

# THE CHRISTADELPHIAN TIDINGS

— of the Kingdom of God —

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# The CHRISTADELPHIAN TIDINGS of the Kingdom of God

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## What Do We Lack on our Journey?

*Riches and poverty are more in the heart than in the hand. He is wealthy, who is contented. He is poor, who wants more. The universe will not fill a worldly heart (Eccl 1:8), while a little will suffice for a heavenly heart (Gen 28:20).*

*"The children of light" (Luke 16:8) content themselves willingly with the small pittance, which their Father allows them during the time of their "youth"; knowing that their main portion is reserved for them in safekeeping, until they reach the "full age" of maturity (1Pet 1:4).*

*They are well satisfied — on their journey — to live rather more scantily along the way. They are like Joseph's brethren, who are provided with food for their journey, while their full sacks remain unopened, till they reach their true home (Gen 42:25). When they reach their final destination, their God compensates for everything they have lacked along the way. But what would compensate for a lack of Him?*

*Adapted from Charles Bridges*

## Editorial

### A Refuge in Death

*“When calamity comes, the wicked are brought down,  
but even in death the righteous have a refuge” (Proverbs 14:32).*

When bad things happen in the world, the wicked will most likely suffer. But even when the **righteous** ‘suffer’ by experiencing the worst possible ‘bad thing’ (that is, death), they will at the same time find a refuge — a shelter or protection — in God.

In the proverb, “calamity” is the Hebrew word “ra”: evil. Used in this sense, “evil” does not necessarily mean sin; rather, it refers to misfortune, catastrophe, or trouble. Sometimes these circumstances come upon the world to punish the wicked (cp also Prov 24:16).

#### The fate of the wicked

The Book of Proverbs tells us about the fate of the wicked:

- (a) Their reputation will be like rotten wood (10:7).
- (b) God will reject all their desires (10:3).
- (c) All their hopes will come to nothing (10:28; 11:8,10).
- (d) Their worst fears will be realized (10:24).
- (e) The wicked person will know nothing but trouble, or calamity (12:21), which is depicted as a relentless hunter (11:19).
- (f) The wicked will also experience contempt and reproach (18:3).
- (g) They will flee even when there are no pursuers (28:1).
- (h) They will be driven to death (14:32).
- (i) No future dwelling place awaits the wicked (10:30).
- (j) God will overthrow them (21:12).
- (k) They will be swept away like chaff (10:25).

Notice that, for the wicked, there is absolutely no mention of eternal torment in a burning hell, or anywhere else, for that matter.

Illustrations of the fate of the wicked provide cautionary tales by which we may examine ourselves:

- (a) Dathan and his associates rebelled against the authority of God, and were swallowed up in an earthquake (Num 16:33).
- (b) Others in Israel, who turned their backs on the LORD’s counsel and worshiped other ‘gods,’ were destroyed at His command (Exod 32:28).
- (c) Balaam and the Midianites, who sought to draw Israel away from the LORD, were rejected by the LORD and then destroyed by His vengeance (Num 31:8,10; cp Rev 2:14).
- (d) Hophni and Phinehas, Eli’s sons, treated their priesthood with contempt, and misused their positions of responsibility for personal gain and grati-

fication. They lost their positions and died in battle when the Philistines captured God's ark (1Sam 1:3; 2:34; 4:4,11,17).

- (e) The false prophets of Baal, and of other false gods, were ridiculed for their pretensions, and then slaughtered at Elijah's command (1Kgs 18:40).

### **Death comes to all**

All the foregoing defines the most fundamental of first principles: the wicked will perish.

The wicked, of course, are not the only ones who die. The most righteous of men and women die also. But there is an incalculable difference between the fate of the wicked and the fate of the righteous (meaning those who trust in the LORD). Extraordinary as it may sound, even in death the righteous find "refuge". "Refuge" signifies a place where one might flee for protection in time of trouble. In his wilderness sojourn, David found refuge in valleys and caves where he might hide from the murderous Saul. That is one sort of refuge, and we need to look for it when necessity demands.

When we are in extreme trouble or danger, we will do almost anything to escape death — or to hold it off even for a while. Nevertheless, the Bible teaches us that the righteous need not fear death. For them, death may become a refuge; there is no greater assurance in this life. Through faith, the righteous may actually come to see the worst imaginable 'evil', death, as a cause of hope:

1. Simeon, a just and devout man who waited for the consolation of Israel, was at last blessed to take the baby Jesus in his arms. Then he thanked God with the words: "Lord, now let your servant depart in peace, according to your word: for my eyes have seen your salvation" (Luke 2:29,30).
2. The prophet Isaiah spoke of death, for believers, as a welcome haven: "The righteous perish, and no one ponders it in his heart; devout men are taken away, and no one understands that the righteous are taken away to be spared from evil. Those who walk uprightly enter into peace; they find rest as they lie in death" (Isa 57:1,2).
3. In his best moments, the righteous Job could look at his God and see at the same time the Bringer of Death, and the Only Source of Help: "Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him" (Job 13:15; cp 19:25-27).
4. The words of the Lord in the Apocalypse pronounce a special blessing upon those righteous ones who die: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord" (Rev 14:13).
5. For the best example of death being a refuge, we turn to Isaiah again:  
*"But your dead [O LORD] will live; their bodies will rise. You who dwell in the dust, wake up and shout for joy... the earth will give birth to her dead. Go, my people, enter your rooms and shut the doors behind you; hide yourselves for a little while until his wrath has passed by" (Isa 26:19,20).*

The righteous may "hide" themselves, or take refuge, in the "rooms" or inner chambers of the grave. There — where nothing else can harm them in any way

— they may safely wait, until God’s “wrath” (trouble, distress or danger upon the wicked) has passed. Then they may come forth to endless life.

In this lovely little prophecy of Isaiah, the grave itself becomes an ark of safety, like the one that sheltered Noah and his family during the Great Flood. The grave also becomes a “house” sprinkled with the Passover blood (cp Exod 12), while the last and greatest plague ravaged Egypt. In both instances, the doors were shut, while the protecting wings of the LORD overspread them, and all outside was hopelessness and death.

In the prophecy or parable, the righteous are seen entering gladly into their “houses” of death. They know that, even there, they are protected by the Angel of His Presence and the blood of the true Passover Lamb (John 1:29; 1Cor 5:7; 1Pet 1:19, Heb 13:20), and that their God and Savior will remember them when the time of wrath has passed, and call them forth to glorious life.

### **‘Why is no one crying?’**

After a long life in the Truth, the old brother died and was laid to rest alongside his faithful wife. At the funeral and immediately after, some of his children, who had never been in the Truth, talked quietly with one another. Then one of them approached a Christadelphian with their question: ‘Why is no one crying?’

It seemed to her and her siblings that her dear father must not have meant very much to his fellow churchgoers, since there was so little visible expression of sorrow at his death. She was most kindly reassured, however, by the Christadelphian: ‘We dearly loved your parents. But we know that death for them is truly just a peaceful sleep. We know we shall see them again, and in the most wonderful circumstances. They are at rest now, and one day — perhaps very soon — they will wake up to receive immortality in God’s Kingdom.’

Thus began to dawn upon the daughter, and then others in her family, a profound realization. What they had heard over the years, but paid little attention to, was much more than empty words. It was, for those who truly believe, the only reality. The death of the righteous will surely bring some sorrow to those who love them, but much more it will bring to them peace and hope. A night of weeping, yes; but also a morning, and many further mornings, of joy in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection (Psa 30:5).

There could be only one response from the daughter who saw, for the first time with real clarity, that a spiritual hope could triumph over a natural death. ‘Please tell me more about this kind of hope.’ And she and other relatives were ultimately baptized into the same hope that her parents possessed.

Let us so live that we have no fear of death — that we fear it no more than our bed at the end of a tiring day. Others will recognize that. At first, they may wonder what is wrong with us. But then, when they understand better, they may say, ‘I want to live my life in hope too.’

*George Booker*

## Exhortation

### “Joy Cometh”

When Barack Obama was inaugurated as President of the United States our television screens were full of pictures of the ecstasy of the people. There was abundant rejoicing, joy and gladness. It is incredible that so much is expected of one man. The evident pleasure and excitement among the massed crowds of two million people in Washington was remarkable. Here was a nation, indeed the whole world, sensing a desperate need. They needed to believe there was a future worth living for. Perhaps for many of them, it was the first time they had ever felt that their way of life was in serious danger. A sense of urgency was in the air: could Obama lead them out of the wilderness? What kind of “change” is ahead?

People around the world, in every country, were aware of this event and its potential significance to them. The world is now “one” in rejoicing or grieving over big events. I recall the death and funeral of Princess Diana. I happened to be in Nepal at the time, it was early in the use of satellite TV, and for hour after hour the offerings of grief at her funeral were portrayed. The funeral was a very different occasion, the opposite of joy, but demonstrating how human joy is so transient. It has ever been so. Today, more than ever, we live for the moment. And now moments that can be shared by billions, situations in which there is an extreme change of fortune, attract enormous public interest.

#### **The raising up of Joseph**

Turning to the Scriptures, we think of the enormous change of fortune in the life of Joseph, his dramatic exaltation from the degradation of an Egyptian prison. Garbed in new clothes, and filled with God-given assurance, he was able to capture the confidence of Pharaoh, who appointed him to a position of the highest responsibility. Imagine the scene. Men shouted before him, “Make way, bow the knee”, as he traveled throughout Egypt in the best style. This was the greatest nation of that age, more than comparable to the role the USA has played in our age.

There commenced a period of prosperity beyond measure; harvests were wonderful. There was an abundance of food, the like of which had never been witnessed before. The Egyptians could not keep count of all that the storehouses held; they needed to build more. Imagine if there had been no Joseph, no message from God! What would have happened to Egypt and in the surrounding nations? For a time there would have been a glut of food; it would have been squandered; no one would have thought to build extra storehouses. The Nile always flooded to make the land fertile, and they were sure life would continue as it always had within their experience!

We can make a comparison with the relative glut of money and possessions in the world. This has brought relative prosperity to more and more countries in recent years. The rich in particular have rejoiced that they can greatly increase

their wealth and boast as to who has the most billions! Have any been wise enough to see that this, like the grain harvest in Egypt, was too remarkable to last, being based largely on illusory foundations — because a sort of insanity has taken command of the reasoning of greedy men, and their “success” blinded the minds of others?

Egypt set the highest standards of glorifying their leaders in death, as much as in their lives. What work went into those remarkable pyramids? We still marvel at how they were able to build them. What work went into carving the statues of the Pharaohs; yet was it so different from the world today? America has carved faces of past presidents on Mount Rushmore and has an ever-burning flame at the Kennedy Memorial in Arlington National Cemetery, where a silent reverence is maintained.

Nearly every city has its statues of the greats of the past. Every town in India has statues of Gandhi. The burial places, such as the island on which Princess Diana is buried, are testimonies to human joys and sorrows; they have become places for pilgrimage. They cause us to meditate on the deep spiritual darkness that covers the earth. Humans are blinder than ever to the true reality of God; they are unable to look inward to see their lack of genuine God-fearing spirituality.

### **Different kinds of “joy”**

As we reflect on the transient joys witnessed at Obama’s inauguration, we meditate upon the differences from the “joy” that is mentioned so often in the Scriptures. Think of the parables of Jesus which conclude with the words, “Enter thou into the joy of our Lord.” Is the “joy” referred to in the Scriptures only a joy to be looked for in the future? Did Jesus know “joy” in his mortal life?

The Greek word *chara* is also translated gladness, joyfulness and rejoicing. Bible dictionaries describe this word as indicating more a state of mind, a quality in our attitudes, than a transient emotion. There are many inspiring words penned by the prophets, words that we sing or hear sung; we know them so well:

*“The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing, with everlasting joy and gladness. And sorrow and sighing shall flee away...”*  
(Isa 51:11).

There are times of joy recorded in the Bible, but the situations that come more readily to mind are the times of sadness, such as when Jesus wept, when all around him were weeping as they came to the tomb of Lazarus. One occasion when the disciples knew joy, Luke tells us, was when they returned to Jerusalem, having witnessed the ascension of their Master to heaven. Then they “returned to Jerusalem with great joy” (Luke 24:52). When Peter stood up to preach on the day of Pentecost, his message was one of future joy. He quoted the Psalms of David and their reference to Christ, that God’s Holy One would not “see corruption”. “You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of joy in your presence” (Acts 2:27,28). Peter sensed the joy that was then in heaven.

The writer to the Hebrews picks up this thought in words very familiar to us, when he tells us to:

*“Run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame and has sat down at the right hand of God” (Heb 12:2).*

## **A life of joy**

So was the mortal life of Jesus all an anticipation of future joy? Is there no hint at all that Jesus experienced joy in his mortal life? There is just one significant passage. Jesus says to his disciples:

*“As the father loved me, I also have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.”*

Then he concludes with these telling words:

*“These things I have spoken to you, that **my** joy might remain **in you**, and that your joy may be full” (John 15:9-11).*

We must capture the full meaning here of “my joy remaining in you.” The joy of Jesus is not some transient emotion; it is the spirit that abides; it is the reality of a relationship with that which is divine; it is the phenomenon of true inner peace that arises from that relationship. Only with that experience can the joy of a disciple be full, or *complete*. It is the joy Jesus experienced.

Surely it is a joy which compares with the joy of the angels when a sinner repents and turns to take on the name of Christ! Meditate on the nature of that joy, the spirit which we imagine to exist in heaven. Compare it with the kinds of joy we have in this life. Human joys are a hollow echo when compared to the completeness of the joy of which Jesus speaks.

We must beware of thinking that the happy, relaxed, pleasurable times in our lives have any real comparison with the completeness of true spiritual joy. Spiritual joy is an unfathomable wonder of inner peace, coupled with a far-reaching vision of what our Master experienced, and from which he derived his joy.

King David knew times of great joy, such as when he was dancing before the LORD when the ark was at last brought into Jerusalem. He could write in his Psalms:

*“Let all those rejoice who put their trust in you; let them ever shout for joy, because you defend them; let those also who love your name be joyful in you. For you, O LORD, will bless the righteous; with favour you will surround him as with a shield” (Psa 5:11,12).*

## **The necessity of shadows**

But as we reflect upon the life of David, we recall the many times his commitment to the LORD led him through paths of danger, and a “walk through the valley of the shadow of death” (Psa 23:4). This was, in its own way, a necessary corollary to feelings of joy. It reminds us of the challenging words at the start of the Epistle of James, where he tell us to “count it all joy when you fall into various trials.”

Walking through the shadows of the valley of death serves to highlight the wonder and privilege of the times we are walking in the light of the Son. When an artist



paints a picture, it looks wrong if there are no shadows. The shadow in the valley brings the light on the hilltops into glorious and dominating focus.

The Psalms have many valuable lessons to teach us on true joy, and also to remind us of the times of famine when we need to go to the storehouses for grain. How tragic if we have failed to harvest enough grain to make the bread which comes down from heaven! We need this to restore our inner joy, strength and vision. With the harvest fields of the world's materialism looking rather barren, we may well have to go to our own storehouses more often. Indeed, this experience will be good for us — spiritually.

David's words are, in many places, a store of "grain". For example, he writes:

*"Be merciful to me O God, for man would swallow me up... whenever I am afraid I will trust in you. In God (I will praise his Word), in God I have put my trust; I will not fear: what can flesh do to me?" (Psa 56:1,3,4).*

Then he answers his question, "What can flesh do to me?" by adding:

*"When I cry out to you, then my enemies will turn back; this I know, because God is for me" (v 9).*

After confessing his sins in that remarkable Psalm 51, and seeking to be washed thoroughly from his iniquity and cleansed from his sin, David's plea is: "Restore to me the joy of your salvation" (v 12). This is a joy that is most precious to us, far greater than any other sort of joy, and one many of us may well rest upon in the coming "lean years", when there is little or no harvest of material things, and we need to go to the storehouses we have made, with full assurance of faith. We will need to share the stored grain with each other. We must not let the values and the joys and sorrows of the world distract us.

### **Funerals of sorrow, and a funeral of joy**

Finally, reflect on the outpourings of grief at the time of the death of John F. Kennedy or Princess Diana, and the apparent contrast when our Lord died. Those who rejoiced at our Lord's death were his enemies, while the fearful women among his followers watched at a distance. His main followers, such as Peter, hid in fear and distress because they had let him down. Two brave men successfully sought possession of his body and placed it in a tomb to save it from being cast into the fires of Gehenna — this was probably the fate of the two thieves, as with those of common criminals. There was no grand funeral for our Master — the very opposite! But is that true?

No, it is not true. It has been, and still is, week by week, the most tremendous "funeral" of any man who has ever lived! We gather together around these emblems and marvel at his voluntary sacrifice and awesome death. Think of the countless millions over the last 2,000 years who have joined together in keeping his memory every week: a memory to be kept until he comes to eat and drink anew with his faithful, loyal and true followers. As we partake yet again of the memorials of his sacrifice, let us treasure that inner joy, that the world can in no way appreciate. How great is our joy, brethren and sisters, how wonderful and privileged our anticipation of future joy.

And we treasure the words of a familiar hymn in our hearts:

“Joy cometh! Sighing, sorrowing one —  
Joy cometh! With the rising sun;  
Joy — holy, blessed, perfect, pure,  
Joy — ever flowing, ever sure!  
“Joy cometh! For the Lord doth come  
To wake the song that now is dumb!  
All righteous tongues shall find employ  
In songs of everlasting joy.”

*David Caudery (Dandenong, Australia)*

## **Bible Study**

### **To Speak Well of God:**

#### **(1) Have You Considered My Servant Job?**

The book of Job always held a fascination for me, simply because there were too many important and unanswered questions, and the proffered explanations which I had encountered throughout my discipleship seemed either contrived or simply inadequate. Study on Job intensified during the five years from 2003 onwards and the exposition detailed here was first prepared as a series of invited lectures given at Bible schools in Oregon (2004), Wisconsin (2005), Vermont (2006) and British Columbia (2007); growing and deepening with each iteration.

This work is not the result of *pre-planned* research, for at no time did I consciously decide to study Job. This work is the result of compulsion. In fact, writing an extensive analysis on anything was by no means a desirable idea. A medical condition has limited the use of my hands: often the right hand provides no function at all, so the majority of this work was typed with one hand, which was frankly exasperating.

But I was becoming increasingly fascinated with the book of Job: that famous, arguably infamous, Biblical drama by which a man is, for reasons not explicitly explained, subjected to the most intense forms of suffering by God. God's question: "Have you considered my servant Job?" reverberated around my mind. I realized that frankly, in depth, I had not. I had read the book of Job many times, but in truth I had not isolated the character for special mental meditation or study. The rising compulsion was also unusual — why should I trouble myself to consider Job anyway? After all I was familiar enough with the text to know that God had directed His question to Satan, not me.

Hadn't He?

#### **Existing expositions of Job**

The book of Job is evidently presented as a dramatic play (although one I also

believe happened in real life), which means that the plot hinges on a relatively small number of key events and key characters. Many serious questions are raised, perhaps chief of which is: “How can a loving God abuse His own disciple in this way? Why is it okay for God to seemingly experiment in human lives, willfully introducing intense pain otherwise not present, apparently for reasons of conducting some sort of philosophical experiment? Is human life so unimportant to this Deity that this is what we should come to anticipate?” There can be no doubt that these are hard-hitting questions that arise from the text, perhaps questions that are all too often dodged.

For this reason, humanist expositions sometimes employ the book of Job as ammunition to demonstrate the apparent folly of appreciating the God of the Bible as a loving or caring Father. Likewise Christian expositions of Job often populate the defensive portion of the spectrum. Some are outright depressed, having somewhat ceded in defeat to the notion that God’s conduct could ever be seen in a praiseworthy, or even justifiable, light. These expositions may postulate as a last ditch defense the highly dubious caveat that the God of grace is solely the God of the New Testament: as if to use that latter Testament as the rug under which to sweep the events of the former. Even those expositors who intend to present God in a good light still largely come across as caught on the back foot, seeking to defend a God whom they can understand as being justifiably under fire. Often they seem keen to the point of desperation to point to Job’s restoration as the justification of that which has gone before. From what I see in the book of Job, the need for defensiveness goes away.

I want to offer an explanation of the drama of Job which is consistent with the broader Bible message concerning God, man, the nature of evil and the source of suffering; and which will carry the message of God’s goodness from an undistorted appreciation of the plot.<sup>1</sup>

For context, I read more than forty expositions of Job, many of which are referenced here, so that I could both refine my thinking and present this work in the light of existing ideas on the subject. A few principal works are referenced more frequently than others, to provide the reader with a ready sense of the backdrop against which my exposition sits.

From the broad spectrum of literature I have selected, for both comparative backdrop and my own edification, the work of Gustav Gutierrez,<sup>2</sup> a Catholic priest in South America; the library of works compiled by Nahum Glatzer,<sup>3</sup> an Austro-Hungarian scholar of Jewish theology; the exposition of David Atkinson,<sup>4</sup> an Anglican minister in England and the commentary of J. Vernon McGee,<sup>5</sup> an Evangelical preacher from midwest America. I also set this work alongside the expositions offered by other Christadelphian expositors: of these I mainly reference the works of the Australian brothers David Baird<sup>6</sup> and Ted Spongberg,<sup>7</sup> as well as the English brothers Jack Balchin<sup>8</sup> and L. G. Sargent.<sup>9</sup> I include a few thoughts extracted from each exposition below to demonstrate the variety of different opinions Job generates and yet still highlight the absence of the main points I see in the book. I wish to share these précis with you so that when the

names of these authors crop up during these articles, you will be familiar with the particular flavor of their expositions.

Gutierrez is a Catholic priest who ministers in rural communities in Ayacucho, Peru, in South America. His writing is heavily influenced by a sense of sympathy for, and duty towards, the poor. Throughout his exposition he holds faithfully to his central view that the poor earn special favor with God. In that vein, Gutierrez understands Job as representing the archetypal innocent who suffers, and he sees a comparison between Job and the South American poor by correlating material poverty with spiritual innocence.

Glatzer has composed an enormous compendium of opinion on Job spanning centuries of thought. He reproduces a number of lengthy excerpts from texts expositing Job, which he groups according to the Judaic, Christian and humanist ideologies utilized by the writer. He offers brief thoughts of his own as an introduction to this library, in which he mainly communicates the view that Job is a depressing tale of an emotionally distant God, who strong-arms Job into submission to His will and recognition of His greatness. Glatzer is unimpressed with many expositions which he feels fail to address the chilling questions which the drama raises.

Atkinson's approach is very straightforward: he directly concerns himself with the issue of Job's suffering and how, or indeed if, it can be understood in the light of a loving God. He quickly broadens his approach to incorporate consideration of contemporary cases of hardship alongside Job's case. Atkinson's exposition is based on studies that were initially presented at Bible reading sessions during morning worship at Wycliffe Hall Chapel at Oxford, UK.

McGee comments on the book of Job as part of his "Thru the Bible" radio series, first aired in 1967, which addressed every book of the Bible. Necessarily, therefore, it was not realistically possible for McGee to delve deeply into an analysis of Job; indeed, his intentions were to make the drama accessible to the common man, or, as he writes in his own words: "to put the cookies on the bottom shelf so that the kiddies could get them."<sup>10</sup> McGee seems quite hard on Job. He stresses the flaws of defensive self-justification to which Job's circumstances, compounded by his friends' accusations, drive him. He describes Job as "very egotistical about his own righteousness," displaying "self-adulation" and "spiritual egotism," and concludes: "He is about to break his arm, patting himself on the back."<sup>11</sup>

By contrast, Balchin's work puts out an explicit call for sympathetic understanding to be shown to the man Job amidst his afflictions, a thought which he extends into his work's title: "Sitting with Job," the same title as an earlier work by R. B. Zuck.<sup>12</sup> Balchin references a large library in his analysis and his work is characterized by a threefold presentation of his ideas: first his thesis, followed by a separate section of detailed notes supporting that thesis; followed by a third section of excursus, considering the wider spectrum of opinion on the broader and oft-debated points of the text.

Baird works from a smaller library, restricting himself solely to Christadelphian

analyses. This smaller database allows him to present a comprehensive review and his exposition is prefaced by some excellent common sense advice given to any reader intending to give serious thought to the book of Job, such as avoiding sweeping generalizations so as not to create caricatures out of the characters of the drama.

The works of Sponberg and Sargent are both shorter: Sponberg's intention was to provide a study aid from notes of a series of Bible school lectures he presented in Queensland, Australia; while Sargent's principal focus was the book of Ecclesiastes, alongside which he offered a relatively brief consideration of Job. Both these works were published in the 1960s and are written in the admirable style of ones viewing themselves as students of the Biblical texts, not masters of them. I am grateful for their exhortation on this point, extolling as it does the logical truth that a man who claims knowledge cannot experience revelation.

Despite the existence of this breadth of literature, I find that my study of Job still offers a different interpretation on a number of vital points. The most important difference is the identification of Satan, where my reading dramatically affects the understanding of the entirety of the remaining plot and enables unique interpretations, such as the relevance of the debate and the illumination of the goodness of God's work with humanity; which both seem diminished using other interpretations of Satan.

### **The central theme of Job**

After reading many expositions I'm keenly aware that many themes can be adequately expressed as central in this drama, and the breadth of suggestions in the literature was more extensive than I anticipated. I have learned that a characteristic feature of the book of Job is the rich variety of themes which can be extracted; and each one seems justifiable as a pillar of the work.

Sargent presents a profound, yet curiously neutral, opinion of the book's theme: naming it the revelation of a man's encounter with God. Balchin sees the central theme as a discourse addressing the connections, or lack of connections, between sin and suffering. Atkinson identifies the central theme of Job more emotionally, as a treatise to assist in coping with suffering, while Gutierrez reaches deeper to suggest it is the need to speak well of God in the presence of the suffering innocent. Luke, writing in the preface of Baird's work, sees Job's central education as perceiving the contrast between the vanity of man and the righteousness of God; and similarly Sponberg identifies the central Joban tenet as the problem of evil when viewed relative to God's righteousness. McGee observes the most didactic tone of those reviewed here; for him the main message of Job is that all men, even the righteous, need to repent before God.

If I had been asked for my opinion on the central theme of Job any time prior to ten years before now I would likely have replied: "Understanding the presence of a loving God, even in the face of extreme suffering." After my study in this book intensified in the years 2003-2007, I was particularly drawn to the fact that the whole episode provided the salvation of the three erstwhile accusers of Job, and

my opinion of the central theme evolved accordingly into a more Messianic tone: “The suffering of a righteous man brought salvation to unrighteous men”, a theme I still feel as highly relevant. Yet now after completing the necessarily more intense level of study which publication of one’s thoughts demands, I refine my opinion further, seeing the central theme perhaps with most similarity to Gutierrez, as: “To speak well of God, because His loving nature always draws men to salvation.” That said, I in no way seek to disqualify any of the preceding opinions of other authors, all of which themes are strongly apparent.

At first reflection it may seem quite foolish to express the central theme of the book of Job without employing the word ‘suffering,’ since the suffering of Job is pervasive throughout, and central to, the plotline. My explanation for this *apparent* omission of the concept of suffering is that suffering is necessarily included in the concept of speaking well of God, simply because how we *truly* speak of God is only revealed under duress and not during times of ease, when we might easily speak well of God, or indeed anything at all.

What is particularly exciting to me is that this central theme eliminates the need to be defensive concerning the book of Job: I find myself enabled to see a God who is operating in a praiseworthy way throughout the unfolding events of the drama. Nor do I feel the exposition falls short in presenting God as ‘merely’ supreme, but actually as a *loving* Father. These facets of this interpretation can potentially provide considerable comfort and encouragement to those who are confused, troubled or even outright disturbed at the events they encounter in the book of Job. Even if this potential comfort and encouragement for those daunted or discouraged by what they read in Job were the only result of this study, I would believe it enough to justify the writing. But, beyond this, I find this exposition has a better treasure to offer: objective evidence, from the book of Job, no less, *To Speak Well of God*.

*John Pople (San Francisco Peninsula, CA)*

**Notes:**

1. Biblical quotations are taken from the New International Version (NIV) unless otherwise marked. The NIV is chosen for its clarity of modern English and idiomatic expression; although the thoughts developed prove independent of the translation of the Bible employed. Quotations are marked parenthetically by book, chapter and verse, except in the case of quotations from the book of Job, where only chapter and verse are specified.
2. G. Gutierrez, “On Job: God-talk and the Suffering of the Innocent,” 1987, Orbis, New York, NY, USA.
3. N. N. Glatzer, “The Dimensions of Job,” 1969, Schocken Books Inc., New York, NY, USA.
4. D. Atkinson, “The Message of Job,” 1991, Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester, UK.
5. J. V. McGee, “Thru the Bible Commentary Series: Job,” 1991, Thomas Nelson, Nashville, TN, USA.
6. D. Baird, “The Education of Job,” 2002, Stallard & Potter, Torrensville, Australia.
7. E. M. Spongberg, “The Book of Job,” 1965, private publication.
8. J. Balchin, “Sitting with Job,” 1998, Rhoswel Books, Oswestry, UK.
9. L. G. Sargent, “Ecclesiastes and Other Studies,” 1965, The Christadelphian, Birmingham, UK.
10. J. V. McGee, *Ibid*, v.
11. *Ibid*, x, 144, 152.
12. R. B. Zuck, “Sitting with Job: Selected Studies on the Book of Job,” 1991, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI, USA.

## “Not Only, But Also”

Consider a rather common Hebrew idiom, which employs “not” and “but” (or their equivalents) in one phrase. Quite often, this does not mean ‘*Never* the one but *always* the other’; instead, it may mean: ‘*Not so much* the one, *but much more* the other.’

Some examples:

- (a) Proverbs 8:10: “Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.” The question is: did Solomon intend to say, ‘Always refuse silver and gold when it comes your way, and be sure to accept instruction and knowledge only’? Or, much more reasonably, ‘You may receive, or earn, silver and gold when you can, but it is much more important at all times to look for instruction and knowledge’?
- (b) Hosea 6:6: Here the LORD says, “I desire mercy, not sacrifice.” However, the Law of Moses — given by the LORD and certainly operative at the time — actually commanded sacrifices. So the only reasonable way to read such a statement would seem to be: ‘I desire not only sacrifice, but also — and especially — mercy!’ (This verse is quoted by Christ in Matt 9:13; 12:7.)
- (c) Psalm 51:16,17: This is another interesting example along the lines of the previous one. The psalmist says to God, “You do not delight in sacrifice... you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.” But since God commanded sacrifices and burnt offerings, we are justified in reading this: ‘You desire not only the outward form of sacrifices but especially the broken spirit and contrite heart which should accompany them.’
- (d) Joel 2:13: Here the prophet commands the people: “Rend your heart and not your garments.” Of course, rending one’s garments was an acceptable means of expressing grief or repentance (cp Gen 37:29,34; 2Sam 1:11; 1Kgs 21:27; 2Kgs 5:7; 6:30; 22:11; Job 1:20; Acts 14:14). So it’s easy to see here that the prophet was really saying: ‘Rend not only your garments, but especially rend your heart; don’t make grief and repentance a vain show, but make sure it is heartfelt.’

Consider how this idiom makes sense in other Old Testament passages: Jeremiah 7:22,23; Psalm 50:8,9 compared with Psalm 50:14.

Because Jesus and the apostles were so familiar with the Old Testament Scriptures, the same idiom occurs regularly in the New Testament. Some examples are:

- (a) Mark 9:37: “Whoever shall receive one of these little children in my name receives me; and whoever receives me does not receive me but the one who sent me.” But obviously those who received Jesus *did* in fact receive Jesus! The real point is that, much more importantly, they were at the same time receiving the God who sent him.
- (b) Luke 14:26: “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters — yes, even his own life — he cannot be my disciple.” There are two issues here. “Hate”, in such verses, is what we might call a hyperbole, an obvious and purposeful exaggeration. It



should be read as ‘be prepared to give up’, or ‘be ready to abandon, if necessary’. With that caveat in mind, then we may employ the “not only, but also” paradigm and paraphrase the verse in this way: ‘If anyone follows me but **is not** [that’s the “not only” part] prepared to give up his family ties if necessary, he cannot be my disciple. And **even more so** [that’s the “but also” part], if he is not prepared to give up his own life in the effort, he cannot be my disciple.’

- (c) John 6:27: “Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life.” Of course, we are commanded elsewhere to labor for our own bread (Gen 3:19; Prov 21:25; 1Thess 4:11; 2Thess 3:10). So here the meaning is surely: ‘Work *not only* for your daily bread, *but especially* work for the bread of life.’

Other New Testament examples of this Hebrew idiom include Mark 2:16,17; Luke 5:32; John 3:17; 7:16; 12:44,47; 14:24; Acts 5:4; Romans 2:13; 1 Corinthians 1:17; 7:10; 15:10; 1 John 3:18.

As Bible students, we may take note of these examples and learn from them. The real test, however, is this: can we keep the principle in mind and apply it elsewhere while we read, and deepen our understanding and appreciation of the Divine communication?

Here, then, is another *possible* application of this idiom, from the prophecy of Jeremiah. There, in fairly rapid succession, the prophet is commanded three times by the LORD (and there are probably other instances):

- (1) “So do not pray for this people nor offer any plea or petition for them; do not plead with me, for I will not listen to you” (Jer 7:16);
- (2) Very similarly, “Do not pray for this people nor offer any plea or petition for them, because I will not listen when they call to me in the time of their distress” (11:14); and
- (3) “Do not pray for the well-being of this people” (14:11).

Yet surely it is generally true that “the Lord is not willing that anyone should perish, but that everyone should come to repentance” (2Pet 3:9; cf Ezek 18:23,32; John 3:15-17; 1Tim 2:4; Tit 2:11). Furthermore, elsewhere in Jeremiah, we see that the prophet does continue to pray for the whole nation (see, e.g., Jer 14:7,20-22; 42:2,4; again, we could probably multiply examples). Was the righteous Jeremiah disobeying the LORD when he did this? Not necessarily.

It is possible that there is an aspect of this “not only, but also” idea implied in these words. Perhaps we should read the commands to “Pray not” in a different way. Not so much as absolute prohibitions, but rather the LORD’s way of saying: ‘Don’t pray for this so much as for that!’ If so, what is the “that”?

How about this as a rough paraphrase of the commands, in their broader context?: ‘Pray **not only** for this whole nation, **but also** pray especially for those who will be saved out of the nation — the remnant who will listen to God’s Word and truly repent.’

*George Booker (Austin Leander, TX)*



## Life in the Truth

### Bro. Colin Badger



**Bro. Colin Badger at  
Christadelphian Isolation  
League Gathering  
in the UK in 2003**

It was with great sorrow and heaviness of heart that the Cambridge Ecclesia reported the falling asleep of our Bro. Colin Badger, on January 19, 2009, bringing to a conclusion his struggle with esophageal cancer.

The frailties of our mortal frame have won the battle; however, the ultimate victory is assured to those who love and fear Yahweh. While we will most certainly sorrow and mourn at the loss of a wonderful brother, we take confidence and reassurance in the words of the prophet:

*“He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation” (Isa 25:8,9).*

Soon our sorrow will be turned to joy, and our mourning will become the sound of rejoicing and praise. We will once again be reunited with our dear friend and with all those who sleep in Christ —

*“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1Thess 4:16,17).*

Bro. Colin was born on October 25, 1950, and was raised in the city of Toronto. Although he had not attended a Christadelphian Sunday school, he did have family ties to the Ossington Ave. (Unamended) Ecclesia. It was while taking classes with the brethren at Ossington Avenue that he was introduced, as a young teenager, to Bro. Ron Abel who had a profound influence on Colin’s already searching mind. Baptized at the Scarlett Road (Toronto West) Ecclesia, on January 15, 1967, at the age of 16; he was immediately ‘about his Father’s business’, as his diary indicates that just two weeks later he attended a Reunion Meeting in Hamilton, Ontario.

He married Sis. Cathy Robinson on July 14, 1972, and they eventually moved to Brantford, where he worked as a teacher until the time of his retirement. Together

they raised four children, instructing them in the Truth, and were blessed to see each of them take on the saving name of the Lord Jesus Christ in the waters of baptism. All four are active members in their respective ecclesias: Bro. Nathan at the Kitchener-Waterloo Ecclesia, Sis. Miriam at the Toronto Church St. Ecclesia, Sis. Hannah at the Cambridge Ecclesia, and Bro. Tim at the Brighton Ecclesia in South Australia. Bro. Colin was influential in seeing his father return to the brotherhood after several years' absence, and was thrilled to witness the baptism of his mother, Sis. Gladys, who is still a member with us at the Cambridge Ecclesia today. Bro. Colin's family was his greatest joy, and their devotion to the things of the LORD is a testament to his love for the things that bind us all together as a worldwide family in Christ.

Our brother has left for each of us an example of devotion to the Truth, commitment to the ecclesia, and true service of our Lord. It is our absent Lord who assures us... *"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them"* (Rev 14:13). He served as a true workman of the Lord, and now he rests, in the sure hope of the resurrection and of the Kingdom age. He died in the confidence of the prayers of Nehemiah *"...Remember me, O my God, for good"* (Neh 13:31). Surely he will be remembered in that great day, just as each of us remembers him now.

Bro. Colin touched the lives of so many brethren, sisters, and young people in his time, and this was borne out by the volume of emails that were received during the last few days of his struggle. Each of you shared wonderful memories of your time with our dear brother. Some recalled working side by side with a workman committed to the proclamation of the gospel message. Others spoke of time shared around the study of the Word, at Bible schools, study days, and ecclesial visits. There were many who recounted time spent alone with our brother simply discussing the inspired Scriptures in the quiet surroundings of one's home, under the stars at the Manitoulin Bible Camp, in the mountains of British Columbia, in the Australian outback, or in going about the work of the Lord in Trinidad and Tobago and other parts of the mission field. Regardless of the memories that were shared, there was almost always a reference to Bro. Colin's infectious laughter and his sheer joy in recounting happy times spent together with those of like precious faith. We will remember him as one who lived by the words of the Psalmist... *"Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God"* (Psa 146:5).

The writer's own memories of our dear friend are similar to those that so many of you shared. They are of a Sunday school teacher at the Scarlett Road Ecclesia, whose charges were too young to recognize the treasure that we had been given in having him to ourselves for an hour each week. Yet he patiently guided us in the Word and brought each of us to an unquenchable love for the Lord. There is a clear recollection of his constant encouragement, a few years later, in our efforts to work with the Toronto CYC, even long after he and Sis. Cathy had left Toronto to raise their family in Brantford. One of my fondest memories is working with him at the Manitoulin Kids Camp where we shared hour after hour working

and laughing with the young people, who are now old enough to have their own incredible memories of a true servant of Yahweh. They will undoubtedly recount them to their own young families with fond and loving affection. Far above all of these things, without a doubt, is the past four years spent working together in the formation and development of the Cambridge Ecclesia. All of our founding members benefited from his kind and confident leadership, and his spiritual guidance as we came together as an ecclesial family. The work that we have shared together bears his mark and speaks of his devotion to the proclamation of the gospel message and the service of our Lord.

The hope of the Kingdom age was his life's obsession, not only for himself, but for all of us who had the opportunity to know him and his kind and gentle manner. All of us are better people for having spent time with him. He has been an example to us all, not only as a brother in Christ, but as a mentor, a teacher, a companion, and most especially a friend. We will always recall his love for the inspired Word, his devotion as a servant of the living God, and of the boundless joy he found in simply being with those who shared the same amazing hope that has been set out in the Holy Scriptures. Bro. Colin's influence extended beyond our small ecclesia, and we consider ourselves privileged to have shared him with the brotherhood worldwide. He has left a mark on our hearts, and has brightened the path that we walk together. He will be sorely missed.

*"But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Isa 40:31).*

Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

Tom Wilson  
On behalf of the Cambridge Ecclesia, ON

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*The story is told of a man, an accomplished artist, who was applying the finishing touches to a bronze sculpture. Occasionally a truck would come from the art gallery in the city to pick up his latest work. Meanwhile he just kept filing, scraping and polishing every little surface of his masterpiece. "How do you know when it's done?" asked an observer. "I don't," came the reply. "I just keep working and working until someone comes and takes it away."*

Dennis Gillett writes:

*"True discipleship involves the whole man and its influence should be conspicuous in every department of daily living. The objective is conformity of the disciple's mind and will to the image of Christ, so that finally, when the Lord comes again, the whole man, body, soul and spirit, may be changed and fashioned like unto him, immortal and incorruptible. But now, while he tarries, the purpose is to create and develop faithful and consecrated souls, upon whom he can depend, through whom he may witness, and by whom his cause is advanced in this world. The making of such through all the varied ways of life is the genius of discipleship."*

## Bereavement

*“Bereavement” means a bereaved condition, the loss of a relative or friend by death; from Old English, “bereafian” be = away and reafian = rob; “bereave”: to deprive of ruthlessly; rob, leave desolate.*

Dear Brother or Sister in the Lord,

The following thoughts are submitted in the hope that they may be helpful to you in some way. If you have experienced bereavement or are close to a bereaved person, it is likely that you will be feeling distressed and might wonder how you can help yourself or others in this situation. Scriptural teaching and examples can help provide a context for our grief; however, there are often practical suggestions that can help in the day-to-day outworking of the grief process.

The above words and their definitions clearly express the meaning of the term “bereavement,” an expression with which we are often only too familiar. If we form close personal attachments, as most of us do during the course of a lifetime, we run the risk of losing that person to whom we are attached. The loss might be related to death, divorce or abandonment. These losses, and the ensuing grief which follows the loss, leave us feeling desolate and broken-hearted.

### Bereavement in Scripture

The process of bereavement is referred to frequently in the Scriptures. Abraham grieved over the death of his beautiful princess-wife, Sarah, and purchased the cave of Machpelah in which to bury his dead “out of [his] sight,” but certainly not out of his memory. Isaac also mourned the loss of Sarah, his mother, and was only comforted when he and Rebekah were united in marriage (Gen 24:67). When Joseph’s brothers conspired and brought a fabricated tale of Joseph’s death to Jacob, he lamented “many days” for his son, refusing to be comforted, and determining that he would spend the rest of his life mourning for his lost son (37:34,35). Jacob later challenged his deceitful sons on two occasions when he told them that *they* had bereaved him of his children (Joseph and Simeon: 42:36) and that if they took Benjamin away they would bring his “gray hairs down with sorrow to the grave” (44:31). Jacob recollected that his beloved “Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the way, when there was but a little way to come unto Ephrath: and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath” (48:7).

David’s poignant lamentation following the death of Saul and Jonathan touches our hearts with the eloquent words: “How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle... I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan, very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love was wonderful, passing the love of women. How are the mighty fallen and the weapons of war perished!” (2Sam 1: 25-27). The sweet psalmist of Israel had many close encounters with the ruthless hand of death. Amongst others, he lost his counsellor, Ahithophel, described as “mine own familiar friend”; Abner, the respected general of the army; fleet-of-foot Asahel, David’s nephew; the child born to Bathsheba; Amnon, consumed with illicit lust for his half-sister, Tamar; Absalom, the darling of the nation for a time; and Adonijah, who conspired to take the throne. David’s words on the news of

Absalom's death ring a heartbroken note of desperation throughout time: "O, Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for you, O Absalom, my son, my son!" (2Sam 18:33).

### **The right understanding of death**

As Bible believers, we rightly understand the origin of sin, the mortality of man, the unconscious state of the dead, and the dependence on bodily resurrection for a future hope. We concur with the words of Paul that we sorrow, not as those who have no hope, but we sorrow nonetheless. In North American society, in particular, we have distanced ourselves from the direct experience of death. Our society removes the aged and dying to palliative care, hospices and hospitals. Even after death, the funeral home "sanitizes" the experience with embalming, flowers, music and a separation of the dead person from the congregation. This is not the experience of our brothers and sisters in other parts of the world where death is experienced more directly on a regular basis.

The correct understanding of death, however, also makes bereavement both easier *and* harder. Firstly, since we do not believe that the dead have any conscious existence, they are not suffering any longer. On the other hand, they are not enjoying a blissful happy-ever-after existence anywhere else. They are no longer with us — that is for sure — but they are in scriptural terminology "sleeping" until their next conscious moment at the resurrection when the Lord returns.

For believers, the loss of that individual for whom they cared deeply is a traumatic and stressful experience. Bro. Islip Collyer, whose wife died leaving him with two young children, wrote:

"Death is a reality from which we cannot escape, and it is inevitably the most terrible to those who are the happiest in life. When there is true love between husband and wife there is a oneness not to be found in other human relationships. To lose one's partner is like being torn in two and yet living on. It is sad to contemplate the prospect of suffering such pain, perhaps sadder still to think of inflicting it on the other." (*The Christadelphian Magazine*, June 1943, p.103).

### **What to expect**

There are many physical aspects to grief, such as tightness in the throat and difficulty swallowing, shortness of breath, sighing, an empty feeling in the abdomen, altered sleep patterns, loss of appetite, restlessness, disorganization, and inability to concentrate. Along with these physical sensations come emotions too: depression, rapid changes of feelings, a sense of unreality, regret, exaggerated self-blame, imaginary sightings of the deceased, obsession with the deceased, and loss of interest in activities that were formerly pleasurable.

Feelings of denial, anger, guilt, depression, and acceptance are all a normal part of the grieving process. Denial is the instinctive and natural protective defense against feeling the full impact of the loss all at once. Feeling that you will wake up and that it was all a bad dream, is reinforced by that moment on awakening when perhaps the loss is momentarily forgotten, but then comes the awful realization,

accompanied by gut-wrenching feelings of reality.

Anger is the emotional response to what we perceive as unfair or unjust. It is a normal component of all loving relationships and a normal reaction to grief. Frustration over our lack of control can lead to intense anger. This anger may be directed at people like the doctor, funeral director, the person who died or God Himself. Guilt, self-blame for the loss, for the way we felt about or treated the person, for just surviving ourselves or for feeling angry, compounds our feelings as the guilt makes us feel morally responsible for wrongdoing.

Depression often accompanies loss, as life temporarily loses its meaning, and you wonder if you can go on, or even if you want to go on without that person who meant so much. This is a part of grieving and needs to be experienced in order to move on. Being surrounded by love and support, even though you feel very lonely and isolated, is very important. For this reason, it is essential that the bereaved person is not isolated, and does not stop attending ecclesial meetings, however difficult that may be. Sorrow will still be your close companion, but if you can still take part in a small way in ecclesial fellowship, that shadow will be mitigated by the love and support of your brothers and sisters.

Acceptance is the part of the grieving process where you realize that you can still function. You may not like where you are or the feelings associated with this place, but you know that you can deal with it. Life has changed irrevocably, but life goes on and so will you, by God's grace. Eventually the loss will be integrated into your life. It will never disappear completely, but will become part of you, opening your heart to the suffering of others. Meanwhile, it is necessary to work through our grief — this is not a progressive stage-by-stage process, rather it is a repeating cycle of emotions, characterized by periods of acceptance followed by renewed grief and sense of loss.

### **What can we do to help ourselves?**

- Allow ourselves time and space to fully experience the feelings and sensations which accompany grief, and to recognize that these are normal.
- Seek the help of our heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus in prayer.
- Continue daily Bible readings even though it is difficult to concentrate, perhaps use a recording of the readings — tapes, CDs, internet sites which will provide these in small doses.
- Draw closer to family and friends, and brothers and sisters in the ecclesia.
- Join a grief support group or seek a counsellor specifically to help those who are working through loss. Talk to your family doctor, look through the yellow pages, and contact mental health organizations in your area.
- Contact one of the Christadelphian Care Groups — check out the UK, Canada, Australia websites for these groups. The Christadelphian Caring Network of Canada operates a toll-free support line for those who would like to speak to a trained volunteer. Similar services are offered in the UK and Australia.
- Use our resources — all of the above; recognize that our need allows others to help us. It is truly more blessed to give than to receive, but if all were giving,

who would be receiving? There will come a time, doubtless, when we are in a position to give again; meanwhile, let us learn to be gracious receivers of assistance in whatever form it comes.

### **What can we do to help others?**

- Allow them time and space to grieve and assure them that their feelings are normal.
- Walk alongside them in their sorrow — physically, if possible. Job's three friends just sat with him for seven days. Make contact, if it is not possible to be there physically, send cards, letters, emails, and flowers. It is never too late to acknowledge a loss, and an acknowledgement sent later will often be appreciated more as it lets the bereaved person know that you realize that the loss continues long after life has moved on.
- Talk about the person whom they have lost, as this gives them permission to do the same. Reminisce honestly, sharing memories of the person and what he or she meant to you. Even if your feelings are conflicted about the person, it is possible to sensitively acknowledge that you might have struggled in your relationship with the deceased.
- Help bereaved persons with everyday tasks: meals, transportation, house-cleaning, babysitting, answering phone calls, letters, sending out cards. Check to see if they need financial help — perhaps they have never managed their finances alone before, and the assistance of experienced brothers or sisters to review their situation may be invaluable.
- Pray for those who are bereaved, both personal and ecclesially, naming them and their needs in your prayers. Let them know that you are praying for them and that you care. Even if you don't know what to say — just say exactly that: 'I don't know what to say, but I just want you to know that I care.' At all costs, don't avoid them. Grief has isolated them enough already.

### **The DON'TS**

Don't say:

- *Don't worry, you will (have more children/get married/have another relationship)* — this gives the message that the loss is unimportant and that the lost person can easily be replaced.
- *The bereaved person needs privacy, needs to be alone with their grief* — this gives the message that grief cannot be shared and they have to do this alone.
- *You just need faith* — the message is that you don't have enough faith.
- *God won't try you more than you can bear* — the message is that you haven't been tried hard enough yet.
- *You have to be strong* — this is a confusing message, why do we have to be strong? is it wrong to show weakness? Surely this is how God's strength is made perfect.
- *Don't cry* — the message is that showing deep emotion is somehow wrong.
- *Give it time/time heals* — the message is that the passage of time alone will heal your loss. This is true, only if you *do* something during that time to work



through your grief will the passage of time help.

- *Just keep busy* — this is another confusing message that busyness will help. It will distract you from your grief temporarily, but it will also exhaust you mentally and physically when you are already emotionally exhausted.
- *I know how you feel* — you don't, however similar your experience might have been. Examples or personal experiences that seem similar to you are likely not similar or helpful to them at this time. Each individual loss and individual person is unique. You are also taking away from the person's own loss by placing your feelings in the situation.
- *This will be of comfort to you* — you don't know what they will find comforting. This is something that they have to work out for themselves.

### **The therapeutic value of tears**

Studies have shown that tears actually help to release toxins from the body. The chemical composition of tears was analyzed and emotional tears were found to contain substances which would become toxic to the body if allowed to remain. On the other hand, repressed or prolonged grief can be detrimental to the body by weakening the natural defenses of the immune system. Bro. Harry Tennant wrote:

“Weeping relieves feelings and betokens inner emotions, but it does not solve problems. The prostrate figure in Gethsemane, weeping, it would seem, his very life's blood from brow to cheek, reached the moment of ultimate resolution, of final commitment, and said, Arise and let us be going! Out of our tears, finally, if they are to be of any value to us, there must emerge a resolve of spirit. Perpetual and inconsolable grief is defeat and self-destruction. However great the burden, however irreplaceable the loss, however terrible the desolation which brings about our sorrow, for the follower of Jesus the moment must come when having poured all his tears into God's bottle, he lifts up his head and says, 'Arise, let us be going'” (*The Man David*, p. 45).

### **The gift of grief**

You will never be the same person, for now you have experienced profound loss. This is important for others to recognize. We cannot expect a grieving person to return to “normal” — there is a new “normal” now. As one sister wrote of her experience of bereavement with a child who died by suicide: “I became a member of an exclusive club.” This was not her choice. She had become one of an unchosen minority.

Weeping endures for a “night” and eventually, “joy comes in the morning.” In the words of the hymn — “Joy cometh, oh, that it were come, to wake the song that now is dumb, to rouse the mourner, soothe who weep and bring again the dead who sleep.” Based on our faith in the fulfillment of God's promises, we know that there *will* come a day when God will wipe away all tears from our eyes, and that sorrow, pain, and even death itself will neither exist or be remembered. In our present imperfect state, joy might not come immediately to the mourner, or for a long time, but be assured that it eventually will come.



Bro. Collyer wrote again:

“An invincible trust in the Lord and a determination to serve Him though all the ordinary blessings of life should be withdrawn... the most glowing ascriptions of praise to a merciful God seem to come from a grief-stricken heart. The good of each day can be appreciated and the evil of each day endured with the full conviction that God knows us altogether and His purpose will not fail. Such a faith puts a spiritual glow into the ordinary joys of life that God has given us and it helps us to bear the ordinary griefs from which there is no escape. When faith is rich enough it gives such comfort in time of trouble that the apparent paradox becomes at least a possibility – ‘As sorrowful yet always rejoicing’.”

In moments of sadness, which inevitably touch us all in a “creation groaning and travailing,” we can look at Biblical examples which reinforce the normality of this experience and provide hope for the process of recovery from our grief. Hopefully, we can also draw strength from the companionship of our ecclesial family, and being borne up in prayer by our brothers and sisters. There are also many resources available to the grieving individual both within and outside the ecclesia. Please take advantage of the Hope that we have, the fellowship which we share, and the knowledge which we have been given, to work through *your* grief and to grow in the fellowship of His suffering.

*God bless,  
With love in our Hope,  
David and Mary Styles (Shelburne, ON)*

## Resources

**Christadelphian Caring Network of Canada.** Website: [www.caringnetwork.ca](http://www.caringnetwork.ca). Toll free support line call the Care Line: 866-823-1039

**Coping with Bereavement.** Seminar notes by Bro. Stephen Hill of Aberfoyle Park Ecclesia in South Australia. Available at <http://www.caregroup.org.au/vic/Seminar-Notes.htm>

**Coping and Caring in Time of Crisis, Grief and Loss: The Social and Psychological Aspects of Grief and Loss.** Study Day given by Bro. David Levin. Available from Auscan Christadelphian Tape Library under New Testament Studies. Contact Bro. Peter Dulis, [pdulis@globalserve.net](mailto:pdulis@globalserve.net)

**Living Through Mourning: Finding Hope and Comfort When a Loved One Has Died.** Harriet Sarnoff-Schiff. New York: Penguin Books, 1986

**On Grief and Grieving.** Elisabeth Kubler-Ross and David Kessler. New York: Scribner, 2007

**Surviving Grief... And Learning to Live Again.** Catherine M. Sanders. New York: Wiley, 1993

**The Grief Recovery Handbook: The Action Program for Moving Beyond Death, Divorce, and Other Losses.** John W. James and Russell Friedman. New York: Collins, 1998

## Music in Worship

*Articles, questions, and letters may be submitted to  
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### **Hymn 132 — “To God Be The Glory” Authorship of Lyrics**

Frances Jane Crosby wrote the words for Hymn 132 — “To God Be The Glory”. She was commonly known as Fanny Crosby. Fanny was born on March 24, 1820, of humble parents in southeast Putnam County, New York. When she was six weeks old she caught a slight cold that inflamed her eyes. The country doctor who came to her home put mustard poultices on her head and chest to loosen her congestion. The poultice slipped and some of the mustard went into her eyes. As a consequence Fanny was totally blind for the rest of her life.

Even though Fanny was blind her mother insisted that she be raised as normally as possible, and she was involved in activities that sighted children enjoyed — climbing trees and playing with other children, despite the dangers of these activities to someone blind. As a result Fanny became very independent in finding her way about throughout her life.

By age ten, Fanny had memorized the first four books of both the Old and New Testaments. She had to learn everything from other people reading to her. The Braille system for the blind was not invented until 1821. It was invented by Louis Braille, a Frenchman, and became the official reading and writing method at the National Institute for the Blind in 1852 in France. The Braille System did not come to the United States until 1860.

When Fanny was fifteen, her mother learned about the work being accomplished for students in New York at the Institute for the Blind. Weeks before Fanny’s fifteenth birthday, her mother enrolled her at the school. She remained at the Institute for 23 years. At first she was a student there and later became a teacher. She taught English and history from 1847 to 1858. Fanny left the Institute in 1858 and married Alexander Van Alstyne who was also blind. Like Frances, he was a teacher at the Institute for the Blind.

Alexander Van Alstyne was an accomplished musician and composed the music to several of Fanny’s hymns during their forty plus years of married life. Throughout her lifetime Fanny composed thousands of hymns (some articles say more than 5,000; other articles claim 8,000).

Fanny and her husband made a large amount of money for that time. Guided by a generous spirit, they gave most of it to the poor and needy, and only retained enough money to provide for their basic needs.

Although in earlier life Fanny wrote many secular songs, at the age of 40 she began to write hymns. Many current hymnbooks contain hymns written by Fanny Crosby. She died February 12, 1915, at the age of 95.

### **Words to Hymn 132**

The words for Hymn 132 are based on the passage from Galatians 1:3-5:

*“Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”*

Throughout Hymn 132, glory is ascribed to God for His redeeming work in Jesus. The opening line of the hymn is:

“To God be the glory, great things He has done!”

The last two lines of the three refrains also ascribe glory to God:

“O come to the Father, through Jesus the Son,  
And give Him the glory! Great things He has done!”

Jesus’ willing sacrifice of himself for our deliverance by the will of God is the theme of Galatians 1:4. Fanny expresses this concept in verse 1 with these thoughts:

“So loved He the world that He gave us His Son,  
Who yielded his life — an atonement for sin,  
and opened the holiest that we may go in.”

In verse 2 Fanny encourages a positive response to Jesus self-sacrifice:

“O how can we thank him — Christ Jesus our Lord?  
By faith and obedience to his living word.”

In verse 3 are thoughts of present and future joy given by belief in Jesus:

“And great our rejoicing through Jesus His Son;  
But purer and higher and greater will be,  
Our joy and our wonder when Jesus we see.”

### **Blindness a blessing**

How could one blind from a tiny infant express in beautiful, everyday language such clear, joyful, optimistic and thankful thoughts, based on the Word of God? She accepted her blindness as a gift from God rather than something to be angry or discontented about. When discussing her blindness Fanny said:

“It seemed intended by the blessed providence of God that I should be blind all my life, and I thank Him for the dispensation. If perfect earthly sight were offered me tomorrow I would not accept it. I might not have sung hymns to the praise of God if I had been distracted by the beautiful and interesting things about me.”

Fanny’s acceptance of her loss of vision and her understanding of God’s purpose with her through this affliction is a wonderful example to us. Through the difficult

times in our life we know “...that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (Rom 8:28).

Joan and Ken Curry

Sources used for this article:

“Fanny Crosby Van Alstyne blind hymn writer and poetess”, *Christian Biography Resources*, by Edward S. Ninde; *Stories Behind The Hymns*, by Warren Shiver; *Moments For Mothers*, by Robert Strand.

## William H. Doane — Composer of Hymn Music

The music for Hymn 132 — “To God Be The Glory” — was composed by William Howard Doane. Doane was born on February 3, 1832, in New London County, Connecticut. He was both a gifted student and musician.

William Doane was extremely successful in business, and accumulated substantial wealth as he grew older. Like Frances Crosby and her husband, Doane contributed large sums of money to many worthwhile causes. He is known as an industrialist and a philanthropist.

During his life Doane edited 43 collections of hymns and wrote over 2,000 hymn tunes. One of his favorite hymn writers was Fanny Crosby. He died on December 23, 1915, at the age of 83.

### Collaborators

Fanny Crosby and William Doane combined their talents to write the hymn titled, “Will Jesus Find Us Watching?” Doane wrote the music and Fanny the hymn words. The lyrics express an expectation that Jesus will return and some Biblical details about his return. Verse 1 reads:

“When Jesus comes to reward His servants,  
Whether it be noon or night,  
Faithful to Him will He find us watching,  
With our lamps all trimmed and bright?”

These words capture Jesus’ words about the need for lamps filled with oil when he returns, representing preparedness and watchfulness for the Lord’s return. This has been a serious and solemn lesson to all Jesus’ followers throughout the ages since his ascension to heaven.

*“Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.’ ‘No,’ they replied, ‘there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.’ But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut. Later the others also came. ‘Sir! Sir!’ they said, ‘Open the door for us!’ But he replied, ‘I tell you the truth I don’t know you.’ Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour” (Matt 25:7-13, NIV).*

Verse 2 of the hymn reads:

“If at the dawn of the early morning,  
He shall call us one by one,  
When to the Lord we restore our talents,  
Will He answer thee, ‘Well done?’”

This verse builds on the thoughts of the Parable of the Talents, in which is described our accountability to use the gifts God has entrusted to His servants in a wise and faithful way:

*“The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.’ His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness’ ” (Matt 25:20,21).*

Verse 3 of the hymn outlines the comfort of serving God in the best way we are able. Our daily service should be loving and willing. Doing our best requires our full commitment and attention throughout each day.

“Have we been true to the trust He left us?  
Do we seek to do our best?  
If in our hearts there is naught condemns us,  
We shall have a glorious rest.”

The concept of hearts void of condemnation is discussed in 1 John 3. We are very much aware of our inadequacies. We need to be equally aware of the love and mercy of our Heavenly Father and His Son:

*“This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and He knows everything. Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God...” (1John 3:19,20).*

Verse 4 of the hymn stresses the need to be watching daily for Christ’s return:

“Blessed are those whom the Lord finds watching,  
In His glory they shall share;  
If He shall come at the dawn or midnight,  
Will He find us watching there?”

Mark emphasizes the need for continuous and vigilant watching for Jesus’ return. We can be so easily distracted and enticed by secular interests that lead to inattention to godly service and responsibilities:

*“No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back — whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to everyone: ‘Watch!’ ” (Mark 13:32-33, 35-37).*

Joan and Ken Curry

## Christadelphian Hymn Collections

Date Published	Title	Editor
1864	The Golden Harp	Robert Roberts
1869	Christadelphian Hymn Book	Robert Roberts
1874	Christadelphian Hymn Book	Robert Roberts
1903	Christadelphian Hymn Book	Committees
1913	Christadelphian Sunday School Union Hymn Book	Unknown
1932	Christadelphian Hymn Book	Charles Curwen Walker
1952	Christadelphian Youth Hymnal	John Carter
1964	Christadelphian Hymn Book	Alfred Henry Nicholls
1974	Sing Hosanna	Committee
1979	Sing to the Lord	Alfred Henry Nicholls
1986	Hymns of Praise	Ian Hyndman
1993	Praise the Lord	Cherry Clementson
1996	Hymns from Christadelphian Conferences and Youth Conferences 1957-1984	Ian Hyndman
2000	Praise The Lord (Revised Edition)	Cherry Clementson
2002	Christadelphian Hymn Book	Committee

*Chart compiled by Ian Hyndman, July 1997  
Updated by Joan and Ken Curry, February 2009*

## Special Invitation

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

*You, your family and friends are invited to the  
34th annual Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith Gathering  
at Denison University in Granville, Ohio, July 20-26, 2009.*

*Main Speakers:*

*Bro. John Downer — "Knowing the Father and the Son"*

*Bro. Steve Ross — "Gleaning from the Servants of God"*

*Bro. John Bilello — "The Church of the Living God:  
the Pillar and Ground of the Truth"*

*Contact Bro. Brad Rek 330-609-6957 or lisarek8@cs.com*

## Letters

### “Faith on the earth” and critical masses

A brother writes:

“I read with great interest the recent articles on the history of the Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith. I also read your commentary on declines versus increases in membership statistics for the two Christadelphian ‘sects’, if you will.”

The brother then goes on to say that, in fairness, I should consider the relative growth rates of the small CGAF group and the much larger one from which they separated so as to maintain their doctrinal purity. He suggests that, if we had those numbers, they might paint a similar picture as the examples cited; i.e., that the much smaller group at the start (which the recent articles profiled) has not grown nearly as rapidly as the far larger group (the Atlanta Conference). But he further suggests that this would contradict my earlier conclusions, for in this case the group that held the Truth did not grow like the apostate group from which they withdrew.

*Editor: The brother would probably be correct as to growth rates alone, if we had the data. But that would not contradict my earlier point. My point was **not** that those who possess saving Truth will always grow faster than other “churches”; far from it! Rather, my conclusion was that any religious organization (whether ‘in the Truth’ or not) needs a critical mass to sustain its very community life. And that, when such a mass is dissipating, they will be much better off if they can find others of like faith with whom to associate. (This was the central point of Bro. Drabenstott’s article.)*

*Coincidentally, I just had a conversation with a business client who is an elder of a mainline Baptist church. He was lamenting the fate of a small, isolated church in his own denomination which he had visited. Its active membership had fallen to six, and it could no longer sustain itself. Here is an example of a single church losing its critical mass; no matter what its belief and teaching, it will probably not survive.*

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The brother who wrote the letter also referred to the passage in Luke 18:8 (“Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?”) He then added, “This implies that the numbers of true believers would ultimately decrease, and not increase in proximity to the Kingdom Age. If we are to join with CGAF, let it be *because* we agree and not simply for the sake of numbers.”

*Editor: In this he is exactly right. Numbers alone can never determine gospel truth — again, far from it!*

*However, we must not act as though numbers mean nothing. If Bible Truth is maintained, then **lost** numbers matter to this extent: they represent individual believers who drift away or would-be believers who are never baptized, if a critical mass is not maintained. This matters very much.*



*Let us put it another way. Suppose it were not a whole community, but a single ecclesia. If we were elders of that ecclesia, watching while our total numbers dwindle, year by year, from 40 to 30 to 20, would we not be alarmed? We could fall back on "Shall he find faith?" and try to feel better about others wandering away from the Truth. But wouldn't it make more sense to truly be concerned about each "lost sheep" that we might yet save and bring back to the fold? And one of the ways to do that would be to develop and maintain a critical mass to sustain Bible classes, services, and family life of the ecclesia.*

*In the same way, we would never simply say, 'Numbers mean nothing', if we watched our own immediate family, perhaps children, in-laws, and grandchildren, drifting away. But this does happen, all too often, in our own communities. And one of the reasons is a failure to maintain a critical mass, on a local or regional level.*

*If there is an exhortation to be taken from the editorial notes on "Critical Mass", in the January and February issues, it is not 'Numbers are the most important thing.' Not at all! Rather, it is:*

- (a) If you are tempted, as an ecclesia, family, or individual, to separate from a larger group so as to maintain 'doctrinal purity', please be very sure that such a separation is absolutely necessary. It is foolhardy to separate for any lesser reason. Not only is it wrong, but it may also mean the eventual loss of your own lampstand (cf Rev 2:5), the very thing you were seeking to preserve and protect.*
- (b) Secondly, even when you believe you must maintain your separation from error, you may find yourself in a dwindling community. Recognize that this is an alarming trend. Then, by all means, seek out others who share your faith and see if there is any way you can join them. Not 'for the sake of numbers', but because Jesus tells us that we are all branches of the True Vine, and must abide in that Vine to produce fruit (John 15:1-8). And because Paul tells us that every part of the One Body belongs together, and no single part of the Body can live alone (1Cor 12:12-27).*

## **Did Jesus fold the head cloth?**

*A sister sends the following, taken from various Christian websites, and asks, "Is this correct?"*

*"Why did Jesus fold the linen burial cloth after His resurrection?*

*"The Gospel of John (20:7) tells us that the napkin, which was placed over the face of Jesus, was not just thrown aside like the grave clothes... In order to understand the significance of the folded napkin, you have to understand a little bit about Hebrew tradition of that day. The folded napkin had to do with the Master and Servant, and every Jewish boy knew this tradition.*

*"When the servant set the dinner table for the master, he made sure that it was exactly the way the master wanted it. The table was furnished perfectly, and then the servant would wait, just out of sight, until the master had finished eating, and the servant would not dare touch that table until the master was finished.*



“Now if the master were done eating, he would rise from the table, wipe his fingers, his mouth, and clean his beard, and would wad up that napkin and toss it onto the table. The servant would then know to clear the table. For in those days, the wadded napkin meant, ‘I’m done’. But if the master got up from the table, and folded his napkin, and laid it beside his plate, the servant would not dare touch the table, because the folded napkin meant, ‘I’m coming back!’ ”

*Editor: It is an interesting theory, and looks plausible at first glance. But, in my opinion, it doesn’t hold up to examination. An important piece of evidence is to be found in one word that occurs in John 20:7. According to the KJV, the “napkin” (or “burial cloth”: NIV) that had been on Jesus’ head was “wrapped together in a place by itself”. This is followed more or less by the ASV and the RSV (“rolled up in a place by itself”). But, in what seems to be crucial to the argument made above, the NIV translates the phrase: “folded up by itself”.*

*The argument cited above leans heavily on the idea that the “folded” napkin or cloth might be easily distinguished from a crumpled or rolled-up one. Supposedly, a folded napkin means, ‘I’m not finished yet’, while a wadded or rolled-up one means, ‘Now I’m finished.’ This tries to make a very significant difference based on an English translation, one that in fact differs from one version to another.*

*According to Merrill C. Tenney, “The participle ‘entetyligmenon’, translated ‘wrapped up by itself’, comes from the word ‘entyllisso’, which means ‘to wrap up’ or ‘to roll up.’ It is used in the papyri to refer to fettering prisoners, wrapping children in clothes, or entangling fish in a net.” The commentary goes on to add, “It implies that the cloth had been wound around the head into the shape of a sphere and **not** [my emphasis] folded flat like a table napkin” (The Expositor’s Bible Commentary). Other than in John 20:7, this Greek word is used in the New Testament only in describing the main portion of the burial cloth wound around the body of Jesus (cf Matt 27:59; Luke 23:53). Far from suggesting a neat folding, this suggests more of a rolling up or wrapping round and round upon itself.*

*Thus the theory does not stand up to examination, because it relies on a single translation but does not take into account the true meaning of the Greek word. However, I do believe there is a significant point being made by the little details observed by the apostle John. In fact, these details led John to “believe” (i.e., in the resurrection) even though he “did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead” (John 20:8, 9).*

*John believed in the resurrection of Jesus based simply on what he saw, not on a full understanding of the Scriptures concerning the resurrection. (This would only come later.) What did he see that convinced him? He saw the linen burial clothes lying inside the tomb. He understood that the body of his Lord had not been stolen or carried away, since no men in their right senses would first unwrap a corpse and then carry it away. The wrappings, left behind in the tomb, were the plainest proof that no one had carried away a dead body. Instead, Christ had risen, leaving behind the old grave clothes, even removing the head cloth and dropping it a little ways from the other clothes, before putting on new robes, presumably provided by the angels.*

## Book Review

*Building a Library, A guide for Bible students who want to be better informed*, Tecwyn Morgan (2008), The Christadelphian Magazine & Publishing Association, Birmingham UK, 184 pages, Paperback.

The apostle Paul exhorted Timothy to “study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2Tim 2:15, KJV). Now it is said that “a bad workman blames his tools” but with good tools a craftsman can produce first-class work. Those who aspire to be workmen capable of “rightly dividing” the word need good tools and Bro. Tecwyn Morgan’s book is an invaluable guide to identifying them.

*Building a Library* is the latest of a line of volumes reviewing the most suitable books for Bible students. Spurgeon’s classic 19<sup>th</sup>-century guide, *Commenting and Commentaries*, has been followed more recently by Tremper Longman’s *Old Testament Commentary Survey* and Carson’s *New Testament Commentary Survey*. However, these guides are confined to commentaries while Bro. Morgan’s book considers a range of Bible study aids including Bible dictionaries, concordances, lexicons and atlases as well as commentaries. The recommendations are from a Christadelphian perspective, based on the author’s extensive knowledge of the literature, with additions suggested by other widely-read, respected brethren. The aim of this book is “to encourage you to read more and to read more widely” and “to encourage more thoughtful reading”. After explaining the purpose and importance of Bible study, some preliminary recommendations are made for books mostly, but not entirely, by Christadelphian authors, which were canvassed from “keen readers”.

A very user-friendly format provides an introductory overview of each topic, which is then supplemented by a comprehensive appendix giving further, detailed suggestions. Each chapter (and appendix) considers one of the various categories of books that a good library should have. The first reviews Bible dictionaries, from which helpful information can be obtained on the meaning of words and also summaries or overviews of Bible topics. Expository dictionaries and concordances are considered next; these not only help us to find the location of every word but also their meaning and usage in the original languages. A more detailed consideration of Bible words is to be found in the next chapter, which reviews the available Greek and Hebrew lexicons.

Sample extracts are provided, where appropriate, so that readers may appreciate the style and content of various options. For example, in Chapter 8a, “More about lexicons”, the treatment of a sample word is compared in six Hebrew and five Greek lexicons, including the familiar Vine’s *Expository Dictionary of Old Testament Words* and the comprehensive Gesenius’ *Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon of the Old Testament Scriptures*. A problem with the typography in this section has resulted in the Hebrew words appearing with their letters the correct way

round but reading from left to right rather than right to left. However, this is a very minor problem and the flavor of the originals is still evident.

Bible atlases, some giving historical and cultural details in addition to topography, are considered in Chapter 9. Subsequent chapters offer guidance on books providing accounts of how we got our Bible; the basis of our distinctive doctrines; exhortations and preaching; Bible characters; history; archaeology; prophecy and Israel today. The remainder of the book is concerned with Bible commentaries. The multi-volume and single-volume treatments of the whole Bible are considered before commentaries devoted to single Old Testament and New Testament books. Those by Christadelphian authors and non-Christadelphians are treated separately, being listed in Bible sequence.

Although the coverage is quite extensive, an unexpected oversight is the absence of recommendations regarding Gospel parallels. It is fascinating to be able to compare the Gospel records without having to turn Bible pages backwards and forwards. However, this omission has now been rectified on the website.<sup>1</sup> Probably the most helpful Gospel parallel is that by Sparks,<sup>2</sup> in which the equivalent words appear on the same line in each Gospel. Sadly this is currently out of print but secondhand copies may be available. It would also have been appropriate to mention Crockett,<sup>3</sup> in which the parallel of the texts of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles are compared.

This book will prove invaluable for those who are beginning Bible study and helpful for those with many years experience. The size is convenient to carry on book-finding excursions. Each ecclesial library ought to contain a copy in order to provide guidance when searching for an appropriate book on a particular topic.

Finally, how I wish this book had been available when I began to acquire my library; it would have helped to ensure that every book I purchased was worthy of its place on the shelves.

John M. Hellawell

#### Footnotes:

1. *Building a Library* is also available on *The Christadelphian* website [www.thechristadelphian.com](http://www.thechristadelphian.com) and will be updated as appropriate.
2. Sparks, H.F.D. (1964/1974) *A Synopsis of the Gospels* (A & C Black). This was available in two volumes: Part I, The Synoptic Gospels and Johannine Parallels; Part II, John's Gospel and the Synoptic Parallels. A combined, single volume was also published in 1977.
3. W.D. Crockett (1985 reprint) *A Harmony of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles* (Baker Book House). There is also R. Somervell. (1897/1901). *The Parallel History of the Jewish Monarchy* (Cambridge University Press) in two slim volumes.

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*As to the Gospels we are not to think that we have ever read them enough because we have often read and heard what they contain. But we must read them as we do our prayers, not only to know what they contain, but especially to fill our hearts with the spirit of them.*

William Law



## **Bible Mission News**

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### **Brother José Luis Fernández Rodríguez: A pillar of the new ecclesia in Guadalajara**

All of us in the Christadelphian Ecclesia of Guadalajara have had marvelous experiences with José Luis. Each experience is as special as our individual relationship with him and each experience is as near to our heart as he is. When we reflect on how we have shared in the life of José Luis, in whatever way we have participated, we value José Luis and all that he has represented and how he has touched our lives in love. We consider also the testimony of his faith in the written Word of God.

José Luis made a commitment in his life to follow the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ. Three years ago on September 24, 2005, José Luis obeyed the call of the gospel and was baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. From that day forward José Luis was faithful to his commitment until the day he fell asleep in the Lord on July 26, 2008. As part of his commitment, José Luis was dedicated to reading the Scriptures daily. By means of the daily readings and fervent study of the Bible José Luis had developed and maintained his faith in the things of the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ.

José Luis arrived at the Bible Center in Guadalajara in April of 2005 with an advertisement from the newspaper in his hand. His wife had found it and had given it to him knowing that he was looking for a better place to study the Bible. José Luis and his family attended the Mormon Church beforehand. He even became an elder in the church. Because he was very conscientious, he began to study their doctrine and discovered that many of their teachings were in contradiction to the Bible. With this discovery, he left the Mormon Church to look for the truth in the Bible. Upon arriving with us, he asked for courses for both himself and his wife, and began to attend our classes. Upon discovering that we emphasize the Bible over the teachings of men, he began not only to attend the classes but also to come on other days to study and learn.

There were many personal problems in the life of José Luis. In Mexico, if you do not have fixed work and are older than 40, it is practically impossible to find work. There are no antidiscrimination laws in Mexico and the majority of the bosses heavily abuse their workers. The financial problems in the home always worried the family of José Luis. These pressures contributed to the bad health of our brother. But despite this he had always given much support to the ecclesia in many ways. He began to preside, exhort, facilitate Bible classes, and joy in helping

to baptize others. It was his practice to study well and to write his notes in the computer. He also liked to practice his exhortations and prayers beforehand with a tape recorder so that his presentation would be well delivered.

Now I am going to share with you something very precious. The family of José Luis only attended a few events with us. They left him to attend alone because they themselves did not feel the importance that he did. When José Luis began to have serious health problems, the brethren were a great support to José Luis and to the family, giving very good testimony to them. His wife, Alicia, commented to me several times how grateful she was for the ecclesia and the brethren in general. A short time after the death of José Luis, she arrived to Bible class. She informed us that she had brought a cassette on which José Luis had recorded a prayer for the ecclesia. We began the class with this prayer. She then explained to us that she had run across a suitcase in which José Luis kept all his studies, writings and recordings. She told us that she understood very well that God had cared for her family greatly through the Christadelphian ecclesia. She said that, even though she greatly missed José Luis, she knows that God knew better what was necessary. She said that God was caring for her well with her daughter, son-in-law and grandson, and that there was no remedy to the problems in José Luis' life. She explained to us that she had not understood well how much José Luis had grown spiritually with us. And now José Luis was sharing with her the things of God by means of his own voice on cassette. She told us that she wants to continue with us, learning of the Word of God and getting to know the precious faith of her husband.

How wonderful would it be if we arrive at the Kingdom of God and our brother José Luis meets his wife there to learn that she began to bring herself to God by means of his own preaching after his death?

*The Guadalajara Ecclesia*



**Bro. José Luis (center) preparing Bro. Philemon Banda Perez (left) for baptism in 2006. Bro. Carl Paiva is to the right.**

## ThisisyourBible.com

2009 has started with a bang! We have more students, more tutors and many more questions as a result of the website activity.

The Survey Question for January 2009 was “Origin of Life: Creation or Evolution?” The **234** people who answered the survey said this:

- 51% There is no room for evolution in a Christian view of origins
- 22% Evolution is not at odds with the Bible
- 17% Evolution? Creation? Who cares? Irrelevant question!
- 7% Biblical creation stories are myths with a moral. Evolution is a fact.
- 3% Don't know.

In addition to the survey, the booklet “Evidence for Design” was read **492** times — more than double the amount of people who took the survey. Isn't that interesting?

If you've read the CBMA/CBMC Annual Activity report sent to your home last month, you will see that there were *six* baptisms related to the website activity last year *and 14 since our inception in 2006*. That is exciting news!

Recent additions to the website include more readings of the ever popular Minute Meditations and music CDs by several different Christadelphian groups.

### 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 — we need your help!
- Hand out the business cards available in your Ecclesia — let us know if you need more.
- *Encourage your ecclesia to 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.

Sis. Jan Berneau  
CBMA/CBMC Publicity

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### *“Let another praise you” (Prov 27:2)*

*“Praise,” says the old expositor Michael Jermin, “is a comely garment. But though you may wear it, another must put it on you, or else it will never set well. Praise is sweet music, but it never sounds pleasant from your own mouth. If it comes from the mouth of another, it sounds most pleasant in the ears of all that hear it. Praise is a rich treasure, but it will never make you rich, unless another speaks it.”*



## Water is Life!

Water is a huge problem in Kenya, both in quantity and quality. At the moment, it is very dry and rains are not 'expected' until April, God willing.

We visited the ecclesia in Mukundi on this trip. We have a number of sponsored children in this ecclesia. When we were there in May 2008, they had built a framework for a new hall where they were meeting and this time the mud walls were intact. Water was at the forefront of people's minds in Mukundi. The dam where they usually walked to get water had completely dried up. We visited it and the ground was cracked and dry where the water used to be, and there was a little sludge in the bottom. The brethren and sisters with their community were being forced to cross the fence into a wildlife reserve to attempt to get water from a waterhole that was also used by the wild animals. They were risking their lives to do this, but you can't live without water either. The worst of the animals were the aggressive elephants — the animals need water too. We left the ecclesia at sunset as it was getting dark, and you could see a line of fires in the distance. The locals had lit them, in a line to and around the waterhole in the reserve, in the hopes of protecting themselves from the animals. All this for a bucket of dirty water.

We also visited the ecclesia in Godo where we have several children sponsored. This area is so dry that it is impossible to grow any food to eat. All that people can do in this desolate area, to get a few shillings, is to make and sell charcoal. However, the resources to do this are running out and it doesn't make enough even to feed a family. The people in this village were quite industrious. For some of the year they can get water from a small dam about two kilometers from the ecclesial hall. The water from the dam doesn't last long and then they have to travel 20 kilometers across the border to Tanzania where they get dirty water from a river. The dam was drying up in January, but the locals had a plan. They had made up a roster of people from the village who would take turns manning the dam. When someone came to get a bucket of water, in return they had to pick up a shovel and dig a wheelbarrow full of dirt from the dam, thus expanding the dam. The person that was there looking after things would make sure that this was done. So, very slowly, the dam was getting a little bigger. However, the quality of the water was still terrible.

Currently, we have Bro. Josh Thurlow from Australia on the ground. He is a mining engineer and has been working to learn what he can from government, other NGOs and locals to find the best water solutions in the worst-affected areas where Agape in Action is working. Please pray for the success of his efforts. For more information on 'water' or if you would like to donate to a water project, please contact [agapeinaction@rogers.com](mailto:agapeinaction@rogers.com).

*Agape in Action newsletter, February 2009*  
([agapeinaction@rogers.com](mailto:agapeinaction@rogers.com))

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*"We never know the worth of water until the well goes dry"*  
(Scottish proverb).

## 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 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 88, Deland, IL 61839-0086. Website: [wcfoundation.org](http://wcfoundation.org)

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

**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)

**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 Heritage College**

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

### **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 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

**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

### **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, V8L 4V7, Canada

### **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

### **Christadelphian Care Line**

provides a service for those who need fully confidential help with emotional and spiritual problems as well as family issues. We now have Canadian charitable status. 866-823-1039

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



## News & Notices

### **BARRIE, ON**

We rejoice with Bro. Dan and Sis. Rachelle Perks on the birth of their son, Charlie Thomas on March 29, 2008. We pray for God's blessing upon him and his family as we await our Master's return.

Our ecclesia has been very busy during the last year preaching in the nearby city of Orillia. Over the year we held three public addresses, and are running the Learn to Read the Bible Effectively seminars this fall. In August we hosted Truth Corps, which was a great help in witnessing to the community in Orillia. Presently we have made 30 contacts in Orillia, two of which are currently studying first principles weekly. We pray God will bless these endeavours to proclaim His truth in the Orillia area, and thank the brotherhood for their financial support of ASK that has made this

We would also like to thank all the brothers and sisters who have visited us over the last year, especially the brothers who have delivered words of exhortation and given special presentations.

*Grant Abel*

### **BEDFORD, NS**

Welcomed recent visitors have been: Bro. Neil and Sis. Sarah Carr (Hamilton MacNab, ON); Bro. Kevin and Sis. Laura Spry and family (Orangeville, ON); Bro. Stephen and Sis. Josie Egginton and family (West Bromwich, UK); Bro. Cliff, Sis. Julie, and Bro. Paul Baines (Sussex, NB).

We thank our Bro. Michael Carr for his untiring missionary work in Kenya for the month of January. It is wonderful to learn how the truth has spread in this third world country. May our Lord return soon to correct Earth's inequities.

*Ronald A. A. Hill*

### **BROUGHTON, JAMAICA**

There is much to rejoice over at our meeting at Broughton with the transfer of Sis. Beverley Lyons from the Brooklyn, NY Ecclesia to us late last year and her subsequent marriage to the undersigned. She has fit in well at the meeting.

We also rejoice at the fact that our Bro. Hugh Kinlocke asked for re-fellowship, and was accepted back into the ecclesia.

Our many prayers have been answered by our heavenly Father as we walk together toward His kingdom. Our hope is that our young people continue to grow our Sunday school for a brighter future.

*R. Arthurs*

### **DETROIT LIVONIA, MI**

God has blessed us with three interested visitors still attending our Bible seminars. Bre. Ken Burkaw and Jared Keyes of the Ann Arbor Ecclesia delivered the word of

exhortation. We had visitors from all three Detroit area ecclesias, and from Kouts, Beaufort, Atwood Lake, Mississauga, Toronto West, Newfoundland, and Gosnells.

Bro. Nick and Sis. Jackie Giroux, Sis. Karen Muniz and Sis. Judy Muniz have transferred to the Detroit Milford Road, MI Ecclesia. Sis. Abi Bell has transferred to us from the UK, and Bro. Ken Sterling from Thousand Oaks, CA.

*Jim Styles*

## **ECHO LAKE, NJ**

On Sunday, January 25, 2009, we rejoiced in the baptism of MICHAEL DAY. We pray that our heavenly Father will overshadow our new brother on his journey to the Kingdom.

Since our last reporting, we have been uplifted by the following visitors: Sis. Odette Ward, Bro. Matthew Ward and Haganah Ward (Cardiff, Wales); Bro. Matthew Link and Bro. Alexander and Sis. Janice Piskura (Washington, DC); members of the Union, NJ Ecclesia; Sis. Margaret Cummins, Bro. Steve and Sis. Chris Cheetham, Sis. Rachel Cheetham, and Bro. Dan and Sis. Kim Langston (Moorestown, NJ).

We thank our Bro. Steve Cheetham for his thoughtful words of exhortation at the baptism of Bro. Michael Day.

As reported in the January issue of the Tidings, God willing, we are planning a study weekend for March 14-15, 2009. Bro. James Harper (Meriden, CT) will be the guest speaker and the title of his study is, "Search the Scriptures... with Your Inexhaustible Concordance." Contact Bro. David Link by email at: [dlink44131@aol.com](mailto:dlink44131@aol.com) or by phone at: 973-696-3316.

*David Link*

## **KAMLOOPS, BC**

It was with great pleasure that we hosted the Inter-Ecclesial Gospel Proclamation Workshop here in April 2008. It has been an ongoing effort to put into practice some of the helpful suggestions that came out of our weekend of discussions.

We also very much enjoyed hosting the Truth Corps 2008 team for the last week of July. They worked hard every day to fellowship with our brothers and sisters and visit our contacts and establish new ones, including advertising our fall seminar series "God's Master Plan".

We rejoiced in the marriage of Bro. Nathanael Massey, son of Bro. Rod and Sis. Dianne Massey of Prince George, BC, to Sis. Nicole Winter, daughter of Bro. Les and Sis. Judy Winter of London, ON on August 9, 2008. We pray their united walk to the kingdom may be filled with fond memories and mutual labor.

Sadly our numbers have diminished over the past year; but our loss is another ecclesia's gain. Bro. Gregg, Sis. Vikki, Bro. Daniel and Joel Ferrie transferred to the Victoria, BC Ecclesia in March; Bro. Nathan and Sis. Crystal Bartholomew transferred to the North Battleford, SK Ecclesia in September; and Bro. Nathanael and Sis. Nicole Massey moved to Ontario in December. We miss our brothers and sisters but trust they are well settled in their new ecclesias and already "putting their hands to the plow".

From June till December our Bro. Rod Jackson was away suffering from an extended illness. For those of you who have met Bro. Rod, you can well understand how difficult this was for us all. But we are very happy to report that he has been attending our

ecclesial functions again since the beginning of January.

We thank the many brothers and sisters from near and far who have joined us in fellowship this past year and particularly Bro. Tim Osborn, who led our fall fraternal on “The Jubilee — In Principle, Practice, and Prophecy”. We would also like to thank Bre. James Larson (Seattle, WA), Rod Massey (Prince George, BC), Skip Bartholomew, Graeme and Geoff Osborn, Jed Dillingham, Adam Jones (Vernon-Okanagan, BC), Wesley Butler (Vancouver, BC), Clive Daniel (Victoria, BC), Les Winter (London West, ON), Jim Cowie and Colin Hollamby (Aust.) for their various adult Sunday school classes, exhortations, lectures and Bible classes.

We started off 2009 with a Sunday school campaign, as one of the suggestions put forth in the GP Workshop, and to date we have four extra Sunday school attendees!

Our further plans include starting a new prophecy seminar, and a proposed fraternal to be held, God willing, March 7-8, 2009, led by Bro. Andrew Jackson on “Practical Lessons from the Law for 2009”.

*Jon Fletcher*

## **KINGSTON, ON**

This is our first Tidings report as the “Kingston Christadelphian Ecclesia” in Ontario, Canada. We were originally constituted under the name of the “Elgin Christadelphian Ecclesia”. After a unanimous vote by our membership in January 2009, we decided to be identified as “Kingston” since it is more central to the area of our future growth expectations.

We were blessed with growth when Bro. Justin and Sis. Abigail Keene, formerly of the Shirley, UK Ecclesia, joined our small group. They were married in the summer of 2007 and Justin moved back to Canada in September 2007 along with his new bride, Abi. Since then she has given birth to a baby girl, Olivia, last July. Bro. Mike and Sis. Sharon Keene have been blessed with a baby boy, Simon, born in November 2007. Both babies are doing wonderfully well and have certainly added a new spark of energy to our ecclesial lives.

We continue with our preaching efforts that we have been conducting for the last four years at a Kingston library. We still have nine students attending our seminars every Monday night. The students seem sincere, engaged and open-minded to the truths of the Bible. We are cautiously optimistic this effort will provide some growth. We ask for your prayers that our heavenly Father may bless our efforts to build up His temple. We are most thankful to ASK, the Williamsburg Christadelphian Foundation and the Simi Hills Fund for their significant support of our preaching efforts.

We frequently enjoy visitors too numerous to mention, and thank them all for their love, fellowship and support.

*Jim Barton*

## **MILFORD ROAD, MI**

Our ecclesia held our annual Study Day in October led by Bro. Ron Kidd from the London, ON Ecclesia on “David, the Shepherd King.” We welcome by way of transfer Bro. Nick and Sis. Jackie Giroux, Sis. Karen Muniz, and Sis. Judy Muniz from the Detroit Livonia, MI Ecclesia. We transferred Sis. Christy Michaels and Bro. Seth Michaels to the Ann Arbor, MI Ecclesia.

As always, we are very appreciative of the many brethren and sisters that have visited our ecclesia over the past months; we especially thank Bro. Ron Kidd and Bro. Michael Walker from the London, ON Ecclesia for their words of exhortation.

*Paul Sparacino*

### **PANAMA CITY, PANAMA**

We are pleased to report the baptism of WILLIAM LOCKWOOD on January 18, 2009. His wife, Sis. Alda Lockwood, was baptized in Panama in 1970 and now they are one in the Lord. They lived and raised a family in the United States, but returned to Panama a couple of years ago. William has been a regular attendee for some time and will be an asset to the Panama City Ecclesia, especially since he is bi-lingual, speaking both English and Spanish!

His assistance will be required in April when God willing, Bro. Clive and Sis. Christine Drepaul from New York will be going to Panama for about 2 weeks to minister to both this and the Colon Ecclesia. William will be able to assist by translating Clive's English addresses. Bro. Luis Sobers, who is also bi-lingual, will do the same for Clive when they visit the Colon Ecclesia. This is the third year in a row that the Drepauls will have visited Panama, and we thank them for their labours in the Lord.

*Don Luff*

### **PETERSBURG, VA**

Once again we have much to report for the last year. We have been very thankful for and encouraged in our ongoing study weekends given by visiting brethren including, Bro. Jim Cowie (July study), Bro. Ryan King (October Young People's weekend ), Bro. and Sis. Carl Parry (prophecy weekend).

Our visitors have included Bro. and Sis. Jonathan Bowen; Bro. and Sis. Steven Hodge; Sis. Bonnie Pride; Sis. Diane McInturff; and Bro. and Sis. Wayne Coutu. Other visitors include Bro. Ezra Link (Baltimore); Bro. David Porterfield (Norfolk); Bro. and Sis. Shawn Howes (James River); Sis. Deana Caesar (England); and Bro. and Sis. David Mutter (James River).

We also appreciate our visiting speakers including Bro. Bob Kling (with Sis. Norley), and Bro. Jason Fertig of Washington, DC; Bro. Ryan Mutter (with Sis. Julia), and Bro. John Woodward (with Sis. Heather), of Baltimore, MD; Bro. Jordan Canady (with Sis. Pauli) from Coshocton, OH; Bro. Aaron King, and Bro. Adam Canady of James River.

We welcome back the Abel family following their Heritage College Mission in Ontario, Canada. Changes in membership have occurred as follows: Sis. Joan Scott, after due consideration, has come back to the Petersburg Central Ecclesia. We welcome her back into fellowship. We welcome our Bro. Basil Cyrus as a new member commended to us from the Brooklyn, NY, Ecclesia. We are also pleased to have attending our meeting for a few months Bro. Jorge Velasquez from the Hispanic Central Ecclesia in Los Angeles.

We have been very pleased to welcome Bro. Luendo Buluma and family, formerly of Tanzania. We are grateful to Bro. Benoit Mukendi (Newfoundland) formerly from the Congo and a Swahili speaker, who is able to help us by phone, communicate with them. We also thank many other brothers and sisters for their assistance in helping the family to settle here and benefit from ecclesial life.

Our outreach effort this past autumn had as its theme, “The Solution to a World in Crisis” — a series of three public presentations.

Finally, we now meet in a new and much improved facility. It consists of a chapel and adjoining fellowship hall. It is on the campus of the VA Home for Boys and Girls. It is located on the west side of the City of Richmond (8716 West Broad Street). This bright and well appointed facility accommodates our various activities including, Memorial Meetings, Sunday school, weeknight Bible class, and fraternal and/or Bible study weekend events.

*Ron McPhee*

## **ROUND HILL, JAMAICA**

“The harvest is plenteous but the labourers are few, pray ye that the Lord of the harvest will send forth labourers into the vineyard.” Over the last twelve months there have been eleven baptisms in the meeting at Round Hill. With the exception of one elderly brother, all the others are teenagers and young people in their early twenties, making a young meeting that is vibrant, willing to learn and keen to get involved in all aspects of the truth.

The Recording Brother is willing and hard working, but he too is less than two years in the meeting and his work schedule greatly restricts his time. But on the whole, this is a meeting with a lot of promise. With a good shepherd there is strong hope.

*R. Arthurs*

## **SHELBURNE, ON**

With joy we announce the baptism on February 1, 2009, of VERITY COTTERELL. Our prayers go with her as she commences her walk toward Zion.

The Shelburne Ecclesia has been busy over the past two years with Learn to Read the Bible Effectively seminars in both Shelburne and Collingwood. The seminar in Collingwood has been particularly encouraging with some maintaining a sustained interest in learning more about their Bibles.

A different sort of preaching effort was put forth last spring by the senior CYC in the form of two performances in the Shelburne Town Hall of a play entitled “Esther”, which was based on the Biblical story of Esther. Many interested friends attended both performances.

Sis. Lois Abel was married to Bro. Tej Chippada of the Hyderabad, India Ecclesia on August 10, 2008, with the best wishes of the Shelburne Ecclesia. They are making their home in Hyderabad.

Our thanks go to Bro. Jonathan Bowen (Brantford, ON) who gave us a very encouraging study weekend in October 2008, on “Ye are not in Darkness” to strengthen us as we await the soon return of our Lord Jesus Christ to this world of sin and death.

*Graeme Wilson*

## **ST. JOHN’S, NF**

We rejoice over three recent baptisms: On April 27, 2008, JILLIAN O’KEEFE; on June 29, 2008, AMANDA SHORT, daughter of Bro. Donald and Sis. Marina Short; and on Jan. 11, 2009, GINA CONNOLLY, wife of Bro. Joe Connolly. We pray for our heavenly Father’s blessing on our three new sisters.

We are happy to announce that our Sis. Leah Evans was married to Bro. Matthew Egginton, on October 24, 2008. Also our Bro. Andrew Hynes was married to Sis. Julia Wilson, December 20, 2008. We pray for God's blessings on their lives together.

We thank the various brothers and sisters that have visited our isolated ecclesia over the past year. Your love and fellowship is greatly appreciated!

*Paul Ridgway*

## **TORONTO WEST, ON**

The ecclesia is very pleased to announce the baptisms into the saving Name of our Lord Jesus Christ of ANDREW and KAREN PETROU on Sunday, January 11. Bro. Andrew is the brother of Bro. Steve Petrou. We were very happy to have the entire Petrou family attend the baptism and witness the special occasion. It is our prayer that Bro. Andrew and Sis. Karen will be encouraged by current events and their developing faith to always press toward the mark of the high and lofty calling that is ours through Christ Jesus.

The ecclesia is thankful for the many visitors who have supported us during the past period. We thank Bro. Roger Lewis (Christchurch, NZ), for his encouraging Prophecy Study Weekend. We also thank Bre. Martin Webster (Kitchener-Waterloo), Warwick Rosser (Riverwood, Australia) and Tim Hall (Golden Grove, Australia) for their ministrations to the ecclesia. Correspondence can be sent to the undersigned who is now recording brother, [rggent@rogers.com](mailto:rggent@rogers.com)

*Rod Ghent*

## **VICTORIA, BC**

With sadness we report that two of our elderly and long-time members fell asleep in Christ recently. Bro. Joe Highton (Aug. 18/07) lived to 93, 69 years of which were in dedicated service to our Lord. Bro. Joe was baptized in Blackpool, England, May 18, 1938. Sister Florence Bidwell (Mar. 28/08) fell asleep at 85, and her sojourn in Christ was some 58 years. She was baptized in Victoria, July 14, 1949. Bro. Joe and Sis. Florence are especially remembered as part of a large group of brethren and sisters who migrated to Victoria following World War II. They were an essential part of this faithful contingent that shaped and grew our ecclesia for over 50 years. We are thankful for their time with us and rejoice that our two loved ones died in the glorious Hope of the coming Kingdom.

We are very happy to report the baptism of LINDA GILMOUR (Feb. 24/08), and we pray for our Father's blessing on our new sister as she walks with us in Christ.

By way of transfer we commended; Sis. Sarah Bennett (July 22/07) to the Bedford Ecclesia in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Bro. John and Sis. Jessica Gareau (July 08/08) to the Vernon Ecclesia, and Bro. Mark and Sis. Kayla Higgs (Nov. 2/08) also to the Vernon Ecclesia.

We welcome Bro. Phil and Sis. Stephanie Crawford by way of transfer from the Saanich Peninsula Ecclesia (Feb. 03/08), Sis. Elaine Jennings who transferred from Houston, TX (April 27/08), and Bro. Greg, Sis. Vikki, and Bro. Daniel Ferrie who have transferred from the Kamloops Ecclesia (April 27/08).

We report that Sis. Jean Ormerod (Mar. 02/08) has been removed from our register at her request.

Thanks to Bro. Devon Walker for speaking at our 2008 Fraternal Gathering. His encouraging words on “Jesus is in the Saving Business” were timely. Bro. John Mannell spoke at our November 2008 Study Weekend on “The Parable of the Sower.” Bro. Mike LeDuke spoke at our 2008 March Study Weekend, and Bro. Jonathan Bowen led the classes at our 2008 CYC conference. Visiting speakers from the last program included Bre. Mark Hunter (Saanich), Duncan Kenzie (Saanich), and Phil Snobelen (Surrey).

Our annual fraternal gathering is planned for September 5-6, when Bro. Tec Morgan will be our guest speaker. We are also planning four other events for 2009. Our Spring Study Weekend is set for March 13-15. The speaker is due to be Bro. Bill Link from Woodstock, MD. His topic is “Proverbs: Guidelines for Godly Living.” We are looking forward to a weekend with Bro. Michael Ashton on the weekend of May 29-31. A late spring study weekend is planned for June 13. The speaker on that occasion will be Bro. Anthony Oosthuizen. His subject will be “Faithful Hearts and Faithful Lives.” Our Fall Study Weekend is scheduled for November 7-8, 2009. Bro. Andrew Jackson from North Battleford will be speaking on “Peter — A Brother Transformed.” Bro. Graham Osborne will lead the classes at our 2009 CYC Conference on “Visions of the Kingdom.”

Please note that the undersigned is the recording brother (e-mail: [csnobelen@csll.ca](mailto:csnobelen@csll.ca), phone 250-652-3318) and all correspondence should be directed to my attention.

*Clyde Snobelen*

### **Manitoulin Family Bible Camp**

The third annual New Manitoulin Family Bible Camp will be held, God willing from July 11 to July 18, 2009, on Manitoulin Island. The speakers this year are Bro. Bob Lloyd, Verdugo Hills Ecclesia, California and Bro. Jay Mayock, Hamilton Book Road Ecclesia, Hamilton, Ontario. Bro. Bob will be speaking to the adults and teens on “We Would See Jesus” and Bro. Jay will be speaking to the adults on “Mine Eyes Have Seen The King” and to the teens on “Challenges For Young People In The Truth.” For more information please contact Bro. Rick Sales via email at [ersales@xplornet.com](mailto:ersales@xplornet.com) or by telephone after April 20, 2009 at 519-925-6847.

### **Manitoulin Bible Camp**

The Christadelphian Bible Camp on Manitoulin Island will be held this year, God willing, July 25-31, 2009. This year's theme is “All the Earth Shall Be Filled with his Glory” and the speakers will be Bro. Michael Ashton (Birmingham, UK) speaking on the subject “Turning the World Upside Down: A Study in the Acts of the Apostles” and Bro. Ted Sleeper (San Francisco Peninsula, CA), speaking on “Meditations on Creation.” Anyone wishing more information should contact Bro. Alex Browning, registrar at [jabrowning@rogers.com](mailto:jabrowning@rogers.com) or phone 416-284-0290

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### ***“Love your enemies” (Matthew 5:44)***

*“Lay your foundation in love and service and kindness. We are never going to help anyone to make a hard decision against the pull of their own animal desires, if we have already embittered them against us by criticism and un-concern. Rather in such a case we re-enforce their resistance. We may have gratified our ego by condemning them, and achieved cheap self-satisfaction, but we have done no service for God” (G.V. Growcott).*



## Minute Meditation

### The Pessimist and the Optimist

Winston Churchill once wrote, “The pessimist sees difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist sees opportunity in every difficulty.” It is easy to be a pessimist instead of an optimist when living in difficult times. It might be easy, but is it right?

We all have troubles. It is important to realize that the Lord sends us trouble to help us. We read in the book of Hebrews, “The Lord corrects the people he loves and disciplines those he calls his own. Be patient when you are being corrected! This is how God treats his children. Don’t all parents correct their children? God corrects us for our own good, because he wants us to be holy, as he is.”

Trouble is not a good excuse for pessimism. We are tested by the problems that God gives us to overcome. We need to look for the opportunity found in every difficulty, as Winston Churchill suggested. It is such a comfort to realize that the angel of the Lord encamps around and that we are never ever really alone. Notice how David reacted when he was in trouble. He said, “I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities.”

It is not what happens to us but how we respond to what happens to us that either makes or breaks us. We need to cast our cares into the hands of our heavenly Father knowing that he cares for us. With so much financial unrest in the world today, and so many out of work, we take comfort in remembering what the writer to the Hebrews said, “Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.’ ” When we lose our job, or savings, or home, and we wonder whether our family will have food, or other necessities, it helps to remember that our heavenly Father knows our needs. Jesus tells his followers that if they seek first the kingdom of God, all these other things will be added unto them. We need to trust God and look for the opportunities that we might have missed otherwise.

God knows what we need even before we ask. He knows all about us, even the exact number of hairs on our head. David was overwhelmed by the fact that the Lord knew when he sat down and when he stood up. David declared, “You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD. You hem me in — behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.”

The apostle Paul had a problem and he did not like it. So he asked God three times to take it away, and the Lord’s answer to him was no. Paul explains, “Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he 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. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

None of us likes the problems that we all certainly have. This is no excuse for us to become pessimistic. When we accept that a loving Heavenly Father is allowing them to help prepare us for bigger and better things, then we can take heart and look for those opportunities that we will find in our troubles. Jesus offers us words of encouragement when he says, "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Paul was certainly no pessimist. He was an optimist who gladly accepted his weakness, since he knew that God loved him and was helping him face with faith and courage the problems that he had. May we follow Paul's example and "rejoice, inasmuch as we are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, we may be glad also with exceeding joy."

*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 2009**

**7,8 Paris Avenue, OH.** Study Weekend

**13-15 Texas Youth Spring Retreat** at T4C camp near Buffalo, TX. Bro. Will Jackson (Austin Leander, TX). Cost \$15 per person, \$45 family cap. Contact Sis. Nicole Nevers at [nlnevers@gmail.com](mailto:nlnevers@gmail.com) or 203-815-0911 for registration

**14,15 Echo Lake, NJ** Study weekend. Bro. James Harper (Meriden, CT) "Search the Scriptures... with Your Inexhaustible Concordance." Contact Bro. David Link [dlink44131@aol.com](mailto:dlink44131@aol.com) 973-696-3316

**14,15 Victoria, BC** Spring study day. Bro. Bill Link (Baltimore, MD): "Proverbs: Guidelines for Godly Living". Contact Bro. Clyde Snobelen 250-652-3318 [info@csll.ca](mailto:info@csll.ca)

**21 New England Little Disciples Gathering** Barton Conference Center, New Oxford, MA. "The Early Life of Jesus", from Luke's gospel. Bible lessons and fun for children ages 3-12, sponsored by Boston and Granite State Ecclesias. Register with Sis. Tammy Rundle at [nelittledisciples@hotmail.com](mailto:nelittledisciples@hotmail.com) or 781-829-4410. A workbook, to be completed in advance and information, is available at [www.nelittledisciples.com](http://www.nelittledisciples.com)

**27-29 Men in the Truth Camping Weekend** Cachuma, CA. Subject: Servant Leadership. Contact Bro. David Lloyd [davidrlloyd@earthlink.net](mailto:davidrlloyd@earthlink.net) 818-352-6486.

**28 - April 4 Florida Bible School** Bradenton, FL. Bro. Dennis Paggi (Verdugo Hills, CA): "Spiritual Growth — Bible Metaphors for our Daily Walk"; Bro. Bradley Butts (Denver,

CO): "Lessons from the Levites"; Bro. Andrew Walker (UK): "Life Before the Flood". Contact Bro. Walt Dodrill waltodrill@msn.com 727-528-1197 or Sis. Diane Jennings diane@dianej.net 727-290-6702

## **APRIL 2009**

**10-12 Wichita, Falls.** Spring gathering at the T4C camp, Freestone, TX. Bro. Paul Billington (Brantford, ON); "Israel in the Bible and in the news". Contact Bro. Larry Beutel 940-592-9418 or Bro. John Clubb jclubb4081@aol.com

**11 Victoria, BC** Annual Pacific Northwest CYC Conference; Bro. Graham Osborne "Visions of the Kingdom." Contact Bro. Dave Higgs dave\_n\_kess@hotmail.com

**25,26 Baltimore/Washington Gathering and Study Day** Washington ecclesial hall, 9240 Riggs Road, Adelphi, MD 20783, 1pm on Sat, 10:30 am on Sun. Bro. Mike Robinson (Echo Lake, NJ): "Ezra, Nehemiah — Studies in Ecclesial Dynamics and Problem Solving". Contact Bro. Bob Kling 301-498-5245 rkling@computer.org

**25,26 Sussex, NB** Study weekend. Bro. Mike LeDuke (Kitchener-Waterloo, ON): " 'With Christ in Mind' — Paul's letter to Colossians". Classes will begin at 2 pm on Saturday. Please contact Bro. Cliff and Sis. Julia Baines if you would like more information or require accommodation, at 506-433-1728 or christad@nbnet.nb.ca

## **MAY 2009**

**1-3 Central Coast Women's Weekend, Cambria.** Sis. Jane Tunnell (San Diego, CA): "My Husband, My Lord" (Theme: Preparing ourselves as the Bride of Christ). Sunday memorial meeting conducted by No. Co. SLO Ecclesia. Contact Sis. Ann Crouse 805-239-3517 or RoanCrouse@aol.com. Cost \$150; \$50 non-refundable reservation; enrollment due by January 15, and may be limited to 40

**1-3 Vancouver Island Sisters' Weekend.** Beach Acres Resort. Sis. Maritta Terrell (Austin Leander, TX): "Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World." Contact Sis. Eileen Henthorn, 19-1950 Cultra Ave., Saanichton, BC V8M 1E3, or Sis. Yvonne Rosenau yvonne2001@shaw.ca. Cost \$180; \$90 non-refundable reservation

**15-17 Sussex, NB Young People's Weekend** Circle Square Ranch. Bro. John Mark Ghent: "Friendship: A Study of David and Jonathan". Ages 12 to 20, limited space available. Cost is \$75. Registration information: sussexspringcamp@live.ca or write Sis. Marie Baines, 140 Bryant Drive, Sussex, NB E4E 5M9 or 506-433-5254

**16 Moorestown NJ** Study Day, Moorestown, NJ Ecclesial hall, 1:00 pm. Bro. Matt Link (Washington, DC): "Galatians". Contact Bro. David Cheetham 856-273-3654 Dnacheetham@aol.com

**17 Mid-Atlantic Fraternal Gathering** Clarion Hotel, Cherry Hill, NJ, 10:30 am. Bro. Matt Link (Washington, DC). Contact Bro. David Cheetham Dnacheetham@aol.com 856-273-3654

**29-31 New York Metropolitan Sisters' Retreat Weekend.** Pocono Manor, Pocono, PA. Sis. Cynthia (Cindy) Paiva (Guadalajara, Mexico): "Tough Love" — Loving when the loving gets tough. Space is limited; register early. For complete information and registration Contact Sis. Averil Ferguson 718-881-8705 averilpsm23@juno.com

## **JUNE 2009**

**13 Victoria, BC** Study weekend. Bro. Anthony Oosthuizen (Durban, SA): "Faithful Hearts and Lives." Contact Bro. Clyde Snobelen anthony@csll.ca

- 13-14 Simi Valley** Study day. Bro. John Pople (San Francisco Peninsula, CA): "Beyond the Cross". Three classes starting at 9:00 AM. Includes lunch. Sunday School and Exhortation on Sunday. Contact Bro. Gordon Hensley [threehensleys@sbcglobal.net](mailto:threehensleys@sbcglobal.net)
- 21-27 Rocky Mountain Bible School** Glenwood Springs, CO. Bro. Peter King (Worcester, UK): "Moses in the Fourth Gospel"; Bro. Roger Lewis (Christchurch, NZ): "Philip the Evangelist"; Bro. Jim Livermore (Ann Arbor, MI): "That the Works of God May Be Revealed". Contact [www.denverchristadelphians.org](http://www.denverchristadelphians.org)
- 27 - July 3 Terra Nova Bible School** Newfoundland, Canada. Bro. Mark Giordano (Norfolk, VA): "Prophetic Images" and Bro. Chris Sales (Shelburne, ON): "King Josiah: the Young Reformer". Online registration and full details at [www.terranovabibleschool.com](http://www.terranovabibleschool.com) or call Bro. Gary Hynes 709-747-2750

## JULY 2009

- 3-6 Central Saskatchewan** Shekinah Study Weekend. Bro. Jim Cowie (Brisbane, Australia): "The King's Manifesto of Life". For information/registration contact Sis Laura Jackson, RR#1 Stn Main, North Battleford, SK, 306-246-4808 or [t.jackson@sasktel.net](mailto:t.jackson@sasktel.net)
- 5-11 Southwest Bible School** Schreiner University, Kerrville, TX. Bre. Frank Abel (Shelburne, ON); Mark Vincent (Boston, MA); Anthony Whitehorn (Maidenhead, UK). Registration information available at [www.planofgod.org](http://www.planofgod.org) or contact Bro. Fred Bearden, 2204 Downing Lane, Leander, TX 78641 or 512-259-4631
- 11-18 Manitoulin Island.** Family Bible Camp. Bro. Bob Lloyd (Verdugo Hills, CA): "We Would See Jesus", Bro. Jay Mayock (Book Road, ON): adults "Mine Eyes Have Seen the King" and teens: "Challenges For Young People in the Truth." Contact Bro. Rick Sales [ersales@xplornet.com](mailto:ersales@xplornet.com) or by phone, after April 20, at 519-925-6847
- 18-26 Eastern Bible School.** Connecticut College, New London, CT. Bro. Dev Ramcharan (Toronto West, ON): "My Heart is Inditing a Good Matter (The Lord in the Psalms)", Teens: "Galatians", Bro. Peter King (Worcester, UK): "Studies in the Gospel of John", Teens: "The Joy of Bible Study", Bro. Mark Vincent (Boston, MA): "Suffering: Man's Problem/God's Problem", Teens: "Marriage and Relationships: God's Way". For registration information contact Sis. Cindy Nevers, [cindy.nevers@tecbs.org](mailto:cindy.nevers@tecbs.org) or [registration@tecbs.org](mailto:registration@tecbs.org).
- 19-25 Pacific Coast Bible School** Idyllwild, CA. Bro. Michael Ashton (Shirley, UK): "John the Baptist"; Bro. Matt Norton (Lismore, NSW): "The Life of Lot"; Bro. Gary Cousens (Cambridge, ON): "James". Contact Bro. Jeff Gelineau [mail@gelineau.org](mailto:mail@gelineau.org) or 567 Astorian Drive, Simi Valley, CA 93065, or Bro. Gary Patterson [garympatterson@hotmail.com](mailto:garympatterson@hotmail.com), or visit [www.californiabibleschool.org](http://www.californiabibleschool.org)
- 25-31 Manitoulin Island.** Christadelphian Bible Camp. Theme: "All the Earth Shall Be Filled with his Glory" Speakers: Bro. Michael Ashton (Birmingham, UK): "Turning the World Upside Down: A Study in the Acts of the Apostles" and Bro. Ted Sleeper (San Francisco, CA): "Meditations on Creation". Contact Bro. Alex Browning, registrar at [jabrowning@rogers.com](mailto:jabrowning@rogers.com) or 416-284-0290
- 25 - August 2 Midwest Bible School** Hanover College, Hanover, IN. Bro. Matthew Blewett (South Africa): "On the Road with the Ark"; Bro. Bill Link, Jr. (Baltimore, MD): "Job: The Spirit of a Just Man Made Perfect"; Bro. Matt Norton (Australia): "The Return of Christ". Contact Bro. Mike Livermore, 44943 Yorkshire Drive, Novi, MI 48375 248-462-5740 [mike.live@gmail.com](mailto:mike.live@gmail.com) or visit [www.midwestbibleschool.com](http://www.midwestbibleschool.com)

## **AUGUST 2009**

**8-14 Niagara Falls Bible School** Brock University Campus, Ontario. Adult classes: Bro. David Lloyd (Simi Hills, CA): "Spiritual Finances — Lessons from Scripture about Money"; Bro. David Smith (Sunderland, UK): "The Family in Genesis". Teens: Bro. Lloyd: "Lessons from Daniel"; Bro. Smith: "The Moral Maze — Finding a Way Through". To register and for information see [www.nfcbcs.com](http://www.nfcbcs.com) or contact Bro. David Brierley [david.brierley@sympatico.ca](mailto:david.brierley@sympatico.ca) or 416-236-5295

**29-4 Sept Vancouver Island Bible Camp.** Camp Pringle, Shawnigan Lake. Adult speakers: Bro. Mark Giordano (USA): "The Kingdom of God Applied", Bro. Erik Sternad (USA): "Elijah — a man like us", Bro. Tecwyn Morgan (UK): "Malachi My Messenger"; Teen speakers: Bro. Dave Garnand (USA): "Jesus' Challenge to You and Me", Bro. Giordano: "The Earth series — Bible Apologetics", Bro. Morgan: "Paul the Preacher — From First to Last". Registrar: Sis. Wendy Johnsen, #7-3855-9th Ave, Port Alberni, BC, V9Y 4T9, Canada; [wendyjohnsen@yahoo.ca](mailto:wendyjohnsen@yahoo.ca), 250-724-0501, fax: 250-723-9321

## **SEPTEMBER 2009**

**5-6 Victoria, BC** Fraternal Gathering. Bro. Tecwyn Morgan. Contact Bro. Clyde Snobelen [tec@csll.ca](mailto:tec@csll.ca)

**18-20 Bozeman** Fall Fraternal. Bro. Garth Maier (East Texas, TX): "Signs of John's Gospel". Contact Bro. Steve Faver (406) 388-3314, [sfaver@unitedagencies.com](mailto:sfaver@unitedagencies.com)

**13-18 Adult Study Week** – The Bible School with a Difference! Wildwood Manor Ranch, Ballinafad, ON. Topic of Study: The Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ Part #1. For information about the workbook or to register please contact Bro. Bob and Sis. Joy Jennings, 6 Stodola Drive, Brantford ON N3R 6J5 ([bobnjoy@vif.com](mailto:bobnjoy@vif.com)) 519-754-0902, or Bro. Martin and Sis. Lois Webster, 63 Bradbury Crescent, Paris ON N3L 4E2 ([mjwebster@vif.com](mailto:mjwebster@vif.com)) 519-442-0544

**19,20 Paris Avenue, OH.** Study Weekend

## **NOVEMBER 2009**

**7-8 Victoria, BC** Fall Study weekend. Bro. Andrew Jackson (North Battleford, SK): "Peter — A Brother Transformed". Contact Bro. Clyde Snobelen [andrew@csll.ca](mailto:andrew@csll.ca)

The following two pages do not belong in this issue,  
but the file is corrupted and they cannot be deleted.

It's not surprising Marian connected the preaching effort with bearing fruit because the Stocks were living on a large ranch north of Moorpark at the time, where they grew and sold apricots. Even today, over 100 years later, the beautiful canyon they lived in is still entirely agricultural and filled with orange, lemon, and avocado trees.



**Apricot pitters on the Stocks ranch about 1903. Note the early Ventura County Christadelphians in the photo. Future Christadelphians, David and Ruth Stocks (Robert and Marian's children) have been circled.**

Marian wrote to the Christadelphian magazine in 1905, mentioning a new preaching effort in Ventura County. "We were able to get a hall, rent free, in Somis, a small village, six miles from our ranch, and Brother Irwin gave three lectures there... As we expected, the attendance of strangers was very meager; but those of us who could attend were much edified. Brother Irwin did not bring the Pomona ecclesia tent outfit this time — it is laid up for the winter — but brought his 'black-board' cloth, which he fastened up outside the one store in Somis, printing dates, subjects, and places in white chalk, and very beautifully he can do it." She also mentioned that their daughter, Ruth, was baptized at age 13. That same year her husband, Bro. Robert Stocks, "gave... a very acceptable and edifying address at the Lord's table" <sup>14</sup> in Los Angeles.



**The store where Bro. J.T. Irwin led a Ventura County Christadelphian preaching effort in Somis, CA, in 1905.**



## History

### John and Elizabeth Reith



**John Reith as he looked in 1877, a few years before his baptism into Christ**

Few tragedies are as hard to understand as the death of a vibrant young person. But the hand of God can move in our lives in ways we might not expect or even desire, and it has the power to bring salvation through circumstances like sickness and death that to us might seem senseless. Such was the case in the baptisms of John and Elizabeth Reith, early Ventura County Christadelphians who were brought to see God's truth by the death of an enthusiastic 27-year-old brother named John M. Armstrong.

The story actually begins in Scotland where, at age 18, John Armstrong was baptized in Glasgow on October 3, 1875.<sup>1</sup> Eight years later, Bro. Armstrong emigrated to Santa Barbara because, like many before him, he was hoping the warm Southern California climate would have a positive effect on his failing health.<sup>2</sup> As he left Edinburgh and steamed to America, Bro. Armstrong would already have been well acquainted with several brothers and sisters living in the Santa Barbara area, particularly Robert Strathearn and Helen Shiells. In fact, Sis. Shiells was John Armstrong's aunt.<sup>3</sup>

The exact details of what happened after John Armstrong reached Santa Barbara have been lost, but his arrival would result in the baptisms of John and Elizabeth Reith in 1884. Apparently young John Armstrong was quite sick when he arrived in America, for he died the following year. Before his death, Sis. Shiells lovingly cared for her ill nephew, as reported by Sis. E.B. Cornwall over 20 years later in the 1908 *Christadelphian* as she spoke of Sis. Shiells' "large-heartedness to all, especially brethren and sisters, and those of her home country, who came here in search of health, she tenderly nursed, among whom was her nephew, our dearly-loved brother John Armstrong..."

Helen Shiells apparently recruited the help of Elizabeth Reith, a resident of nearby Ojai, California, to help her take care of Bro. Armstrong. Why Elizabeth came to be his nurse is a mystery, but as his own life was ending, Bro. Armstrong brought life to her and her husband John. Robert Strathearn had the following to say about this on the occasion of John and Elizabeth Reith's baptisms: "Sis. Reith was one of those who ministered to the comfort of our beloved brother Armstrong during his illness. He, in return, helped them to the possession of the pearl of great price. He greatly desired their salvation, so you see his labour in coming to this far-off land has not been in vain."<sup>4</sup>