHIAN TIDINGS of the Kingdom of God

Peter Hemingray, Editor

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New Book

On the Way: Bible Studies, Exhortations, Meditations and Musings by George Booker

"The Way" is a path to salvation, a manner of living day by day, a journey through life with all its ups and downs. This book offers insights, encouragement and food for thought, to encourage all those "on the Way"; whether young in the Truth or baptized for many years.

The 71 chapters vary in length from short reflections to in-depth studies. Each focuses on a different topic, from the serious to the lighthearted: practical issues of life in the Truth, difficult passages, exhortation from hymns and songs, personal memories, and observations about the modern world.

See Page 44 for details

Editorial

What's in a Name?

The origin

Most Christadelphians know about the origin of the name of our denomination: indeed, the name “Christadelphian” has quite a history, as well as great significance. It was coined to provide the small company of believers in USA during the Civil War with a name. This was required, so as a religious body they could apply for exemption from military service in the North. Dr. Thomas gives the account of this origin in a letter which was printed in *The Ambassador* for 1865. He says:

“The crisis had come, and something had to be done to save brethren in deed and in truth from being seized upon by the Devil and Satan; and hurled into the Bottomless Abyss, now engulfing with the voraciousness of Death and Hades, the sinners of this ungodly nation. I did not know a better denomination that would be given to such a class of believers than **“Brethren in Christ.”** This declares that true status; and, as officials prefer words to phrases, the same fact is expressed in another form by the word Christadelphians, or *cristou adelfoi* Christ’s Brethren.”

Not quite so well know is his explanation of the name in his Petition for conscientious objection to the US congress, also in 1865. He says:

“During the past eighteen hundred years, they have been distinguishable from the heterogeneous “names and denominations” of the kingdom of the clergy, by various titles imposed upon them by their enemies. These names they repudiate; and, in accordance with apostolic teaching, that all the real children of God are the Brethren of Jesus (a relationship in which their brethren in all ages have glorified), your petitioners choose to be known as CHRISTADELPHIANS, or **BRETHREN OF CHRIST**”

If you ask most Christadelphians what their name means, they will reply “Brethren in Christ”. And if you look on the Internet, this is largely the explanation used: for example, Wikipedia, that universal compendium of knowledge, so explains the term. But is this accurate? It is without question that when the problem of finding a name for them arose, John Thomas said that “Brethren in Christ” defined the status of the believers. But the word he chose and by which we as a community are known was derived from *Christou adelphoi* which he correctly translated as Christ’s Brethren. There are at least a dozen references in his writings where he refers to the name, and he uniformly gives **Brethren of Christ** as the explanation for the term “Christadelphian”. In Col 1:2 we read “*to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse:*” There the phrase “faithful brethren” is *adelphois en Christos* which means “**Brethren in Christ**”, and we cannot think he was not aware of it, yet he did not use it. We do not think there is any doubt John Thomas thought of **Brethren of Christ** as the meaning of the name he had chosen.

Which to use?

Some have argued strongly that to use the term “Brethren of Christ” to explain our relationship to our Lord and Master is presumptuous and inappropriate. It has been pointed out that when the term is used, it is as given by Jesus, and not used by his disciples. For example:

“Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me” (Matt 28:10).

“For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,” (Heb 2:11).

“For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother” (Mark 3:35).

So the question is, despite the use of “Brethren of Christ” to denote the name of our community, is it appropriate to use the term to describe ourselves? It is no light matter to be called a brother of the Lord, but if the Lord is not ashamed to call the sanctified his brethren, should we not humbly recognize the fact? John does not hesitate to say, *“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is” (1John 3:2).* So are we not truly “sons of God”, because those who receive the Lord are given power, right, or privilege to become sons of God? In the passage from Hebrews above, the inspired writer connects the fact that Christ uses the word brethren with the other fact that both he and his brethren are all of one Father, and he adds that he shared the same nature as the other children. There is, however, a tremendous difference in the basis of the sonship of Jesus and of ours, for which cause we hesitate to speak of the Lord as “elder brother”.

A quick survey of the usage of the terms in *The Tidings* over the last sixty years shows a preference for “Brethren in Christ” over “Brethren of Christ” by about 2:1, but there is no doubt both terms are in common use. It is by grace we can be called a brother of Christ, but it is a fact that we are firstly brethren in Christ. We are brothers and sisters in the Truth, first and most important because we are baptized into Christ. We become related spiritually, through Christ and his action in reconciling us with God through his sacrifice.

In addition, we are baptized, not into the Christadelphian community specifically, but into a body of believers who share the same beliefs, the same first principles. It is possible, although rare, for a person to be baptized (by whoever, as most of our constitutions say), with the same set of beliefs and not discover the Christadelphian community until later or even perhaps never!

Who is a brother?

It is clear, therefore, that who is my brother is defined by the validity of their baptism. Your natural brother remains your brother throughout your life, even though you might become estranged from them. So someone who has been validly baptized so remains a brother, unless by abandoning the Truth, or by through some outrageous act that is clearly a sin against the Holy Spirit, as discussed below.

When a brother or sister from another fellowship seeks to join us, we normally conduct an interview to check the validity of their baptism and their grasp of the Truth, but we do not normally re-baptize them. We accept the baptism as valid of all who accept what we consider as basic Bible doctrines, and as such we recognize them as our brethren. We do not have the right to say that somebody is no longer a brother of Christ because they disagree with us, neither can we imply that only the baptisms performed by our community are valid. The validity of your baptism depends on the state of your knowledge and attitude, not on the person who baptizes you. As we have pointed out, we are “Brethren in Christ”, not brethren because we happen to go to a Christadelphian ecclesia on a Sunday. After all, we are baptized into none other than the Lord Jesus Christ (let not the wonder of that escape us), not some church or organization. We must not think of those who might leave our Amended community for others as renouncing their status as Brethren in Christ, and we should continue to recognize them as Brethren. If we neglect this duty, it means that it is our decision to admit them to our community that makes them a brother in Christ, rather than their faith and baptism into the Lord their Savior. The whole question of how we should fellowship them is quite a different discussion.

The limits

“But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person”

Clearly, there are limits, as Paul shows. But we must be very careful to assume that one who is in what we might consider doctrinal error, is no spiritual brother of ours. As we read *“And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother”* (2Thess 3:14). So even those we do not readily keep company with are still our Brethren in Christ.

The custom of Robert Roberts and the rest of the community has always been to regard those who might disagree with us on some point of doctrine to be brothers in error, not as those who totally disagree with us. (We can see this in reference, for example, to Robert Ashcroft and JJ Andrew, both of whom promulgated doctrines that were refuted by Robert Roberts.) Of course, we do not so regard as brethren those of most of the religious communities around us, even though a fair number have been baptized as adults. And we must remember that Christ, through God, will judge all in the Kingdom: I expect there will be many surprises at that event. So not only do we have no right or ability to gather up the tares from among the wheat, but it is the clear teaching of the Bible that if condemn our brother, we too will be condemned.

So are we Brethren in Christ, or Brethren of Christ? The clear answer is both: we address each other as brother (or sister), because we are Brethren in Christ. But

we are all Brethren of Christ, though the grace of God in giving us His son, our Lord Jesus, through whom we can hope to become true sons of God.

Peter Hemingray

Exhortation

Never Give Up

The memorials

The memorials of our Lord that are before us, testify about what God and Christ have done out of love for us, and what they have done to save us from death that is our natural end. We see a body that was mortal like ours, put to death, and raised to immortality. We see the extent of God's power to save and of our Lord Jesus' desire to save. This has stood as an example through all the ages: the compassion of God for His creation and especially for His people does not come and go. We are all dependent on God's love and faithfulness. Peter observed "*The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*" (2Pet 3:9): this must first be applied to ourselves. Except for the long-suffering of God on our account there would be no hope. And in Rom 5:8 we learn that his patience with us began well before we were aware of our need: "*while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.*"

God loves his creation, especially His Holy people. God does not give up on His people. The Bible is full of examples of God working to save men, whom we might have thought were beyond hope. Consider Saul of Tarsus, a man greater in accomplishment, and greater in sin, than any one of us. He surpassed all in his nation in regards to the Law of Moses, and he persecuted the disciples of Christ Jesus even to death. Such a man, vehement in his opposition to the true ways of God, zealous for the false ways of the Pharisees, was seen in the early church as the most fearsome of their enemies. In the face of the direct commandment of the Lord, the faithful disciple Ananias balked, protesting that this was a man to be feared and avoided, not a man to be helped. But Christ insisted, and Ananias baptized Saul who went on to become Paul, the apostle of Christ.

Another example is King Manasseh, who was initially one of the wicked kings of Judah. 2Chron 33 tells how he stopped the worship of the LORD in Jerusalem, and promoted the most debased idolatry: yet God turned him around and redeemed him from his wickedness through exile and prison time in Babylon. We wouldn't ordinarily think of this as God's way to redeem such a man, but that was the effect for Manasseh. Even with such a man, God did not give up.

Israel, the holy people, are presented to us in Scripture as wayward throughout their history. There were occasional reformations, but they were always followed by apostasy and idolatry. In the end, God likens His relationship to Israel to a marriage that has reached its end.

“They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man’s, shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the LORD. Lift up thine eyes unto the high places, and see where thou hast not been lien with. In the ways hast thou sat for them, as the Arabian in the wilderness; and thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredoms and with thy wickedness. Therefore the showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain; and thou hadst a whore’s forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed. Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My father, thou art the guide of my youth?” (Jer 3:1-4).

He sent Israel away from His holy land, into the home of idolatry, into Babylon. But this is not a record of God giving up on his people — to the contrary — *“Return, faithless Israel...” (Jer 3:12).* Even in the extremity of divorce and expulsion, God did not give up on His people Israel, but was willing to restore them to favor and to His land.

Never give up

These are all examples of the divine precept in 1Cor. 13:8, *“Love never fails.”* There is a day of judgment; a day in which the righteous will be given God’s gift of life, and the wicked will be condemned. There is a day of death, beyond which no man can respond to God and be saved. But until that day, God, our Father, is tireless in His efforts to redeem any and all who will respond to His mercy. Until that day, there is hope even for men such as Saul of Tarsus and Manasseh king of Judah.

Here then is the faithfulness of God and of His son Christ Jesus our Lord: they will never give up on their people. With this reassurance, and with the Lord’s memorial before us, we should consider our response to the unfailing, steadfast love of God. In this wonderful love, we all have found hope. Think about how it will affect our lives. There are two responses we should consider: first our response to Christ and his Father, and second towards each other. Here is the call, then: **Never give up!** This may describe the essence of faith in God: a consistent reliance on the Almighty, our Father. It is God who has called us to obedience; therefore before the world and the temptations of this life, never give up! There is no condition in life; there is no opponent more powerful than our Father. Never give up on God.

God does reprove and discipline his people, a fact that has led some of them to wonder whether it’s a good thing to be God’s people. There may be times when we wish He would give up on us! But the essential thing about this special position is that it’s eternal. If you have hope of eternal life, that life will be in the presence of God. So it’s important to get used to His presence now.

Do not mistake the Father’s correction for abandonment. No one should expect that this life will be trouble-free: the Bible tells us plainly that the Father chastens or disciplines every son whom He loves. God is patient; we need also to be patient with Him and His son. Continue to rely on God in prayer, even though sometimes we need a “No!” and sometimes we need to wait for God’s time. We need to understand that there are proper things to pray for. But God always works with us in

prayer to increase our appreciation of His ways. God gives us a clear statement of His dealings with Israel. They had challenged God many times, thinking He did not see their need or did not care for them. His explanation is found:

“And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live” (Deut 8:3).

It took them a very long time to learn this lesson! But how many times did they lose faith, giving up on God who loved them and was trying to teach them his ways. Some patience — extreme patience is what is required of us.

Jesus’ statement in John 6:37 is a guide to our dealings with him: *“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”* The thief on the cross was a condemned, dying man — and justly so, as even he admits. In his dying he reached out to Christ, justifying our Lord rather than himself, and pursuing a desperate hope of mercy. One who was condemned and being executed for his crimes, as good as dead, won eternal life in that moment. God had not given up on him, and he did not give up: he came to the Lord Jesus, and the Lord did not turn him away. And know this: even when you have given up on Christ, he does not give up on you: *“if we are faithless, he remains faithful — for he cannot deny himself” (2Tim 2:13 NLT).*

Our dealings with our brethren

If we are all going to enjoy eternal life in the presence of God, we shall most assuredly enjoy it in the presence of one another. So get used to it! Years ago I realized this and have been using this little prayer, which I recommend to all: *“May God so bless me that I may spend eternity with this person.”* Now, with many of the Lord’s people this is a heartfelt and earnest prayer: I really enjoy your company and anticipate that eternity in your presence will never be tiresome. With others, I’m afraid it’s a bit of an attitude adjuster. The thing I hope for most is that all of saints may be saved — and I recognize a responsibility to work for that end. It does not mean that I accept every one, no matter how they behave. It means that I accept that every one of us has the potential to manifest God, and I will not give up on any of my brothers and sisters.

If we are to be the sons and daughters of God, it is fitting that now we should behave as God’s children toward one another. I do not mean by this, “Yeah, you need to behave toward me like God’s child.” I mean rather, how would God deal with the problems we see in one another? Does God give up? Does God consign His people to oblivion before the Day of Judgment?

It is all too easy to give up, to say things like *“He’ll never change!”* or, *“You’re wasting your time!”* or, *“These people are a bunch of hypocrites.”* It is easy and therefore an early option on both sides of every disagreement, to say, *“I’m absolutely right; you’re hopeless”*, and in so doing, to judge God’s people, to condemn those for whom Christ died. This is true whether it’s a disagreement with one brother, or several, with a whole ecclesia, or indeed with the brotherhood as a whole.

In the Bible, the idea of judgment is always associated with finality. These are blessed forever; these are rejected and outcast forever. The command, “*judge not, lest ye be judged*” means that kind of judgment. It cannot mean, “*Don’t tell anyone he’s done wrong*” because that is exactly what the Bible does every time we read it. It cannot mean, “*Don’t require any one to repent of his sins*” because that is the way of salvation. And, as the Proverb says, “*reprove a wise man, and he will love you.*” No, the command not to judge others means, don’t consign any one to damnation before the time because that is the way God works with all of His creation. To judge someone then, is to give up on him. Brothers and sisters, none of us nor all of us has any right to do this. The Day of Judgment will come. And here is how the Lord Jesus describes it.

*“When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, **Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.** Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, **Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.** And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal” (Matt 25:31-46).*

In prison? This does not mean only, one who was in prison unjustly; the Lord did not place any such limit on his mercy. Hungry, poor or afflicted? Often the pitiless will find reason for turning away, saying “*he brought it on himself.*” This is not the spirit we see in Christ. Christ may instruct, he may warn, he may even rebuke those who behave foolishly or wickedly. But he does not abandon them in their folly or in their wickedness. If this memorial means anything to us at all, it must remind us, as the apostle Paul noted — he who was formerly Saul of Tarsus — “*while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*” (Rom 5:8).

Jim Seagoe (San Francisco Peninsula, CA)

First Principles

God and His Son

(1) The Revelation of God by the Angels

This subject is of interest in itself, but it is also important as an introduction to the subject of the Father and the Son, which is a consideration of the relationship between God and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Millennia ago, the angels showed or revealed to the people living at the time, the things about God that He wants everyone to know, so that we all can worship and serve Him in a faithful way. This work of the angels was then recorded by writers inspired by God, such as Moses, and this record has come down to us in the Bible. (Rather than reveal, “Manifest” is quite common in older translations of the Bible, being used 38 times in the KJV New Testament, and has the same meaning as to reveal. So we can say the angels “manifested” God.)

Why did God create angels?

The Creator Himself is so powerful and glorious that He cannot be approached in person by human beings, ordinary men and women. He alone *“hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto: whom no man hath seen, nor can see”* (1Tim 6:16). Angels do not have man’s limitations, and can therefore approach God and talk to Him directly. And they can then act for Him to fulfill His will. In particular, they represent Him when talking with men and women. They bridge the huge gap between the Holiness and Perfection of God in heaven and the shortcomings of dying people on this planet. Angels were made immortal (that is, never to die).

No man can see God and live:

“And He said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live” (Exod 33:20).

“No man hath seen God at any time” John 1:18,

“And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape” (John 5:37).

Yet in the Old Testament, the Bible frequently speaks of God appearing and speaking to men and women. There is a simple explanation, but it takes a little getting used to, because God, for good reasons, has not made the explanation stand out in an obvious way in the Scriptures. But, He has made sure that we can find a Bible explanation if we look for it. So, let’s see what the Bible tells us.

The first passages we will look at are from Genesis and Hosea.

“And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob’s thigh was out of

joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved” (Gen 32:24-30).

“The LORD also brings a charge against Judah, And will punish Jacob according to his ways; According to his deeds He will recompense him. He took his brother by the heel in the womb, And in his strength he struggled with God. Yes, he struggled with the Angel and prevailed; He wept, and sought favor from Him” (Hos 12:2-4 NKJV)

Verse 2 shows Hosea is talking about Jacob. While a number of incidents in his life are spoken of by Hosea, the words we have just quoted refer to Gen 32. It is clear from Hosea that it really an angel, who was representing God, which struggled with Jacob. Taking point by point:

- Jacob says: *“So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, saying, ‘For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been delivered’ ” (Gen 32:30 ESV).*
- No man can see God and live.
- Hosea 12:2-4 tells us that it was an angel representing or acting for God that Jacob wrestled with.
- Jacob’s experience was frightening and awe inspiring, so he spoke as he did.

Next, let’s consider the time when the angel in the burning bush spoke to Moses (Exod 3:2) as God: *“I am the God of your father ...”* (v. 6). The angel reveals to Moses that “I AM” is the Name by which God is to be known (vs 13-15). It is represented by LORD in the majority of Bible translations. The Name is printed in all capital letters - LORD - to indicate the special nature of the Name. The Hebrew behind this name is often represented by Yahweh. The Jews of the time of Jesus regarded it is too sacred to pronounce: it is not found in the New Testament. In addition, special angels bore this name for God.

“Behold, I send an Angel before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. Beware of Him and obey His voice; do not provoke Him, for He will not pardon your transgressions; for My name is in Him” (Exod 23:20-21 NKJV)

It is not appropriate for people to see God, and so He sends His messages and commands to people through special angels. We have already seen in John 5:37 that no-one has seen God.

“Then fled Moses at this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Madian, where he begat two sons. And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sina an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush. When Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight: and as he drew

near to behold it, the voice of the Lord came unto him, Saying, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Then Moses trembled, and durst not behold. Then said the Lord to him, Put off thy shoes from thy feet: for the place where thou standest is holy ground. I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send thee into Egypt. This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush” (Acts 7: 29-35).

When reading Exodus 3, we can see from vs 2 that the angel appeared to Moses but we may not be sure whether it is the angel or God Himself that is speaking in 3:4 through 4:17. However, if we read the speech of Stephen in Acts, then clearly it was the angel of God doing the speaking.

“And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sina an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush... This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush. (Acts 7:30, 35).

These passages from Acts show clearly that it was the angel that spoke.

Revealed in the angels

Angels displayed the joy of God:

“When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?” (Job 38:7)

“And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people” (Luke. 2:10).

Angels carried the Name of God:

“And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction” (Gen 16:10-11).

“In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them” (Zech. 12:8).

At the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt and at Mount Sinai, angels showed the power and glory of God

“And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them” (Exod 14:19).

(See also Exod 19:16-20:21; Acts 7:30-35, 38, 53).

In the appearance of the angels at Mt. Sinai (Exod 19:9-20), the angels are not mentioned in the chapter. God wanted the Children of Israel (and us) to think of it at the time as being God that was appearing on the mountain though concealed by clouds of fire and smoke. It is only from Acts that we know that an angel appeared then.

“This is the one who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the angel who spoke to him at Mount Sinai, and with our fathers. He received living oracles to give to us... You who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it” (Acts 7, 35,53).

The angel of God’s “Presence”

Observe the authority given to the angel as described in Exodus 23!

“Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him. But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries” (Exod 23:20-22).

God had put His name into the messenger: the angel would guard them on the journey, but he must be obeyed or he would punish them. Yet God Himself would “not go up in your midst” but would allow His “presence” to be with them (Exod 33:3, 14). The divine power, glory and authority would be wholly with this angel. It does not mean that the angel would be seen by the people, but the evidence that he was there would be the pillar of cloud in the daytime and the pillar of fire that would be over the Tabernacle at night.

Again, when Moses on Mount Sinai desired to see the face of God Himself he was not permitted to do so, only to witness the glory of God passing by: “You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live” (Exod 33:20). John confirmed this when he wrote “No man has seen God at any time” (John 1:18). The angels therefore brought divine guidance to men and women, which they could not otherwise receive because of God’s holiness and man’s sinfulness.

Jesus greater than the angels

In His wisdom, God requires and insists that His holiness and sanctity be always completely preserved. Therefore, in Old Testament times He used the angels to carry out His will and all His work with regard to all men and women. But it is necessary that we recognize that it was God’s will and God’s work, and that the angels were doing everything according to His will. Therefore the Bible is written in a way that causes us to think of the things that were done and the messages that were spoken, as being done and as being spoken by God. We are to praise, worship, obey, and love God. The angels are to be respected and obeyed but they should not be worshipped, as Paul writes “Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind” (Col 2:18). We need to recognize and respect their role, but we usually do not need to emphasize it. The

reason that we have studied it now is to help us to understand the role of Jesus in revealing God to us.

Followers of Jesus are left in no doubt that he is greater than the angels when they read the letter to the Hebrews. The early chapters demonstrate how God has spoken to man, how the angels are His servants and how Jesus, the Son of God, is now superior to the angels and directs them in their service to his Father. The writer says that God spoke in the past in many different ways (for example, by angels delivering God's word to ordinary people and to prophets) but He now speaks directly through His Son, who is *"the express image of his person ... having become so much better than the angels, as he has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they"* (Heb 1:3-4). The Son is greater than the servants.

Yet, he says, the angels still have their work to do:

"Of the angels He says, 'He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire'. ... Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?" (Heb 1:7, 14, ESV)

So God has shown Himself by intermediaries, angels, who reveal God to us. In Old Testament times, the angels spoke and acted for God. To the people who saw and heard these angels, it often seemed as though it was God Himself. As we read the Old Testament, we can think of the things described being God appearing and acting, because the angels were perfectly carrying out God's will. It is important, though, that we realize that no one has ever seen God's form or heard His voice.

This is more than an interesting and remarkable subject. We need to understand it in order to be able to understand how Jesus revealed God to us: *"Jesus saith unto him,.. he that hath seen me hath seen the Father"* (John 14:9)

Gar Cooper (Pittsburgh, PA)

Generosity a family trait

There is a remarkable spirit of generosity that pervades the family of God. The Deity shared with the angels; the angels chose to share with man. The Father shares with the Son and the Son will be generous with the redeemed: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev. 3:21). The glory and honor Christ has at present includes authority over the angels. The Lord Jesus "is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him" (1Pet 3:22). This is real, not nominal, authority for when the Lord Jesus comes again, "he shall send his angels...and they shall gather together his elect..." (Matt 24:31; 13:41). Angels are now under the Lord and subject to his direction. Christ has been designated "the firstborn of every creature" over even the angels, for it pleased the Father that "in all things he might have the pre-eminence" (Col 1:15,18-19).

The Tidings, 1995 p. 77

Bible Study

The Way of Cain — (11) Tubal-Cain: A Man of War and Naamah: Mother of Beauty

Tubal-Cain

“Zillah also had a son, Tubal-Cain, who forged all kinds of tools out of bronze and iron!” (Gen. 4:22).

Tubal-Cain is a character cloaked in myth. One traditional, non-Biblical version of his story involves his father, Lamech, accidentally killing a young man through the misuse of weapons, which he forged. A variation of this story has Tubal-Cain as the young man who is slain. Neither version is, however, confirmed by the Bible. Genesis merely states that Tubal-Cain was an artificer of bronze and iron.

Gen 6:11 says that by the time of the Flood, *“the earth was filled with violence,”* indicating that, in addition to personal conflicts, there was also war. As has already been discussed, there was a population explosion in the 8th generation. From the example of Abraham and Lot, it is possible to see how conflicts, large or small, may have occurred:

“Now Lot, who was moving about with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents. But the land could not support them while they stayed together, for their possessions were so great that they were not able to stay together. And quarrelling arose between Abram’s herders and Lot’s” (Gen 13:5-7).

Just as the land could not support both Abram and Lot’s herds, we may surmise that the available land around Eden and Nod grew smaller as the inhabitants and their livestock multiplied, and as cities expanded. And, like Abram and Lot, conflicts arose between antediluvian families or tribes in competition for space and resources. These conflicts may have intensified with the advent of Tubal-Cain’s armaments. A family/tribe possessing iron or bronze weapons would certainly have a military advantage over another which was likely wielding inferior weapons — probably wood or a combination of wood and stone. Thus, in the course of this great transitory moment in history, with space growing smaller and populations of humans and domesticated animals increasing, wars broke out. Not only were Tubal-Cain’s weapons used in these conflicts, but their very existence may have even encouraged the use of violence in settling conflicts, since the military advantages iron and bronze weapons provided would almost certainly have been exploited by those in possession of them. As such, wars arose, or as Gen 6:11 says, *“the earth was filled with violence.”* Thus “man of war” is an appropriate moniker for Tubal-Cain, a man whose weapons gave the means for people to slaughter one another en masse.

While we may think of Tubal-Cain as the man of war, the first part of his name, Tubal, means “thou will be brought of.” The latter part of his name, Cain, is either a direct reference to his great ancestor or carries the same meaning as Cain’s name

does: “acquire” or “get.” The latter suggests that his name be expressed as, “thou will be brought of/acquired,” while the former suggests his name be expressed as, “thou will be brought of Cain.” Other ways to phrase this are: “thou will manifest Cain,” or “thou will manifest/bring forth an aspect of Cain.” However the interpretation, “thou will be brought of/acquired,” is vague and therefore meaningless, providing us with no useful information. Thus we must look for an alternative interpretation — one of which can be found when Tubal-Cain’s name is expressed as “thou will manifest an aspect of Cain.”

Cain is notorious for having murdered his brother. As such, Cain and murder are synonymous. Thus the “Cain” part of Tubal’s name invokes the memory of his ancestor, in particular his most defining characteristic: murder. Therefore Tubal-Cain’s name should be expressed as: “thou will bring forth murder, an aspect of Cain.” This confirms that Cain continued to be remembered, even in the 8th generation, as the father of violence. It also is an appropriate choice of name for a man whose iron and bronze weapons enabled mankind to “*fill the earth with violence.*”

Tubal-Cain’s name demonstrates the powerful legacy that Cain’s actions wrought upon the earth. From his name, we can see that Cain’s murder of Abel continued to resonate down through time.

Finally, Tubal-Cain is the last male descendent recorded in Cain’s genealogy. How fitting then that Cain’s lineage begins and ends with bloodshed: Cain murdered his only brother and Tubal-Cain developed the means for mankind to murder thousands of his “brothers.”

Naamah: mother of beauty

Zillah also had a daughter: “*Tubal-Cain’s sister was Naamah.*” (*Gen 4:22*)

The first and only mention of a woman in either genealogy should pique our curiosity. We are obviously meant to notice her inclusion and derive a particular meaning from it.

Naamah’s name means “beauty” or “pleasure.” Tradition credits her with cosmetics/ cosmetology or the sensual arts, depending upon which meaning of her name is used. Regardless, within the framework for this study either meaning suggests a worldly, not spiritual, connection. Naamah may have been extraordinarily beautiful or a particularly pleasure-seeking individual, but the fact that her brothers, Jabal, Jubal, and Tubal-Cain, are mentioned in the genealogy in relation to their discoveries — or what they “fathered” — suggests that she also made a significant contribution to the 8th generation. And has also been shown, Naamah’s brothers ‘contributions’ in the 8th generation are not only noted in Genesis 4, but also in Genesis 6. Thus we can expect that whatever her contribution was, it will also be referred to in Genesis 6.

As noted, Naamah means “beauty” or “pleasure.” These may not seem as important as Jabal’s migration, Jubal’s music, or Tubal-Cain’s weapons of bronze and iron, but their significance to the antediluvian world — in particular to the 8th generation — is revealed in Genesis:

“When human beings began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of humans were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose. . . . When the sons of God went to the daughters of humans and had children by them” (Gen 6:1-4).

Recall that prior to the 6th generation the righteous (sons of God) did not marry the unrighteous (daughters of men). Gradually, however, this changed. Intermarrying began to occur in the 6th generation, and as this trend continued, so too did the ecclesia’s decline. Gen 6:1-4 states that the defining reason that the sons of God began to marry the daughters of men was that they found them to be “beautiful.” Yet it is difficult to imagine that the daughters of God were somehow uglier than the daughters of men.

The word for “beauty” in this passage is *towb*, and it has a variety of uses, including an association with that which is spiritual (ethically/morally) good (Isa. 5:20); that which is physically beautiful (Isa 5:9); and that which smells good (Psa 133:2).

In the first sense: if the morals of the sons of God had been corrupted, then they would, indeed, perceive the morals of the daughters of men as good; since they would no longer be able to distinguish between good and evil from the LORD’s perspective. But what specific role Naamah would have played in this is obscured. That she, alone, could have corrupted the sons of God seems unlikely. Rather, it is more probable that she, in some way, contributed to the ongoing corruption of the sons of God.

The second, possibly third, possibilities for the meaning of her name and her association with the 8th generation provide more satisfactory explanations. In the second sense, the “beauty” the sons of God saw in the daughters of men was likely superficial; one created from cosmetics, jewelry, perfumes, and apparel. Paul’s writing to Timothy illustrates the contrast between the appearance of godly women and worldly women:

“I desire therefore that... women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, but which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works” (1Tim 2:9).

Women in Christ were meant to emphasize their inner, not outward beauty, which was contrary to a Roman world that, for the most part, only valued women for their procreative and attractive qualities. Since God’s requirements for the transformation of our inner character have not changed since the foundation of the world, we may safely assume that what was intended for women in the 1st century ecclesias would have also been intended for women in the antediluvian ecclesia.

Thus, there would have been a notable difference in the appearance of godly and ungodly antediluvian women. This difference was likely the result of Naamah’s cosmological contributions and/or in the arts of pleasure (“sensual arts”) that would continue to be taught to courtesans and prostitutes for thousands of years.

Thus Naamah’s name “beauty” or “pleasure” signifies that the daughters of men made themselves superficially attractive: either by painting their eyes and adorn-

ing themselves in jewels, perfumes, and fine clothes, and/or who were skilled in the arts of seduction.

The third possibility — beauty as related to scent — plays on the second idea, perhaps hinting that Naamah had discovered/created perfume. But to think that perfume alone had the power to steal the sons of God away from the daughters of God is too simplistic. Instead, perfume is likely representative of cosmetology in general, which, once more, leads back to the second idea — that the “beauty” referred to in Gen 6:1-4 was a superficial one.

Since “beauty” as ethically/morally good, provides no real explanation of how Naamah, alone, could have contributed to the intermarrying of the sons of God and the daughters of men, this explanation should be rejected. That leaves the second (the third is really part of the second) as the only viable explanation for the meaning behind Naamah’s name: superficial beauty and/or sexual “pleasure,” i.e. the sensual arts.

Thus by making the daughters of men look superficially or sexually attractive, Naamah’s crafts seduced the already spiritually weak sons of God. And, by their admittance into the ecclesial body through marriage, the daughters of men had the opportunity to corrupt - whether intentional or unintentional - the community’s ideas and practices. This further weakened an already weak ecclesia, and thus hastened its decline.

End of the line

Although Seth’s genealogy extends into the 9th and 10th generations, Lamech’s children — Jabal, Jubal, Tubal-Cain, and Naamah — are the last of Cain’s descendants mentioned in the genealogy of Genesis 4. This is because Genesis is not an all-encompassing history book. It only deals with those people, places, and events that affect the progress of God’s plan and purpose. And for a time, Cain’s legacy had just such an effect: in relation to Seth’s descendants, Cain’s legacy illustrated the contrast between the spirit and the flesh; it explained how violence “*filled the earth;*” and why those who “*called on the name of the LORD,*” gradually disappeared. In regards to the latter, Cain’s legacy provides the motive for God’s decision to destroy the earth in a Flood, since without His intervention, the faithful would surely have died out, been utterly corrupted, or murdered, as was almost Enoch’s fate.

Moreover Genesis does not chronicle Cain’s descendants past the 8th generation because intermarrying had erased any significant distinction between his and Seth’s lineage, excepting two individuals: Lamech, Noah’s father, and Noah. Although human progress continued, Genesis considered their discoveries and inventions immaterial in relation to the corruption and violence that consumed the earth.

When the Flood erupted, Cain’s descendants were destroyed. Although dead, Cain’s spirit of ignorance, pride, and jealousy, combined with the worship of a god he neither knew nor understood, emerged 4,000 years later, when, among the Christian brethren of the first century, division grew and Cain’s spirit manifested itself as hatred and fratricide.

Matthew Harrison (Ottawa, ON)

Notes:

1. [Editor] Some might argue that iron was not available in those days, for the “Iron Age” did not begin until at the earliest 1500 BC. But it can be shown that iron from meteorites was available and used from the earliest times: see for example “*Iron is taken out of the earth, and brass is molten out of the stone*” (Job 28:2). The only form of iron existing in its natural state is meteoritic iron.

Life of Timothy **(5) Ye Know the Proof of Him**

Introduction

During the years immediately after his conversion, Timothy followed Paul’s example and conducted his own, local “missionary work.” He made trips to the nearby, embattled ecclesia in Iconium, and he also helped the members of his ecclesia with the tribulations they had to endure. Doing that kind of work is how Timothy wanted to use his energy and spend his time. He must have been excited, therefore, when Paul returned to Lystra, Timothy’s hometown, and invited him to join him on the Second Missionary Journey.

Timothy traveled with Paul and Silas to Philippi. Their initial preaching efforts there were successful. However, Acts 16 records that the people of Philippi had a violent reaction to one of Paul’s miracles. A mob formed, and the rulers of the city commanded Paul and Silas to be beaten and cast into prison. “*And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them*” (Acts 16:22).

The day Paul and Silas were attacked and the night they spent in prison must have been hard for the new members of the ecclesia in Philippi to endure. At the time, they did not have the perspective that comes with hindsight. They did not know that the events that had transpired would ultimately lead to the conversion of the city’s jailer and his family.

The Philippian Ecclesia

All the members of the Philippian ecclesia knew is what they had seen and heard. A violent anti-Christian mob had convulsed their city, and their wonderful teachers, who they had come to know and love, had been abused and imprisoned. Some in the ecclesia would probably have been fearful because of what had taken place. What would happen to Paul and Silas, to them, and to their families the next day and in the coming weeks and months? Others in the meeting might have been disheartened and questioned the ways and/or the power of God. Why would He allow such terrible things to happen?

The believers in Philippi probably gathered together. That is how first-century ecclesias often responded when tumultuous events occurred.¹

Acts 16 does not indicate where Timothy was or what he did during that difficult time. But the Epistle to the Philippians, which Paul wrote years later, provides insight. It states: “*But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the*

things which are Jesus Christ's. But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel. Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me" (Phil 2: 19-23).

Paul described Timothy as “*naturally*” caring for the Philippians (verse 20). (The English Standard Version renders the phrase as “*be genuinely concerned.*”) It is hard to imagine, therefore, that Timothy could have been anywhere else but with the members of the ecclesia during that great time of need.²

Timothy's command of the Scriptures and his years in Lystra and Iconium had certainly provided him with the wisdom and experience needed to relate to what the Philippians were going through. He had felt what they were feeling, and he had had a godly response to it. Some of those moments in his past that had seemed so painful — like the time that Paul was stoned in his city — would have revealed their great value if he drew upon them in speaking to the Philippians, offering them encouragement, assuring them, showing them genuine care, and providing them with perspective on what had happened.

In his Epistle, Paul also reminded the Philippians that they knew “the proof” of Timothy (verse 22). The Greek word rendered “proof” means “trial.”³ The English Standard Version translates the phrase as “*you know Timothy's proven worth.*” The Philippian believers had evidently seen Timothy remain steadfast during difficult times. That could be a reference to his response to the attack on Paul and Silas.

Timothy among the Philippians

Timothy's steadfastness during trial must have been a source of encouragement to the ecclesia in Philippi. That is probably why Paul made reference to it when he wrote to them. It is a reminder to us that our faithful behavior during difficult times can help and strengthen the people around us who are watching us and how we respond.

There is also more that we can learn about Timothy from what Paul wrote than just how he might have responded to the attack on Paul and Silas. If we consider what Paul said about him within the context of his overall message, we can get a glimpse of Timothy throughout his time in Philippi. Paul's words reveal what a wonderful example Timothy's character had been to the ecclesia while he had been with them.

Phil 2 shows that Timothy had developed many of the characteristics Paul wanted the believers in Philippi to have. For example, Paul wanted the Philippians to be of one mind in service to God together with him: “*Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind*” (Phil 2: 2). Like-mindedness was a characteristic Timothy displayed when he had been among them. “*For I have no man likeminded,*” wrote the Apostle about him in verse 20 of the same chapter.⁴ Paul wanted the Philippians to develop the same unity of mind he and Timothy had.

Unity of mind is made possible when we are not focused on ourselves and the pursuit of our individual wants. Paul wanted the Philippians to be mindful of the

needs of others and to serve one another: “*Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others*” (Phil 2: 3-4). That is exactly what Timothy had done when he had been among them: “*For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s. But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel*” (Phil 2: 20-22). Instead of looking out for himself, Timothy had cared for the Philippians and elevated their needs, knowing that they belonged to Christ.

Phil 2 contains some well-known language about the Lord Jesus, which tends to come up in first-principles discussions: “*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men*” (Phil 2: 5-7). The point Paul was trying to make in this passage was that even though the Lord had an exalted status, he had humbled himself and given himself to serving others. Several verses later, Paul noted that Timothy had followed in the Lord’s footsteps and had also given himself to service: “*But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel*” (Phil 2: 22).

Timothy was a great asset to the preaching work in Philippi. He did more than just speak about the principles of the Gospel. He demonstrated them in the way he lived his life.

Godly behavior can be very influential. Paul exhorted the Philippians by recalling how Timothy had conducted himself when he had been among them. Paul’s message was not, “Remember Timothy’s words and what he taught in his classes.” It was, “Remember how Timothy acted and do likewise.” That emphasis is a compelling reminder that we should live our lives so that our behavior demonstrates our beliefs and offers encouragement in godliness to those around us. As the life of Timothy illustrates, a godly example can have a tremendous impact by showing the principles of the Gospel in meaningful and memorable ways.

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Notes:

1. See, for example, John 20:19 and Acts 12:12.
2. Bro. Shane Kingsbury has some excellent thoughts on what the attack on Paul and Silas would have meant for Timothy and how he responded in S. Kingsbury. Teenagers of the Bible: Growing Examples of Godliness. (Findon, South Australia: Logos), pages 427-429.
3. The Greek word is Strong’s Number G1382. The definition is from J.H. Thayer, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament. e-Sword 9.9.0.
4. The Greek word is Strong’s Number G2473. It is *isopsuchos*. Thayer defines it as “equal in soul.” J.H. Thayer, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament. e-Sword 9.9.0.

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Youth Speaks

Eternal Hope in Times of Temporary Sorrow

Jeremiah said, “The word of the LORD came to me: Hanamel son of Shalum your uncle is going to come to you and say, ‘Buy my field at Anathoth, because as nearest relative it is your right and duty to buy it’ ” (Jer 32:6-7).

Depressing times in Jeremiah’s time and ours

At times the world can bring us down. We see the doom and gloom on the news, the failing economy, the increasingly prevalent immorality, or our own sinful nature, and it can simply depress us. When this happens, and inevitably it will when we consider the magnitude of the world’s problems, we need a spiritual refresher. We need something that gives us renewed hope and comfort to see beyond current troubles. The account of Jeremiah’s purchase of the plot of land in Jerusalem is an excellent example of a spiritual refresher. As we will see, it gave Jeremiah and all the Israelites who witnessed it hope in the midst of a dire circumstance, as it does for us now. Let’s start out by going through the process that should be undertaken with every Bible passage: backing up and looking at context.

The events preceding Jeremiah 32 give us an understanding about why this chapter is here. The book of Jeremiah can definitely be considered one of the most ‘gloomy’ books in the Bible; much of the writing focuses on such topics as the idolatry and sinfulness of the tribe of Judah and the impending captivity of the people at the hand of the Babylonians. Apart from the first 12 verses of the book, the first 29 chapters are almost entirely about the failings of the people of Judah and God’s judgment on all the nations, Judah included. It would weigh heavily on the hearts of those living in the time period described in these chapters, to see God explaining through His prophet Jeremiah the way in which the nation of Babylon was to completely take over Judah. But in His infinite wisdom, God set up the book of Jeremiah in the most extraordinary way. After all the doom and gloom of chapters 1-29, the next section of Jeremiah, chapters 30-33, has a completely opposite tone. These four chapters provide reassurance from God of His wonderful plan for the faithful remnant. God telling Jeremiah: “*Write all the words which I have spoken to you in a book. ‘For behold, days are coming’, declares the LORD, ‘when I will restore the fortunes of My people Israel and Judah’*” (Jer 30:2-3; all quotations are from the NIV). The next two chapters further expound upon this statement, offering a message of hope. All this sets us up for chapter 32, where Jeremiah purchases the plot of land.

The purchase of a field

By this time, it’s quite clear that Judah would be taken into captivity; in fact, it says: “*Now at that time the army of the king of Babylon was besieging Jerusalem...*” (Jer 32:2). Despite all the despair, God spoke to Jeremiah and told him that his cousin Hanamel would approach him and ask him to purchase his field, and God

commanded Jeremiah to accept this offer and purchase the field! This seems very bizarre since the desolation to be caused by Babylon didn't exactly make this prime real estate buying season. Of all the times to buy a field, this would appear to be the worst. Buying land is usually associated with times of prosperity, or at least some stability; certainly not when nationwide captivity is on the horizon! From a human perspective, it would make no sense to buy a field at this time, knowing that king Nebuchadnezzar was in the midst of ransacking Jerusalem and taking captives by the masses to Babylon, and even if one were to be left in the land, it is doubtful that the Babylonians would honor any title deeds of the people of the land. Nevertheless, Jeremiah follows through with God's instruction and buys his cousin's field for seventeen shekels of silver. It is also recorded that there was an official ceremony, with witnesses observing the transaction. For these witnesses, it doubtless seemed like complete foolishness for Jeremiah to buy this field; perhaps they looked at him in the same way the people of the world looked at Noah when he built his ark on dry ground.

We know God has a purpose in all that He does, and so we can draw through deductive reasoning that God had a plan when He told Jeremiah to buy this field, and we can also assume His plan was not to see Jeremiah make a useless purchase. Why then, we should ask, would God want His faithful prophet to buy this plot of land in this most peculiar of times? Let's delve into this further, because the language used in this passage, as well as context, will reveal the picture God was painting for Jeremiah. Jeremiah declares that he took the deeds of purchase and made sure there was a crowd to see: *"...In the sight of Hanamel my uncle's son and in the sight of the witnesses who signed the deed of purchase, before all the Jews who were sitting in the court of the guard"* (Jer 32:12). Jeremiah wants people to witness this property purchase. Verse 14 gives us the best clue of what is really going on: *"Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Take these deeds, this sealed deed of purchase and this open deed, and put them in an earthenware jar, that they may last a long time' "*. The LORD instructs Jeremiah to make certain that these deeds are to be preserved *'for a long time.'* This makes sense when we read the next verse: *"...Houses and fields and vineyards will again be bought in this land."* This would occur; after 70 years of captivity, the nation was reestablished. This is irrelevant for Jeremiah, though, because he was not a young man when this happened and wouldn't outlive the period of captivity. By the time Judah returned from captivity, Jeremiah would have long been dead. But this wasn't an ordinary land purchase and God wasn't interested in having Jeremiah inherit this property while a mortal man; He wanted Jeremiah to invest in eternity! It is my belief that Jeremiah bought this plot of land because he will one day inherit it, forever in the most holy city in the world: Jerusalem!

The reason for the purchase

There is a reason that Jeremiah purchases this land under such difficult circumstances. The realization of what was to come had to be upsetting for Jeremiah; he was only human after all, and to see utter destruction to his fellow people would not have been an easy thing to experience. We don't know exactly what was going on in Jeremiah's head when this happened, but we do know what was happening

in his country, and it very well may have become too much for him to handle. God chooses this moment, when perhaps Jeremiah was at his lowest, when he was struggling to stay strong, to present to Jeremiah a promise. This promise was that one day, Judah would be restored. This passage in the Bible has always been so uplifting to me, as it should be for you too; it is an amazing reminder that even in the most difficult of circumstances, God has a plan for us. How inspiring it must have been for Jeremiah, who, after giving prophecies of destruction and captivity for some time, surely needed this enlightenment from Yahweh. This verse would have resounded clearly with Jeremiah after this purchase: *“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future” (Jer 29:11)*. God knew Jeremiah needed reassurance in times like these, and this was His way of comforting His servant.

How incredible it is when we consider the fact that God did this just to bring comfort to Jeremiah! We may think that one man would be insignificant in the eyes of the Creator of all things. Not true at all, for one person who cares means everything to Yahweh. In order to comfort this one man, the LORD planned this eternally significant land purchase. It shows the ends to which God will go to help any one of us if we only seek His help!

The significance of the purchase

The question could be posed: how did Jeremiah know what was really happening? Perhaps he was simply blindly following God's decrees with no knowledge that he was investing in eternity? We may also ask: how do we even know this was an eternal investment and not just an ordinary purchase of land? Firstly, the fact that it is recorded in Scripture shows it's not something completely ordinary that's happening; that much we know. The true answer to this lies in the way in which Jeremiah responds to God after the purchase of the field: he praises God! Jeremiah offers a heartfelt prayer to God:

“Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you...” He goes on to say: *“See how the siege ramps are built up to take the city. Because of the sword, famine and plague, the city will be given into the hands of the Babylonians who are attacking it. What you said has happened, as you now see. And though the city will be given into the hands of the Babylonians, you, Sovereign LORD, say to me, ‘Buy the field with silver and have the transaction witnessed’ ” (Jer 32:17, 24-25).*

These verses show not only the significance of the transaction, but additionally his praise of God demonstrates Jeremiah's understanding of the significance of the purchase; this was a prayer showing gratitude to the Maker for extending His mercy to His faithful servant. Jeremiah sees God's grace, and is abounding with joy because of it; it does not matter that Jerusalem is about to be besieged by the Babylonians, for he has been given a powerful picture showing that, many years from the day of his purchase, God will reign supreme over all the nations. In that day, Jerusalem will no longer be besieged, no longer be subject to human rule, but eternally be filled with faithful believers joyously giving praise to Yahweh

Almighty and His son Jesus Christ. It is quite clear from his prayer in Jer 32: 17-25 that Jeremiah was fully aware of God's eternal gift being demonstrated in the purchase of his cousin Hanamel's field.

Faithless Hanamel

Like many Biblical accounts, Yahweh, in mindfulness of the readers, presents not only the example we should emulate of a faithful servant in Jeremiah, but also the example not to be emulated in the faithless Hanamel. Jewish custom maintained that owning land had great significance. Amongst families, land was usually passed down from generation to generation. Similar to having children, owning land was a way of preserving one's lineage, and furthering the success of future generations. In selling his field, Hanamel was giving up hope. Perhaps Hanamel didn't think about the long-term consequences of his actions, that there was eternal significance in this transaction, but by going through with it he was showing faithlessness and short-sightedness. Difficult times call for us to look beyond the current situation and have faith in God's greater picture. If not, we show ourselves to not be pleasing in God's sight, as Prov 24:10 hints at: *"If you falter in a time of trouble, how small is your strength!"* It is not the moments when life is great and everything seemingly is going our way that define us (although I'm not downplaying the significance of our choices in 'prosperous times'), but when we have our backs against the wall and keeping on the right path becomes difficult, *that* is when our true characters come out. The encounter between cousins Jeremiah and Hanamel rings similar to that of brothers Jacob and Esau when Esau sells Jacob his birthright. The account is found in Gen 25:29-34. Hunger caused Esau to despise a long-term investment. In the story, Esau declares to Jacob: *"Look, I am about to die...what good is the birthright to me?"* (Gen. 25:32) We can imagine Hanamel looking around at the dire situation and declaring something very similar as he sold his inheritance. Both Esau and Hanamel were short-sighted and not spiritually minded enough to consider the future consequences of their birthright and land, respectively. When we face times when we must choose between God's way or man's way, either to temporarily please the flesh or permanently please God, we must remember to avoid making the same mistakes Esau and Hanamel made.

The significance for us

This story has great significance not only to Jeremiah but to us likewise. We see from this how deeply God cares about His believers. He will never abandon us if only we seek Him wholeheartedly. Jeremiah was just one man, but the LORD loved him enough that He went through this process of arranging the purchase of his cousin's field so Jeremiah would feel comforted in a dark and disturbing time for the nation of Judah and all its inhabitants. When the world brings us down, God will lift us up if we seek Him. He cares about each and every one of us, so much that, in the words of Christ, *"...the very hairs on (our) head are numbered..."* (Luke 12:7). At times, in God's omnipresence and vastness, it is difficult to see that He is a very personal God and loves us individually. But despite His power, there is a completely personal connection between Yahweh and every single one of His creation. The lesson we can most certainly take from this story is that even

when our world seems to be crashing down, God is there, and He has a plan for you and me. On a very personal level, God is not just the omnipotent Creator of everything; He is our God, and He never will forget His children. Never, ever, let the thought cross your mind that the future is hopeless, or worse yet, never think that God doesn't care. The only way we can believe that the future is hopeless is if we become short-sighted and lose faith in the big picture, unable to see past our current trials. If we have that vision of the glorious future that lies ahead, then no current circumstance can ever have us beat, regardless of how much the pain is. The story of Jeremiah's purchase provides us with a refreshing reminder of God's future plans with the nation of Israel, a nation we all strive to be part of.

Dalton Henley (Sacramento, CA)



History

“Lost” Christadelphian Churches

There was an article in *The Christadelphian*, November 1993, about the “lost” Christadelphian Meeting place in Lanesville, Virginia. In the article it was reported that this ecclesia was quite unknown before being discovered by accident when a brother was delivering a mail order in rural Virginia. He noticed a Christadelphian Hall on the property, and on enquiring was told that indeed the house owner was a Christadelphian, but had not any contact with any other Christadelphian for over 40 years. And so this “lost” ecclesia was re-discovered. But why was it “lost”?

In fact, it is not the only lost Christadelphian Hall, for elsewhere in Virginia is an isolated hall, obviously disused, with a new signpost saying “Bethany Christadelphian Church, Est. 1895”. And near Baltimore, MD, is another building, still active, with a sign outside saying “First Christadelphian Chapel of Maryland”, but which is listed in no directory of Christadelphian ecclesias.

In fact, all these ecclesias share a common history, and their background does illuminate, in a small way, some of the background of Christadelphians in North America. I am not going to give a history of the individual ecclesias, but use their common origins to describe some of the background of the divisions among us.

AH Zilmer

Born in 1868, Albert Herman Zilmer was initially associated with the “Church of God”, the forerunner of what is today known as the Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith. By 1896 he was a pastor there, and was later appointed evangelist. However, on July 26, 1906 he was baptized into the Christadelphian Faith at Plymouth, IN. As elaborated in “A Minister’s Reason for Leaving his Church”, the reasons were a general dissatisfaction with the looseness over baptismal requirements, and also disagreement over judgment (the “Immortal Emergence” problem).



Albert and Anna Zilmer

He rapidly became as prominent among the Christadelphians as he had been among the “Church of God”, and upon the death of Thomas Williams in early 1914 was appointed editor of *“The Advocate”*: he had since about 1910 been associated with John Lea in editing *“The Faith”*, a magazine designed strictly for proclaiming the Truth to strangers.

Zilmer's editorship of *The Advocate* ceased with the issue of June, 1917, reportedly because the committee could no longer afford to pay Zilmer his stipend of \$50 per month (about \$1,000 per month in 2014 dollars). It was not long before he became sole editor of *The Faith*, which he turned into a fraternal magazine.

When Zilmer in 1927 published a small book entitled "Sin: A Treatise", he seemed to endorse an "Amended" view of the atonement, and was therefore accused by many voices of endorsing Strickler's views, and hence of "Clean Flesh". Since Zilmer lived in Morrilton, Arkansas, where the Unamended had long had an active ecclesia, he exerted considerable influence there, and several ecclesias lent support to his views. The pages of *The Advocate* for a time bristled with debates between "orthodox" Unamended writers and Zilmer or those sympathetic to his perspective. However, at the end of 1933 the then editor of *The Advocate*, Albert Hall, was removed from editorship: when the magazine resumed after an absence of a year, Bro. Zilmer totally disappeared from its pages. In fact, both Zilmer and the ecclesias associated with him were ostracized from the broader Unamended community.

Zilmer continued *The Faith* until his death in 1949, and his wife, Anna, continued it until her death in April, 1959. He maintained his views on the Atonement, and also a much more loose view on fellowship than was customary within either the Amended or Unamended groups at the time. His "Statement of Faith" consisted of the "Synopsis of the One Faith" (although only the positive statements), as written by John Thomas in 1867, and he was prepared to fellowship anyone who agreed with it. He strongly disagreed with the Amended community making belief in "responsibility" a requirement for fellowship, maintaining the belief in the "synopsis" a necessary, but sufficient, condition for fellowship.

Germany¹

Zilmer's background was German, in which language he was fluent. It was therefore natural that he served as one of the main conduits to the German brethren. The little German ecclesias, which have continuously witnessed the Truth for almost 100 years, was essentially founded by a Bro. Albert Maier, who emigrated to the USA from Germany, and was converted around the turn of the nineteenth century. Maier returned to Germany for good by 1914, and spread the gospel there. Bro. Zilmer became the main contact of the little group when it became a viable group soon after the First World War, and many letters from the German ecclesias can be found in the pages of *The Faith*, including the sad note in the issue for 1946 noting the execution of Bro. Albert Merz for refusing military service under the Nazis.

Zilmer's beliefs

It is hard to summarize his beliefs, but clearly he strongly disagreed with the notion that mankind, as well as Jesus, is born in a perishing condition, prone to sin i.e. that they all possess "sin in the flesh" as a physical reality. Zilmer held that "we are morally bound to exempt him [Jesus] from the necessity of making a sin offering for himself". In this he seemed to reflect the type of ideas that Strickler, a contemporary, held. His views are therefore more extreme in this than Amended

beliefs, but they are much closer to that of the Amended than the views of the majority of Unamended.

The Faith ecclesias

The ecclesias associated with him were known as “Faith” or “Zilmer” ecclesias, and as you might have guessed the three ecclesias discussed in the first paragraph all were part of the group. Lanesville membership appeared to have slowly



shrunk: in 1951 was the last recorded intelligence by a Sis. Edwards, although I have an old newspaper clipping from 1954 describing the church, as told by Bro. Charles Edwards, great-grandson of the founder, Lemuel Edwards. Bethany shut down in the 1980’s, with the remaining members transferring to other ecclesias. So Baltimore remained, along with a group led by Bro. Ernest Robinson in the Richmond “Faith” Ecclesia. Upon his death around 2000 this ecclesia disbanded, with members joining the three other Unamended ecclesias in town. The few other ecclesias either dwindled to nothing or joined the Unamended. The only (early) exception was the Washington DC Ecclesia, which had joined the Amended Community in 1954. A few others survived for a while: Waterloo, Iowa, Marion, Illinois, and San Saba, Texas: these also either returned to the Unamended fold or, like Lanesville, disappeared.

Thus the number of Faith ecclesias slowly dwindled: the last remaining one in Baltimore is prepared to fellowship any Christadelphian, but because of this is not officially welcomed anywhere among our community, although it maintains ties with the Church of God of Abrahamic Faith, particularly the Cleveland church.

Going back to 1956, the last issue of *The Faith* I can find lists 22 ecclesias: this list is interesting for several reasons:

- Of the ecclesias listed, eight also appear in *The Advocate* for the same year, although fourteen do not.
- The geographical spread is illuminating, for only one isolated ecclesia is reported in Texas, and no others in the Southern United States at all.
- Several “Faith” ecclesias are reported in Ontario, including two duplicate with *The Advocate* list.
- Similarly, Western Canada has two “Dual” ecclesias.

Among the members of ex-Faith Unamended ((Advocate) Ecclesias, even those with relatives of Bro. Zilmer, all I have talked to would disassociate themselves from the views put forth by Bro. Zilmer. But it seems clear that the current geographical grouping among the Unamended is somewhat similar to that one can discern from *The Advocate* versus *The Faith* grouping from 50 years ago. Very few in the southern USA endorsed the NASU, for example, while most with old connections to Zilmer did when it was voted on in 2005.

Conclusion

I believe Zilmer influenced many in the Unamended ecclesias with whom he was associated to embrace views on the atonement somewhat close to those of the Amended. I believe that traces of those views still linger in some Unamended ecclesias, particularly those disposed to unity with the Amended community. However, it is also probable that along with those views comes a view of fellowship boundaries that differ from that of the Amended community, and it is this latter problem that has proved to be the harder problem to solve in the current unity discussions.



As we consider the current state, I hope a little historical background shows why many in the Unamended community have historically held views on the atonement (and hence “responsibility”) compatible with those of the Amended, while recognizing how different were the views of Zilmer on fellowship.

Peter Hemingray

Notes:

1. A brief account of the Truth in Germany is to be found in *The Christadelphian*, 1957 p 211

The Joy of Sunday Schooling

Teaching and Learning: Some Simple Ways to Improve Instruction

It is easy to suppose that teaching is telling. In other words, if we tell our Sunday schoolers something they will learn it. Lecturing and storytelling are prime examples of this kind of teaching. To be sure, some students learn a lot from a lecture, and many of them remember important details of a story long after it has been told. It also goes without saying that it is important for the children to develop good listening skills. But good teaching often requires more than telling, because learning often involves more than listening. Some students are not good auditory learners, and for them other ways of receiving information are important.

Using all the common senses

There are several ways that students take in information. Hearing is just one of them. Seeing is another. When we draw on sound and sight at the same time, we have audio-visual instruction. Audio-visual instruction is often more effective than either one alone. Audio-visual materials are more engaging. It is no surprise that children often pay close attention to age-appropriate DVDs, and adults often find lectures more compelling when PowerPoint or Keynote illustrations are used.

There are other ways of taking in information as well. Manipulating objects can be instructive. Children learn by handling and manipulating things. Drawing, coloring and writing are common manipulative activities. So are doing jigsaw puzzles, working with matching cards, and physically putting things in order (e.g., sequencing). Often there is room to increase the use of manipulatives in Sunday school and to draw on their unique instructional power.¹

Physical movement is a fourth way in which the senses are engaged and learning can take place. Skits, charades, finger puppets, and songs with body movements are just a few of the learning activities that involve physical movement.

There will even be times when the engagement of smell and taste are appropriate in a Sunday school lesson. The point is that all of our God-given senses allow us to take in information that contributes to learning.

Children differ

It is recognized that children differ in how they learn, and at least part of this has to do with the different ways in which they take in information. Some are excellent auditory learners. Others are more visual. Still others respond well to tactile (handling) or kinesthetic (moving) activities. Teachers are not the first to recognize this fact. The Bible honored these differences in people long ago.

*“For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot (**moving**) shall say, Because I am not the hand (**handling**), I am not of the body; is it therefore*

*not of the body? And if the ear (**hearing**) shall say, Because I am not the eye (**seeing**), I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body?" (1Cor 12:14-19).*

In the body of Christ we are not all alike, and we complement each other by serving with our different God-given strengths. Similarly, a body of instruction is more effective when it engages the different ways that children take in information and learn.

Can it really be done?

Is it possible for a teacher to accommodate so many differences in a single Sunday school class? Actually quite a lot can be done. Give a little thought to the things you already do and you may be able to find ways to engage more of the common senses. Think again about the examples of lecturing and storytelling. Each of these can be enriched by providing additional ways for the students to take in information.

	Hearing (passive)	Seeing (passive)	Handling (active)	Moving (active)
Lecturing				
by itself	x	x		
with PowerPoint, etc.	x	x		
the above with corresponding worksheets / question sheets ²	x	x	x	
Storytelling				
by itself	x			
with pictures	x	x		
with touchy-feely props, etc.	x	x	x	
the above plus acting out the story	x	x	x	x

Go ahead. Evaluate the things you do in Sunday school. See if there are ways you can add something to engage more of the common senses. Almost certainly you will improve instruction in the process.

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Notes:

1. Watch a child use an iPad. Seeing, hearing, and manipulating are all involved in whatever it is they may be doing and learning!
2. Good questions that require written answers take learning beyond just listening and seeing. For information about question design, see "The Questions We Ask", *Tidings*, June, 2012, pp.228-231; July 2012, pp.281-285.

Reflections

The Gospel of Forgiveness

What is the purpose of God, as seen through the Scriptures? It is to make one again, in heart and mind, the relationship between God and man. It is to help man become “right” again in God’s sight, so man can give honor and glory to God in the “right” way.

The Jews could not grasp this was God’s main goal. They figured they were already “right” in God’s sight by merely being, physically, children of Abraham. Therefore, they did not focus on the promise of God, to Adam and Eve, of one who would destroy sin in himself. The Jews ignored the fact that the *first* thing promised to Abraham, even before the land, was forgiveness. The land is promised to Abraham, prospectively, in Genesis 13. However, before the land promise is actually confirmed to Abraham, by the covenant described in Genesis 15, we are told that “*God counted Abraham’s faith as righteousness,*” or “rightness”, in God’s sight.

This concept is so important to God that this particular verse is quoted in Galatians, twice in Romans 4, as well as in James! Paul in Galatians is berating the people of Galatia for departing from the true gospel. What does Paul quote as the gospel? He quotes Gen 12:3: “*In (or by, through) you shall all nations be blessed.*”

To what does Paul apply this blessing? To the future kingdom? No. To the future king, the Lord Jesus Christ? No. To future immortality? Not even that. Instead, Paul applies this important gospel definition to *forgiveness*, that is, to being made right, or becoming justified in God’s sight.

“The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, ‘All nations will be blessed in you.’ So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer. For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the Law, to perform them.’ Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, ‘The righteous man shall live by faith’ ” (Gal 3:8-11).

Paul stresses in the letter to the Galatians that we are not automatically made right in God’s sight just by being a Jew, or by saying we are baptized into Christ, but we are made righteous by having and continuing in the same type of faith Abraham had.

What type of faith did Abraham have that we need? He believed that: God would and could do what He said He would do — in His time:

“For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, (as it is written, ‘A father of many na-

tions have I made you') in the presence of Him whom he believed, even God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist. In hope against hope he believed, so that he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken, 'So shall your descendants be.' Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform" (Rom 4:16-21).

God could and would achieve the seemingly impossible (impossible to man): "And He took him outside and said, 'Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them.' And He said to him, 'So shall your descendants be.' Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness" (Gen 15:5,6).

There would be a savior to be a sacrifice for sins, as promised to Abraham in Genesis 22.

"And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice" (Gen 22:16-18).

"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Gal 3:16).

If we believe as Abraham did, what does Paul say will be given to us? The same forgiveness, the same "accounted as right" in God's sight, as Abraham received:

"Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:24-26).

That is the first main part of the gospel. In order to inherit the rest of the promises made to Abraham (the land, forever), we must first be made right, and one with God. He must be able to justify us, and meet us, clean from our sins in His sight. This will be the permanent forgiveness, the permanent right-ness with God — forever.

What were the apostles and disciples to teach?

"He said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things' " (Luke 24:46-48).

What did Jesus do the first time here on this earth? His main purpose then was to be a sacrifice for sins — a perfect sacrifice — for our sins. If we choose to believe that action in that person, we are granted forgiveness, justification, *righteousness!* Forgiveness has to come first, a blessing *now* through Abraham, through Christ

Jesus our Lord. We can be made “right” in God’s sight! What a joyful, incredible happening! We who are not worthy at all, the dust of the earth (1Pet 1:24, Isa 40:6-8; James 1:10, 11; 4:14, etc.), have been granted the incredible opportunity to be made one with God, the Creator of our world, the Universe. He is willing to remove all our wrongdoings, our sins, our faults, so they are never seen again, and make us as if we were perfect in His sight, only if we believe.

What an offer! What a gift! These verses of the Scriptures mean so much more now when we try to comprehend the awesomeness of God’s love for us — each of us.

“Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! (Rom 7:24, 25).

“He will again have compassion on us: He will tread our iniquities under foot. Yes, You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea” (Mic 7:19).

“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners; To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, To grant those who mourn in Zion, Giving them a garland instead of ashes, The oil of gladness instead of mourning, The mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting. So they will be called oaks of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified” (Isa 61:1-3).

“How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered! How blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit!” (Psa 32:1-2).

“To give to His people the knowledge of salvation By the forgiveness of their sins, Because of the tender mercy of our God” (Luke 1:77-78).

“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world — our faith. Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1John 5:4-5).

“Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?... But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 8:35, 37-39).

And finally,

“The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord” (1Cor 15:56-58).

Maritta Terrell (Austin Leander, TX)



Bible Mission News

Guyana — 43rd Annual Bible School April, 2014

According to the book by Bro. Stanley Owen, “Into all the Word”, the beginnings of the Truth in Guyana goes back as far as the 1890’s. Following the history of the ecclesias in this country is quite intriguing and encouraging. The work of the brethren there has been supported by many over the years, and this has been helpful since members have immigrated to other countries in the past decades.

The six ecclesias in Guyana, about 100 members in total, undertake the task of organizing and implementing a full slate of scheduled annual activities. The CBM Canada provides assistance to the brotherhood in Guyana in various forms — such as Sunday School supplies, speakers for Bible Schools, and hall repairs and upgrades — as well as funding towards transportation needs. Bro. Ted and Sis. Dolores Sleeper have served as CBMC link couple for a number of years — they also lived in Guyana in the past as missionaries, so they have provided a valuable long-term support for the brotherhood in this country.

The most recent fraternal activity for all the ecclesias was the 43rd Annual Bible School, which was a four-day event during the Easter Weekend. The School was held at the Georgetown Ecclesial Hall, Friday, April 18th to Monday, April 21st, 2014. The theme was “Law and Grace”, and the speakers were Bro. Rafeek Soolaman from British Columbia and Bro. Don Luff from Ontario. The attendance varied from 90 to 130 brothers, sisters, teens and children during the course of the weekend. Bro. Rafeek reviewed aspects of the Tabernacle of David and Bro. Don presented practical topics from the Law of Moses. The highlight was the baptism



Sunday school children group singing

first thing Sunday morning of one of the Sunday School scholars — Abigail Semple, who is the oldest of Sis. Dawn Semple’s two daughters, from the Georgetown Ecclesia. It was an emotionally happy day for all who attended. We were also entertained by the talents of the members, teens and children that afternoon by means of recitations, singing and different performances. A full and spiritually uplifting day indeed!

During my eight day stay in this country, I was taken by Bro. David and Sis. Joan Andrew to view the other five ecclesial halls. It is evident that the members care for and appreciate their meeting places by the cleanliness, well-maintained appearance of each hall. We were also pleased to see the revitalization of the Plegt Anker farm by a young couple of that ecclesia. They have planted many trees which bear tropical fruit, as well as large vegetable gardens.



New Amsterdam Hall looks great, bright, clean with flowers/plant/shrubs all around!

the plow (discipleship and life in the Truth) and to look ahead to the hope that is set before us. The Bible School certainly did that for all of us. I really enjoyed my first visit to Guyana!

*Written by Don Luff,
CBMC representative*

*Submitted by Jan Berneau,
CBMA/CBMC Publicity*

Wednesday evening April 23rd we attended a joint Bible Class of the Georgetown and Eccles Ecclesia's, at the Eccles Hall. A study on "Putting our Hand to the Plow" was the topic, and tilling and sowing the focus for the class. Lessons from the natural and symbolic or spiritual applications were drawn from soil, tilling, planting and watering — and applied to our daily lives in the Truth. As we serve together on our way to the Kingdom, there are "waymarks" along the path to encourage us to keep our hands on



**Above:
Kilcoy Hall, very presentable from the street!**



Left: Plegt Anker Hall with sign in it

Jamaica Easter Youth Camp — a Perfect Weekend!

Our Journey to Jamaica for the Easter Youth Bible School really started six months before we left. Preparation, they say, is the key to a successful trip. Bro. Don Luff, from the Brant County Ecclesia in Ontario was our designated CBMC support person to help us prepare. And prepare us he did. Monthly meetings, numerous emails, many phone calls, sewing backpacks in the basement, and collecting supplies from the Christadelphian Save the Children Fund (CSTCF) in London, Ontario, for classes were just a few of the planning steps. And that was not including three brethren preparing for classes and devotions. It was a labor of love, and we are truly thankful for the support and guidance in making sure we were well prepared to go down. It gave us the confidence that we would be as helpful as we could be for the brethren and sisters and young people in Jamaica, as we strove to work in God's vineyard. With eleven eager laborers, we were the largest group to go down in a long time.



We left on Thursday morning, April 17th, 2014, and landed in Montego Bay, Jamaica in the evening. The heat was a wonderful change from a winter of freezing temperatures in Ontario. We gathered our 15 suitcases, and met with our bus and driver for the two hour journey to Westmoreland, on the south of the island. It was a bumpy ride in the dark, which meant we could not see the beauty of the country. (We were able to however, on the return trip home). At last we arrived at the Easter Gathering location at just after 9 pm. Everyone had been waiting patiently for us to arrive. Bro. Stephen Macfarlane was asked to provide some fun icebreakers to get the young people introduced to each other and the visitors from Canada. It was a fun evening, and we were able to get to know most of the kids and brethren and sisters that were there. After all the excitement and introductions, the young people headed off to bed, but not to sleep! Many rekindled old friendships and created new ones — chatting and socializing until the wee hours of the morning.

We awoke to a stunning site! Having arrived at the camp in the dark we were now able to see that the camp is located directly on the beach. The camp grounds covered about a 3-acre parcel of land, lush and green— the west side was the aquamarine Caribbean Sea and the east side displayed an inland mountain range. The Camp Hope facility was perfect for the weekend including a lot of room for

the kids with separate boy's and girl's dorms, a large common area in the middle and a kitchen at the back.

The morning moved quickly as the organizers had a 6 am wake-up call for the campers. Stretching and exercises, and a brisk run certainly woke everyone up. Each morning started like this, and when the exercises were over, various groups of young people from each ecclesia on the island presented a morning devotion. Then off to a full breakfast!

Friday and Saturday were both busy days, with two classes in the morning, and one after lunch. The theme for the morning classes was "Lessons from the Sower", presented by Bro. Shawn Snobelen, and the afternoon sessions were mutual improvement style classes presented by Bro. Stephen. Separate classes were held for the under 12-year-olds out on the front lawn with Sis. Marnie Snobelen, Sis. Rachel Pryer and Sis. Realle Macfarlane. The sisters and brothers thoroughly enjoyed these opportunities to share the Truth with the young people and really get to know them on a more individual and personal way. Afternoon activities included group team games in the form of a field day and a fantastic cook-off competition.



Following dinner we enjoyed a quiz championship on Friday and a challenging treasure hunt on Saturday. Each day ended with a devotion on the Fruit of the Spirit by Bro. Grant Pryer — our sub theme for the weekend.

The weather was beautiful. It was over 30 degrees (86 F) both days, and humid. We had heavy rain for a short afternoon burst almost every

Afternoon youth activities

day which cooled down the heat, and provided ample opportunity for volleyball in the rain — a popular activity on the weekend! Much of our free time was spent playing volleyball on the grassy area in front of the main building and heading to the beach to swim.



Sunday came too soon — and preparation for our memorial service was under way. We have all had to speak in different kinds of weather, however this was the hottest temperature any of us have had to endure. Imagine an exhortation in 37 degrees (99 F) weather. Some

of us started to miss the cold north — even if just for a moment. However, we had a wonderful opportunity to break bread with the brothers and sisters and young baptized. Following lunch we had a lecture entitled “What Kind of Believer are You”. Sunday afternoon was spent in games, spiritual conversation, and preparation for the formal dinner and talent night that was scheduled for that evening. Part of the preparation included a class on etiquette that was prepared by Sis. Kay Brown. The young people were really excited and spent many hours getting ready for the dinner. The male campers were dressed in their finest clothes and waited patiently for the young ladies to make their entrance. It was a wonderful evening, with great food and an entertaining evening of Biblical skits, songs of praise and poems. The evening ended in a devotion on kindness.

Monday was the All-Island Fraternal Gathering which involved a flood of brethren and sisters, friends and children from across the island converging on Camp Hope to meet and fellowship with each other. Some arrived by car, others by bus, and soon there were over 100 people in the main room. Bro. Stephen presented a talk entitled “Passing the Charge” and then we had a memorial service and lunch. It was wonderful to meet so many from Jamaica, and get to know some, and reminisce with others who had previously met some of our relatives and brethren and sisters from Canada. (Brethren Philip Snobelen, Ted Hodge, Ron Leadbetter, Ron Ghent, Daniel Leadbetter and others).

We left sad, but exhilarated at 3 pm. Driving out of the camp, heading back to the Sangster Airport, we really felt it was too short, and that we needed more time to learn more about our brethren and sisters. Yet we also felt that we had formed strong bonds with many of them. Since our group included various ages of both males and females, we were blessed to engage in spiritually uplifting conversations with many different individuals throughout camp. It was a unique and fulfilling experience for all of us, and one that we would certainly repeat if our Lord remains away, and we are afforded the opportunity.

*Written by Shawn and Marnie Snobelen
Submitted by Jan Berneau, CBMA/CBMC Publicity*

In St. Lucia — Preaching is *Living!*

Preaching is always a challenge! Even after many years’ experience it is still a challenge! In the Caribbean country of St. Lucia, Brothers and Sisters have been presenting the gospel for fifteen years. There have been countless discussions with people in an endeavour to turn them “from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God”. Friendships have been made, contacts have come and gone, and sadly even some members of the ecclesia no longer attend.

History

For many years St. Lucia was a battle ground between England and France. The small island changed hands fourteen times before it finally became part of the British Empire in 1814. While the island was under French control the Roman Catholic Church became very well established and this continued under British

rule. However Protestant churches came to St. Lucia during the 19th and 20th centuries and became established. These include Anglican, Seventh Day Adventists, Methodists, Pentecostals, Jehovah's Witnesses and a few others.

It's the Devil, it is always the Devil!

Our discussions over the years with members of all these congregations have centered on the devil and demons. Since most of the inhabitants are ethnically from Africa where the culture is steeped in voodoo and superstition, many people who live in the Caribbean carry these ideas from generation to generation.

We have given a number of lectures (well attended by visitors) and had many discussions with people about the devil and (almost) convinced them that Lucifer is not a fallen angel and the 'war in heaven' is not about what happened before Genesis 1:2 but is a graphic prophecy of events future to John's day. But the stumbling block is 'demons'. People in St. Lucia have 'seen' too many occasions when a demented person is apparently cured and are convinced that a demon has left the cured person. We are always looking for better answers to these questions!

One 'good' contact who began discussions with a member of the ecclesia a couple years ago accepted the Bible teaching on the devil, but in this visit in early 2014, he argued vigorously that Lucifer is the angel that sinned in heaven and was cast down! Old convictions are hard to dislodge. All too often this man argues from ignorance!



St. Lucia public lecture

This is a topic that is reviewed fairly often with members to cement into their minds the truth concerning the devil and the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. As the saying goes, 'it was relatively easy to get the Israelites out of Egypt, but it was quite another thing to get Egypt out of the Israelites'.

Then of course there is also vigorous discussion about keeping the Sabbath day. Many view the Sabbath as being sacred above all days. They maintain that to worship on Sunday rather than Saturday is a mark of false religion.

The author of confusion?

The topic of the "Holy Spirit" comes up quite often in discussion. Many people here talk about the Holy Spirit in their lives. Really what they mean by this is the word of God is in their thinking. To say that it is the "Holy Spirit" as in New

Testament times does not fit the situation today. We point out the contradiction, that the Pentecostals say they have the Spirit, but assert that when a believer dies he goes to heaven however. The Seventh Day Adventists who also claim to “have the Spirit” strongly deny this teaching of the Pentecostals. The Adventists say that death is death, the believer is asleep until the resurrection. The same is true for other churches.

Challenges of a small Ecclesia

It is not very easy to be a member of a small ecclesia where there are only a couple of brethren to exhort and give public talks. Every other week an exhortation has to be prepared. Members who are not able to be at the Breaking of Bread because of age or infirmity have to be visited and encouraged. So the question is raised; who will encourage those who encourage? Visitors to St. Lucia can make a great contribution to the spiritual wellbeing of the members and coming for an extended stay really raises the spirits of brothers and sisters. Perhaps this is where you can help.



At St. Lucia, Rodney Bay

There is great personal benefit participating in active overseas preaching. In discussions with contacts and friends about the first principles you will learn a lot about what the Scriptures say on all these topics. You will be asked challenging questions and have to seek the answers. Then in finding the answers, your faith will be stimulated and grow. You will see things in the Word

of God that you have not seen before. Bible truth will be taught to others and your personal faith will be refreshed and strengthened.

Anyone interested in obtaining information about actively helping support mission work in St Lucia should contact Bro. Phil Snobelen. (CBMC Chairman).

*Martin and Lois
Webster, Link Couple
Submitted by Jan
Berneau, CBMA/C
Publicity*



Puerto Rico — So many churches, and so much deception!

For many years, the CBMA has sent correspondence course material to people in Puerto Rico. However, the contacts on this Spanish-speaking island in the Caribbean are an enigma. There has been no response to advertised lectures, phone calls receive a cool answer and acceptance to our appeals to visit in contacts homes is minimal — even from those who answer the course with enthusiasm. Most Latin American countries are the opposite! Part of the problem could be the materialistic life style, or the many “Prosperity Gospel” type churches, which have a strong appeal. On top of all this, the deception of these churches is hard to overcome with the simplicity and common sense of the Truth.

During the month of March, my wife and I spent five days in Puerto Rico visiting the few brethren in this country. Bro. Edgardo met us at the airport and took us to a little efficiency apartment he had arranged for our stay. For most of the first three days of our stay, we spent our time with Bro. Edgardo and two of his friends. This seems to be the most effective method of reaching people — personal contact. One woman contact is quite open to the things of the Truth, but the other considers that he believes the same as we do. The problem is that he also believes in keeping the Law of Moses (7th day) and has some different thoughts on the nature of Christ, as well as some unique views on the angels. After a few hours of conversation, it was evident that he really did not believe the same as we do. The matter of rebaptism had been previously discussed with him, however he saw no need for that. We pray that with more study, time and patience the seed of the word will grow in him, since he is open to discuss the Word and quite friendly.

We spent an enjoyable day on Sunday, March 23rd with Bro. Edgardo, Bro. Miguel and Sis. Aida (at their home in Ponce) and with a woman contact. The three Puerto Rican members and the two of us enjoyed fellowship by mean of a Breaking of Bread Service, and after that we were treated to a delicious meal. Monday, March



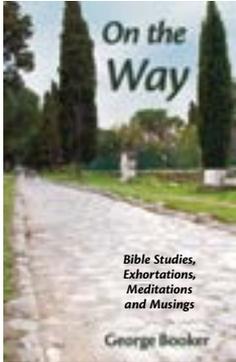
Sis. Aida, Bro. Miguel, Sis. Miriam, contact/friend Solveig and Bro. Edgardo

24th we were hosted by Bro. Miguel, Sis. Aida and their oldest son, Miguel Junior. For all the years this couple have been in virtual isolation, they are very strong in their faith. There are only four Christadelphians on the island of Puerto Rico and we pray that God will help them remain strong in these last days.

*On behalf of the CBMA, Don and Miriam Luff
Submitted by Jan Berneau, CBMA/CBMC Publicity*

Books from The Tidings

On the Way: Bible Studies, Exhortations, Meditations and Musings, by George Booker



“The Way” is a path to salvation, a manner of living day by day, a journey through life with all its ups and downs. This book offers insights, encouragement and food for thought, to encourage all those “on the Way”, whether young in the Truth or baptized for many years. The 71 chapters vary in length from short reflections to in-depth studies. Each focuses on a different topic, from the serious to the lighthearted: practical issues of life in the Truth, difficult passages, exhortation from hymns and songs, personal memories, and observations about the modern world. Published: 2014 – soft cover, 309 pages, color and B&W photos \$9.00 USD (plus S&H)

The Ecclesia at Ephesus, by Ryan Mutter

Studying the Ecclesia at Ephesus provides powerful lessons in spiritual growth relevant in today’s times. \$9.00 US (soft cover, 264 pages, with color maps).

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

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

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

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

My Journey in Faith, by Ronald Hicks

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

Pictures of Redemption, by George Booker

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

The Whole Armor of God, by Ryan Mutter

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

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Make checks payable to *The Christadelphian Tidings*.

News and 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.)

HONESDALE, PA

We were very happy to have Bro. Dave and Sis. Ann Cheetham visit us on June 22nd and share a luncheon with us after our memorial service. Bro. Dave is one of the brothers from the Moorestown Ecclesia, NJ, who periodically devote a Sunday to visiting us, giving us excellent exhortations. We greatly appreciate this service which has benefited us for many years.

Stephen J. DeMarco

LONDON, ON

In April we enjoyed our annual Study day led by Bro. Jay Mayock Jr. (Hamilton Book Road, ON) on “Secret Narratives of the Kingdom”. We thank Bro. Jay for his labors on our behalf. We enjoyed a brief visit from Bro. Peter and Sis. Norma Forbes (Glenfield, UK) in July. We thank Bro. Peter for his Bible class and exhortation.

We rejoice in the baptism of STEPHANIE WINTER on July 17th. Sis. Stephanie is the youngest daughter of our Bro. Dave and Sis. Audrey Winter. We pray that God will richly bless her walk in the Truth.

We are saddened to report that two of our members fell asleep within a short time of each other, Sis. Jean Webb on March 19th, followed by her husband Bro. Philip Webb on July 23rd. Bro. Philip and Sis. Jean will be sadly missed by us all but especially by their daughters Sis. Jennifer (Ron) Gordon, and Sis. Joanne (Ron) Broda who lovingly cared for them both in their later years. We pray that God will comfort them in their sorrow.

Ron Kidd

NANAIMO, BC

It was with great joy that we baptized sister SHARON MASON into covenant relationship with our Lord on May 25th, 2014. Sis. Sharon is the eldest daughter of the late Bro. Don and Sis. Jean Jenkinson, who were also long standing members of this ecclesia. Again we thank the visiting brethren who have supported our small ecclesia with words of exhortation.

Tom Alexander

OTTAWA, ON

Our Bro. Nsanga Kasongo fell asleep in Christ on February 15th. Bro. Nsanga and Sis. Monica came to Canada with their four children in 2001. Originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo, they had lived in refugee camps for 10 years, learning the Truth in Malawi. The family deeply appreciates the love shown by the Brotherhood in its generous financial assistance with the funeral and other needs. The Ottawa ecclesia has enjoyed fellowship with brothers and sisters from various Ontario ecclesias and the UK. We thank those visiting brothers who have exhorted and given Bible classes.

Charles Archard

PITTSBURGH, PA

We thank Bro. Mike Robinson (Echo Lake, NJ) for his instructive classes in May on "The Levites, They Shall Be Mine." On May 28, we witnessed the baptism into Christ of our new sister, ROCHELLE QUICQUARO. She responded to our ecclesial website and has attended and studied with us faithfully since then. We pray that the Lord will guide her in her walk to the kingdom. We have received a letter of transfer from Paris Avenue, OH, Ecclesia for Bro. Kevin and Sis. Melinda Flatley and Sis. Melinda's mother, Sis. Jean Wilson, who we welcome into our ecclesia. We look forward to serving our Lord with them.

We enjoyed visitors from Canada, Columbus, Ohio, Cranston, RI, Paris Avenue, OH, Northern Virginia, Livonia, MI, Kouts, IN and Costa Rica. We thank Brethren Tim Cooper, Kevin Flatley, and Art Hibbs for their encouraging words of exhortation. We also thank Bro. Tim Cooper for his informative talk about his trip to Kenya, which made us aware of the work being done there and the needs of the people there.

We welcome two new Sunday School scholars: Alexander Schwieger born on August 11, 2013, to Bro. Jonathan and Sis. Vanessa Schwieger and Quinn Hemingray born on September 10, 2013, to Bro. Steven and Sis. Kristen Hemingray.

Lord willing, we plan to have a CYC study weekend October 4 and 5. Bro. Matthew Trowell (Hamilton Book Road, ON) will speak on "One Day in the Kingdom of God".

Len Budney

SARASOTA, FL

The Sarasota ecclesia is very pleased to announce that another of Adam's race has taken on the saving name of the lord Jesus Christ. KEVIN CRONIN was immersed as a result of an interview conducted by two of the brothers in Sarasota over the Skype video link-up. Technology has made events like this possible, and more will occur, I'm sure.

This baptism came about by a wonderful effort on the part of a number of brothers and sisters. I would especially like to thank the brothers and sisters of the Orlando Ecclesia, who were able to host the baptism and memorial service at a member's home, where there was a swimming pool available. This is another example of laboring together in the Master's vineyard, and the labor has brought results. We thank our Heavenly Father for blessing this effort. Our prayer is that more may respond to His gracious call before that great day of His Son's return is at hand.

Our new brother is currently in Jacksonville, FL. The immersion took place in Orlando which is half way between Jacksonville and Sarasota. Our prayer for our new brother is that he may continue in his walk to the kingdom.

James Wilkinson

SHELBURNE, ON

Please note that as of July 1st, 2014, Bro. James Pearce will assume the role of Recording Brother for the Shelburne Ecclesia. We thank him for volunteering for this important service to the members of our ecclesia. He can be contacted via email at shelburne.announce@outlook.com.

Sis. Janine Finlay has transferred her membership to the Shelburne Ecclesia from the Guelph Ecclesia. We look forward to her presence among us and pray that there will be mutual benefit for ourselves and Sis. Janine in the days that remains until our Lord returns.

On a final note the Shelburne Ecclesia will be hosting their annual Fall Gathering on the weekend of September 26-28, 2014. God willing, Bro. Martin Webster will lead the studies around the theme of “First Principle — Truth and Love: A study of 1 John”.

Chris Sales

SIMI HILLS, CA

Our ecclesia has recently been blessed with many visitors and would like to thank brethren Harley Young of the Seattle Ecclesia and Dennis Paggi of the Verdugo Hills Ecclesia for their exhortations. We also wish to thank brethren Mike Robinson of the Echo Lake, NJ Ecclesia and Wilfred Alleyne of the Birmingham, U.K Ecclesia for their Wednesday night Bible Classes.

On February 23, our ecclesia hosted a get together for Sis. Julie (Jennings) Fernando. Sis. Julie was married last December in Sri Lanka to Bro. Naleen Fernando. Bro. Naleen was not able to be with Sis. Julie as he awaited his immigration papers, but we were excited to welcome Sis. Julie home and congratulate her on her marriage. We are also happy to announce Bro. Russell McLeod’s engagement to Sis. Tricia Woolcock. We pray God’s blessings on them both as they plan their future together.

Bro. Steve Hawthorne has been undergoing cancer treatment and has been having a difficult recovery from surgery. We look forward to Bro. Steve being able to return to the Sunday meetings in the near future. He has further surgery scheduled in the next few months.

We rejoice in the baptism of AUSTIN DE CAUSSIN on Friday, February 28. We are thankful another was called out from the world.

Our softball team, made up of members from the Simi Hills, Verdugo Hills and Thousand Oaks ecclesias, had a very successful season, winning their division.

Jeff Gelineau

WORCESTER, MA

We are pleased to announce that Sis. Rosamond Smith has transferred to our ecclesia from the Meriden, CT, Ecclesia. We thank our Father for bringing her to us.

Mark Fulmer

2014 RUN FOR THE EVERLASTING CURE

The 2014 Run for the Everlasting Cure will take place, God willing, on Saturday, November 29. Make this your year to run!

Since 2005, ecclesias and youth groups all over the world have participated in a yearly day of prayer, followed by a 5 KM Run/Walk. From India to Ecuador, Costa Rica to Canada, England to Australia, the USA to New Zealand, family and ecclesial groups from 3 to 300 have gathered to pray and run/walk together on the last Saturday in November.

This event is a great way to cement ecclesial unity in prayer together, as we reflect on our urgent need for the healing power of God in our lives, and the only true and lasting hope — the return of Christ as King in Jerusalem.

Join our worldwide community in prayer for our friends and family in the faith who are struggling with debilitating and terrible illnesses — particularly cancer.

To add your friends, family and ecclesial members to the prayer list posted online, or for further information, write to bible@christadelphia.org. You can also join the facebook group Run for the Everlasting Cure to correspond with other run organizers and participants around the world or at <http://www.runfortheeverlastingcure.org/>.

Kevin and Rebekah Hunter

PRINCE GEORGE, BC APPEAL

Dear Brethren and Sisters, when Paul was on his second missionary journey he received a message through the spirit of a man from Macedonia asking him to come and help them. (Acts 16:9.) I am making that same appeal to you.

I am the recording brother of a small ecclesia in Prince George, British Columbia, Canada. Our ecclesia has shrunk to 13 members over the past 10-15 years. Most of this has been from people moving to other ecclesias throughout North America most of which are still strong, active members of our worldwide ecclesia. Prince George is a wonderful place to live and work both in the ecclesia and in our day to day lives. We function with a Sunday school, memorial meeting, regular mid-week Bible class and a sister's class. We have had a recent baptism from our seminars and plan to run them again in the fall.

Our Sunday school has five children in it with one more on the way. Their ages range from three to nine. There is another even smaller ecclesia in Ft. St. James that we also try and support as much as we can, as it is two hours west of Prince George. We would love to continue to grow in numbers as well as spiritual strength. Moving here would allow you to work constantly in Gods vineyard to support the ecclesia as well as reaching out to see if there are any other hearts that are open to receive God's word.

We would be most grateful if any, young or old, would be willing and able to either visit or relocate to our beautiful part of the world. There are wonderful educational and employment opportunities in our small community of about 80,000. Housing is very affordable and you can enjoy all four seasons of weather when you live here.

If you are unable to visit or move to our ecclesia we would appeal to all brothers and sisters in these last days to support and help any ecclesia they can. The world is pressing ever closer into our ecclesiās. We need to stay strong and firm in our foundation of God's word in these last days before Christ's return.

If you have any further questions please feel free to contact me by email at pgchristadelphians@hotmail.com or by phone 250-962-8191.

With love in our Master name, Jonathan Lawrence

TEXAS CHRISTADELPHIAN CAMP AND CONFERENCE CENTER (T4C) APPEAL

My dearest brethren and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ; it has been a few years since our last letter so I would like to update you on some of the events and projects that are going on at the Texas Christadelphian Camp and Conference Center (T4C) and the Texas Youth Conference (TYC). We continue to hold at least two or three weekend

gatherings per year (hosted by various Texas ecclesias) and (by the time you read this) will have completed our ninth Youth Conference! This year we were blessed to have Bro. Shane Kirkwood from Sydney, Australia leading our young people in a week of spiritually uplifting Bible studies. We had just over 80 young people along with about a dozen support staff for a week of Bible study, fellowship and lasting memories with those of like precious faith!

Two years ago, we completed a 24' x 30' metal building that holds 12 bunk beds (24 sleeping spots) that is primarily used as the 'guys' dorm. Just over one year ago, we installed a 40' x 60' concrete pad for basketball, volleyball, foursquare, etc. along with two light poles so that the court can be utilized after dark.

The T4C camp, although used throughout the year for various gatherings, is still focused on the week-long Youth Conference at the end of each year and the improvements that are made ultimately benefit these young people the most. This year for the first time, we had to set a cap on the number of attendees because we have reached the limit that we can provide beds for. Also, with 80 young people wanting to take HOT showers each morning, it has maxed out our water heater! We have a commercial hot water disinfecting dish washer in the kitchen and it cannot do its job and provide steady hot water for the showers at the same time. This year shower times were staggered in the hopes of having enough hot water to go around for the kids AND the kitchen. But we are blessed to have this "problem" to deal with!

The Youth Conference has continued to grow in popularity each year, showing that our young people are craving opportunities like this where they can renew old friendships, make new ones and do it all while learning and talking about the incredible hope that we all share in the Christadelphian Brotherhood!

Our basic needs operating costs (water, electric, propane, insurance, etc.) averages about \$4,500.00 a year. If our Lord remains away and if we are blessed with the resources to do it, we would like to build another dorm that the girls could use (fully built and furnished average about \$30,000.00); add a separate water heater for the kitchen (@ \$1,200.00); install coverings over the front and back patios of the main building so that they can be utilized more (@ \$1,400.00) and install water and electricity hookups where families can park campers or RV's.

We fully realize that financial times are hard on everyone, but what better investment can we make than in our young people who are so fervent in the truth, and for brethren and sisters of all ages to have places such as T4C and TYC to benefit from?

It is with this thought that we, the T4C committee, humbly request financial donations for the continued growth of this camp that our Heavenly Father has blessed us with thus far. We also realize that not only financial donations, but the continual prayers and volunteering of time and talents will help us to grow. We pray that our Lord's return will circumvent this need; if until then, may he continue to bless our efforts until that day.

Donations may be sent to: T4C, c/o Bro. Dave Gadberry, 24506 Jocelyn Park Court, Katy, Texas, 77493.

*Yours truly in the hope that we all share,
Mark Ishman — Secretary of the T4C Committee*

Minute Meditation

Bodily Exercise versus Godliness

As we age we realize that our strength is fading and our body is failing. Is improving our fitness a cure? The many benefits of physical fitness, according to health experts, include greater strength, flexibility, energy and a better mood as well as long term health benefits. When we look for a Scriptural answer, we read the words Paul wrote to young Timothy: “Bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having a promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come”.

Notice that Paul did not say that bodily exercise is useless, but that it only profits a little compared to godliness. Think about the time and money that many in the world devote to bodily exercise. The gyms are full of people working out. Sporting goods stores are packed with gear such as stationary bicycles, tread mills, and weights to sell to those who want to improve their fitness. Think how many people run in the many marathons and other shorter races happening each week in various places. Drive through any neighborhood in the early morning or late evening and notice how many are walking, jogging, or running. Many folks faithfully work out each day to keep their body fit. Others have fitness equipment stored in their homes that is not very useful because they never touch it. Sadly, every one of them eventually ends up dead, and any time spent on bodily exercise gives no benefit beyond the grave.

When Paul compares bodily exercise and godliness, he acknowledges that exercise has its benefits, but the benefits of godliness completely overpower the short term benefits of physical exercise. Godliness helps us prepare ourselves to live forever with the Lord in his soon coming kingdom. Godliness can bring the reward of eternal life. Those who do physical exercise still die.

If folks who spend so much time in bodily exercise would only apply that time and energy to godliness, how much more profitable would their efforts be, because their exercises would work towards their eternal welfare rather than such a temporary welfare that only affects this life.

What kinds of activities would we be doing if we were exercising in godliness? We would be learning about what God has told us. It does not take special equipment to study the Bible or memorize verses. Certainly we do our daily readings every day, don't we? If any of us are too busy to read God's word each day, then we are simply too busy in the affairs of this life. As an athlete is careful what he eats, so we need to ingest the bread of life, the word of God, for our spiritual health while avoiding the evil ways of thinking that our world offers.

Exercising in godliness involves living according to God's will. When we wake up each morning we need to think, “What can I do today to help someone else in his walk to the Kingdom?” We show our love for God by the way we treat some of His other children. James gives us his definition of true religion, “Pure religion

and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” What we do does not need to be something spectacular, because Jesus tells us that if we just give a person in need a cup of cold water it will be remembered by him. We need to ask ourselves, how thoughtful are we to the needs of others? How can we help someone bear his load? Paul tells the Galatians, “Bear ye one another’s burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.” We need to be fully engaged each day in doing kind things for others.

Another aspect of godliness is preaching to others. Christ spent his time preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God, and to be godly, we need to try to do likewise. Truly loving our neighbor means that we want him to have the opportunity for everlasting life in the kingdom of God. We need to share our hope with those who surround us in the hope that they may hear and choose to seek the Lord and begin to walk in the way of salvation.

Paul tells Timothy to train himself to be godly. We exercise our godly muscles by filling our minds with the word of God and living a life following His commandments and looking out for the welfare of our fellows. May we spend each day living in a godly manner so that when our Lord returns we will be welcomed into his kingdom. Our prayer, like Nehemiah’s, is, “Remember me, O my God, for good”.

Robert J. Lloyd

Coming Events (Lord Willing)

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

SEPTEMBER, 2014

- 13-14 Paris Avenue, OH** Fall Study Weekend with Bro. Bryan Styles (Livonia, MI) speaking on the topic: “Joel’s Prophecy — Rend your hearts and return to Yahweh”. Contact Bro. Derek Elder by phone at: 216-965-9763, or by email at: derekelder1@gmail.com.
- 13-14 Rogue Valley, OR** Southern Oregon Study Weekend. Study of Psalm 119 on theme of “Open Thou Mine Eyes, that I may behold wondrous things” by Bro. Dev Ramcharan (Toronto West). For registration, contact Bro. Randy Yoshida at yoshida@cpros.com (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.
- 13-14 Southern NH (Nashua), NH** Study Weekend with Bro. John Pople (San Francisco Peninsula, CA) on “Growing Closer to God.” Contact Bro. Peter Dixon for additional information jpdixon@charter.net.
- 20-21 Bedford, NS** Study Weekend with Bro. Jonathan Bowen (Brantford, ON): “The Evidence of Things Hoped For” at the Masonic Hall, St. Margarets Bay, NS. 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”.

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

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26-28 Norfolk, VA CYC Study Weekend. All CYCers ages 13 and up are encouraged to attend. Bro. Nathan Giordano will be speaking on "Visions of the Kingdom". For more information atamyandniq@hotmail.com or 757-222-6726.

26-28 Shelburne, ON Fall Gathering. Bro. Martin Webster will lead the studies around the theme of "First Principle — Truth and Love: A study of 1 John".

OCTOBER, 2014

4-5 Pittsburg, PA CYC Study weekend. Bro. Matthew Trowell (Hamilton Book Road, ON) will speak on "One Day in the Kingdom of God".

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.

17-19 Women at the Well Sisters Retreat at Palm Springs, CA. Theme: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of Knowledge" Prov 1:7 with Sis. Patty Reister. 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". Contact Bro. Joe Bennett at (219) 762-2704 or jkb8275@comcast.net.

7-9 Brothers' Weekend in New Hamburg, ON. The speaker will be Bro. Mark Carr. Contact natejbadger@gmail.com for any questions.

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.

29 Run for the Everlasting Cure. A worldwide day of prayer followed by a 5 Km Run/Walk. For more information write to bible@christadelphia.org or see the website www.runfortheeverlastingcure.org.

MARCH 2015

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