

# THE CHRISTADELPHIAN TIDINGS

of the Kingdom of God

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# The CHRISTADELPHIAN TIDINGS of the Kingdom of God

**Editor: George Booker**

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## *Keeping a Balance*

*The embarrassments of the truth are very great in this age of divine silence and human contradictions.*

*It is a work of difficulty to encourage the good while withstanding the encroachments of the evil. I suppose it is a training for the work that waits the accepted friends of Christ in the day of his appearing.*

*I feel great pity for men who are doing the best they are capable of in the midst of the reigning confusion, even if the line they pursue may not be geometrically straight. We shall all stand in need of the divine patience and magnanimity at the last.*

*Robert Roberts*

## Editorial

### Times that Try Men's Souls

*"These are times that try men's souls."*

Thomas Paine, known as the pen of the American Revolution, wrote these words during a time of great trial and peril for the new nation.

So it has always been. As much as we dislike them, and as much as we would avoid them if we could — times of trouble are the best times for developing moral strength. Just as hard work and exercise develop physical muscles, so do mental and emotional struggles develop moral muscles.

Into our lives as believers, there will surely come times of strain, pressure, and difficulty. These may take many different forms. Sometimes these troubles may fall upon a community, collectively. At other times they may come upon any one of us individually. During such times, our souls (our hearts, minds, or inner beings) may feel besieged, buffeted, and in imminent danger of being crushed. We may desperately thrash about, like a wild animal caught in a trap, but to no avail. We may fall back upon a frantic search for the quick fix, the one action, the one form of words, or the one right answer — something, anything, that will make it all better.

Even comfortable, peaceful times require spiritual strength if we are to survive. But experience, indeed all history, teaches us an important lesson: when hard times come, we will surely need even more spiritual strength. The house must be built, not just for the fine weather, but also for the storm. The army must do more than look good on paper, or the parade ground; it must be ready for the day of battle. And faith must be ready for the time of testing, trial, and persecution. The spiritual life needs to be strong enough to hold on through terror, tempest, and turmoil. Otherwise, it is no more than a delusion, and all our religious exercises merely a pretense. Who are we fooling?

"Times that try men's souls" are surely coming. How can we prepare for them? By making our days, and evenings, count right now. The athlete rises early and trains in her sport — track and field, tennis, golf, whatever it may be — day after day, when no one is holding a stopwatch or keeping score. The soldier marches countless miles, and practices difficult drills, knowing that what he learns by exhaustive repetition, in every imaginable situation, may one day spell the difference between life and death. In such work of preparation there is, or should be, a fearful sense of urgency: 'Will I measure up when the moment of truth comes?'

*"If you falter in times of trouble, how small is your strength!" (Prov 24:10).*

Are we surprised at this idea? We should not be. Every character trait that we develop patiently and consistently, in good times, may well be put to the test when

bad times come. “We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22). The gold of our faith will most certainly be tried one day in the furnace of affliction (1Pe 1:7). How well we do under adverse conditions will reveal how strong we are. The time of trouble is coming, as surely as sunrise tomorrow, even if we know not the precise day or hour.

A man never knows his strength until he is put in a situation that demands much from him. A woman never knows her courage until she is put in circumstances that call for all her reserves.

*“Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise!... it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest” (Prov 6:6,8).*

*“Ants are creatures of little strength, yet they store up their food in the summer” (Prov 30:25).*

The classic example of such foresight and industry was Joseph, when he was elevated from slavery to a ruling position in Egypt (Gen 41). He knew by prophetic revelation that a terrible famine was coming upon his world, and that the only hope of survival was to lay up great stores of food for the hard times coming. With God’s help he carried out his plan, and in so doing saved countless lives.

There is, as far as I know, only one real source of spiritual strength: the Word of God. We must imitate the ant; we must imitate Joseph. We must lay up reserves of this Word by private study, and by attending and participating in ecclesial Bible classes. And we must do this all in “the good years”, so that when “the lean years” come, and they surely will, we may have a full storeroom (Matt 13:52).

We must put our spare time to profitable use, in every way we can possibly devise. We must pray about this. If our prayers are restricted to praying for, and giving thanks for, material needs, then how spiritually feeble we are. We are like the multitudes that marveled when Jesus multiplied the natural bread, but drifted away when he talked about spiritual bread. Our prayers must be not just for food and shelter and health, but especially for our spiritual needs. Then our heavenly Father will grant us the riches of His eternal Word, and build us up so that we might be strong in faith.

Furthermore, we must exercise our spiritual muscles by sharing what we know with others, by preaching to those outside and inside. There are so many different ways in which we may do this. We exercise ourselves spiritually so the Word of life may dwell in us richly, and so that we may be able instruct and encourage ourselves, and one another, in exhortations, Bible classes, hymns, and prayers. Indeed, we may help others by the example of our actions, every day.

Let us think again of Proverbs 24:10: “If you falter in times of trouble, how small is your strength!” At first glance, the sentiment of this verse seems very pessimistic, akin to Jeremiah 12:5:

*“If you have raced with men on foot and they have worn you out, how can you compete with horses? If you stumble in safe country [or, NIV mg: ‘If you put your trust in a land of safety’], how will you manage in the thickets by [or, NIV mg: ‘the flooding of’] the Jordan?”*

Both verses strongly suggest that a coming time of testing will surely reveal all our shortcomings. If that is so, then what is the use? The little nagging voice inside our heads whispers, ‘Why bother? You might as well give up now.’

But both verses, though dark and foreboding on the surface, carry within themselves seeds of renewal and promise: ‘Don’t underestimate times of trouble,’ they say. ‘Out of these dark times there will arise new light, *if* you truly believe.’ It will come to the one who knows, when the time comes, how and where to find the great strength to help in his time of need (Heb 4:16).

In the proverb (24:10), the words “trouble” and “small” (“adversity” and “small” in the KJV) are closely related in the Hebrew. “Trouble” is “tsarah”, literally a narrow, confining, or pressure-packed space. It is derived from “tsar” (*small*), which has the same idea of being close or constrained. This suggests the question: ‘Will we let the constraints of the times constrain our strength? Or will we rise above, and expand beyond, the times to allow our strength and faith to grow, and overcome the constraints?’ To this Jesus supplies an answer:

*“If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you” (Matt 17:20; cp Luke 17:6).*

In the proverb, strength (*koach*) means not only physical endurance, but mental toughness and moral courage as well. Those whose reserves of strength are depleted by straitened circumstances — and whose reserves will **not** be depleted? — can appeal to God to be empowered again. Whether the strength has faded due to sorrow and affliction (Psa 31:10), serious illness (Psa 38:10), or old age (Psa 71:9), there is a ready help at hand in faithful prayer. The LORD will always be pleased to answer the prayer of faith, and to grant an increase in mental, moral, and spiritual strength to meet changing conditions. The apostle Paul assures us,

*“God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it” (1Co 10:13).*

Restricted (*tsarah*) times and restricted (*tsar*) strength do not restrict God!

*“O LORD, be gracious to us; we long for you. Be our strength every morning, our salvation in time of distress [‘tsarah’]” (Isa 33:2).*

*“I call on the LORD in my distress [‘tsarah’], and he answers me” (Psa 120:1).*

When our resources are, humanly speaking, failing and about to be depleted, like the widow’s only jug of oil (1Ki 17:16), then is the special time when God’s resources may be most readily available:

*“[The Lord] said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me” (2Co 12:9,10).*

The great 19th-century preacher Henry Ward Beecher discussed the benefits of times of trouble in a powerful analogy. “Some men,” he said, “seem to grow as the white pine grows, with straight grain.” But he added, ironically, “I notice that all

that grow easy, split easy.” (Surely this reminds us of the seed, in Jesus’ parable, that fell on rocky soil, with no depth of earth. It sprang up quickly, but just as quickly withered away: Matt 13:5,6.)

Beecher continued, “There are some men who grow as the mahogany grows, with knots and whirls and contortions of grain. The best timber of the forest has the most knots. Everybody seeks it, because, being hard to grow, it is hard to wear out. And when knots have been sawed and polished, how beautiful they are.”

He added, “There are many who are content to grow straight, like weeds on a dunghill; but there are many others who want to be stalwart and strong like the monarchs of the forest. Yet, when God sends winds of adversity to ‘sing a lullaby’ in their branches, they do not like to grow that way. They dread the treatment that is really giving toughness to their soul and strength to its fiber.”

Which is simply another way of saying what the writer to the Hebrews said:  
*“No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees” (Heb 12:11,12).*

This last phrase, about feeble arms and weak knees, recalls the example of Gideon and his men:

*“Gideon and his three hundred men [were] exhausted [‘faint’: KJV] yet keeping up the pursuit” (Jdg 8:4).*

It is quite possible (no matter how well-prepared one is) to come to the hour of the greatest trial, and to feel feeble of arm and weak of knee. It is quite possible to experience faintness and think yourself unable to cope, yet at the same to gird up the loins, in faith; to persevere through the faintness, as though it were (which it is) but one more element of the trial; and to continue to pursue righteousness. I tell you, the person who perseveres through faintness will find that his little faith will grow to mountain-moving size.

The mountain that we need most to move in our lives is the mountain of doubt, despair, and loss of hope, when the times come to try our souls. Let us pray, and prepare, now. Then we will be all the better prepared to pray again when the trial comes: “Lord, I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!” (Mark 9:24).

How precisely will this wonderful promise be fulfilled? How will the Lord’s strength be completed, realizing its full maturity and potential, in our poor mortal weakness (2Co 12:9,10)? How, exactly, will our small faith grow until it measures up to the mountainous task before us (Matt 17:20; cp Luke 17:6) in times that try men’s souls? How will God work in and with and through us to achieve His eternal purpose? Answers to such questions as these are scarcely forthcoming now, for we see “but a poor reflection as in a [polished metal] mirror” (1Co 13:12). We must simply do our part, now, to prepare. And we must believe that “in all things” God will work “for the good of those who love him” (Rom 8:28), even if those “things” be “trouble, hardship, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, and sword” (v 35). As old William Cowper put it, in our Hymn 142:

*"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,  
The clouds ye so much dread  
Are big with mercy, and shall break  
In blessings on your head..."*

*"His purposes will ripen fast,  
Unfolding every hour;  
The bud may have a bitter taste,  
But sweet will be the flower."*

George Booker

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*When men stand in the mouths of their caves and declare that they alone are fighting the battle of right, and distress the hearts and weaken the hands of their fellow-warriors by their self-centered declarations based upon ignorance of the true state of affairs, not seeing the faithful attitude of the 7,000... then surely is needed the earthquake, the fire, and the still small voice to purge them of their discouraging fantasies.*

C.A. Ladson (son-in-law of Robert Roberts)

*We have not an high priest who cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities. Therefore, let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need, or in a time when the enticements and allurements of the world without, appealing to the desires of the flesh and the mind within, threaten to prove too strong for us, and cause the paths of our feet to wander out of the way of understanding and of life.*

*Yes, 'tis in moments of inward struggle -- such as these -- that our High Priest invites the prayer of faith, standing ever ready with bended ear and loving eye, to render aid, succor, and strength.*

*Let not the doubting heart disdain to approach the living fountain, and obey the injunctions laid down; the promise is sure, and the reward certain.*

*One promise especially is clear and unmistakable in 1Co 10:13: "For God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."*

Eusebia Thomas (daughter of John Thomas)

## Exhortation

### On a Scale of 1 to 10

Many a time we've participated in a memorial service and reflected on the crucifixion of our Lord. Most of us have probably read or heard a detailed description of crucifixion.

The pain is awful. It's a terrible way to die, one of the worst that man has ever devised. On a scale of 1 to 10, the pain is a 10.

You've probably all had the experience, but when going to a doctor recently, I was asked, "Do you hurt?" "Yes" was the answer. "On a scale of 1 to 10, how much does it hurt?" Until we've experienced a 10, I don't suppose we can give a very accurate answer.

Well, Jesus Christ knows a 10.

That's not accidental; it's deliberate. On Jesus' part, he refused the pain deadeners. On his Father's part, it was the determinate plan of God that His Son would be crucified.

In the Lord's case, his crucifixion wasn't as bad as it could have been. Jesus was six hours on the cross. Normally it took some 72 hours for a victim of crucifixion to expire. Thus the Father was not into torturing His Son. But the Son knows what "10" feels like because of the brutal form of death he suffered.

#### Why this way?

Sometimes in our reflections we no doubt ask, 'Why, why is brutal crucifixion part of God's way of saving us?'

There is a commonly given reason that is very wrong, and even pagan: The blood of Christ does *not* pay, to some angry god, the debt for our sins. Instead, God forgives our sins. On the cross, God is the one *giving*, not the one *taking*. He gives His Son as a great act of divine love. There is nothing in the cross about appeasing His wrath.

A right reason for Jesus being crucified relates to his continuing role in regard to us. By knowing of his agony, we are convinced that when we are in great pain ourselves, we can cry out for divine help and be fully confident the Lord Jesus understands our agony. He understands because he himself has suffered a "10", for hours. We remember Hebrews 2:16-18:

*"For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted" (NIV).*



As the whole of Hebrews 2 elaborates, the Lord Jesus was and is one of the race — he was a human being. And as we know from our own reactions to the problems of others, humans can only enter into the sufferings of another when they have suffered in like manner themselves. Thus a key reason Christ suffered brutal crucifixion is to encourage us to earnest prayer, being assured that we can trust our Lord fully to empathize with our trials.

## **Rejection**

There are other areas of Jesus' life where he came close to suffering a "10". Take rejection for example.

Jesus experienced rejection by his family. At first Mary and Joseph were wonderfully supportive, with Mary's great thanksgiving and joy at being mother of the Messiah, and Joseph's full cooperation even in moving to Egypt for a couple of years. Then there was a hint of difficulty when Jesus was 12 years old. When he was found in the temple, Mary and Joseph didn't have a full understanding of his early dedication to his Father's work. During the ministry, we're clearly told Jesus' brothers did not believe in him (John 7:3-8). Even though the brothers would later be converted, they were at this point in a different world. They rejected, even derided, the Lord and his work. There will be some of us who have had a similar rejection by our families because of our devotion to the Lord. When that happens, we are grateful the Lord can fully empathize with our situation.

No doubt some of us have been rejected by our neighbors and have cited the Lord's comment: "No prophet is accepted in his own country" (Luke 4:24). Jesus said this in Nazareth where he had been raised from a boy (v 16). When we are similarly rejected by folks at school, work, or in the neighborhood, Jesus knows how we feel and will help accordingly.

Jesus was also rejected by his nation. This is an experience that few of us will have. But the Lord was born king and spent three years going throughout the nation preaching the gospel of the kingdom. He agonized to save these people (Luke 13:34,35). From our perspective we know the attempt would fail. Yet the Lord yearned to save his nation, and we can sense his agony at their rejection.

Probably the rejection that hurt the most was that by his close friend, Peter. The most prominent of the twelve, Peter was confident in his own loyalty to Jesus, but the Lord knew better (Luke 22:33,34). So it was when Peter denied Jesus the third time (v 60), "the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter... and Peter went out and wept bitterly" (vv 61,62).

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would we rate the Lord's experience with rejection? Family, neighbors, nation, Peter — more than a "5", maybe an "8"? Certainly enough so Jesus can fully sympathize with us when and if we are rejected.

## **Betrayal**

We may never have experienced betrayal, when someone very close to us has — for money, power, popularity, or revenge — turned against us to seek our dire harm.

Jesus did.

Probably the most remarkable aspect of Jesus' suffering of betrayal is the fact he never marked Judas as the betrayer to the eleven. Jesus knew from the beginning who would betray him (John 6:64). This saddened him; it dismayed and troubled him, and gnawed at the very soul of his being:

*"Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" He spake of Judas Iscariot... for he it was that should betray him" (John 6:70,71).*

Yet he never exposed Judas. At the last supper, Jesus announced,

*"Behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table. And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!"*

Because the eleven had no idea the betrayer was Judas,

*"They began to enquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing" (Luke 22:21-23).*

With the Lord's feelings running so deep that "It would be better for this man if he had not been born," how did he not expose Judas? It's remarkable.

In terms of suffering betrayal, where would we rank Jesus' experience on a scale of 1 to 10? I believe we'd rank it a "10".

Thus any of us who have ever suffered betrayal can have the total assurance that our Lord and helper knows exactly what we're going through. He knows a 10.

### Other trials

There are several other trials where we could apply this same scale of 1 to 10. We could apply it to **frustration** at the inability of the twelve to accept the certainty of the cross and of resurrection. A lot of us face great frustration in trying to convey the truth to others.

The Lord knew **exhaustion** to the point of sleeping in a boat in the midst of a storm. What mother has not experienced utter exhaustion during her baby's first year?

Jesus experienced an **uncertain future**: "The Son of Man has not where to lay his head." In our early years particularly, many of us have been completely dismayed at considering what the future might bring.

**Futility** is another trial known by our Lord. At one point, he must have cried out something like, "I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing" (Isa 49:4). On a scale of 1 to 10, where would we rank that?

### An example for us

Why was the Lord crucified? One reason is clear: he was developing empathy for our trials of great pain. He experienced many other trials as well, so that we might feel confident in his understanding of our temptations.

There are, of course, other reasons why the Lord endured a wide range of suffering.

*"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (1Pe 2:21).*

We look to our leader to lead us in a right course. He is the spiritual prince whose own behavior defines the right way for us to respond to various difficulties in life.

### **Developing his own character**

Hebrews 5:7,8 tells us that:

*“in the days of his flesh... [Jesus] offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him who was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; though he were a Son yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.”*

From our own trials and afflictions, we know how they develop in us hope, faith, patience, forbearance, etc. We don't like difficulties in our life, but we know we learn obedience by the things we suffer. And so did our Lord Jesus.

In the cross and all its circumstances, we see the climax of our Lord's character development. The hands that tormented him were wicked hands guilty of shedding much innocent blood. Here were people fully deserving the outpouring of divine wrath. While Jesus is the ultimate judge of all, at that time he had to exercise supreme self-control. A time will come for judgment, but that was not the time.

The Lord was given the opportunity to argue his own defense. He would have made fools of his accusers with the brilliance of his words. But at that point, he had to do the will of his Father and submit to his fate.

In this climax of his character development, Jesus humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, putting to death the power of sin within himself. He is the captain of our salvation, our champion in fighting the great power of sin. It's like David slaying Goliath, while giving the rest of us courage to fight the Philistine within ourselves.

There was a lot being accomplished in those climactic 24 hours. Jesus was learning what a “10” feels like. He was setting an example for us in how to endure trial. He was destroying the power of sin in his own soul, encouraging us to do the same.

As we meditate upon the redemption the Father worked in the Son, we are powerfully exhorted, we are encouraged, we are motivated, and we are stirred to deep humility and thankfulness.

We thus proceed, with reverence and joy, to partake of the memorials before us.

*Don Styles (Ann Arbor, MI)*

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*“Some will learn through pain and sorrow, others through joy and laughter”  
(Arabic proverb).*

*“Pain and suffering is inevitable, but misery is optional.”*

*“Where there is love, there is pain” (Spanish proverb).*

## Exposition

### Paul's Letter to the Ephesians: (14) Christ extends his grace to his captives

The teaching of the apostle in Ephesians 4:7-10 is challenging in the highest degree to the expositor. In the study that follows, we endeavor to interpret Paul's words by ranging somewhat widely over Scripture. My hope is that this will help the reader to understand a very concentrated passage.

Is it stretching imagination too far to visualize Tychicus, the trusted ambassador of the apostle, and one familiar with his teaching, being asked by the readers to help them in their understanding of certain passages in Paul's letters? With regard to Tychicus, see Ephesians 6:21; while the bearing of this passage concerns the news of the apostle that Tychicus could convey, is there possibly a deeper meaning to the words "[he] shall make known to you all things"? We recall that Peter, in his tribute to the apostle, mentions "the hard things to be understood" in Paul's writings (2Pe 3:16). Among the hard things we can perhaps place the passage we now struggle to understand.

#### Grace is given

Having dwelt on the unity of faith in the Lord Jesus (4:1-6), Paul considers the question of what each disciple can contribute. He states:

*"But unto each one of us was the grace given according to the measure of the gift of Christ" (v 7).*

We note first that the apostle mentions "each one of us". Thus every single member of the body of Christ has a part to play; this privilege has been bestowed by God's grace. For Paul, there are fundamental truths relating to our calling in the Lord Jesus. None is more important than the concept of grace. The framework, as it were, of the Christian calling is held together first and foremost by God's grace. This becomes effective in the measure in which the believer apprehends this truth. Confidence in this grace is an aspect of faith, and the proper exercise of this faith is in love. Thus we have **grace, faith, and love**. When we embrace these concepts and respond to them, we can aspire to become true disciples.

While grace is bestowed on each and every member of the body of the Lord, it is not in equal measure. This truth is revealed in the parables the Lord spoke towards the end of his ministry. In the first (Luke 19:11-27), he likened himself to a nobleman who departed to a distant land. Before leaving he gave a total of "ten pounds" ("ten minas": NIV) to his ten servants (Luke 19:13). Each received, without distinction, one "pound" or "mina". On his return, he summoned them to report on what they had done with the gifts they had received. The responses varied; one had traded so successfully that his original pound had gained ten further pounds, another had made five more, while yet a third had done precisely nothing with his pound. The Lord rewarded his servants proportionately.

In the first parable each servant received the same amount initially. But in another of his parables (Matt 25:14-30) the situation is different: one received five talents, another two, and another one. In the first parable, the lesson is that all share alike in the call to salvation, and the parable then spells out the different responses to God's grace in His extension of salvation to all, without distinction of race, or sex. In the second parable, we are shown how the capacity for service is varied. The response here again is variable.

### **"Ascended"**

Having seen in verse 7 how all participate in God's grace in equal measures, the apostle makes a brief reference to Psalm 68:

*"Wherefore he saith, When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men" (v 8).*

While expositors are unanimous in praising to what they regard as a great psalm, they vary in identifying its precise context and its precise date of writing. These considerations need not detain us now. What matters is why and how Paul uses it. As the context makes abundantly clear, Paul is concerned with the triumph of the Lord Jesus. What prompts the quotation is the thought of the gift from Christ (v 7), and this is followed by a clear reference to his ascent to heaven ("when he ascended on high"). Psalm 110 had prophesied this ascent: "Sit thou at my right hand." With this we may compare Psalm 16:11 ("Thou wilt shew me the path of life; in thy presence is fullness of joy; in thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.") That the Lord was familiar with Psalm 110, and its precious promise for himself, is shown in that he quoted it to his adversaries at the end of his ministry (Matt 22:42-44). This was the joy that sustained him, the joy set before him (cf Heb 12:2). Facing his great trial, he had the certainty not merely of resurrection but also of ascension to heaven. He spoke enigmatically; even his apostles were bewildered when he spoke of going to the Father. Thus, in John 7:33, he declared: "Yet a little while am I with you, and I go unto him that sent me" (and see especially John 13:3).

### **His captives**

So we must now ask: When our Lord ascended to heaven, what did he do for his followers? Apparently he made them *his* captives. They had previously been captives — that is, to sin and death — but now they were *his* captives, through his triumph.

In the interpretation of this thought, we have the guidance of the Lord himself. In a truly dramatic scene, the Lord is in Nazareth; he opens the scroll, and reads from Isaiah:

*"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to teach good tidings to the poor; he hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18,19).*

In this prophetic anticipation of his ministry, the Lord is drawing on Isaiah 61:1. All its details are of interest, but we now focus on the concept of "release for the

captives”, or prisoners. In another truly remarkable Old Testament prophecy, the prophet calls on his fellows to “rejoice greatly”, because their king is coming to them, bringing salvation (Zech 9:9). Associated with this is the declaration that he is “lowly, riding upon an ass”. He is to speak peace, not merely to Israel, but to the nations. Then, there is a message addressed to the one who is to fulfil this prophecy:

*“As for thee also, because of the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water” (v 11).*

What we note especially in this verse is the idea of “thy prisoners”. By his action of salvation he has made them his prisoners, or captives. There is thus a clear link with the language of Ephesians 4:8.

The waterless pit is a striking figure for the grave. Death is a universal experience and an inescapable one. If we now revert to the New Testament, we find that Paul himself, in Romans 6:16, tells his readers that if they allow sin to reign over them, they are the slaves (bondservants) of sin. However, if they are obedient to God, they become the slaves (bondservants) of righteousness. This is achieved by their being baptized into the Lord Jesus.

### **The gifts of the Holy Spirit**

These reflections enable us to give meaning to the imagery the apostle uses when he quotes Psalm 68, with its portrayal of a royal triumph. The ascension of the Lord Jesus enabled the Lord to bestow his gifts, on his apostles initially. The Gospels and Acts throw light on this great truth. In his record of the appearances of the Lord after his resurrection, Luke informs us he led forth the eleven from Jerusalem, and told them to tarry until they were “clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24:49). This was a clear promise of the gift of the Spirit (see also John 20:22). So it came to pass, when Matthias had been added to the eleven and the apostles were all together, there descended “from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind” (Acts 2:2), “and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit” (v 4). The phenomenon attracted the attention first of those who heard the public proclamation of the gospel after the Lord’s resurrection. Later in his discourse on this occasion, Peter refers to the Lord’s elevation and the great truth that the Father had granted to His Son, in fulfillment of the Son’s own promise, the power to bestow the Spirit. The harmony, between what Paul wrote in his letter and what occurred as authentic historical events, is most impressive. His teaching in the letter is greatly concentrated but, in the light of Luke’s record in Acts, it becomes luminous. It is indeed Luke who enables us to identify the circumstances in which the Lord was able to give gifts to men.

### **“Descended”**

In Ephesians 4:9 Paul links the ascension to heaven with the notion that the Lord “descended into the lower parts of the earth”. This can only refer to the Lord’s burial in the tomb. It is when we read the accounts of the Lord’s death that we begin to understand the apostle’s teaching. The Lord’s dead body was given an honorable burial by Joseph of Arimathea who, acting with the help of Nicodemus, “bound the body in linen cloths with the spices” and buried it in Joseph’s new tomb. Joseph

saw that the tomb was rendered secure by rolling “a great stone” to the entry of the sepulcher (Matt 27:60; see also Mark 15:46). This action was taken by Joseph to ensure there would be no interference with the tomb. The Jewish authorities, now rejoicing that they had finally got rid of the Lord, were still not satisfied with what Joseph had done. They took added precautions and approached Pilate with a request. They received a guard to keep watch over the tomb; and they adopted measures to secure the sealing of the sepulcher (Matt 27:62-66).

Thus, in the circumstances of his death, as well as the circumstances in which his dead body was buried, the Lord went down, as it were, to the depths of the earth. But what seemed to his enemies to be his end was, for the Lord himself, the beginning. Despite all the efforts of his persecutors, he rose again on the third day. Remembering that Paul’s readers would have no acquaintance with the Hebrew Bible, it is understandable Paul would use the Septuagint. If we look at Psalm 139, we see what a wonderful meditation it is upon the universality of God’s Spirit: there is no place where it is not operative (see vv 7-12). In verse 15 the psalmist writes:

*“My frame was not hidden from you, when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth” (NIV) —*

This last expression should specially be noticed. Paul appears definitely to have this passage in mind, and especially “the depths of the earth”. It affirms that, when the Lord was buried after his crucifixion, this was the prelude to his resurrection and being invested with “the body of his glory” (Phil 3:21). In the great passage that concludes Romans 8, Paul declares:

*“Neither death... nor height, nor depth... can separate us from God’s love.”*

This great truth is exemplified first and foremost in the person of our Lord himself. It can be the experience of every faithful disciple: “Christ the firstfruits; then they that are Christ’s at his coming” (1Co 15:23).

### **“All authority”**

In the final verse to be considered now (Eph 4:10), Paul connects the Lord’s supreme elevation with the fact of his descent. We have interpreted this “descent” as bearing on his death, which involved his submission to the cross, with its shame and fearful physical suffering. After his resurrection, the Lord declared to his assembled followers:

*“All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth” (Matt 28:18).*

We take special note of the words “in heaven”. Paul endorses this himself when he declares that, because of Christ’s obedience to the death on the cross,

*“God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil 2:9-11).*

In our next study we hope to see precisely how the Lord’s grace was bestowed.

*Tom Barling (Teignmouth, England)*

## Bible Study

### Little Words that Mean a Lot (7) Steadfastness

*“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord”*  
(1Co 15:58)

Contrary to popular lore Thomas Edison didn't invent the light bulb; in fact his 1879 patent was disallowed in the courts in 1883. The idea had been bantered about for almost 50 years, but no one had been able to successfully produce a lamp filament that survived for more than a few hours. Thus nobody could market a useful product. Edison's genius was his steadfast persistence in searching for, and eventually finding, a filament material that would last hundreds of hours. It is reputed that he and his associates tried some 10,000 different materials over several years before eventually finding the solution to the filament longevity challenge. The answer was as simple as a thin strand of carburized Clark's sewing thread sealed in a vacuum glass enclosure. Many years later Edison was asked if he was ever discouraged by so many failures before he finally succeeded. He is reputed to have replied: “We had conducted thousands of experiments on a certain project without solving the problem. One of my associates, after we had conducted the crowning experiment and it had proved a failure, expressed discouragement and disgust over our having failed to find out anything. I cheerily assured him that we had learned something. For we had learned for a certainty that the thing couldn't be done that way, and that we would have to try some other way.”<sup>1</sup>

Even though Edison's steadfast goal had been to create a bright inexpensive source of artificial light, he soon found that creating the light bulb wasn't enough. Three years after he started manufacturing light bulbs, Edison's company had sold them to only a little over 200 customers. He realized that to make the product successful he would have to create a whole new infrastructure that would make light bulbs acceptable to the public. Hence he went on to develop the electric dynamo, electric fuses, power stations, a Copper wire distribution system, electric meters and so on.

Even with these developments, ten years after he had patented his light bulb he only had a little over 700 customers. Edison was probably the most steadfastly persistent inventor who ever lived, and he persevered. By forging ahead to develop the infrastructure (sometimes even in the face of potential financial ruin), he eventually had, by 1899, three million customers. He had also altered the face of the world.

Forging ahead steadfastly towards a goal is a character trait that all faithful followers of the Lord Jesus Christ need to develop — “knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord”. We strive not for millions of customers and financial reward,



but for a much higher calling, the Kingdom of God — “for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32).

Edison could have given up, but because he was firm in his determination to accomplish his goal he succeeded when many others before him had failed. He demonstrated that steadfastness is not only a character trait that can help one become a successful inventor, but it is also an attribute that will serve us well on the path to the Kingdom of God.

Several different Hebrew and Greek words were translated by the English root word “steadfast” in the King James Bible. The oldest reference appears to be in the Book of Job, 11:15, where the Hebrew word comes from a root meaning, “to melt or cast as metal; by extension, to place firmly, to stiffen or grow hard.”<sup>2</sup> Molten metal is a fluid that can be poured into a mold and take any shape that the skill of the model maker can pattern. However, once the mold cools and the metal takes its solid form, it is hard and strong. Without reheating, it will require great force to reshape into some other object. Ancients were of course familiar with this simile, since armor and weapons of war were cast metals and prized for their strength. In the same manner we need to be malleable to the word of God. We should let His Word be poured into us and let it mold us into firm, steadfast creatures as that Word solidifies.

One weakness that can overcome us is the inability to accept basic doctrine and to move on to fulfilling the fruits of the spirit (Heb 6:1). Such a person is continually arguing with himself, and others, concerning their doubts. The apostle Paul castigates the Ephesians for exactly this failing. Instead of being steadfast in holding onto the doctrines they were taught, they were constantly enamored by new ideas that departed from the Truth. The apostle tells them:

*“We should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting” (Eph 4:14, NKJV; see also Heb 5:11-14).*

If we are steadfast in our goal of achieving the Kingdom of God, then we will stick to our task of conquering the flesh and not be discouraged when we are blown off course by the storms of life.

Sometimes when trouble buffets an ecclesia there is the temptation, in effect, to pull up our stakes and run. There is this marvelous comment in the book of Acts:

*“They continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42).*

Obviously, at that time, the fervor of the first century Christians was at its peak, but with the passage of time the steadfastness of holding to the “apostles’ doctrine and fellowship” didn’t hold up. We know this because we have all of the letters of the apostles (Paul, Peter, James, Jude and John) that address the weaknesses of the various first century ecclesias.

We are no different today; we suffer from temptations and trials from within and without. What are we then to do when we find ourselves in an ecclesial situation where there is no longer a congregational commitment to be steadfast in the

“apostles’ doctrine and fellowship”? It is important that we realize that the ecclesia is a God-given institution (Matt 18:17). It is the foundation of the Truth:

*“I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (1Ti 3:15).*

If the ecclesia is not being steadfast we owe it to the congregation to be steadfast ourselves. It is patently wrong for us to stay away from meeting when we are upset with something that has occurred, because we may feel offended in some way. It is instead our job to do our best in a patient loving way to correct the wrong. The book of Hebrews exhorts us:

*“And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching” (Heb 10:24, 25, NKJV).*

Instead of thinking of ourselves we need to think of the need of others.

We didn’t choose the membership of our ecclesias.

*“For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called” (1Co 1:26).*

The ecclesia is **not** a social club where people of like social status and interests associate together for mutual enjoyment. The only thing that everyone in a particular congregation may have in common is their calling to the Word of God. In such a situation it may indeed be necessary to “stir up”<sup>3</sup> up love (for it will not always naturally occur). If we forsake the gathering of ourselves together, we are certainly not remaining steadfast in our own faith.

Sometimes 2 Corinthians 6:17 and Revelation 18:4 are quoted as justification for separation, but clearly neither of these refers to ecclesial circumstances. The former reference is to the idolatry and lusts of the world, while the latter citation alludes to the harlot Church. Unless one’s ecclesia has gone completely worldly and/or adopted the doctrines of the harlot church, one should not forsake it. It is only under the most extreme circumstances that one should remove oneself from an ecclesial assembly and seek association elsewhere. Thus, withdrawing for perceived offenses and refusing to go to any meeting cannot be justified on Scriptural grounds. This places us in the position of judging our brethren when indeed the mote may be in our own eyes. The bottom line is that we shouldn’t give up on our brothers and sisters. We need to be firm in our own faith and steadfast in renewing the faith of others if necessity should make it so.

Edison’s story has another valuable lesson. If we are steadfast in our goal of achieving the Kingdom of God, we can sometimes learn more from our failures than we can from our meager successes. We will not be able to succeed in everything we do. Unfortunately, there may be times that we will sin miserably, but we can recover as long as we don’t give up. In speaking of forgiveness the Lord Jesus taught us that God’s mercy is virtually without limit. The Scriptures don’t teach ‘three strikes and you are out’, as happens not only in baseball but also in the penal codes of some states. Instead, Jesus told his disciples when it comes to

forgiving sins:

*"I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven" (Matt 18:22, NKJV).*

The psalmist tells us that with God there is forgiveness that he "may be feared" (Psa 130:4). The seemingly curious connection between "forgiveness" and "fear" is readily understood from the root meaning of the original Hebrew word in Psalm 130, which refers not to *terror*, but to *deep reverence*. God is to be revered because of His virtually unlimited capacity for forgiveness, a quality that has been amply demonstrated in that He gave his only begotten Son for the sins of the world (John 3:16). Since God is steadfast in His love for us, it is only reasonable that we do our best to return that love by not giving into our failures. Even if we make 10,000 mistakes, we can eventually succeed by learning from our defeats. By seeking to do better we can overcome the weaknesses of the flesh.<sup>4</sup> The Word of God is the key to learning how to overcome our failures and get back on the road to eternal life:

*"Keep my commandments, and live..." (Prov 7:2).*

*"If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).*

*"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love" (John 15:10).*

Continual study and contemplation of the Word of God will strengthen us in keeping His commandments. It is said of the godly man:

*"His delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night" (Psa 1:2).*

If we are steadfast in keeping the Word of the LORD before us, then we will be strengthened to keep His commandments. As a result, sin will flee away and we will indeed abide in His love. This is more than just doing our daily Bible readings. It involves keeping the Word of God always before us in all our dealings in life.

How else can we overcome failure? One thing to bear in mind is that, contrary to myth, scientists and inventors rarely if ever work alone. Edison had a whole team of engineers that worked with him. Einstein said that he stood on the shoulders of giants, referring to the fact that he was only able to accomplish what he did by learning from the work of the many scientists who had preceded him. The world has learned how to succeed in conquering weaknesses of the flesh by setting up such self-help organizations as Alcoholics Anonymous and Weight Watchers. The premise of these organizations (and similar entities) is that mutual self-support by a group of people with similar weaknesses strengthens the individual and allows them to be steadfast in accomplishing their goals, whether it be to abstain from alcohol or to develop good eating habits to control weight.<sup>5</sup>

The ecclesia was founded by the Lord Jesus Christ and is the ultimate self-help organization. We are all suffering from the severe weakness of giving into sin; we are 'sinaholics'. By association with the ecclesia in coming to Bible classes, attending the memorial service and participating to the fullest in the religious and social life of our fellow brothers and sisters, we place ourselves in a climate that will help us conquer sin in the flesh. However, just as alcoholics and foodaholics can fail by not sticking to the programs of their respective support groups, even so we can fail in serving God by not being steadfast in our support of the eccle-

sia. An obvious corollary of these thoughts is that the elders of an ecclesia have a great responsibility to see that the congregation is served effectively, so that an atmosphere of love and respect prevails at all times for all members. Alcoholics Anonymous would never have someone who is visibly drunk run an AA meeting, nor would Weight Watchers have a 300-pound moderator telling others how to control their eating habits. Neither should an ecclesia have arranging brothers who are not spiritual examples to the flock.

Fortunately, God has provided us with the perfect example of steadfastness, demonstrated in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. He knew from his youth (Luke 2:49) that he was destined to do his Father's will, and he never wavered from that task. Jesus was able to say:

*"I am the light of the world. He who follows me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life" (John 8:12, NKJV).*

This is truly a light that has never failed, and never will. It has lasted almost 2,000 years and will continue to shine forever.

*John C. Bilello (Ann Arbor, MI)*

**Notes:**

1. Quoted from an interview with Edison, published in the January 1921 issue of *American Magazine*.
2. Strong's number 3332.
3. The KJV uses the word "provoke" here, which is even stronger. See Strong's 3948.
4. I am not saying here that one should commit sin 10,000 times before learning to stop any more than Jesus was asking one to sin 490 times before ceasing. The numbers are mere metaphors for not giving up.
5. I am a gold key alum of Weight Watchers, so I know this from personal experience.

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## *Special Invitation*

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

*You, your family and friends are invited to the  
32nd Annual Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith Gathering  
at Denison University in Granville, Ohio, July 21-27, 2008.*

*Main Speakers:*

*Bro. John Pople — "Powerful Lessons Hidden in Mysterious Scenes"*  
*Bro. Scott Tennant — "Micah's Message to the Modern World"*  
*Bro. Kyle Tucker — "Comparing Spiritual Things with Spiritual"*

*Contact Bro. Brad Rek 330-609-6957 or lisarek8@cs.com  
Also visit CGAF.org for additional information  
and online registration (late March '08)*

# Reflections

## What Then?

When all the great plants of our cities  
Have turned out their last finished work,  
When the merchants have made the last bargain  
And dismissed the last tired clerk,  
When our banks have raked in their last dollar,  
And paid out the last dividend,  
When the Judge of the Earth says,  
“Closed for the night”,  
And asks for the balance — *What then?*

When the choir has sung its last anthem,  
And the preacher has said his last prayer;  
When the people have heard their last sermon,  
And the sound has died out on the air;  
When the Bible lies closed on the pulpit,  
And the pews are all empty of men;  
When each one stands facing his record,  
And the Great Book is opened — *What then?*

When the actor has played his last drama,  
And the mimic has made his last fun,  
When the movies have made their last picture,  
And the billboard displayed its last run,  
When the crowds seeking pleasure have vanished  
And gone into darkness again,  
When the world that rejected its Saviour  
Is asked for a reason — *What then?*

When the bugle's last call dies in silence,  
And the long marching columns stand still,  
When the captain has given his last order,  
And they've captured the last fort and hill;  
When the flag has been hauled from the masthead,  
And the wounded have all been checked in;  
When the trumpet, the last one, is sounded  
And we stand before him — *What then?*

*(Author unknown)*

## *My Journey*

*I have wandered through valleys, climbed over hills,  
Stumbled through deserts, walked through a forest still.  
Slumbered through twilight, dreamt of peace within,  
Searched through many mansions to find a song to sing.  
I crossed a raging river, swam an ocean deep,  
Searching for knowledge and wisdom to keep.*

\*\*\*

*I am but a weary traveler on a long and narrow road,  
I've stumbled, and faltered, seeking a new abode.  
I see within the darkness a light that beckons me,  
Hear, through the turmoil, sounds of harmony.*

\*\*\*

*There are many shades of knowing, many ways to be,  
But there is One Truth to follow, the true way to see.  
I tremble and weep as I walk this narrow way,  
Remembering all I've done from all my yesterdays.  
I have seen a timely passage of the way I used to be;  
Now I'm cleansed by the waters, anew, feeling free!*

\*\*\*

*As I watch through a window with a candle burning bright,  
Through the mist I search for an end to the night.  
Through joy and sorrow, I will triumph another day,  
Watching and waiting: for Christ's return I pray.  
Then the darkness will be lifted; I'll be wandering no more,  
For my journey will be ending. The Truth remains my core.*

\*\*\*

*I was a weary traveler on a long and narrow road.  
I still stumble and falter, but have found a new abode.  
I found within the darkness his Light that beckoned me.  
Now I hunger and thirst for Christ's return to set me free.  
Now I pray for his Kingdom and its sounds of harmony.*

*Marieke Garner  
(Hamilton Ewen Road, ON)*

## Seven Things the LORD Hates

Calamity will come suddenly to “the naughty person” (the scoundrel, or villain), the one who walks with a “forward” (or perverse) mouth, who “winks with his eyes” (deceiving others in his insincerity), and who enjoys or devises mischief and sows discord.

Yes, the Lord declares that there are *seven things* — involving our eyes, our mouth and tongue, our hands and feet, and our “heart” (our inner being) — that, used in an evil way, are an abomination to God (Prov 6:16-19).

### A proud look

When we were children, probably none of us escaped either receiving or perhaps giving a proud look! It is the look of accomplishment turned into conceit, or a “righteously” raised eyebrow, or the lofty ‘I’m better than you’ look. It is definitely different than the looks and actions of a humble person.

In our youth, we may have been loud and possibly presumptuous; perhaps we demanded notice, exaltation, and adoration. But, in our maturity we learned, as servants of the Lord, that we are commanded not to “lord it over others,” but to love others and to esteem (and value) them as better than ourselves. If we are to be good and faithful servants, we must follow the Lord’s example. We must not elevate ourselves, but make ourselves of lesser importance. We gird our towels around ourselves and serve others, as he did. It did not matter whom Jesus served, whether man or woman; his respect for them was the same.

The proud look will only lead to evil because it comes from an arrogant spirit. We may see it in the young person who wants to appear important before his peers, who may be rude in speech, poorly mannered, laughing loudly and making sport of others, belittling and bullying others, and causing pain and grief. The proud look comes from an over-sized ego; it may involve pride in our physical appearance, or even in our Bible knowledge or our position in the meeting. The pride may come, later, from being wealthy or holding an important job. Whatever the causes, the proud look needs to be addressed because it is sinful and we are warned that *pride comes before a fall!*

Jesus noted how Judas criticized the woman with the alabaster box of ointment, who “wasted” its contents on the Master (Matt 26:7-13; Mark 14:3-9; John 12:1-8).

We are told he “cared for the money bag,” certainly more than he did for the funds for the poor — this love of money was the root of all evil, and he was a thief. We note how Jesus’ reprimand led to Judas leaving the company of the disciples, and going quickly to the chief priests, where he made plans to betray Jesus. He then received the coveted silver (Matt 26:14-16; Mark 14:10,11; John 13:2).

### A lying tongue

Lying is a very common sin in today’s society. It is used so often to get one’s way in almost everything: in gaining employment, passing tests, getting ahead

financially, and elevating oneself above others. Just little “white lies” in the sight of the ungodly, we tell ourselves. The tongue, we are told, is an unruly evil; we must be careful with our words and even our tone. Did Judas, in his words and his tone, make the woman with the alabaster box feel small and despised? Was he discrediting her and demeaning her because of her past? Perhaps that is why Jesus said, rather strongly, to Judas: “Leave her alone!”

The proud person, who lifts himself up over others, likes to remind people of their past errors. He may use words that belittle or demean, or he may conspicuously whisper to someone else in the presence of the person he is “putting down”.

This is done often in the world. It should never been done by Christ’s disciples.

### **Hands that shed innocent blood**

Being a party to hurting others, whether by word or deed, is also a terrible evil. When we hurt others, we may never be able to repair the friendship. We may cause offense when the wounds go so deep that the wounded one leaves the truth. We are warned not to offend the little ones, and that, if we do, a millstone should be tied about our neck and we should be cast into the sea.

Young school children, in their desire to be accepted, may join a gang in their neighborhood or school. We hear in the news of more conflicts and school shootings because of bullying. Often in order to join the gang, perhaps even to feel protected, one has to become a part of injuring a member of another gang, or has to steal or do some other malicious thing to prove one’s loyalty. This is extreme, but we can also be a party to hurting someone with just our words (or with that proud look)! Remember, words cannot be taken back; words can become like chicken feathers, flying in the wind, that can never be gathered up. We may want to take back what we said, but consequences will linger. Slanderous words are heard daily on our news programs. They are calculated to sting, and sometimes to destroy lives. Remarks seemingly made in jest may be deliberately harmful.

When Judas took the silver coins and agreed to identify Jesus in the quietness of the garden, he chose as his sign a kiss of friendship. How sad the Lord must have felt when his disciple kissed him on the cheek! A kiss is the sign of endearment, and should never be used in a hateful way (Matt 26:48,49; Mark 14:44,45; Luke 22:47,48).

### **A heart that devises wicked imaginations**

When we imagine or plan to hurt someone, or we plot to do wrong (like stealing or betraying), we often have in mind some benefit from doing so. We expect some recognition, and so our heart becomes disloyal. Our thoughts may have been honest in the beginning, but later we grow interested in satisfying our own pleasure. The lust of the flesh takes over, as like the serpent we cunningly design a way to deceive our victim. We watch for the opportunity; we wait for the perfect time. Jesus’ strong words to Judas seem to have given him the excuse he needed to betray our Lord. And it all began with his proud look upon the woman with the alabaster box!



## **Feet swift in running to mischief**

What is “running to mischief”? It is the decision to plan evil. It starts in the heart or inner being of the individual, and it continually grows if not checked when temptation and enticement step in.

The heart of Judas was already sick with covetousness. He already had an exalted opinion of himself; now, his pride hurt, he could not resist the offer of silver to betray Jesus. He *may* have thought: ‘Surely this will force Jesus to establish his kingdom. That won’t be such a bad thing!’ But I don’t think he thought about spiritual matters at this time. His rational mind had left him, and now his feet were swift in the mischief he plotted with the chief priests. He was not thinking that he was doing wrong. When they took Jesus and he did not resist, perhaps Judas had second thoughts. But by this time his mind had forgotten obedience and forgiveness.

He could not go to God in a spirit of repentance. Instead, he went to the chief priests and, in a fury, threw their coins back at them. Then he went and hanged himself.

When we have sinned, we must remember the Lord is ready to hear us, and we need to humble ourselves and return to him in repentance, seeking forgiveness.

## **A false witness who speaks lies**

Witnessing is giving testimony or a report, on an official record. In Jesus’ trial, the Pharisees sought out false witnesses who were willing to fabricate lies about Jesus — or at least testify falsely by twisting the words he had said. In their proud desire to retain power over the people, the Pharisees violated the laws of God. Under the Law of Moses, false witnesses should be stoned. But, in their desire for power, this no longer mattered. They broke laws left and right!

Perjury, or false witnessing, is practiced every day in the courts. Lawsuits of lies and cunningly devised accusations are served against innocent victims every day. Some make a living suing others, knowingly devising such mischief. Others may be influenced by these lies.

Some years ago, when I was barely 15, a very hurtful rumor was circulated about me. It was totally false, but my peers believed the person who repeated the lie, and they distanced themselves from me. I was so hurt that I ran away in tears from the Bible school — as far as I could go. Without suitable clothing, and without any protection, I walked for miles. Exhausted, I finally called my mother, who was at home, hundreds of miles away, and I sobbed on the phone.

She gave me the best advice I have ever found for dealing with hurtful lies: to go back (in this case to the Bible school), and to accept that the friendship may have ended. She told me that I must show my former friends, by the way I lived my life, that no one would ever believe the lie. She was right, and I found other friends. I also found God and was baptized just six months later. When I turned to Christ, he became my very best friend. Most importantly, I learned that day that the Lord deals with those who are false witnesses. They indeed will have their

reward, although it may not be what they expected. Sadly, though I forgave the false witness, my former friendship was never really restored.

### **He who sows discord among brethren**

If we bite and devour one another, as Galatians 5:15 warns us not to do, we must take heed that we are not consumed by one another. Sowing discord is the kind of abomination that destroys so much good. How can we preach and teach the gospel if we don't follow it ourselves? Won't those to whom we preach notice our behavior? We are to be known for our love for one another. How can the spirit of God dwell in those who purposely, or even mistakenly, cause discord and division? Our love for others should solve our problems. Sometimes, however, one party will not be open, or listen.

Having Judas' attitude — one that is proud, self-seeking, covetous, manipulative, and deceitful — is incredibly sad. It is worse yet when one loses sight of the loving forgiveness of God. Such an attitude caused much trouble among Christ's disciples.

Some discord had sprung up among them: we remember that the mother of Zebedee's children desired two high positions for her sons — positions of prominence. When the others heard of this, they were indignant with the two brothers (Matt 20:24).

Whoever will be great among Christ's disciples, or be chief, must learn to be a servant now.

Jesus is our example. He willingly served and died for us, and we must do the same for others. The commandments of the Lord are a shining light for us. When we receive reproof and correction, we should think that perhaps these are necessary for our growth in Christ. Let us not take offense, but rather learn to see the love behind the words given, and ponder them, before we let our feet run to mischief. We are commanded to speak up and turn a sinner from his destructive way. God can use us to accomplish His will. Let us look for the best and seek forgiveness when we fail. Peter, after his denial of the Lord, became a changed man. Let us not refuse to repent, as did Judas.

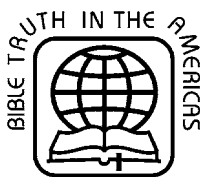
*A sister*

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### *A Common Faith*

*No one can deny that the New Testament has variety as well as unity. It is the variety that gives interest to the unity. What is it in which these people, differing as widely as they do, are vitally and fundamentally at one, so that through all their differences they form a brotherhood and are conscious of an indissoluble spiritual bond? There can be no doubt that that which unites them is a common relation to Christ — a common faith in him, involving religious convictions about him.*

*James Denney*



## Bible Mission News

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### Thisisyourbible.com Website

This is an amazing statistic: a person visited our website every 2 1/2 minutes in January. We also had **1,000,350** hits on the site's contents last month. Our featured question was: "Should Christians delve into the occult?" The question was answered by **505** people. Below you can see the various choices for response and how the question was answered.

Should Christians delve into the occult?

- No. The occult is of the devil and his demons and should be avoided at all costs! 309
- Not an issue. The occult is just harmless entertainment. Enjoy! 11
- Generally no, but some occult practices such as astrology are harmless. 17
- No. Occult practices have no basis in reality and are contrary to Bible teaching. 134
- Don't know. 34
- **Total responses** 505

What is the Bible's answer? See "Satanism"

In addition, the pamphlet associated with the question of "Satanism", that has drawn **411** readers since 2006, was accessed **569** times in January.

We had **11** new tutors sign up last month, and we still need more all the time, since we have **438** new students of whom **305** have signed up for classes. Once again, we wask, "How else could we reach this many people?"

#### Want to help?

- Visit the website and find out what it's all about ([www.thisisyourbible.com](http://www.thisisyourbible.com)).
- Become an on-line tutor; you can see from the statistics above that we need your help!
- Hand out the business cards available in your ecclesia; let us know if you need more.
- Advertise the website in your local newspaper or as a link on your ecclesia's website, since the contacts in your area will come back to you and can be managed by your ecclesia.
- Continue your CBMA / CBMC financial support either individually or as an ecclesia.
- If you are not a CBMA / CBMC sponsoring ecclesia, please consider becoming one to support the important work on the website and in the mission field.

## Brother Francisco Gilardoni — His Personal Account

### *How did you get in touch with the Christadelphians?*

On July 18, 2005, an advertisement appeared in the daily newspaper of Córdoba, *La Voz del Interior*. It invited readers interested in studying the Bible in a systematic way to write to a given address for study material. Since my youth I have always had an interest in the Bible, but my reading had always been random and my knowledge patchy. I responded to the invitation in the paper and as a result completed the basic correspondence course, followed by an advanced course, and after this a third course.

The more I studied the courses the more I realized that the spirit of this message reflected what my parents had instilled in me many years ago in Entre Ríos, Argentina. They were Catholic, but I would like to think that, had they had the opportunity to consider the message preached by the Christadelphians, which in love I practice today, they would have responded as I have, recognizing the true teaching about God and His Son, the man Jesus Christ.

As well as the postal courses, I am very grateful to the brothers and sisters who came to Córdoba with love and dedication, and have taught me the Truth. As I pulled away from Catholicism I requested material to help clarify my newfound understanding on subjects I knew had been distorted by the Church, subjects such as baptism, celibacy, the sacraments, and the destination of the dead.

Finally, my conscience awakened, and full of faith and goodwill, I finished the appropriate preparation. On November 21, 2006, at the age of 88, I was baptized by my brothers here in Córdoba.

### *How has the first year as a Christadelphian gone?*

The year since my baptism has gone very well. A great source of this wellbeing has been constant prayer to God through Jesus Christ. I pray for the health of my wife, family and friends. But the chief and constant focus of my prayer is that God, creator of all things, will send His Son Jesus Christ — according to the promise — as soon as possible, and that with his return to this earth the hatred, evil, corruption, and physical and spiritual poverty that fill this world will be ended. I pray also that, after the resurrection and judgment, Christ will establish the heavenly Kingdom of God on this earth. Then that promised kingdom of truth, health, love, and peace will become a reality.

I would like once again to express my heartfelt gratitude to Bre. James Hunter (and his wife Jean), Donald Luff, Robert Alderson, Hugo Petrilli, and Rubén Barbosa (and their families also). These all have helped me on the path to spiritual peace. To those brethren I hope to know, I offer my constant friendship. At the same time, I ask for God's and Christ's blessings on my brothers and sisters throughout the world.

*Your brother with much affection,  
Francisco Gilardoni*



**Baptism of Bro. Francisco Gilardoni**

## **Searching the Internet for Truth**

**[www.labiblia.com](http://www.labiblia.com)**

I'll begin by telling you how, some years ago, while I was searching the internet trying to find information about the Bible, I came across *www.labiblia.com*. From that day on I began to read the studies and teaching there. After a while I asked to be sent correspondence courses. That's how I began my contact with *la Misión Bíblica Cristadelfiana*.

Before long I was invited along to some Bible studies at the Gran Palace Hotel in the center of Santiago, Chile. There I first met with Christadelphians, and I specifically remember a man with a beard and a rough voice, surname Petrilli. He had an unmistakable presentation, and from his accent I thought he must have been from Argentina. Afterwards I had a chance to talk with Hugo Petrilli, and he told me how he had been baptized 25 years earlier and was the only Christadelphian in Argentina all that time. I could detect his frustration at having to walk by himself for such a long time.

In 2003, I decided to be baptized, and on October 19 of that year I was baptized by brothers visiting Chile. At that time there was a concern at the back of my mind that there could be a repeat of the circumstances of my Bro. Hugo Petrilli, and I too could pass many years by myself. But that wasn't the case. Sis. Giselle Pintado, who is from Ecuador, was living in Santiago, and before long Bro. Richard

Castillo was also baptized. So here we are, three of us, on this long strip of land at the ends of the earth.



**Bro. Richard Castillo, Bro. Don and Sis. Miriam Luff standing by the Centro Biblico Cristadelfiano plaque/sign by the entrance door to new meeting room, Sis. Gisella Pintado and Bro. Bernardo Soto**

Recently, in the building where I work, some offices came up for rent, and the idea came to me that we might rent one as a meeting place. I approached the owners of the building, and they had no problem with the idea. With the support of the Bible Mission we have rented one of the offices, and equipped it with the necessary furniture: folding chairs, a desk, a lectern, clocks, etc. We are on the tenth floor of a building right in the center of Santiago, just 2 blocks from the Plaza de Armas, the very center of the city.

We officially inaugurated our Centro Bíblico Cristadelfiano, on November 3 and 4, 2007 with a series of studies presented by Bre. Don Luff and Robert Alderson. A number of interested students came along on both days.

I hope that with God's help we will continue to give simple studies each Saturday to those who are interested here, and that with time the ecclesia in Chile will grow. We don't want to go at things too fast; it would be painful for us to stumble or fall in this project. We want to do things slowly but surely so that the Work of the Lord will grow "like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither: and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (Psa 1:3).

*Your brother in the Faith,  
Bernardo Soto Raimil (Chile)*



Group conversation in Santiago meeting room after lecture

## Welfare in Africa and Beyond

*"If among you, one of your brothers should become poor, in any of your towns within your land that the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother, but you shall open your hand to him and lend him sufficient for his need, whatever it may be" (Deut 15:7,8).*

This article looks at the problems of our brothers and sisters in Africa and beyond, and considers the help available to them.

### **Brothers and sisters in need in Africa...**

In Kenya, the homes of several brothers and sisters have been destroyed in the tribal violence that followed the disputed elections there. At the moment 12 Christadelphian families have been displaced, but everyone has been affected. In many parts of the country, shops have been looted and transport has ceased, and everywhere food prices have rocketed. While there have been riots in the west of the country, in parts of the east the crops have failed, making the problems even worse.

The troubles in Kenya have been widely publicized and reported, and all the world's media have sent reporters and camera teams to the country to film the disturbances — while, almost unnoticed, another catastrophe has occurred some 700 miles to the south. In Malawi and Mozambique there have been severe floods that have forced many people to leave their homes and seek refuge. In one area of Mozambique alone, two Christadelphian meeting halls were washed away, and more than 200 brothers and sisters have been displaced.

It is one of the tragedies of our world that, while in 'the West' we enjoy greater wealth than any generation before us, many in other countries live in crippling

poverty. In Africa a third of the population lives on less than \$1 a day, while in some countries as many as one adult in six is infected with HIV. Orphans are everywhere. Meanwhile corrupt men lead corrupt governments, making themselves and their friends rich while their people starve, and taking for themselves money that other governments and charities send to help the needy. The problems of Kenya are not unique; before these events the spotlight was on Zimbabwe, where inflation has made money worthless and another dictator hangs on to power.

### **...and beyond**

In many countries of the world a similar tale could be told of individual brothers and sisters:

- A sister in Russia lived in an unfinished house. The roof was collapsing, and the snows of winter were coming, with temperatures below 0°F. She had almost no money.
- A brother and sister in Israel are almost totally blind. She cannot see with one eye and the other has blurred vision, while her husband can only distinguish between light and dark with the one eye that is functioning. They have almost no income of their own.
- In southern Africa a sister was raped, and lived in fear because the man who attacked her was threatening to repeat the assault.
- Elsewhere in Africa a young boy was suffering from a strangulated hernia that needed urgent surgery, but his family and ecclesia could not pay the medical bills.
- A contact in Bosnia met an old woman whose only source of warmth was to burn old clothes in the middle of her room. He tried to help her, but he had little money himself.

This is the world to which many thousands of our brothers and sisters, and their children, awake every morning. It is a world that challenges their faith, their morality, and their care for each other. At the same time it challenges the rest of us to care for those in need as the Lord Jesus would wish.

This article focuses on Africa, and the needs of Christadelphians there, not because they are the only ones in need, but because the problems have been so serious, and because there are so many brothers and sisters there.

### **The challenge of Africa**

The greatest help we can give to anyone in need is to teach them the gospel. It is good to provide food and shelter, to heal diseases, to alleviate poverty in this life. It is even better to provide a hope of life to come, when God will wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there will be no more death or grief or crying or pain.

Responsibilities for preaching in our community are shared among the four Bible Missions. While the CBM of the Americas works in Central and South America, the CBM in the UK ([www.cbm.org.uk](http://www.cbm.org.uk)) works in Africa, the Middle East, the former Soviet Union, and Europe. In Africa by God's grace, there are around 16,000 brothers and sisters in 27 countries, and the number is growing fast.



CBM appoints for each country a linkman, a brother to lead a team that visits the country regularly, one who knows the brothers and sisters there, and to whom they can turn in time of need. Preaching is carried out by correspondence and visits, while at the same time local brothers and sisters are spreading the gospel themselves, and in some areas the knowledge of the Lord is spreading very quickly. This is the key work of the CBM. Yet, along the way, we meet many in real need. This is not surprising, of course: most of these countries are poor by western standards, and have no state welfare system for those in need.

It is not, of course, always easy to know how to help, or how much to give, and yet our obligation is clear. The apostle John wrote:

*“If anyone has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him?” (1Jo 3:17).*

### **Help for the problems in Kenya...**

Everyone will be aware of the violence in Kenya that followed the disputed elections at the end of last year. In some way or another this has affected brothers and sisters throughout Kenya, and to a lesser extent in Uganda, where refugees have crossed the border to escape the troubles.

Most of the violence in Kenya has been in the west of the country, and it is there that our brothers and sisters have been most affected, particularly in Rift Valley and South Nyanza provinces. Throughout the country, brothers and sisters are in touch by email and mobile phone with the CBM Kenya team — particularly Bro. Alan Sutton, the linkman — so we have a good picture of how they have been affected.

Overall we are thankful that, at the time of this writing at least, the troubles seem to be calming down. In the west the homes of some brothers and sisters and their families have been destroyed, and others have either fled to places of safety or been evacuated. It is one of the blessings of the internet that it was possible within a few days to send money, and help was sent from the CBM Welfare Fund to assist these brothers and sisters and to provide for anyone else in serious need.

In the country as a whole, everyone has been affected by increased food prices. Food has been looted and is simply not available for sale. The Kenya team are monitoring all these situations, and as and when new needs emerge further funds will be sent, to supplement what local brothers and sisters are able to do for themselves.

### **...and in Malawi and Mozambique**

The CBM has an office in Malawi, in which local brothers work to coordinate activities in both countries. Through them, as in the past, money has been sent to meet the needs of the brothers and sisters who have been affected by the flooding, and as in Kenya there is excellent communication with the linkmen, Bre. Trevor Radbourne and Arne Roberts.

### **When there is no food**

In recent years, CBM has responded to disasters in Africa on an even larger scale.

The worst of these was three years ago, when there was a widespread famine in Malawi, Mozambique, Kenya, and Tanzania, and in these countries many people starved to death. The drought in 2005 was the fourth year when the rains had failed, and many in Africa were unable to grow their own food and had no money to buy any, as the shortages forced prices up. Thousands of brothers and sisters were caught up in the famine, and we can be grateful that there are honest and caring brethren in those countries who can be trusted to help others and to arrange food distributions. In Tanzania money was sent to several regional centers to help brothers and sisters there. In Malawi, Mozambique, and Kenya grain was purchased in the towns, and trucks transported the grain to local ecclesias and distributed food for each family. In this way the families of around 10,000 brothers and sisters were provided with maize and cooking oil to see them through the famine. It was gratifying that, when brothers and sisters visited the families later, they were able to confirm that the food had been shared fairly among those in need.



**Food being shared among the members of an ecclesia in Kenya during the famine of 2005. See how bare the earth is.**

### **The ravages of disease**

In many parts of Africa, diseases such as malaria are a constant threat, and tuberculosis is increasing alarmingly.

Children are particularly vulnerable to malaria because mosquitoes become more active in the evenings when they may be asleep, and the children of some brothers and sisters have died as a result. In recent years, therefore, CBM has provided mosquito nets for the children of brothers and sisters. During 2007 around 4,000 nets were provided to families in Africa.

In some countries in Africa, AIDS is an ever-increasing threat. Millions of adults are dying from AIDS while they are still young, or in early middle age. The average life expectancy in Sub-Saharan Africa is now 47 years, when it could have been 62 without AIDS. The effect on households can be severe. Many families are losing those who used to provide an income, and many of those dying from AIDS have surviving partners who are themselves infected and in need of care. They leave behind orphans, grieving and struggling to survive without a parent's care.

We do not know how many brothers and sisters are infected with the HIV virus (many are not aware themselves), but we have a duty of care in those cases too. In countries where there are treatment programs, CBM helps brothers and sisters to register, so that they can obtain free drugs and medical advice.

Education is also important, and a booklet has been prepared that sets out to teach brothers and sisters how to avoid being infected, how someone with HIV should behave, and how an ecclesia should respond to those who do contract the disease.

### **The dangers of welfare**

It seems hard to imagine that something as Christ-like as helping our brothers and sisters could be a source of trouble, yet even in the first century there were those who followed the Lord only because they enjoyed the loaves and fishes. The very first problem the early church encountered had to do with welfare:

*"A complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution" (Acts 6:1).*

Those problems have their counterparts today. There is always the danger that, when people see Christadelphians being provided for in times of famine, they will seek baptism not because of a real faith but as an insurance against the next time the crops fail. Others, seeing the influence that ecclesial elders have in welfare matters, may seek to become elders themselves for their own financial gain.

Sadly, these problems have happened, and do still happen. The only wise course is that the provision of welfare should be moderated with an understanding of human nature and a little common sense. Thus, when help is provided, it must be on a scale that will not attract undue attention. The aim is to help brothers and sisters through a difficult time, not to make them conspicuously wealthier than their neighbors.

As far as possible, brothers and sisters must be treated equally, so that nobody feels envy or jealousy at the help given to another. The aim is that, when a brother or sister is in need, they should turn first to their family. If the family cannot help, they should ask their ecclesia. If the ecclesia is unable to meet the need, the ecclesia itself should turn to CBM for assistance.

### **Self-sufficiency**

The ultimate aim must be for brothers and sisters to be independent, and able to survive times of hardship without needing to depend on others. In many areas, for instance, brothers and sisters are dependent on growing maize, and if the

rains fail either at sowing time, or before harvest, the crop may be lost. In several countries, CBM is seeking to help brothers and sisters to vary the crops that they grow, so that they can eat a more varied diet, and so that with more than one source of food they may be better equipped to cope with drought.

Another fund, the Christadelphian Meal A Day Fund ([www.meal-a-day.org](http://www.meal-a-day.org)), has funded many projects throughout Africa that have this aim in mind. Some examples are:

- Providing water tanks for schools or ecclesias, which collect rainwater and provide drinking water for a village. Several villages have benefited in this way, and recently an ecclesia in Los Angeles donated enough money to provide a large water storage tank for one of the Fund's children's homes in Kenya.
- Funding wells or boreholes so that fresh water can be available for villages where there is an ecclesia. During 2007 another 30 wells or boreholes were provided in Africa by Christadelphian Meal A Day.
- Funding orphanages so that children who might otherwise be living wild can have a safe home.

CBM and the Christadelphian Meal A Day Fund work closely together, and both benefit from this cooperation.



**This brother in Uganda suffered from throat cancer, but is now able to communicate by using an electronic voicebox, which CBM provided.**

### **The situations with which we began?**

We began by thinking not only of Africa, but also of those in need in other countries. There, too, help is given to meet needs when they arise.

- The sister in Russia, living in an unfinished house, was given help to move into

- a flat, and financial assistance to enable her to start to earn her own living.
- Money is being sent to Israel to pay for eye treatment and to provide a small living allowance for the blind brother and sister.
- The sister in southern Africa who was raped has been helped to find a safe place to live.
- Money was provided so that the African boy with the hernia could have surgery.
- Money was sent to Bosnia to help the poor woman and to reduce her debts.

But these are only a handful of the thousands who have had reason to be grateful for the kindness and generosity of their brothers and sisters.

### Contact Information

Any brother or sister wishing to contribute to the welfare of brothers and sisters in Africa can do so by contacting the CBM Treasurer, Bro. Philip Tarrant: phil.tarrant@btinternet.com

*“So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith” (Gal 6:10).*

Andrew Walker (Knowle, UK)  
CBM Welfare Secretary  
andrew.j.walker@blueyonder.co.uk

## Meeting in Bangladesh

One of the more original names for a Christadelphian Community I have come across in my travels is the title of the Christadelphian Ecclesia in Dhaka. Still, in the 2008 CALS Diary, they call themselves the Christadelphian Bible Students. That is exactly what they are. Since Bangladesh is a Muslim state, Christian Churches have to be recognized and registered. Officially they don't exist; thus, my son Kenneth had to have two weddings, a civil one (presided over by a registered Baptist minister) and a Christadelphian wedding (which Bro. Tim Galbraith traveled to Dhaka to solemnize). It is noticeable that many of the Dhaka brethren have Christian names. We may presume they were keen Bible students before they became Christadelphian Bible Students. Kenneth's wife Nipun belongs to a Baptist family. It can be no coincidence that their meeting room is an apartment leased by Bro. Ron Hicks (Washington, DC), who contacted the group while working for the International Monetary Fund branch in Dhaka.

The first visit that Arla and I made to the apartment was three hours after we landed, off a flight from Fredericton in New Brunswick — via Halifax, London and Doha, Qatar — to Dhaka, on Friday, September 21. After two wakeful nights and a day in the air, we were really not ready for a two-hour long lecture on the promises to Abraham, with readings from a Bangla Bible. At least, we were told that was the subject!

After breakfast, changing, and freshening up at Ken's apartment, we went by two

rickshaws to the meeting at Banani, in the north end of Dhaka, arriving in good time for the lecture. We were asked to remove our shoes before entering the meeting room as a courtesy. Socks were permitted, but bare feet were standard. The majority of the people present sat in three rows, with more seats on either side, forming a U-shaped audience. There were several visitors, and a number of family members and their friends present. The outside hallway and one of the bedrooms was used for Sunday school classes. At the top of the U stood Bro. Prince, Bible in hand, with important points written in Hindi script, and occasionally English, for our sakes, on a white board behind him. After the address, there was an opportunity for discussion.

A little later lunch was served: rice and curried chicken, plenty of cold water, and 7-Up. The memorial service took place about 2:30, following a familiar pattern. However, the members of the meeting sat in a square around a low table on which was arranged the bread and wine. The wine had been poured into precisely the right number of small glasses. Kenneth gave the exhortation, translating sentence by sentence into Bangla. We were to get two more opportunities to attend the meeting at the apartment during our visit to Dhaka.

I was invited to give the Bible address the following Friday. I found the experience of talking to an audience in a language only a few could speak, not a little disconcerting. At least I had to speak for only half the allotted time, the remainder of time being for translation. My exhortation on the final Friday was even shorter. I was told later that Bro. Bappy did an excellent job of translation — no small feat, I would imagine!

Dhaka is a city of 11 million people, who seem to be on the move all the time. We found traveling around Dhaka no pleasure whatsoever. Those we visited, and who visited us, lived reasonably close, but these journeys were made on foot, by bus, by rickshaw, or by three-wheel mini-cab, powered by natural gas. Few could afford the price of a taxi, and the motor bike was a popular private conveyance, whereas private cars in Dhaka, at least, belong to the upper strata of society, such as senior army officers and bureaucrats. The Christadelphians' efforts to travel regularly to the Friday meetings, with their families, by public transport, warrant our greatest respect.

Sunday school is not limited to the Banani flat, but becomes a very important facet of home life for many of the brothers and sisters in semi-isolation. Arla and I were taken to visit such a family at the town of Savar, west of Dhaka; this was a rather tedious drive in a small taxi hired for the day. There we visited Bro. Daniel and Sis. Trina. Bro. Daniel has around 15 neighborhood children in the class he teaches himself. While we were there, Daniel and Nipun questioned the children on their previous class. The proper answers were rewarded with wrapped sweets. The class was held in the home of the parents of one of the children — very obviously, from the room's decorations, orthodox if not Catholic Christians. At Daniel and Trina's we had light refreshment and afterward held a short memorial service. I believe that a room has been rented for the Sunday school since we returned to Canada.

On Tuesday, October 2, Ken took a break from work to take us out of Dhaka. We took the train to Chittagong, a name I remember from my seafaring days as the main seaport of Bangladesh. There we transferred to a bus for the journey to Cox's Bazaar. Shortly after sunset the bus stopped at a village en route, at which a supper was provided for the Muslim passengers, who had conscientiously observed Ramadan by fasting all day. Ken had arranged that Bro. Sajal, in Cox's Bazaar, should book us rooms for two nights. This allowed us time to meet Sajal and his wife. They both work for World Vision [*a worldwide children's welfare organization*], he in the office in town and she at a children's home at Chowfaldandi, about 28 kilometers north, from which Sajal commutes every day on his motor bike.

Cox's Bazaar is a tourist town. Our hotel overlooked the Bay of Bengal. The long sandy beaches were very enticing, but use of these beaches was limited to paddling, because swimwear is forbidden as immoral. However I spent much of an afternoon riding with Sajal, trying to book a plane for the following day back to Dhaka, so we could attend the meeting that Friday. I had already declared my refusal to travel by bus to Chittagong, in case the cramped seating might further aggravate my knee, already sore from traveling by rickshaw. The option of a sleeper on the train back from Chittagong still meant a bus trip there.

Eventually we were able to book a flight to Dhaka on Friday morning. It was just as well. I was expected to exhort in the afternoon. Missing the morning Bible study was offset by being able to travel to the children's home and visit with Sajal and Chom, his wife, in the World Vision home for children. We had a breaking of bread with Sajal before they accompanied us in the World Vision SUV, that Sajal had arranged for us, for the return trip to Chowfaldandi. Back in Cox's Bazaar we took this lovely family out for dinner at a restaurant close to our hotel. Then they returned home by bus. I was left with a distinct feeling that our inability to book a ticket on a regularly scheduled flight on Thursday was no accident. Even Cooks [*a large travel agency*], after several tries, gave up. But this allowed for our time with Sajal.

The Friday flight next morning was efficient and comfortable, so that we were back in time for lunch at the Banani apartment, in Dhaka. Chicken and beef curry, and that afternoon another excellent translation by Bro. Bappy at our final memorial service in Dhaka.

Before we left for our return to Canada, Ken took Nipun (with her family), Arla, and myself to the Radisson Hotel. It was "our" birthday and a farewell to us from her family. Two days later we were on our way, headed back to Fredericton, with a stopover (a very expensive one) in London. It was strange to return to our roomy home, quiet streets, and light traffic. Our culture shock was reversed. Sussex Christadelphian Hall and the apartment in Banani were set in different cultures. But the common ground, shared in faith, hope, and love, assures all of us that we shall meet again, when the Lord returns.

*Ron Easson (Sussex, NB)*

## “That the Man of God May be Perfect”

On the weekend of November 9-11, 2007, 45 brothers from Canada and the Eastern United States met for the second annual Brothers' Weekend. The location was Hidden Acres retreat, in the rolling hills of central Ontario, about a 90-minute drive west of Toronto.

It was a joyful event for all brethren attending. Starting with the readings on Friday evening until we dispersed after lunch on Sunday, the focus of our time and attention was on the theme “Called to be a Man of God”.

We had four 90-minute sessions (three on Saturday and one on Sunday). For each session, the brother leading the discussion first made a twenty-minute presentation; this became the basis for a number of small group discussions. After about 45 minutes of these small discussions, a brother selected from each group gave a brief summary to the full group.

The individual topics were as follows:

1. “Called to be a Man of God among Brethren”, led by Bro. Colin Badger
2. “Called to be a Man of God at Work”, led by Bro. Dev Ramcharan
3. “Called to be a Man of God at Home”, led by Bro. Chris Sales
4. “Called to be a Man of God in the Ecclesia”, led by Bro. Ron Leadbetter

The exhortation in the memorial service was given by Bro. Mark Carr, following the general theme, “That the Man of God May be Perfect”.

On Saturday evening, there was a group prayer session. At this time brothers could request that we pray altogether for a particular situation or person as identified. It was with deep appreciation that our prayers of praise, thanksgiving, and help were offered. May our Father in heaven hear and answer our prayers.

During our weekend together there was time for recreation such as walking, table tennis, and the late evening bonfire. Friendships were strengthened and new friendships made. We all left encouraged and a little more confident as each “man of God” grows day by day to become more like “*the* Man of God”.

Brothers, do mark in your calendar November 14-16, 2008, for the next Eastern “Brothers' Weekend”. Join us for what, God willing, may be a time to build each other up in the faith and hope we treasure.

*Nathan Badger, Gary Cousens, Steve McKay,  
Joe Sparacino, and Martin Webster*

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*“One man awake awakens another,  
The second awakens his next-door neighbor,  
And three awake can rouse the town,  
And turn the whole place upside down.  
And many awake can raise such a fuss,  
That it finally awakens the rest of us.  
One man awake with dawn in his eyes...  
Multiplies” (Author unknown).*



## Addresses for Bequests and Donations

(For tax ID numbers please contact the Editor)

**Christadelphian Bible Mission of the Americas (CBMA)** supports preaching work throughout the Americas, Domestic Truth Corps, etc. Visit [www.cbma.net](http://www.cbma.net) for an update on current activities as well as to make US dollar online donations. Donations by check should be sent c/o Charles Brinkerhoff, 15925 La Ronda Cir., Hacienda Heights, CA 91745-4244.

**Christadelphian Save the Children Fund** provides Bible learning materials, personal items, and scholarships to needy mission areas. For details see: [www.christadelphianchildren.com](http://www.christadelphianchildren.com)

**Christadelphian Tidings Publishing Committee** publishes this magazine and other works on the truth. P.O. Box 530696, Livonia, MI 48153-0696.

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

**Christadelphian Indian Children's Homes (CICH)** donations in US dollars can be sent to CICH, c/o David & Connie Stiles, 3 Blue Acre Rd., Middletown, CT 06457-5012.

**Christadelphian Heritage College Donations** may be sent to Christadelphian Heritage College, c/o Brantford Ecclesia, 442 Dunsdon St., Brantford, ON, Canada, N3P 2B1

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

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

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

**Williamsburg Christadelphian Foundation (WCF)** supports pastoral and preaching activities throughout the world. c/o Ray Pratt, P.O. Box 86, Deland, IL 61839-0086. Website: [wcfoundation.org](http://wcfoundation.org)

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

**Fairhaven Christadelphian Charitable Foundation** provides assistance to Canadian ecclesias dealing with the health and welfare issues of senior members. Donations can be sent c/o Clive Daniel, 8583 Sansum Park Drive, North Saanich, BC, V8L4V7, Canada.

**Spanish language literature** is available at P.O. Box 947, Monrovia, CA 91017-0947.  
[jdhunter@gte.net](mailto:jdhunter@gte.net), 626-303-2222

**Christadelphian Care-Line** provides a service for those who need fully confidential help with emotional and spiritual problems as well as family issues. 866-823-1039

**Alcohol Help Line** provides a service for those who need fully confidential help overcoming alcohol dependency. 866-823-1039

**Anderson Family Support Fund** provides help for Bro. Grant Anderson's family after Grant's serious car accident. Mail checks payable to Christadelphians to: P.O. Box 530696, Livonia, MI 48153-0696. Website: [www.milfordroad.net/Andersons.html](http://www.milfordroad.net/Andersons.html)

## News & Notices

### **AUSTIN LEANDER, TX**

We are pleased to report the baptism of one of our Sunday school students, MARK BERRY, on August 19, 2007. He is the son of Bro. Bryan and Sis. Jenifer Berry.

Our Sis. Keitha Linville and her husband, Paul, were blessed with a daughter, Sarah, on August 21, 2007. Sis. Keitha is the daughter of Bro. Steve and Sis. Kathy Lucas.

We welcome, by transfer, Sis. Luci Cook from the Austin South, TX, Ecclesia.

We have welcomed many visitors. Those from outside Texas include Bro. Lennox and Sis. Sinetta Prashad (Toronto West, ON); Sis. Jodee Webb (Hamilton Greenaway, ON); Sis. Karen Cooper (Manitoulin Island, ON); Bro. David and Sis. Janet Riley (Bournemouth Central, UK); Bro. Michael and Sis. Vanessa Floyd (Port Elizabeth, South Africa); Sis. Nicole Nevers (Meriden, CT); Sis. Robin Sternad (Simi Hills, CA); Sis. Betty Vogel (Kouts, IN); Bro. Ian Prentice (Bedford, UK); Sis. Nini Graham (Thousand Oaks, CA); and Bro. John Seagoe (Santa Barbara, CA). We also thank Bro. Paul Wade (Houston West, TX) for his word of exhortation.

We were pleased to have Bro. Gordon and Sis. Rosa Hensley, as well as Bro. Jason Hensley, from the Simi Hills, CA, Ecclesia, visit for our Fall Fraternal Gathering, held at the HEB camp in December. We thank Bro. Gordon for leading our studies of "Christ in the Old Testament".

*Fred Bearden*

### **BEDFORD, NS**

We held a successful study day, with outside interest, on Saturday, October 20, 2007, at Grand Lake-Oakfield Community Center. Bro. Brian Luke (Adelaide Brighton, South Aust.) led us in an analysis of Daniel. Also here was Bro. Brian's wife, Sis. Lorna. Other welcome visitors from Sussex, NB, have been Bro. Brad, Sis. Deb and Sis. Joan Goodwin and family; Bro. Cliff, Sis. Julie, Bro. Paul and Sis. Marie Baines and family; Bro. Ken and Sis. Wendy Dickson; Sis. Carolyn Kelly; and Bro. Ron and Sis. Arla Easson. We thank the brethren for their stimulating exhortations.

*Ronald A. A. Hill*

### **BRANTFORD, ON**

On February 2, 2007, we rejoiced together in the baptism of PETER JENNINGS, son of Bro. Jim and Sis. Shirley Ann Jennings. Bro. Peter was a member of our Sunday school and we are happy to welcome him now as our brother, and look forward to laboring with him in fellowship as we await the return of our King.

*Daniel Billington*

### **DETROIT LIVONIA, MI**

After a successful interview with the Arranging Board, Sis. Linda Putnick has been restored to fellowship. She has been attending the Milford Road Ecclesia for six months, and has transferred her membership there. We commend her to the care of the brothers and sisters at Milford.

*Jeffrey P. Adams*

## **DOUBLE SPRINGS, AL**

In reviewing our planned activities for the first nine months of this year, unfortunately we will not be able to have our study day as planned. Initially we had planned to hold the study day on March 14-16, 2008, with our Bro. Stan Isbell leading our classes and giving a topical lecture. We will have to postpone that effort until either this coming fall or early next year, in the spring. Instead, we plan on having a “Learn to Read the Bible Effectively” seminar in April.

Our Bro. Wesley Jones suffered a mild heart attack in late December. Sis. Margaret Jones was hospitalized with a staphylococcus infection, also in late December and through the middle of the first week in January. Both are recovering nicely, although Bro. Wesley continues to have dialysis three times a week. We ask for your prayers.

Even though we are not having our study day in March, we certainly would welcome any visitors to our ecclesia. We promise not to work you too hard.

*Troy Haltom*

## **KAMLOOPS, BC**

We are happy to announce the baptism of ROD JACKSON on January 27, 2007, and pray for our Father’s blessing on his walk to the Kingdom. Rod was first exposed to the gospel message at a “Learn to Read the Bible Effectively” seminar in the spring of 2005. He has continued to be an eager and enthusiastic student since that time.

We welcome by transfer Sis. Nicole Winter from London West, ON, and Sis. Cheryl Lario from Calgary, AB, both during the summer of 2007. Our Bro. Daniel Ferrie transferred to the North Battleford, SK, Ecclesia in the winter of 2006 for work purposes, but he has since returned to our ecclesia as of September 2007.

We rejoice in the marriage of Bro. Jesse Fletcher, son of Bro. Jon and Sis. Pam, to Sis. Lori Sargent, daughter of Bro. Dan and Sis. Wonda, on December 15, 2007. We pray their united walk to the Kingdom may be filled with pleasant memories.

We thank the many brothers and sisters who have joined us in fellowship this past year, and particularly Bro. Stephen Hornhardt, who led our spring fraternal. We would also like to thank Bre. Rod Massey, and David and Jonathan Lawrence (Prince George, BC); Skip and Stephen Bartholomew, and Graeme Osborn (Vernon Okanagan, BC); Andrew Jackson, and Rafeek Soolaman (Maple Ridge, BC); Wesley Butler (Vancouver, BC); Ron Kidd (London West, ON); Bernard Burt (Coventry, UK); and Colin Hollamby, Carl Parry, and Brian Luke (Adelaide Brighton, South Aust.) for their various adult Sunday school classes, exhortations, lectures, and Bible classes.

Our plans during 2008 include starting a new “Learn to Read the Bible Effectively” seminar in mid-February; an Inter-Ecclesial Gospel Proclamation Workshop for April 26-27, 2007; a visit from Truth Corps during the summer months; and a proposed September fraternal, all things being, of course, subject to our Father’s will.

*Jon Fletcher*

## **LOS ANGELES, CA**

The Los Angeles Ecclesia has been meeting for a number of years at our current location at 10721 Pioneer Blvd., Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670. Being a short 22 miles by freeway from LAX, 12 miles from downtown Los Angeles, and 15 miles from Disneyland, we are close to many travelers who may be passing through. Our Memorial Service begins at 10 am, followed by Sunday school, and we have a continuing Bible

class and seminar on Wednesday evenings beginning at 7:30 pm. We are delighted when visitors do come. Our meeting numbers about 60. Two noteworthy events that indicate that our meeting is aging were the 100th birthday of our Sis. Olive Clare earlier this year, and the 75th wedding anniversary of Bro. Oty and Sis. Opal Broyles on December 27, 2007. Sis. Clare is originally from Ireland, having come to the US via Canada. She has been in the Los Angeles meeting for many years. Bro. Oty and Sis. Opal have now moved to Lemoore, in the Central California valley, to be close to their daughter and son-in-law; but we are in frequent contact with them.

We had our Los Angeles Reunion dinner this past fall, attended by over 100, who are or have been in the Los Angeles meeting or the Sunday school in the past. We are very excited about the success of our Wednesday evening “Learn to Read the Bible Effectively” seminar. We modified the format somewhat, making it more along the lines of the Reseda Ecclesia’s program; this has proven very successful. We finished our 12-week introductory session, and then made a transition into the intermediate seminar with all the students continuing. The seminar has been a proven means to bring the Hope of Israel to our neighbors and has led to several baptisms. Seeing the enthusiasm of our current students is uplifting to the brothers and sisters.

We welcomed the transfers to Los Angeles of Sis. Priscilla Walther from Boston, MA, and Sis. Megan Wilson from Kouts, IN, as well as the return of Sis. Kristen Patterson from San Francisco, CA.

God willing, we plan a study day on May 31, 2008, to be led by Bro. Nathan Lewis, who is currently enrolled at the University of Southern California in a three-year advanced dentistry program. Bro. Nathan and Sis. Suzanne Lewis (Christchurch, NZ) have been frequent visitors to the Los Angeles Ecclesia.

The Los Angeles Ecclesia is also hosting the Christadelphian Youth Summit planned for February 16-17, 2008.

The newest member of our Sunday school, Ari Jude Brinkerhoff, joined us on November 30, 2007, due to the efforts of Bro. Ben and Sis. Elissa Brinkerhoff, his parents. Sis. Kathryn and Bro. Chris Yearsley, of Auckland, NZ, were visiting until recently to help the new parents.

*James E. Land*

## **MONTEGO BAY, JAMAICA**

With sadness at the loss of a countenance that truly reflected the love of Christ, but with thankful joy at a race well run, we record the falling asleep of a great saint, Sis. Margaret Drummond, age 104. A very few older brothers and sisters in North America will fondly recall her diminutive body and towering spiritual presence as she campaigned for the gospel in the days of her full strength. Like Moses, she had all her faculties until a day or two before her death. A few days later, Sis. Udaphne McLeod, also known and loved worldwide, was taken seriously ill. We know that many will wish to pray for her recovery.

Our meeting hall has recently been completely renovated inside and out. We would love to welcome visitors, but please contact me at 1-876-369-0057 before visiting our ecclesia, as we are not able to meet in the hall every Sunday.

*Siswe Stephen*

## **MONTREAL, QC**

We request that correspondents please send any ecclesial mail from now on to my home address at: Michael Parry, 22 - 310 Ave. Lanthier, Pointe-Claire, QC H9S 4G5, rather than to the PO Box, which has been discontinued.

*Michael Parry*

## **PARIS AVENUE, OH**

This past year has been a year full of rich and varied experiences and blessing from our Heavenly Father. First of all, note the change in the name of our ecclesia to Paris Avenue Christadelphian Ecclesia (PACE) from the former North Industry, OH, Ecclesia. We have moved into a newly constructed hall that is located near Alliance and Louisville, OH. Our first breaking of bread took place on Sunday, January 27, 2008, after nearly eight months of construction on a 5.5 acre plot of open farmland.

We sponsored two study weekends during 2007. Bro. Jonathan Bowen, from the Brantford, ON, Ecclesia, led the one in March and Bro. Dev Ramcharan, from the Toronto West, ON, Ecclesia, led the one in September.

We witnessed two baptisms during 2007: KYLE MISKO, son of Sis. Tammy and Bro. Greg Misko, Jr.; and JOYCE CORBETT, who came into the truth after eight years of study via the seminars.

Our Sis. Angie Swanson married Bro. Steve Mumaw of the Kouts, IN, Ecclesia on June 23, 2007.

Born to Sis. Amanda and Bro. Everett Muniz was a daughter, Moriah, on November 11, 2007.

We have had two transfers into our ecclesia: Sis. Martha Muniz from the Detroit Royal Oak, MI, Ecclesia, and Sis. Molly Schmitt from the Simi Hills, CA, Ecclesia.

Sis. Angie Mumaw transferred to the Kouts, IN, Ecclesia, and Sis. Katy Wuthrick transferred to Avon, IN.

We would like to announce two different study weekends that the Paris Avenue Ecclesia is sponsoring in 2008: March 15-16, 2008, with Bro. Jay Mayock of the Hamilton Ewen Road, ON, Ecclesia, who will be speaking on the topic of Isaiah; and September 20-21, 2008, with Bro. Roger Long of the Coventry, Grosvenor Road, UK, Ecclesia. That topic has not yet been decided.

We have enjoyed many visitors from Petersburg, VA; Canton, OH; Pittsburgh, PA; Manitoulin Island, Hamilton Ewen Road, and Hamilton MacNab, ON, as well as other Canadian ecclesias; Kouts, IN; several Detroit area ecclesias; several ecclesias in Texas; and several of the California ecclesias. Exhortations have been given by Bro. Bill Jennings (Hamilton MacNab), Bro. Bob Pommer (Pittsburgh), Bro. Henry Ternent (Pittsburgh), and Bro. Troy Haltom (Grand Rapids, MI).

Our ecclesia is helping to sponsor a meeting in central Ohio, that will meet in Columbus on the first and third Sundays of each month, and in Coshocton, OH, on the second and fourth Sundays. If you find yourself in central Ohio at any time, please join that body for fellowship and worship. The contact persons for precise information on times and places are Bro. Kevin Flatley at: [kflatley@insight.rr.com](mailto:kflatley@insight.rr.com), phone number 614-933-8535; and Bro. Paul Prater at: [pdprater@aep.com](mailto:pdprater@aep.com), phone number 740-623-8589.

This past year we sponsored a seminar on prophecy, and there was a follow-up on the topic "The Good News of the Gospel." That has resulted in four people continuing now with classes looking toward baptism.

For further information on our study weekends and times of activity, contact Recording Bro. Greg Misko, Jr., at: gmisko@neo.rr.com, or by phone at 330-784-7159. Again, please note the change in our ecclesia's name.

*Jack Vogelgesang*

### **SAN FRANCISCO, CA**

We have enjoyed visiting speakers from the San Francisco Peninsula, CA, Ecclesia. Our sincere thanks to Bre. Robert Sleeper, Jim Seagoe, Jessie Warner, and John Popel. Our thanks also to our Bro. J.T. Hawksworth (Portland, OR) for his exhortation when he was visiting.

Our Sunday School Program is scheduled for April 6, 2008, and our Sunday School Picnic for June 8, 2008. Both are to be held at the Marinwood Community Center.

Our dear Sis. Sheila Giltzow fell asleep in the Lord in early December at the age of 92. Our love and prayers to her husband Ed Giltzow.

*Paul Campbell*

### **SARASOTA, FL**

Our ecclesia continues to welcome the visits of brothers and sisters from the US, Canada, and the UK. In January we enjoyed the company of Sis. Lynn Sporzarsky (Treasure Coast, FL) and her husband George; Sis. Connie Walsh (Shenandoah Valley, VA); Bro. Rick and Sis. Elaine Sales (Shelburne, ON); Bro. Norm and Sis. Jan Luff and Sis. Judy Barclay and her husband Phil (Brantford, ON); Sis. Nella Berkhout and her husband Jack (Niagara, ON); Bro. Tom and Sis. Yolanda Baldock (Mississauga West, ON); Bro. John and Sis. Mary Cromie (Peterborough, ON); Bro. Terry and Sis. Jean Cannon (Castle Bromwich, Birmingham, UK); and Bro. Keith and Sis. Louise Archer (Studley, UK).

We thank Bre. Archer and Sales for their words of exhortation.

Please note that the undersigned is now recorder.

*James Wilkinson*

### **THOUSAND OAKS, CA**

During the past few months we have been pleased to welcome many brothers and sisters from our neighboring California ecclesias. In addition, we welcomed from afar: Bro. Jimmy and Sis. Jennie Vetkos and Bro. Tony and Sis. Pam Cipriotti (South Yosemite, CA); Bro. Frank and Sis. Dorothy Abel (Shelburne, ON); Bro. Mark and Sis. Teri Bitteringer (Bozeman, MT); Bro. David and Sis. Nicole Wisniewski, and Bro. Dan and Sis. Ashley Robinson (Brantford, ON); Bro. Jack and Sis. Shirley Robinson (Kitchener / Waterloo, ON); Bro. Nathan and Sis. Suzanne Lewis (Christchurch, NZ); Bro. Jim Cowie, Bro. Ben Cowie and Bro. Ben Nolan (Wilston, Aust.).

Our thanks go out to Bre. Jim Cowie, David Wisniewski, Jack Robinson, and Dean Gibson (Reseda, CA) for their words of exhortation; Bre. Neal Caplan and John McConville (Reseda, CA), and Chris Stickney (Simi Hills, CA) for their exhortations and afternoon classes.

Our special thanks go to Bre. Jim Cowie and David Wisniewski for their help with our annual Kids Camp on the subject of “The Judges”. Again, we had a full camp of nine to 16-year-olds, who had a lot of fun while becoming quite knowledgeable on the judges.

Also, special thanks to Bro. Frank Abel for leading us in our annual “Day With The Word” and weekend activities. His classes on “Where Is Your Conscience?” motivated all in attendance to continue to seek first the Kingdom of God.

Tom Graham

## WACHUSETT, MA

Our ecclesia is saddened to report that our Sis. Ellen Clark peacefully fell asleep in Jesus on January 4, 2008, in her 93rd year. Baptized in 1932, she remained a faithful attendee at our memorial meeting, until her health declined to the point where she found it difficult to get around. She now rests from all her labors, joining her husband, Bro. Burton E. Clark, awaiting the resurrection morn. Our sympathies are extended to her son and family.

We had the pleasure of Bro. Ron Kidd’s company (London, ON) in November, 2007, when he led a most informative Bible class.

On November 4, 2007, the Hudson, NH, Ecclesia joined us at our memorial service. We all enjoyed dinner together, followed by a time of fellowship.

Wesley Trow

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## The Name of Christadelphian

*I have borne the name of Christadelphian for forty years, and upon the significance of that title a few words may be useful. It came into existence when it was necessary to distinguish the brethren from other so-called Christians. Ever since, that name has stood for the One Faith and for separation from the present evil world in its religious, social and political aspects.*

*“Brethren in Christ”, a high and noble calling, an honorable name! Has it lost its meaning since it first came into being? The Ecclesia at Sardis had a “name” that it lived, but it was dead. They called themselves Brethren in Christ, and they had a high reputation, but in Christ’s estimation they were like the Pharisees, “whited sepulchers”, outwardly beautiful, but inwardly full of dead men’s bones. May the salt never lose its savor; may the name Christadelphian never become a misnomer; may it never come to be borne by a people who have become false to the Truth it signifies.*

*Brethren! remember our proud and exalted appellation; see that it never becomes tarnished, dishonored, meaningless. It is the fact that is important; not the name. If we call ourselves Christadelphians, then let us be Brethren of Christ in that we hold his Truth unimpaired, and follow his example of holiness.*

J.M. Evans

## Minute Meditation

### That's all I need to know

There is a delightful story about a little girl who memorized the 23rd Psalm to recite at a Sunday school program. She was able to say it perfectly to her parents as they drove to the program. When it was her turn, she nervously stepped up on the stage in front of the microphone and turned to face the audience — the biggest audience she had ever seen. She said, “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want,” and then she panicked, and suddenly her little mind went completely blank. She stood in complete silence for several seconds. Finally she blurted out, “That’s all I need to know,” and ran back to her seat.

What she said was more profound than she realized. If the Lord really is our shepherd, then, in a sense, that *is* all we need to know. A shepherd takes care of the sheep. The sheep do not have to worry about their needs because that is the shepherd’s job.

If the Lord is our shepherd, the rest of the psalm applies to us. He will make us to lie down in green pastures; he will lead us beside the still waters. He will restore our soul; he will lead us in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake. Though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we will fear no evil: for he will be with us; his rod and His staff will comfort us. He will prepare a table before us in the presence of our enemies; he will anoint our head with oil; and our cup will run over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our life, and we will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

What a great way to live. If the Lord is our shepherd then we will “seek the Lord, and we shall not want any good thing.” If the Lord is our shepherd then “he will deliver us from all our fears.” All things will work together for our good, and we really can do all things through Christ who strengthens us, if the Lord truly is our shepherd.

How can we make the little girl’s words true for us, so that we can say, “That’s all I need to know”? Those words will apply to us if we “trust in the Lord with all our heart and do not lean upon our own understanding,” because then “He will direct our paths.” If we set our purpose in life to “seek the Lord”, then we will be in good hands following our shepherd. He will keep us safe. We need him to guide us because there is a way that seems right to mankind, but its end is the way that leads to death. Jesus tells us to choose our way carefully because “The gate to destruction is wide, and the road that leads there is easy to follow. Many people go through that gate.” There is only one way and that one way is following the good shepherd. Jesus has said to us, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

We do need to be aware of one important consideration: if the Lord is our shepherd, then we are not free to go where we want to go or free to do what we want



to do. If he is our shepherd then we must allow him to direct our paths. We must obey our shepherd. We read, "Obey all the Lord's laws and commands, so that you may live in safety." If we love him we will keep his commandments.

We love our shepherd because of his care for us. Jesus tells us, "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me — just as the Father knows me and I know the Father — and I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd." Jesus our shepherd gave up his life for his sheep. He is gathering his flock. We want to be among those whom he is gathering.

So let us choose to make the Lord our shepherd, and then that is truly all we need to know. If we set our mind to follow him, he will lead us to places in his everlasting kingdom.

*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.)

### MARCH

**7-9 Young People's Study weekend** Bro. Jeff Gelineau (Simi Hills, CA). Contact Sis. Becky Hill, 11110 South Bay Lane, Austin, TX 78739 [dolphingirl72388@aol.com](mailto:dolphingirl72388@aol.com)

**8,9 Victoria, BC Study weekend** Bro. Mike LeDuke (Kitchener/Waterloo): "With Christ in Mind — Paul's Letter to the Colossians". Contact Sis. Pat Williamson (250-721-4938) [pwilliamson@telus.net](mailto:pwilliamson@telus.net)

**15,16 Lompoc Valley, CA Annual study weekend** Bre. Don Pearce (Rugby, UK) and Paul Billington (Brantford, ON): "An Up Close Look at Bible Prophecy Being Fulfilled in Our Time". Registration: contact Bro. Ron Stewart [ronandshirley777@aol.com](mailto:ronandshirley777@aol.com) or call 805-733-5577. Seating limited; we suggest an early response

**21,22 Simi Valley, CA Bible study and sports challenge** Bro. Allen Laben (Norfolk, VA): "Parables in Luke". Contact Bro. Jason Hensley [Jason@speakingofhisglory.com](mailto:Jason@speakingofhisglory.com) 805-202-6063

**21-23 Toronto Fraternal Gathering** Silverthorn Collegiate, 291 Mill Road, Toronto, ON. Bro. Tecwyn Morgan (Birmingham, UK): "Jesus Fulfills the Feasts". Contact Bro. Stephen Wilton [sdwilton@yahoo.com](mailto:sdwilton@yahoo.com)

**21-23 Wichita Falls, TX Spring gathering** Texas Christadelphian Camp and Conference Center, Buffalo, TX. Bro. Roy Styles (Detroit Livonia, MI): "Marriage in the Lord". Contact Bro. Larry Beutel, 1900 NW Access Road, Iowa Park, TX 76367; or Bro. John Clubb [jclubb4081@aol.com](mailto:jclubb4081@aol.com)

**22,23 Echo Lake, NJ Study weekend** Bro. John Hellawell (Peterborough, UK): "David — Shepherd, Soldier, Sinner, Sovereign, Saint". For CYC: "Creation or Evolution?" Contact Bro. David Link dlink44131@aol.com 973-696-3316

**29 Worcester, MA Study day** Bro. Mark Vincent (Boston, MA). Contact Bro. Aaron MacAdams, (978) 502 9690, aaronmacadams@hotmail.com

**29 April 5 Florida Bible School** Christian Retreat, Bradenton, FL. Adult / teen classes. Bro. Ken Curry (Toronto East, ON): "Bumps along the Road of Discipleship"; Bro. Mike LeDuke (Kitchener-Waterloo, ON): "With Christ in Mind — Paul's Letter to the Colossians"; Bro. Martin Webster (Kitchener-Waterloo, ON): "The Fifteen-Minute Exhortation". Contact Bro. Walt Dodrill 727-528-1197 waltoddrill@msn.com. Registration: Sis. Diane Jennings 727-528-1886 diane@dianej.net

## APRIL

**4-6 Men's Weekend** Lake Cachuma, CA. "There is nothing better for a man than to enjoy his work" (Eccl 3:22). Contact Bro. David Lloyd 818-352-6486

**5 Boston, MA Study day** Bro. David Levin (Baltimore, MD): "Seven Pillars of Spiritual Personhood". 9:00 am, lunch served. Contact Bro. Jeff Wallace jeff@tecbs.org 508-763-2981

## MAY

**2-4 Vancouver Island Sisters' Weekend** Nanaimo, BC. "Becoming a Handmaid of the Lord". Sisters Linda Reding and Beth MacAdams (Worcester, MA). For registration information contact Sis. Iris Brown rayandirisbrown@shaw.ca 250-758-4284

**2-4 Central Coast Women's Weekend** Camp Ocean Pines, Cambria, CA. Sis. Kim Brinkerhoff (Pomona, CA): "God's Beautiful Garden"; Sis. Shirley Barratt (San Luis Obispo, CA): "Walking in God's Garden"; Sis. Helen Jennings (Pomona, CA): "The Garden Restored"; Sis. Ann Crouse (North County San Luis Obispo, CA): "The Secret Garden (John 15)". Exhortation by Bro. John Warner (San Francisco Peninsula, CA): "The Garden Tomb". \$50 non-refundable deposit to secure registration. Contact Sis. Ann Crouse 805-239-3517 RoAnCrouse@aol.com

**3,4 Pittsburgh, PA Study weekend** Bro. Ken Styles (Detroit Royal Oak, MI): "Godly Love". Contact Bro. David Pommer thepommers@verizon.net 724-224-7363

**25,26 Sussex, NB Study weekend** Bro. Dale Crawford (Bedford, NS): "Portrait of the Perfect Man — Job, Jesus and the Saints"

**16-18 Hartford City, IN Lake Placid Study Weekend** Lake Placid Conference Center. Bro. Jim Styles (Detroit Livonia, MI): "James". Anyone interested in teaching a class for the children please contact Bro. Jerry or Sis. Dorothy Asbury 27 Dogwood Terrace, Maryville, IL 62062 or phone 618-288-5023

## JUNE

**27 - July 5 St. John's, NF, Campaign** Bro. Peter Forbes (Glenfield, UK): "Gospel Cameos in Genesis". For more information and to register online: register.explorethebible.com Contact person: Bro. Jim Keating 709-753-3578 jkeating@nf.sympatico.ca

**28 - July 6 Mid-Atlantic Bible School** Shippensburg, PA. Bro. Roger Long (Coventry Grosvenor Road, UK): "A Holy Nation"; teens: "We Have Found the Messiah"; Bro. Frank Abel (Shelburne, ON): "The Fate of the Dead"; teens: "Resurrection of the Dead, Who and When?"; Bro. Mark Vincent (Boston, MA): "The Servant and His Songs (Isaiah 40-

66"); teens: "How Readest Thou?". Information at [www.christadelphians.net/MACBS](http://www.christadelphians.net/MACBS)

## JULY

**4-7 North Battleford and Saskatoon Ecclesias, SK Shekinah Study Weekend** Bro. Bernard Burt (Coventry, UK): "Lo, I Come — In the Volume of the Book It is Written of Me". For information and registration contact Sis. Laura Jackson, RR#1, North Battleford, SK S9A 2X9 t.Jackson@sasktel.net 306-246-4808

**6-12 Southwest Bible School** Schreiner University, Kerrville, TX. Bro. Roger Long (Coventry, UK): "Built Together in Him" (adults), "A Holy Nation" (teens); Bro. Maurie Beale (Wanganui, NZ): "Six Lessons from Olivet" (adults), "God's Faithful Young People" (teens); Bro. Mark Giordano (Norfolk, VA): "Wonders of the Kingdom" (adults), "What Jesus Taught" (teens). Contact Bro. Joe Hill 512-288-0353, 11110 South Bay Lane, Austin, TX 78739, joehill@io.com. Forms at [www.planofgod.org/SWCBS/swcbs.htm](http://www.planofgod.org/SWCBS/swcbs.htm)

**12-18 Manitoulin Island, ON: THE NEW Manitoulin Family Bible Camp** Theme: "The Kingdom of God — Past and Future". Bro. Jim Cowie (Brisbane, Aust.): "Cameos of the Kingdom" (adults), and "Events Subsequent to the Return of Christ" (teens); Bro. Chris Sales (Shelburne, ON): "David: A Character Study of His Friends and Foes" (adults and teens). For additional information, please contact Bro. Mike Moore michael.l.moore@rogers.com 519-756-0175

**19-27 Eastern Bible School** Ascutney Mountain Resort, Brownsville, VT. Bro. Stan Isbell (North Houston, TX): "Pillar and Ground of the Truth: Finding our Role in the Body of Christ" (adults), "Samson: Freefalling to Faith" (teens); Bro. Jim Harper (Meriden, CT): "Pentecost Revisited" (adults); "The Time Will Come When They Will No Longer Endure Sound Doctrine" (teens); Bro. Devon Walker (Manchester, UK): "Jesus in Prayer" (adults), "Biblical Soap Operas" (teens). Contact Bro. Peter Dixon peter@tecb.org

**26-August 2 Manitoulin Bible Camp** Theme: "Come out of her and be ye separate". Bro. Bill Link, Jr. (Baltimore, MD): "Jude: Keep Yourself in the Love of God"; Bro. Richard Morgan (Saanich, BC): "Our Spiritual Exodus". Contact Bro. Alex Browning jabrowning@rogers.com 416-284-0290

**26-August 3 Midwest Bible School** Hanover College, Hanover, IN. Bro. Mark Giordano (Norfolk, VA): "Prophetic Images"; Bro. Frank Abel (Shelburne, ON): "The Fate of the Dead"; Bro. James Mansfield (Aust.): "How the Lord Treated People". Contact Bro. Mike Livermore, 44943 Yorkshire Drive, Novi, MI 48375 248-462-5740 mike.live@gmail.com

**27-August 2 Western Bible School** Menucha Conference Center, Corbett, OR. Bro. Ted Sleeper (San Francisco Peninsula, CA): "That I Might Know Him" (adults), "The Gospel of Adam" (teens); Bro. Colin Edwards (Newbury, UK): "Twenty-one Centuries Later: A Comparison Between Their Ecclesial Life and Our Own" (adults), "How Not to Get Lost in a Large Bible" (teens); Bro. Mark Vincent (Boston, MA): "From Paradise to the Promised Land" (adults); TBA (teens). Registration and other information at [www.menchabibleschool.org](http://www.menchabibleschool.org) or contact Sis. Jane Szabo szabojj@peak.org

## AUGUST

**9-15 Niagara Falls Bible School** St. Catherines, ON. Bro. Nigel Patterson (Cornwall, UK): "Preparing for the Coming King"; Bro. John Pople (San Francisco Peninsula, CA): "Powerful Lessons from Mysterious Scenes in the Bible". For information contact Bro. David Brierley david.brierley@sympatico.ca 416-236-5295, [www.NFCBS.com](http://www.NFCBS.com)

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**10-16 California Kids Camp** Camp Arnaz, Ojai. Bre. Nathan Lewis (Christchurch, NZ) and Jim Styles (Detroit Livonia, MI): "The Life of Abraham". Contact Bro. Tom Graham tom@bigbrand.com or website at kidscampcalifornia.com

**23-29 Vancouver Island Bible Camp** Camp Pringle, Shawnigan Lake, Vancouver Island. Bro. Devon Walker (Manchester, UK): "Jesus in Prayer" (adults), "Biblical Soap Operas" (teens); Bro. Gordon Dangerfield (Victoria, BC): "In the power of his might (Ephesians)" (adults), "Let this mind be in you" (teens); Bro. Martin Webster (Kitchener/Waterloo, BC): "Jonah, the Prophet of the Great Reformation" (adults), "To know wisdom and instruction" (teens). Contact Sis. Wendy Johnsen wendyjohansen@yahoo.ca #7-3855-9th Avenue, Port Alberni, BC V9Y 4T9, Canada. Tel 250-724-0501 Fax 250-723-9321

## **NOVEMBER**

**8 Brantford, ON, Prophecy Day** Copetown Community Centre, Copetown, ON. Contact Bro. Gary Smith 519-758-0362 hgarysmith@sympatico.ca