

THE CRISTADELPHIAN TIDINGS

of the Kingdom of God

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The CHRISTADELPHIAN TIDINGS of the Kingdom of God

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On the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10)

The Samaritans were neighbors in the most literal sense, but as for loving them, that seemed impossible. Christ loved them and caused his disciples to marvel at the manner in which he spoke to the woman at Jacob's well and afterwards to others who came out to hear him. The Jews as a whole almost made it a part of their religion to hate the Samaritans, and if they were able to analyze their own feelings, they would probably have to admit that the hatred was directly traceable to the fact of their being such near neighbors.

This is a common weakness of poor human nature. Those who are near but not quite with us arouse more bitterness of feelings than complete strangers. Then when such an evil feeling has once been started, the deceitful heart begins to build up fancies to justify the hatred, thus further traducing [criticizing, disparaging] those who have been already wronged.

Islip Collyer, The Guiding Light

Editorial

Bringing Back the Banished

In Tekoa, just south of Bethlehem, there lived a woman known for her shrewdness (2Sam 14). It was this wise woman who was enlisted by Joab to convince King David to bring his alienated son, Absalom, back to him.

Carefully instructed (and probably well paid) by Joab, she approached the place where the king sat in judgment, seeking his help with a fictitious family problem. In her contrived story, she told of a quarrel between her two sons, ending in the death of one of them. Now, it seems, the rest of the family was threatening to take the remaining son and put him to death. (Perhaps he was supposed to be safe in Hebron, a city of refuge.) Her lament was that, if her other son were to die, she and her husband would have no one left to perpetuate their name.

Here was a second parable about a problem in David's own family. This story, like Nathan's story about the ewe lamb, which pricked the king's conscience concerning Bathsheba and Uriah (2Sam 12), was sufficiently disguised so as to arouse no initial suspicions.

The woman's argument is summarized in verse 14:

"Like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be recovered, so we must die. But God does not take away life; instead, he devises ways so that a banished person may not remain estranged from him."

The woman persisted in her pleas until David consented that her other son would come to no harm. Having achieved this promise, she could now move forward to make her real point. Once again it was, "You are the man!" The two sons in the story were actually Amnon and Absalom, and — from his own lips — the king had given an emphatic ruling that no harm should come to the manslayer.

"The words were lightly spoken and there was a vein of insincerity running through them, in that Joab, who had thought them out, was speaking to David's heart but not from his own. [Nevertheless] David was moved, moved by his inner memories, his recollections of how God had restored him and brought him home rather than banish him to death and destruction [2Sam 12:13]. Now he could see his own son exiled far away, and the realization of his own inaction came upon him" (Harry Tennant, *The Man David*).

Although David had "devised" one thing (v 13), that is, to banish his son, God "devises" something very much different (v 14): a means of bringing back the banished person. The Hebrew word is the same in each case, "chashav"; it refers to carefully worked-out plans or schemes, schemes that may be either for good or ill. Plainly, in this case and as she tells it, the king's "device" is bad, and God's is good. And it is far, far better to bring back the banished than to abandon him in his punishment and despair.

Whether it worked out for good or ill to bring Absalom back to his father and family is probably more than we can say for certain. His return led, eventually, to a rebellion and a short-lived war, with difficult times for David, including the betrayal by one of his closest advisers. However, we know that, in the providence of Almighty God, even the severest trials may work for good to God's elect, the ones He has chosen (Rom 8:28).

In this incident, the wise woman speaks of much more than one father and one son. The reconciliation between David and Absalom does not appear to have had the desired effect in changing the heart and mind of the young man, either before or after his return. But that is easier for us to say in retrospect than if we had been there at the time. Nevertheless, it is not necessarily wrong to attempt such reconciliation, even if the final results turn out to be very disappointing.

The old Scottish preacher Alexander Maclaren points out that the truest and best reconciliation comes through the redemptive and mediatorial work of the Lord Jesus Christ. For the sake of comparison, that work may be set alongside the work of 'reconciliation' attempted by Joab. Maclaren writes: "If there are to be forgiveness and restoration at all, they must be such as will turn away the heart of the pardoned man from his evil. The very story before us [about Joab, the wise woman, and Absalom] shows that it is not every kind of pardon which makes a man better. If there are to be forgiveness and restoration at all, they must come in such a fashion as that there shall be no doubt whatsoever of their reality and power. The work of Jesus Christ, and the work of Jesus Christ alone, meets all the requirements. That work of Christ is the only way by which it is made absolutely certain that sins forgiven shall be sins abhorred; and that a man once restored shall cleave to his Restorer as to his life. God has devised a means. None else could have done so. We are all exiles from God unless we have been brought nigh by the blood of Christ. In him, and in him alone, can God restore His banished ones. In him, and in him alone, can we find a pardon which cleanses the heart, and ensures the removal of the sin which it forgives. In him, and in him alone, can we find, not a peradventure, not a subjective certainty, but an external fact which proclaims that verily, there is forgiveness for us all."

In this, the truest sense, God alone can devise — and has devised — the means by which the banished can be brought back to him. From the coverings of skins in the garden of Eden, and the cherubim with the flaming sword, keeping the way to the tree of life (Gen 3:21, 24), all the way to the One who is "the way, the truth, and the life" — or more particularly, "the *true way to life*" (John 14:6) — God has been "devising" His perfect plan. From the One who hung *on* the tree of death, but in his resurrection *became* "the tree of life", of which we may all partake (Rev 2:7; 22:2, 14, 19), to the same One who sits on the Father's right hand as our Mediator, and will return again to gather us all to himself and to his Father, our LORD God has been carrying out that plan.

Along the way, through this valley of the shadow of death, we are all like "water spilled on the ground"; we all must die. But in Christ the "way of death" becomes "a way of life", and the water spilled on the ground may be regathered into God's

eternal vessels, if we hold close to His Son. The Father stands waiting for us, and He extends His arms to accept us when, like the prodigal son, we return home again. We see Christ in those outstretched arms, too. His hands, and arms, were stretched out to heal, and to teach, and finally on the cross where he suffered and died. His hands, and arms, are stretched out still: “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest” (Matt 11:28).

Lessons for us

Practical lessons are to be gleaned from this, for us all. Charles Spurgeon writes: “There may be someone, a father, a mother, or some other relative, who has been compelled, as he has thought, to deny and no longer to acknowledge a child or a brother. Great offences have at last brought anger into your bosom, and, as you think, very justifiable anger. Celebrate this very day by a full forgiveness of all who have done anything against you! And do not merely say, ‘Well, I will do it if they will ask me.’ That is not what God does; He is first in the matter, and devises means. Try. Consider. Devise means. [You say...] ‘Would you have me lower myself?’ Sometimes to lower ourselves is to make ourselves much higher in God’s sight.”

The further application of the lesson should be this: let each of us devise means for bringing back to Christ those “banished” ones who are around him. We must, as a body of believers, be tireless and resourceful in seeking out the Lord’s expelled and banished ones who live near us, or those who once belonged to the Lord, but have “banished” themselves by bad choices or indifference.

Here is the reason that the Bible speaks so favorably of the “peacemakers”: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God” (Matt 5:9). “Go and be reconciled to your brother” (v 24). “If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone” (Rom 12:18). “Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness” (James 3:18). “Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins” (James 5:20).

Every day, we should be asking ourselves, ‘Where, in my own circle, and where, in the larger circle around me — my family, my ecclesia, or the brotherhood — can I help do the work of God, who gathers up the spilled waters, brings home the wanderer, breaks down the walls of division, and reconciles in Christ those who are estranged?’

George Booker

The Shortcoming of Money

Money may be the husk of many things but not the kernel. It brings you food, but not appetite; medicine, but not health; acquaintances, but not friends; servants, but not loyalty; days of joy, but not peace or happiness.

Henrik Ibsen

Exhortation

“My God, My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me?”

We know the passages that describe death in the Old Testament. It is sleep (Dan 12:2). It is total unconsciousness (Eccl 9:5). Death is the antithesis of life.

But there is something else of the greatest importance that was central to the thinking of faithful men like David and Hezekiah:

“My soul also is greatly troubled. But you, O LORD — how long? Turn, O LORD, deliver my life; save me for the sake of your steadfast love. For in death there is no remembrance of you; in Sheol who will give you praise?” (Psa 6:3-5).

“Do you work wonders for the dead? Do the departed rise up to praise you? Selah Is your steadfast love declared in the grave, or your faithfulness in Abaddon? Are your wonders known in the darkness, or your righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?” (Psa 88:10-12).

“O LORD, by these things men live, and in all these is the life of my spirit. Oh restore me to health and make me live! Behold, it was for my welfare that I had great bitterness; but in love you have delivered my life from the pit of destruction, for you have cast all my sins behind your back. For Sheol does not thank you; death does not praise you; those who go down to the pit do not hope for your faithfulness. The living, the living, he thanks you, as I do this day; the father makes known to the children your faithfulness” (Isa 38:16-19).

Death completely separates man from fellowship with God. For the faithful man or woman, this is the worst possible thing that could happen. Nothing is of greater consequence. Fellowship with God is the essence of life itself.

Life derives all its meaning from our relationship with God.

The faithful man or woman, for whom fellowship with God is life's greatest joy, shrinks from anything that severs this holy relationship. Death is an enemy indeed.

No one knew this better than the Lord Jesus Christ. His life was fellowship with the Father in a degree that we can only try to contemplate. He walked with his Father every moment of every day. And His Father walked with him. It was an earnest of the eternal joy that God set before him.

Jesus knew, of course, that he must die to put away the sin of the world. He knew that the grave would not hold him; that he must rise to life again. But this did not diminish the full awfulness of death that loomed before his face.

His words as he entered Gethsemane were an echo of Psalm 6:

“Then he said to them, ‘My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain

here, and watch with me.' And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, 'My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will' " (Matt 26:38,39).

May I suggest that the cup that Jesus prayed might pass from him was not just the cup of physical suffering? It was the bitter cup of death that would separate him from his Father and his God.

Where now would be his remembrance of God? Where now would be his life of praise? Could not God transfigure him, as He had once done on the holy mount, and give him immortality without the horror of even a moment's separation between them?

Do not holy men and women think this way?

Then the ninth hour of the next day drew near: the hour of his death on the cross, the end. Jesus must have felt the last vestiges of life slipping from him:

"And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' " (Matt 27:46).

Why have you abandoned me to this end? You are everything to me, even life itself!

Is it not possible that this cry of Jesus simply expressed the anguish of his soul as the darkness that had settled over the land turned into the reality of his death? Heaven must have cried, too. God derives no pleasure from the death of a sinner, let alone the death of the righteous man.

In Psalm 22, the opening words of which anticipated the anguish of Jesus' soul, the immediate context is separation from God:

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest" (vv 1,2).

In David's case, the experience was some living death when he had sought but received no help from God; when he had prayed but gotten no answer. For Jesus, it was about to become the complete separation of death itself.

How thankful we can be that reassurance follows. God has saved the faithful before. He will do it again. He will yet be enthroned on the living praises of His people:

"Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel. In you our fathers trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them. To you they cried and were rescued; in you they trusted and were not put to shame" (Psa 22:3-5).

God is now forever enthroned in the praises of the Son whom He delivered from the darkness of death. But for a little while their fellowship was severed. The separation of the Father and the Son by his death was a tragedy of the ages. It was not because of anything he had done. Our sins made it happen. Hear his cry from the cross and be ashamed. God forgive us!

Jim Harper (Meriden, CT)

Bible Study

To Speak Well of God: (7) I Know that My Redeemer Lives

Underlying his tragic circumstances rests the adamant faith of Job. The faith driven by the perseverance of which James speaks (James 5:11). It is that faith which provokes Job's most famous expression concerning the Redeemer; a comment which almost seems out-of-place, amidst his understandably agonized cries.

*"I know that my Redeemer lives,
and that in the end he will stand upon the earth.
And after my skin has been destroyed,
yet in my flesh I will see God;
I myself will see him
with my own eyes — I, and not another.
How my heart yearns within me!" (Job 19:25-27).*

Many scholars have struggled to understand who the "Redeemer" is [Hebrew: Go'el] of whom Job speaks, and I likewise struggle. Rowley denotes this verse "one of the most cryptic passages in the book."¹ The reference to "God" in the following verse suggests that the Redeemer is a different person, since a different title is used. On the other hand it is evidently characteristic in Hebrew to switch between titles, even grammatical persons, mid-speech,² so this does not preclude the Redeemer being God; and indeed many expositors ultimately arrive at that conclusion.^{3, 4, 5, 6}

Some expositors suggest that Job's words profess, or imply, an understanding of the resurrection.^{7, 8, 9} Job's belief in seeing God 'in his flesh,' yet after his skin has been destroyed, sounds consistent with that belief. But considering the full range of comments Job makes concerning death and the grave, I lean away from this idea. Consider the full range of evidence:

In his first reply to Eliphaz the Temanite, Job speaks with clarity of his belief that the grave [Hebrew: Sheol] is the place of no return.

*"As a cloud vanishes and is gone,
so he who goes down to the grave does not return.
He will never come to his house again;
his place will know him no more" (Job 7:9,10).*

This is a very matter of fact statement. One does not return from the grave, in Job's opinion. He speaks further on this same topic in his second reply to Eliphaz:

*"Where then is my hope?
Who can see any hope for me?
Will it go down to the gates of death?
Will we descend together into the dust?"
(Job 17:15,16)*

Again, the language here suggests Job does not believe that hope can overcome the grave. Furthermore, Job comments in his first reply to Zophar the Naamathite:

*"At least there is hope for a tree:
If it is cut down, it will sprout again,
and its new shoots will not fail.
Its roots may grow old in the ground
and its stump die in the soil,
yet at the scent of water it will bud
and put forth shoots like a plant.
But man dies and is laid low;
he breathes his last and is no more" (Job 14:7-10).*

This is conclusive that he believes there is no hope for a man after death. Yet later in the same speech, when Job speaks of the grave, he says:

*"If only you would hide me in the grave
and conceal me till your anger has passed!
If only you would set me a time
and then remember me!
If a man dies, will he live again?
All the days of my hard service
I will wait for my renewal to come" (Job 14:13,14).*

Here Job speculates on the possibility of surviving the grave, of only being contained there for a temporary period. He uses the intriguing word "renewal" (Hebrew *chaliyphah*: change, release, renewal¹⁰) which seems indicative of resurrection.

In total we have five passages where Job comments on death and the grave, as shown above. A natural reading of verses 19:25-27, aligned with verses 14:13,14, suggests Job believes in resurrection. But his comments in verses 7:9,10; 14:7-10 and 17:15,16 are best read with the opposite inference. What then should we conclude? Personally, I conclude that Job does not (yet) hold a belief in the hope of resurrection. The three comments where he speaks of death as final yield little room for maneuver in their interpretation, where the other verses, where Job does seem to believe in resurrection, do have latitude to be interpreted either way. The verses in 14:13,14, for example, are spoken in a hypothetical voice. Job speaks with yearning hyperbole: "Could I be merely hidden in the grave?" voicing an 'if only' tone. By contrast his comments speaking of the grave as the place of no hope, and from which one cannot return, are very direct and offer no such option for different interpretations.

Thus I conclude Job does not (yet) perceive a hope beyond the grave, and that his comments in chapter 19 refer to his belief that God will restore him in his present lifetime.

By contrast, those who see the resurrection in the Job 19 passage sometimes go further and explicitly suggest Job refers to Jesus of Nazareth as the Redeemer.^{11,12} This postulate has been circulated as early as the fifth century AD by Jerome,¹³ but this is evidently more than the text is able to support. Furthermore, since Job speaks about his Redeemer being alive in the present tense, yet speaks of his

restoration in the future tense, this would most logically necessitate Jesus being alive in heaven at the time Job is speaking. That assertion is consistent with a number of variants of Christian doctrine, again dating back as early as Jerome; but not my own — I am convinced the Scriptural message communicates that Jesus' life began at his mortal birth (Luke 1:35).

Some expositors suggest that Job refers to God in the first mention in the sentence, but Jesus in the second. For the Trinitarian expositor,¹⁴ who believes God and Jesus are the same being, this is no great issue, but for the non-Trinitarian,¹⁵ the verse is required to be read as: "I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end *someone else* will stand upon the earth," which to me is unconvincing. I conclude the Redeemer of whom Job speaks cannot be Jesus of Nazareth.

Who then is this Redeemer? The Hebrew word we are focusing on — Go'el, a participle of the primary root Ga'al¹⁶, is usually understood to mean 'redeemer' and it is translated that way here in the book of Job and in a host of other Scriptural occurrences (e.g., Lev 25:25, Isa 63:16). Interestingly, however, it can also mean 'avenger' (e.g., 2Sam 14:11). So Go'el is one who sets the record straight, whether performing an upbuilding act of redemption or a destructive act of vengeance. Which does Job seek? It is not clear. On the one hand he evidently seeks what he understands to be justice in release from his suffering. Does he seek vengeance against God? Likely not, considering the verses that follow, but we cannot dismiss the possibility as quickly as we may wish, since he seeks deliverance from the assaults he weathers and Job correctly deduces that, with the exception of the hapless moralizing of his friends, these assaults are coming from the LORD.

Job had made reference to an advocate in an earlier speech. Here the language suggests more clearly that the advocate is a person distinct from God, appealing to God on Job's behalf.

*"O earth, do not cover my blood;
may my cry never be laid to rest!
Even now **my witness** is in heaven;
my advocate is on high.
My intercessor is my friend
as my eyes pour out tears to God;
on behalf of a man he pleads with God
as a man pleads for his friend" (Job 16:18-21).*

The Hebrew words for 'witness', 'advocate' and 'intercessor' are all different from 'Go'el' which appears in the Redeemer passage. But they are clearly presented as synonyms with each other and therefore logically synonymous with 'Go'el' too, since Job is speaking on the same topic of pleading for one to represent, defend and vindicate him.

So who then is this advocate? Who is pleading with God?

I suggest that Job references God's knowledge of his life, which is 'hid with God' (cf Col 3:3). Paul's quote in his letter to the Colossian Christians teaches us that God's omniscience in heaven incorporates a total awareness and memory of everyone's life and being: their true character. I suggest Job is saying that God's unerring

knowledge of his own blameless life will appeal to God. Job also firmly believes in God's goodness, so Job believes God cannot disregard the appeal of his blameless life forever and thereby He will choose to restore him. This suggestion is similar to that of Clines,¹⁷ with whom Balchin tentatively agrees,¹⁸ although the latter comments that more justification is needed. I attempt that in the following.

There is Scriptural evidence for the idea of someone's life appealing directly to God irrespective of the conscious words or actions of the person himself. The precedential case is Abel. God reveals to Cain that Abel's own life, even in death, was the witness, the advocate, that 'cried out' to God to avenge the earthly injustice before Him.

"Then the LORD said to Cain, 'Where is your brother Abel?' 'I don't know,' he replied. 'Am I my brother's keeper?' The LORD said, 'What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground. Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand' " (Gen 4:9-11).

'Blood' is introduced as a metaphor for 'life' very early in the Bible (Gen 9:4,5) and that Scriptural symbolism is maintained throughout both Testaments, (e.g., Lev 17:11, John 6:53). This strongly supports the proposal that Abel's life (i.e., blood) is the Go'el whom God hears.

One of John's apocalyptic visions strengthens this suggestion of the lives of the saints in God's consciousness acting as Go'el. John looks into heaven and sees this vision:

"When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, 'How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?' " (Rev 6:9,10).

In what way are the saints in heaven? Some Christian doctrine supposes that the immortal souls of the dead saints physically travel to heaven and are literally appealing to God. It is not our place here to digress into a discussion of fundamental doctrine, but suffice to say I have long been persuaded that the Bible teaches that man is a soul, not that he *has* a soul. I believe that the word and concept of the "soul" is essentially a synonym for "life" and is extinguished upon the collapse of the mortal consciousness (cf Gen 2:7 and Psa 104:29,30). Nevertheless the Scripture certainly does reveal that the saints are in heaven in some way, because John is shown them there in a vision from God. I utilize the previously cited case of Abel, whose blood (life) cries out to God after he was dead, to understand this apocalyptic scene. The lives (souls) of the saints, i.e., all their thoughts, deeds, hopes and expectations, are clearly laid out before, and accessible to, the mind of the Almighty in heaven, whether the saints themselves are living, dead, or yet unborn. What is especially fascinating, and directly applicable to our case in Job, is that the "souls in heaven" in the Revelation passage are also acting as "Go'el". They are petitioning God to take note of their martyrdom, and avenge and redeem them.

Thus I understand the Go'el of whom Job speaks in the same way, as a personification of Job's life within God's awareness — another saint in heaven, if you will.

By analogy, imagine an occasion where someone has spread a slanderous story about you to a close friend. You are desperate to contact that friend and correct the impression they may have. But you are unable to reach them; they're simply not picking up the phone, for example. Your failure to establish contact continues for what seems an interminable period. This is the position Job feels he has got to with God: God's not picking up the phone. Eventually, one might get to the point where one says: "My good friend knows who I am. Their knowledge of the real me has to convince them I've done no wrong, no matter what they've heard." I think that's where Job is with God.

This interpretation allows us to understand how Go'el is alive in heaven at the time Job speaks and also how he both is — and isn't — God. It allows us to understand how Job can have some relief, for even though he feels God will not speak to him, Go'el allows him an indirect line to the ear of the Almighty. It also does not deprive God of ultimate control, for this Go'el is God's knowledge of the life Job has lived. It is not a sentient creature which can enact anything. It can only advocate in the presence of the One who always hears, and the choice to bring redemption, or not, remains with God alone. It also explains who will stand upon the earth in the last day (19:25) — righteous Job, the life restored by God.

The stage is now set. The Joban tale has led us into the wilderness. In fact many wildernesses converge here — the literal wilderness of Uz, the spiritual homelessness of a people whose faith is waning, and the desolate wasteland of a stricken man's soul. We have met the participants of the drama and realize they are only three: God, the Satan, and the Righteous Man. And now we will see the natural dynamics of these characters unfold into one of the most poignant dramas recorded in literature. By the organization of the Spirit, the righteous man will be tempted in the wilderness by the Satan.

Maybe we're tested too, if only by proxy. Tested simply by what we read happening in this wilderness: a God of whom we desire to speak well, yet whom we see afflicting His own disciple. And tested by a thousand subsequent Satans who will slander Him, and any man who speaks well of Him, precisely because of what will follow here.

In all these senses then, the field is set, so we must be ready. Battle is about to commence.

John Pople (San Francisco Peninsula, CA)

Notes:

1. H. H. Rowley, "From Moses to Qumran: Studies in the Old Testament", 1963, in N. N. Glatzer, *Ibid*, 126.
2. A multitude of examples exists for the shift of grammatical persons in Hebraic Scriptures when talking to/about the same character. I note one from Jonah's prayer to make the point. Observe in the prayer how the person of God is shifted from second to third person even in the same sentence:
*From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the LORD his God. He said:
"In my distress I called to the LORD, [third person]*

and *he* [third person] answered me.
From the depths of the grave I called for help,
and you [second person] *listened to my cry*" (Jonah 2:1,2).

3. G. Gutierrez, "On Job: God-talk and the Suffering of the Innocent", 1987, Orbis, New York, NY, USA, 65.
4. D. Atkinson, "The Message of Job", 1991, Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester, UK, 93.
5. E. M. Spongberg, "The Book of Job", 1965, private publication, 59.
6. L. G. Sargent, "Ecclesiastes and Other Studies", 1965, The Christadelphian, Birmingham, UK, 116.
7. E. M. Spongberg, *Ibid*, 60.
8. D. Baird, "The Education of Job", 2002, Stallard & Potter, Torrensville, Australia, 155.
9. J. V. McGee, "Thru the Bible Commentary Series: Job", 1991, Thomas Nelson, Nashville, TN, USA, 109.
10. J. Strong, "A Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Hebrew Bible with their Renderings in the Authorized English Version", in "Strong's Exhaustive Concordance", 1997, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI, USA, 39.
11. D. Baird, *Ibid*, 157.
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13. Jerome, "To Pammachus against John of Jerusalem", in "A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church", 1893, Ed. P. Schaff & H. Wace, Kessinger, Kila, MT, USA, 424-447.
14. D. Atkinson, *Ibid*, 93, 94.
15. D. Baird, *Ibid*, 155-157.
16. J. Strong, *Ibid*, 25.
17. D. J. A. Clines, "Job", 1989, Word Biblical Commentary, Vol I, Dallas, TX, USA, 390.
18. J. Balchin, *Ibid*, 175.

The Fruit of the Spirit

We blithely mark time in the Truth, thinking that just being in the Truth is all that matters. But it's not having the Truth that counts, it's what you do with it when you've got it! The transfer from being "in Adam" to being "in Christ" is only a transfer; it's not a transformation! The transformation of our character happens slowly afterwards, as we continue to apply our minds to spiritual things in a purposeful way — or it doesn't happen because we don't. Therefore we stagnate spiritually — and find life in the Truth rather less than fulfilling. This transformation of our character is the development of the fruit of the Spirit. It's as simple as that. And once we know that, we know what we're aiming for. Spiritual development ceases to be vague. It is the process of bringing the nine aspects of the fruit of the Spirit into our character [Gal 5:22,23].

And as we involve ourselves in this process, we learn one of life's greatest lessons. A God-given law of life comes into operation. We learn, as the fruit of the Spirit develops, that we can more easily handle the tests God puts our way. We lose those old feelings of stagnation, of being spiritually becalmed, that we may have had before. We lose any dissatisfaction with life in the Truth that being vague about our spiritual direction generates. We arrive at the wonderful conclusion that life in the Truth is the most satisfying and fulfilling way of life available to anyone living on this planet.

Colin Attridge

Bible Study

What the Qur'an Says About... (3) Jihad

The Qur'an has a very wide range of instructions in respect to the conduct of jihad (holy war). The instructions range all the way from gentle, patient preaching to forced conversion upon conquest of war. While it's initially a very confusing study to sort out, we found *Understanding the Qur'an*, by Mateem Ellass, Zondervan, MI, 2004, to be helpful in putting the pieces together in an understandable way.

His key points rest on two features of the Qur'an and Muhammad that were noted in our first article:

- (1) The Qur'an is not organized in chronological order and rarely gives enough information to establish the historical setting of a given Sura (chapter). Therefore teaching on a topic in one Sura may in fact have been given much later than the following chapters. Since later "revelations" take precedence over earlier ones, there is much sorting out required to see the logical development of teaching regarding jihad.
- (2) Muhammad's efforts started with quiet communication of his visions to family and friends. The only thing realistically possible at this point was patient preaching [effectively a jihad of the word, which Muslims call "Dawah"]. At his death he commanded a rapidly growing army, conquering all before him and imposing Islam on the vanquished. [Islam eventually conquered as far east as India, as far west as the Atlantic on the north African coast up into Spain, and north through Turkey to the heart of the Balkans as well as the entire Middle East — a truly vast area.] In these later years, forced imposition of Islamic law and government became a practical goal.

Because of the organization of the Qur'an, instruction on these varied forms of jihad are scattered throughout the book, not being found in any order nor related to any easily identifiable historical events.

Martyrdom, the consistent theme

What is consistent throughout the Qur'an is the great reward assured to those who give their lives and property in the cause of Allah.

As opposed to other Muslims, who must await the resurrection and judgment, martyrs go straight to heaven where they are guaranteed eternal bliss:

"Do not think of those who are slain in Allah's way as dead. Nay, they live, finding their sustenance in the Presence of their Lord; they rejoice in the Bounty provided by Allah: and with regard to those left behind, who have not yet joined them (in their bliss), the (Martyrs) glory in the fact that on them is no fear, nor have they (cause to) grieve" (3:169,170).

The person who may not have been a particularly good Muslim in terms of charity, prayers and pilgrimages can thus rectify his situation by one occasion of great self-sacrifice. If he's a martyr in person or property, all is forgiven:

"Those who have left their homes, or been driven out therefrom, or suffered harm in My Cause, **or fought or been slain — verily, I will blot out from them their iniquities**, and admit them into Gardens with rivers flowing beneath — a reward from the Presence of Allah" (3:195).

This point is confirmed in Sura 61:

"O you who believe! Shall I lead you to **a bargain that will save you from a grievous Penalty?** That you believe in Allah and His Messenger, and that you strive (your utmost) in the Cause of Allah, **with your property and your persons:** that will be best for you, if you but knew! He will forgive you your sins, and admit you to gardens beneath which rivers flow, and to beautiful mansions in Gardens of Eternity" (vv 10-12).

If a person felt he/she had seriously lapsed in his religious duties, he would thus be tempted to martyrdom to rectify all his wrongs.

The exchange of martyrdom for eternity is expressed as a bargain from Allah which he will surely keep:

"Allah has purchased of the Believers their persons and their goods; for **theirs (in return) is the Garden (of Paradise):** they fight in His Cause, and slay and are slain: a promise binding on Him in Truth, through the Law, the Gospel, and the Qur'an: and who is more faithful to his Covenant than Allah? Then rejoice in the bargain which you have concluded: that is the supreme achievement" (9:111).

We can well imagine a young person, faced with unemployment and the bleak future of a refugee camp, willingly entering the terrorist forces with this guarantee of eternal salvation.

The bliss he is promised is sketched in glowing terms in the Qur'an. The gardens for the blessed are ones...

"...containing all kinds (of trees and delights)... In them will be fruits of every kind, two and two... They will recline on carpets, whose inner linings will be of rich brocade... In them will be (maidens), chaste, restraining their glances, whom no man or Jinn [supernatural being] before them has touched... like unto rubies and coral" (55:48-56).

While there is no mention of a specific number of virgins, the picture presented is suggestive of perpetual fleshly delights readily designed to attract the young man.

This picture is emphasized many times in the Qur'an. The young martyr is encouraged to envisage himself sitting on...

"...thrones encrusted (with gold and precious stones)... Round about them will (serve) youths of perpetual (freshness), with goblets, (shining) beakers, and cups (filled out of clear-flowing fountains)... and (there will be) companions with beautiful, big, and lustrous eyes — like unto Pearls well-guarded... We have created (their Companions) of special creation.

And made them virgin-pure (and undefiled) — beloved (by nature) equal in age” (56:15-37).

It's no wonder there seems an endless procession of young men throwing rocks and strapping bombs to their bodies.

The gentle jihad

As noted at the beginning of this article, the Qur'an commends a jihad of the word. This would be suitable for Muhammad when he first made public his message, and for Muslims today where they are a small minority in a country. The instruction sounds almost Biblical:

“Invite (all) to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious... And if you do catch them out, catch them out no worse than they catch you out: but if you show patience, that is indeed the best (course) for those who are patient. And you be patient, for your patience is but from Allah, nor grieve over them: and do not distress yourself because of their plots. For Allah is with those who restrain themselves, and those who do good” (16:125,126).

When Islam is claimed to be a religion of peace, it's passages like this that are used to support such a claim.

The limited retaliation jihad

There are passages which speak of the gentle jihad, and there are several which encourage limited retaliation if Muslims are harmed. This would have been suitable instruction for the intermediate period when Muhammad's followers started to multiply and become a threat to entrenched religious interests. During those years, Muhammad and his followers were frequently persecuted. Unlike Christians, who are told to suffer persecution, Muhammad's followers were instructed that limited retaliation was acceptable as a response to those who persecuted Muslims. It would also be useful for today's Muslims when they are a significant minority in a given country. Here are examples of such instruction:

“The recompense for an injury is an injury equal thereto (in degree): but if a person forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is due from Allah... But indeed if any do help and defend themselves after a wrong (done) to them, against such there is no cause of blame. The blame is only against those who oppress men with wrongdoing... But indeed if any show patience and forgive, that would truly be an exercise of courageous will and resolution in the conduct of affairs” (42:40-43).

“To those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight), because they are wronged — and verily, Allah is Most Powerful for their aid — (They are) those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right — (for no cause) except that they say, ‘Our Lord is Allah’ ” (22:39,40).

Such a form of limited violence would find application today in countries such as France, where Muslims are a substantial minority but not in a position to try a conquering jihad.

The conquering jihad

Toward the end of his life, Muhammad led a significant fighting army. They went forth to conquer their neighbors and force them to submit to Islam. After Muhammad's death, this is the jihad that was featured for centuries in Africa, Europe and Asia and which many Muslims would like to see practiced today. It is expressed in the Qur'an in the following terms:

"But when the forbidden months are past, then fight and slay the Pagans **wherever you find them**, and seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem (of war); but if they repent [i.e., convert], and establish regular prayers and practice regular charity [i.e., become Muslims], then open the way for them... **fight those who do not believe in Allah** nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which has been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger, nor acknowledge the Religion of Truth... until they pay the Jizya [a tax to Muslim conquerors] with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued" (9:5, 29).

Today, with many countries almost 100% Muslim, this type of jihad is clearly a factor in the international setting. Muslim countries can point to the Qur'an for justification to conquer their neighbors and force them to submit to Islamic laws. Such passages also provide the theological underpinning for violent, militant Islam.

The special jihad

There are two communities selected for the greatest vitriol from Muslims — Jews, and Muslims who desert their faith (e.g., converts to Christianity, including Christadelphians).

The Jews are listed as among the greatest enemies of Islam:

"Strongest among men in enmity to the Believers will you find the Jews and Pagans" (5:82).

Combine this denunciation of the Jews with the Arab assertion that the land of Israel belonged to them before the Jews took it away (3:195), and we see the Islamic justification for perpetual war against the state of Israel.

An equally strong denunciation is leveled against those who were once Muslim but have converted to another faith (e.g., the Truth). Consider the following:

"How shall Allah guide those who reject faith after they accepted it and bore witness that the Messenger was true... But those who reject Faith after they accepted it, and then go on adding to their defiance of Faith — never will their repentance be accepted" (3:86, 90).

From a Muslim's point of view, converts from Islam to the Truth fit this category.

The Qur'an's condemnation is very specific against Christians:

"They say, 'God (Allah) has begotten a son!'... those who invent a lie against Allah will never prosper... **We make them taste the severest Penalty for their blasphemies**" (10:68-70).

Added to this is the direct charge to fight against Jews and Christians:

“Fight those who do not believe in Allah... The Jews call ‘Uzair (?) a son of Allah, and the Christians call Christ the Son of Allah. That is a saying from their mouth; (in this) they but imitate what the unbelievers of old used to say. **Allah’s curse be on them:** how they are deluded away from the Truth!” (9:29,30).

“They but wish that you should reject Faith [Muslims would put our missionaries in this category] as they do, and thus be on the same footing (as they): but do not take friends from their ranks until they flee in the way of Allah (from what is forbidden). But if they turn renegades, **seize them and slay them wherever you find them**” (4:89).

With such instruction in the Muslims’ revered book, we can understand why some of our brothers and sisters have been slain in the name of Allah.¹

Conclusion

It is unrealistic to think Islam is a religion of peace. The bottom line of the message of the Qur’an is: whenever possible, advance the Muslim cause by force. And in the case of our brethren who have converted from Islam in such places as Pakistan and Iran, the message of this book threatens them with personal harm on a daily basis.

Don Styles (Ann Arbor, MI)

Notes:

1. 2:62 and 5:69 speak of Jews and Christians being saved, but the context makes clear it is only those Jews and Christians “who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and work righteousness”. In other words, those who convert to Islam.

(Next month, Lord willing, what the Qur’an says about women)

“Intellectual Probation”

There are men to whom uncertainty on particular questions seems intolerable. They cannot ‘learn to labor and wait’; they cannot wait patiently, and work patiently, until a complete solution is found. And hence they hurry to a definite conclusion, support it by evidence that is not relevant, and affirm that it is demonstrated by what is perhaps relevant, but is far short of proof.

Intellectual probation is part of our moral probation in this life, and it is a discipline much needed in an age of great mental activity. Impatience of the intellect is a common blemish, and it is disastrous both to him who allows himself to be conquered by it and to the cause of truth. He does a good service both to himself and to others, who cultivates a dread of jumping to unproved conclusions, and who in speaking and writing watchfully distinguishes what is certain from what is only probable, and what is probable from what is only possible.

Alfred Plummer

Bible Study

The True Tabernacle

“We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven... the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man” (Heb 8:1,2).

What is meant by “the **true** tabernacle”?

The word “true” here is the Greek “alethinos”. “Alethinos” is derived from “alethes”, which is the negative of “lanthos”, meaning hidden. Thus “alethes” means, literally, ‘not hidden’, or ‘revealed’. As used in the New Testament, it does not mean ‘true, in contrast to false’, but rather ‘real and complete, in contrast to the imperfect or the pattern’. We might put it this way: first there is a pattern, and then there comes the reality. In each case, God has “written”, by one means or another, a pattern, set of instructions, or prophecy, of what would become the most perfect reality only in His Son.

This definition holds true through all the usages of the word in the New Testament. A few examples, from the writings of John:

- (a) In contrast to the sun, Jesus is “the true light” that gives light — spiritually — to every man (John 1:9; cf 1John 2:8). Not that the sun was anything like a “false” light, but that — bright and essential as it is — the spiritual “light” of the man Jesus Christ means far more.
- (b) In contrast to the manna in the wilderness, Jesus is “the true bread from heaven” (John 6:32). The other manna was real enough, but it was a mere pattern of the “bread of life” which is Christ.
- (c) “I am the true vine,” Jesus tells his disciples (John 15:1). What the grapevines, and the grapes, and the wine only symbolized, Jesus made real in his life, death and resurrection.

The “true” reality to be found only in Christ — of all aspects of the worship and service of God — is also described elsewhere in Hebrews, even when the same word “alethinos” is not used. In fact, it may be said to be the theme of the Letter:

- (a) Paraphrasing Hebrews 9: As long as the first tabernacle (or Temple) — the “earthly sanctuary” — was standing, the way into the Most Holy could not be disclosed, because the regular offerings and sacrifices could not cleanse the conscience of the worshiper. But Christ, when he came, approached the Most Holy through the more perfect tabernacle — his own flesh, in which he shed his own blood! Thus he became the better sacrifice, so as to purify all things in a way that no other sacrifices ever could. Having accomplished this by the one perfect sacrifice of himself, he then entered into the one “true” (“alethinos”: v 24) tabernacle, heaven itself, of which the earthly tabernacle was only a pattern.
- (b) Next, in Hebrews 10, the writer plainly sees the rending of the curtain, or

veil, in the Temple at the time of the crucifixion (Matt 27:51; Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45) as symbolic of the opening of direct access to God's presence accomplished by Christ's sacrificial death (Heb 10:19,20). Thus, for our author, although he does not explicitly say so, the tearing of the Christ's "flesh" in the crucifixion is analogous to the tearing of the curtain in the temple. Through his death Christ opened the way to God's presence (cp Eph 2:14-18).

- (c) Thus Christ became the "great priest" in a way that no Aaronic priest could ever have been, and the only means of truly drawing near to God (Heb 10:21,22).
- (d) Moreover, he became THE (only, true) "altar" (Heb 13:10), from which all who serve God may eat.

To summarize, not only is Jesus Christ the "true tabernacle". He is also the only "true priest", for he offered the only "true sacrifice" in the rending of his flesh, which was the only "true veil". Thus he becomes for us the only "true altar".

One greater than the Temple

The true "tabernacle", in which the LORD dwelt most completely, was the man Christ Jesus. The old tabernacle itself — including its servants and services — was a "shadow" and a "pattern" of what is in heaven, i.e., in the mind and purpose of God (Heb 8:5). In fact, the Law itself, in all its particular details, is only "a shadow of the good things that are coming — not the realities themselves" (Heb 10:1).

Several passages point to Jesus Christ as the true "temple", greater than all other "temples" that came before:

- Matthew 12: Here Jesus justified himself and his disciples picking and eating ears of grain on the Sabbath by referring to David and his men, when hungry, eating the consecrated bread of the tabernacle (1Sam 21). Then he concluded, "I tell you that one greater than the temple is here" (v 6).
- This is not the only time Jesus compares himself to the Temple. When, at the beginning of his ministry, he drives the moneychangers out of the Temple for the first time (John 2), he demonstrates his dedication for his Father's house (v 16). He carries the lesson a significant step further when he says, with seemingly little connection to the context: "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days" (v 19). When the Jews say that such an idea is absurd, since the Temple had been 46 years in building (and even then was not finished), then the explanation is given (by John, in something like a historical footnote) that "the temple he had spoken of was his own body" (v 21). Now the contextual significance becomes clear: Jesus's zeal for his Father's house would lead, soon enough, to his own arrest, trial, and execution. In bringing this about, his enemies the Jews would in effect destroy "God's (true) temple", but in the three days it would be erected again — in his resurrection! (The irony is that Herod's Temple, being but a pattern of the true "temple", would be destroyed within a generation of that time, never to be rebuilt again.)
- John 1:14: Looking back on such incidents, and by then realizing the full significance of the resurrection and ascension of his Lord, John could write — in the preamble to his Gospel: "The Word became flesh and made his

dwelling among us. We have seen his glory... the glory as of the only Son from the Father" (NIV, RSV). The power of this verse is in the Greek word translated "made his dwelling"; "skēnoō" means literally a tent, tabernacle, or encampment. The RV margin catches this perfectly: the Word made flesh "tabernacled" among us! The LORD God had said to Moses, "Have [the people of Israel] make a sanctuary ['miqdash': holy place] for me, and I will dwell among them. Make this tabernacle ['mishkan': dwelling place, tent] and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you" (Exod 25:8,9). What was done in an instructive mode in Exodus was done in the most wonderful reality in the first century: The LORD God pitched a tent, and dwelt among His people, on the earth, in the person of His only-begotten Son.

- Colossians 2:9: So is stated plainly what has been illustrated in all the above: "In Christ all the fullness of the Deity ['Theos': God] lives in bodily form." Of course, it was in the Tabernacle and the Temple that the fullness of God was supposed to dwell among men.

Christ the living "Temple" of God

Against this background, let us contemplate some scenes from the Gospels, when Christ is in or near the Temple — when, we might say, the Greater Temple (Matt 12:6) is set alongside the Temple of Herod; when the perfect is shown in the setting of the imperfect, the substance alongside the shadow, and the eternal alongside the temporary:

(1) The consecration of the baby: Jesus and the Temple of Herod are seen together for the first time in Luke 2, when Mary and Joseph bring their baby into its precincts to offer the sacrifice of consecration for the child (vv 22,23; cf Exod 13:2, 12) — though all they have is the sacrifice of the poor: "a pair of doves or two young pigeons" (v 24; Lev 12:8).

In our mind's eye we pause a moment to gaze upon Herod's temple. It was one of the wonders of the ancient world, awesome and majestic, pure and white and dazzling. Into its beautiful courts comes a little family.

There are crowds on every side; moneychangers and cages of birds; sacrificial animals and rich-robed Sadducees. Here and there little cliques of earnest Pharisees engage in debate. We smell the odor of burning flesh from the altar, and in the background a choir sings holy chants. It is the house of God.

Now we know, however, that there are two houses. God has two houses. The one house is visible and ostentatious, richly decorated, luminous, lovely, and altogether awe-inspiring. The other "house" is a tiny baby. The real "temple of God" is held in his mother's arms. The "mercy seat" has been fashioned by God out of a woman; that "mercy seat", and not the golden one hidden behind the lavishly decorated curtains in the Most Holy Place, is the place where God Himself will truly meet with man. The baby held by his young mother is to be — all in one — "altar" and "offering" and "priest".

We feel compelled to call upon all the "blind" people going about their business in Herod's Temple: 'Stand up and take notice! Then bow down before your king.'

But no, not yet; some years must pass first. Meanwhile Joseph and Mary prepare to offer the sacrifice of the poor before departing, and returning to their humble, obscure home.

(2) The young man Jesus: Further on in the same chapter (Luke 2), but 12 years later, the boy Jesus — practically a young man, and son of the covenant — accompanied his parents to the Temple for the keeping of the Passover.

With his keen mind and spiritual bent he would have already grasped, with a special fascination, the teaching of the passover. Other boys might be infatuated with the account of the plagues, the parting of the Red Sea, or the courage of Moses, and surely Jesus would also be impressed by such things. But it is not hard to imagine the little Son of God being drawn, in deep wonder, to ponder the lamb without blemish, prepared and watched, and then slain without uttering a sound, its blood sprinkled on the doorposts.

The “Lamb of God” who would “take away the sin of the world” was not made in a moment. His character was the work of many years. Slowly, painfully, from that first revelation as a child and a young man, through the years to come, he “learned obedience” in ever more difficult lessons, until at last he was ready for the supreme test.

Did the child of twelve read and contemplate, and did he understand, the words of Isaiah? “Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities... he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth” (53:4-7).

The feast being ended, the pilgrims packed up and left Jerusalem, but the Son of God could not just yet tear himself away from his Father’s house. In the midst of the teeming crowds, Joseph and Mary supposed that Jesus was in the company of some of their “relatives and friends” (Luke 2:44) also returning to Nazareth. When they discovered he was not with their company of travelers, they retraced their steps and found him sitting in the temple, in the midst of the legal scholars, listening carefully and then posing them questions. “When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, ‘Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you’ ” (Luke 2:48).

To this mild rebuke, Jesus replied: “Why were you searching for me?... Didn’t you know I had to be in *my* Father’s house?” (v 49). Where else should a son be, except in his Father’s house? These are the first recorded words of Jesus, and they bring into focus the essential purpose of his life. Mary did not fully understand his words. But she kept all these sayings and cherished them in the motherly storehouse of memories. Later... much later... it would all become clear. She would hear his words, spoken from the cross: “It is finished” (John 19:30). His life’s work of dwelling in his Father’s house, and exemplifying everything that that house meant, up to and including his sacrificial death: “It is finished”. Then Mary would understand.

(3) **The cleansings of the Temple:** These cleansings, at the beginning of his ministry (John 2), and at the end (Matt 21:12-14; Mark 11:15-18; Luke 19:45-48), have been considered somewhat above. It seems these were the times when, firstly, Jesus announced the purpose of his ministry, and lastly, he brought his ministry to a conclusion by returning to the same place where he had first announced himself — to offer a final challenge to the entrenched authorities. At the same time, these cleansings emphasized to the people of Israel that, as the Son of God, the Father's house was by all rights Jesus's house — with which he would do what was necessary. If it was defiled, he had the authority to cleanse it. If its worshipers failed to heed his warnings, he had the authority to destroy it. And finally, in the culmination of his Father's purpose, he has the authority to establish it again, to build it up, spiritually and physically, and to dwell in it forever.

(4) **Healing and preaching:** On these occasions of cleansing, the Lord also healed people, and taught in the precincts of the Temple. Thereby he emphasized that he wasn't just one more worshiper seeking God's presence there — but rather that he *was* God's representative, and thus God's presence.

When he performed miracles of healing, it was by the Hand of God, and he was illustrating the true purpose of that shadowy Temple: it was to bring spiritual healing to all who are ill and dying, all who are beset by the infirmities of the flesh and spirit.

And when he taught the people there in the Temple, he was surely teaching them, fundamentally, what the literal Temple was expected to illustrate: God had chosen to dwell among men, and to manifest His character and His purpose to them, and through them. The single man, this most extraordinary man, was His agent, His messenger — worth more than all the gold and all the fine furnishings; worth more than all the money and all the sacrifices; worth more than all the prophets and priests and kings who had come before. In him, the fullness of Divinity “tabernacled” in human form.

(5) **Matthew 26:** After his arrest, Christ was taken to be “judged” by the Sanhedrin, meeting at the *palace* of Caiaphas the high priest (vv 57-59), close by the *Temple*, over which Caiaphas presided. In the midst of this great assembly, Jesus stands out as the true “high priest”, and the true “judge”. “Tell us,” said Caiaphas, “if you are the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God” (v 63). “Yes, it is as you say,” Jesus replied. “But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven” (v 64). The one whom they were “judging” was himself the true “judge”, and one day — after his return from heaven — he will pronounce judgment on these men... at *his* palace, next to *his* temple!

I cannot read this passage without thinking of a little poem, entitled “What shall we do with Jesus?” In our lives, we can all sometimes act as “judges”; we try to make judgments, to decide what's important in our lives, how we prioritize our time and our activities, and how we live our lives. Probably we do so whilst giving thought to the man Jesus Christ. What emphasis do we put on this man? What emphasis on our Father's message through him? On our relationship with

him? On our relationship with our other family members? On our relationship with our brothers and sisters? When we try, in our own ways, to “judge” how to live with Jesus beside us, what to do with this man Jesus, then we may be sitting alongside Caiaphas and his colleagues. **We** may also be “judging” Jesus! So we ask: What shall **we** do with Jesus?

Jesus is standing in Caiaphas’ hall,
Friendless, forsaken, betrayed by all.
Hearken, what meaneth the sudden call:
“What will you do with Jesus?”

Jesus is standing on trial still.
You can be false to him, if you will,
Or you can be faithful through good or ill.
*“What will **YOU** do with Jesus?”*

“What will you do with Jesus?”
Neutral you cannot be.
Someday your heart will be asking:
*“What will **HE** do with **ME**?”*

The Temple of the Living God

Finally, we must remember that God’s purpose, brought to fruition in Jesus Christ, was not finished. God is a Creator whose creative work has not ceased since the beginning of the universe. He is working to “create”, today, individual believers who will make up His eternal spiritual Temple, of which Jesus Christ is the cornerstone:

- “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, which is in you, which you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body” (1Cor 6:19,20).
- “What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: ‘I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people’ ” (2Cor 6:16).
- “As you come to him, the living Stone — rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him — you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (1Pet 2:4,5).

Then comes the end, as we can experience it:

“And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God’... I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp” (Rev 21:3,22,23).

One day, all the threads of our character, and all the experiences of our lives, will be brought together in the pattern our Heavenly Father intended. One day all the individual strands and threads which make up each of our lives will be brought together, and woven and interwoven, into the perfect fabric, a perfect robe. The tapestry will be complete. As the holy garments of Israel's high priests represented all the nation, and all those for whom he made offerings, so we — though individual beings, with our own lives — will be bound together in one royal robe, and placed upon the shoulders of our Lord. We will be his "crown of rejoicing", his multitudinous bride, his eternal companion, the garment of his glory:

"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you"
(Matt 25:34).

"'They will be mine,' says the Lord, 'when I make up my treasured possession'" (Mal 3:17).

George Booker, Austin Leander, TX

Bible Study

The Allegory of Genesis 1

The following considerations arose from correspondence with some Russian sisters. Because of the heavy emphasis on science in that country during the past several generations, our Russian brothers and sisters are very interested in science and quite naturally wonder how science and the Bible can be reconciled in a number of areas. One comment was that there is a lot of information missing about how the creation was accomplished. In fact, the creation accounts in Genesis are not what we might expect: that is, they do not reveal *how* God made all things. Why? The following is a suggested answer.

In the Bible, God reveals only selective facts which directly affect our eternal life. The Bible is not a science book, nor is it a history book. For example, the details in Genesis 1 are very selective and very brief, and they are not primarily scientific, although everything revealed is in harmony with the physical sciences.

"In the beginning God created the heaven..." (Gen 1:1). That is, He made the generations of the heavens (as in Gen 2:4). At that time, God created the universe (some might call it the "Big Bang"); we can picture the universe bursting forth with indescribable energy so that the stars, planets, comets, interstellar space, etc. filled the universe with trillions of heavenly bodies of incredible variety.

The first verse of the Bible then says, "[In the beginning God created]... the earth"; that is, the generations of the earth (again, as in Gen 2:4). From that point forward, God no longer describes the generations of the heavens; this information is closed until it is reopened in the book of Revelation (19:11). In other words, there is a gap to be inferred in Genesis 1:1. From Genesis 1:2 and onwards, the Bible is specifically related to the "generations of the earth" and the main theme is the salvation of mankind.

God chose not to reveal to us *how* the heavens and the earth were created, probably because very few people would be able to understand the physical process. To this very day, astrophysicists debate the mechanics of the primordial creation — the “big bang”, or however we might wish to describe it. Yet throughout Scripture there are thousands of references to the created world and the details revealed are beyond modern scientific reproach.

What God wants us to focus on, however, is the earth as our future inheritance. In the Bible He tells us how we can gain this inheritance. While there are many references to the physical creation, these are secondary to God’s primary message:

“But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD”
(Num 14:21).

Don’t expect all the details of creation or science to be fleshed out in the Bible; references to creation are secondary to the primary message of Scripture, which is the offer of eternal life to all of God’s children.

More than just literal

As many have pointed out, there are some oddities in the record:

- There is light (Gen 1:3), yet the sun does not appear until verse 14.
- The sun and moon “rule” over day and night (vv 16, 18) as if they were active persons.
- The earth and seas “bring forth” flora and fish, yet it was God who created them.

Why? I think it is because there is a message of the plan and purpose of God for humankind interwoven in the Genesis 1 record of creation.

Very briefly we will review each day:

- **The first day:** division of light and darkness. *The spiritual meaning:* separation of sons of God from sons of men.
- **The second day:** water predominates with separation of waters above from waters below. *The spiritual meaning:* separation of righteous from the wicked by means of a flood.
- **The third day:** emphasis on oceans, seas, earth and herbs. *The spiritual meaning:* the earth (Israel) to bring forth fruit amidst a sea of unfruitful nations; note Genesis 1:9,10: God’s purpose is now centered in Israel (i.e., the “land”, or “earth”).
- **The fourth day:** the atmosphere thins to reveal the universe. Note emphasis of “light” and “lights”. *The spiritual meaning:* Jesus Christ appears to bring righteousness to light. As the heavenly lights now becomes clearly visible, so the Mosaic veil gives way to the full revelation of God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Note that in this “fourth day” (i.e., the fourth millennium?) the greatest of all kings, Jesus Christ, appears — he is the One who will eventually “rule” the earth. The word “rule” appears three times for the events of this day.
- **The fifth day:** first marine, then bird life. *The spiritual meaning:* the sea is often likened to humankind, which signifies that God is calling out of the Gentiles

a people for His name (Acts 15:14).

- **The sixth day:** mammals and reptiles (terrestrial life culminating in man). *The spiritual meaning:* the sixth or final millennium will be characterized by Gentile dominion, but the saints, Jew and Gentile (mankind created in the image of God), prevail and are given immortality and receive power over the nations (cp Gen 1:26,27).

So Genesis 1 tells us that God created our earth, and also that He devised a plan whereby mankind might have the opportunity to respond to its Creator by developing the image and likeness of His holiness and glory. By the way, the word God is translated from the Hebrew word *elohim* (plural). In Psalm 8:6, *elohim* is translated “angels”:

“Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels (elohim), and hast crowned him with glory and honor.”

We believe that the angels assisted God in the creation process and that, at the direction of the Lord Jesus upon his ascension to heaven, the angels are actively administering the affairs of the world today, especially with respect to the believers. Read Hebrews 2:5 and also note Job 38:1-7: there God declares that He laid the foundation of the earth and, at this time, the “morning stars (the angels) sang together, and all the sons of God (angels) shouted for joy.”

A number of these points are available in our literature but, from time to time it is helpful to review this approach to Genesis 1 as it teaches not only about God's power in creation, but it also demonstrates His plan for man's salvation.

Ellen Styles (Ann Arbor, MI)

Fifty Years is a Long Time

A wife is responsible to keep her husband from being alone in a terribly lonely world. A wife is a hedge against the alienation that comes from being human. She is a sanctuary when he battles with pain and criticism. Few people care about a man's dreams, hopes, and fears. Society tells him he's out of step. His friends lack real love and intimacy. Since being expelled from Eden, man vaguely remembers and longs for the fellowship and completeness only God Himself can supply. But, in the interim, a wife can help more than almost anyone, or anything, else.

One writer recounts this story: “One day, we stopped by the house of an elderly couple, and the husband joyfully insisted that we join them for some ice cream and cake because it was their 50th anniversary, ‘Fifty years!’ I exclaimed. ‘That’s a long time with one person!’ ‘It would have been a lot longer without her,’ the husband replied.”

Anonymous

Music in Worship

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“Messiah” — A Spiritual and Musical Delight

Many musical choices are available to the followers of Jesus in the modern world. Various factors affect our choice of music: appropriateness, preference, musical taste, musical training, and occasion. There are, of course, times when our selection of music will not necessarily be Biblical or religious in content. Classical music, opera, musicals, ballet, and folk music may also be of interest. Enjoyment of music as a recreational pastime can be restful and pleasing, and the vast library of musical literature provides a wide selection of worthwhile and wholesome choices. For the disciple, the primary guiding factor should always be what is appropriate:

“If there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things” (Phil 4:8).

We are privileged to have some of the world’s great music available in high quality recordings at a very reasonable price. Wonderful orchestras, disciplined choirs, exceptional soloists, ensembles and singers can be heard readily in our home or car, or at live presentations. The training and skill of musicians today, combined with quality of recording and amplification systems, make listening to music a delightful experience.

For the disciple the “Messiah” by G.F. Handel will likely be considered one of the very worthwhile musical compositions available. It has rich orchestral music, exciting choral selections, dramatic solos, and words that are taken from inspiring Scripture passages. Through the words of the Bible, the story of Jesus unfolds in music: Messianic prophecies, Jesus’ life and death and resurrection, ending in events related to his return. Music is written in ways that reflect the narrative and emotion of events related in Scripture.

While some disciples will not find music from the “Messiah” to their musical preference, many will find both the musical style and creative presentation enjoyable, helpful and stimulating. There are well over 100 recordings of the complete score of the “Messiah” available on the market today. These have been recorded over many years in various countries of the world. In addition, there are countless recordings containing instrumental, choral and individual selections from the “Messiah”. The choruses are available separately from the rest of the oratorio.

For those interested in music like the “Messiah”, many will feel this is one of the most thrilling and encouraging oratorios available. This is not an overstatement. More than a few Christadelphians regard the “Messiah” as one of the finest musical expressions of reflection and appreciation of the exciting message of salvation through Jesus, the Son of God. It is thrilling to sing and inspiring to hear.

Live presentations are vibrant with an element of drama. Professional choirs are usually well worth hearing, but tickets are often expensive. Local productions of the “Messiah” by community choirs should not be ruled out and are sometimes surprising in quality and presentation. They are also much less expensive, as well as being more accessible than larger venues.

A highly recommended CD recording of the “Messiah” is an extremely well produced edition by Philips (Product number 412 538-2). This recording features Sir Colin Davis conducting the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra and Chorus. It is sung in English and has four very enjoyable and capable soloists.

One outstanding feature of this recording is the piece “And with His Stripes We are Healed”. This chorus was written with orchestral accompaniment. But in this recording Sir Colin Davis has chosen to have it sung a cappella (without accompaniment). It is sung very softly, without the orchestra, and it provides a startling contrast to the faster and louder selections on either side of this chorus. Sung so softly, it conveys the pathos, the sublime personal meaning of Jesus suffering for sin. It almost forces the listener to strain to hear every precious word. One is left breathless when the chorus is finished.

In summary, listening to the “Messiah” is a wonderful musical experience made particularly more meaningful because of our familiarity and understanding of the Scriptures presented in this oratorio. Take the opportunity sometime soon to hear this beautiful music and its lovely words of Divine purpose and fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

Ken Curry (Toronto East, ON)

Handel’s Oratorio “Messiah” — A Personal View

In the eighteenth century, when Bibles were comparatively very expensive, oratorios were designed to educate people by setting significant portions of the Holy Scriptures to music, employing solo singers, choir and orchestra. Oratorio means “oratory by music”. George Frederick Handel (1685-1759), the German-born composer (naturalized English from 1726), was one of the foremost musicians who employed this particular dramatic form as seen in “Messiah”. (Other composers include Beethoven, “Christ on the Mount of Olives”, and Mendelssohn, “Elijah”.) After the first performance in a music hall in Dublin on April 13, 1742, just after Easter, it is said that a friend thanked Handel for ‘such a beautiful piece of entertainment’. The composer replied that ‘it was not written for entertainment, but for education’!

It is difficult to imagine anything more awe-inspiring than the design of “Messiah”:

- Part I: The prophecy and realization of God’s plan to redeem mankind by the coming of the Messiah.
- Part II: The accomplishment of redemption by the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus and the utter defeat of his enemies.
- Part III: Thanksgiving for the final overthrow of death, and the glory and blessing of immortal life.

There is the gradual unfolding of the grand plan of redemption with many of the texts being drawn from Old Testament prophecies in the Psalms, Isaiah, Lamentations, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. These quotations become more and more substantial and definite as the Nativity is approached. This development is accompanied by the overwhelming expressiveness of the melodies, especially the so-called ‘Passion Music’ in the depiction of the sacrificial mission of the Messiah, for the salvation of mankind. The climax of the composition depicts the faith and hope of the redeemed, and the final triumph of the Messiah.

My earliest acquaintance with Handel’s “Messiah” was as a Sunday school scholar at Rochdale, England, in the mid-1940s. Two young brethren, the late Ross Longley and Jack Taylor from Northwich, were invited by the ecclesia to come along and play their collection of vinyl records. It was a long session but there was excitement about the glorious words that Handel had set to music. I assumed that the whole work was put together by Handel; thought that he must have been very religious; and heard that he was reputed to read the Bible regularly. A few years later I went to a public performance that was complete with soloists, choir and symphony orchestra. Reading the program notes I learned that Handel had employed a librettist,¹ Charles Jennens (1700-1773), who chose the words from the Holy Scriptures, and also selected the texts for Handel’s oratorios “Saul” and “Belshazzar”. (The suggestion that the compilations were made by Jennen’s chaplain, Mr. Pooley, is now widely discredited.) Many years later I decided to find out more about Charles Jennens, and as with my previous supposition about Handel, I assumed that he must have been extremely pious.

Who was Charles Jennens? He was the country squire at Gopsall Hall in Leicestershire, England, descended from a family that made its ample fortunes at Birmingham, probably from jewelry, where they were equally famous for industry and generosity. Jennens was noted for the grandeur of his demeanor, his sometimes eccentric behavior, and his many servants. His neighbors called him ‘Suleiman the Magnificent’ after the great Ottoman ruler. He also owned a house in Great Ormond Street, London, and was driven from his house to his printers, a stone’s throw away, in a chariot drawn by four horses. However, he was said to be kindhearted and generous.

Evidently his efforts at Shakespearean literary criticism made him the laughing-stock of his bookish contemporaries, who described him as ‘conceited’. This did not endear him to Handel’s admirers, but they failed to gather a shred of evidence to indicate that the great musician himself was not involved in the libretti.² There

is no reason to believe that anyone was responsible for the selection of these Holy Scriptures, other than Squire Jennens. However, he has long enjoyed the dubious distinction of being one of the few objectors to the way in which Handel set the words of “Messiah” to music. Even so, he continued to remain a sincere and valued supporter of Handel.

Handel is not regarded generally as a religious composer, for he was not a theologian or Bible scholar, but “Messiah” is seen as a supreme harmonious religious creation. This is because of its exciting Messianic theme, remarkable musical power, lyricism, and the eloquence of the orchestration. Beethoven is said to have remarked, “Handel is the greatest composer who ever lived”, and spoke of the oratorio as having “sublimity of language”. Over the past three centuries, many criticisms of the work; various editions, arrangements and misarrangements, and predigested editions such as “Young Messiah” (1979) have been published. However, Handel’s “Messiah” has exhibited an extraordinary resilience, and made a significant contribution as a unique testimony to the world of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Kenneth Camplin (Mittagong, Australia)

Notes:

1. A librettist is someone who writes a libretto, i.e., the words of a dramatic musical work.
2. Libretti is the plural of libretto.

Sources:

Dictionary of National Biography
Oxford History of Music, Volume IV
The Gospel in Song, H.P. Mansfield
The Musical Times, November 1, 1902
Wikipedia

“Messiah” — Jesus’ Remarkable Life and Purpose in Music

The “Messiah” Oratorio is a major composition about the life and purpose of Jesus in a magnificent symphonic and choral structure. The selections (pieces) in Parts I, II and III include arias (solo pieces), recitatives (narrative pieces) and choruses (sung by four voices). The three parts, using words (libretto) exclusively of verses from the Bible, include the account of Jesus in music. Included are:

- (1) Old Testament prophecies about his mission and birth;
- (2) Old and New Testament passages related to his death, resurrection, and the preaching of the gospel message, concluding with
- (3) exciting events, foretold in the Scriptures, depicting his return and the resurrection.

In Part I there are a total of 21 pieces. Two are orchestral pieces. The opening overture (an introductory piece played by the orchestra) is followed by Old Testament prophecies that foretell the mission of Jesus, including “Every valley shall be exalted — But who may abide the day of His coming?” Bible passages used include Isaiah 40:1-5; Haggai 2:6,7; and Malachi 3:1-3.

Excitement builds in the next five pieces. Bible passages that speak about darkness covering the earth are contrasted with the hopefulness connected with the birth of a child. The section begins with the alto voice announcing, “Behold, a virgin shall conceive”, followed by a lively choral number, “O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion.” The deep bass voice is chosen to convey the dismal news, “For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth.” Next is a bass solo, in which the darkness of the people is contrasted with the great light the people will see. The darkness statements are written in a minor (sad) key contrasted with the “great light” sections written in a major (happy) key. This section concludes with a well-known, joyful choral piece, “For unto us a child is born.” Bible passages in this mini-section of Part I include Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23; Isaiah 40:9; Isaiah 60:2,3; and Isaiah 9:2, 6.

The Pastoral Symphony, the second of two orchestral piece in the Messiah, sets the scene for the section on the birth of Jesus. In the next five pieces, events surrounding the birth of Jesus are presented with Bible passages taken from Luke 2:8-11,13,14. The soprano voice begins with a narrative recitative, “There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night”, sung to a simple accompaniment of solid, sustained chords. In the next recitative, “And lo! The angel of the Lord came upon them”, the soprano solo voice is accompanied with an active accompaniment of arpeggiated chords.¹ This mini-section in Part I concludes with the joyful chorus, “Glory to God”.

The work of Jesus is then considered in four pieces. The first piece urges the need for a positive response of the people of Israel to the birth of Messiah. “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee. He is the righteous Savior, and he shall speak peace unto the heathen” (Zech 9:9,10). The second piece, an alto recitative, speaks of the healing aspect of Jesus’ work: “Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart and the tongue of the deaf shall sing” (Isa 35:5,6). The succeeding piece, an alto aria, outlines the mission of Jesus. It speaks about Jesus’ instruction and care of his sheep: “He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; and shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young” (Isa 40:11; Matt 11:28,29).

Part I concludes with a chorus reminding the listener that “His yoke is easy and his burthen (an old English word for burden) is light” (Matt 11:30).

In Part II (the longest section in the Messiah, with 23 pieces), the scene changes from one of jubilation over the birth and mission of Jesus to one of despair. It is interesting that there are only two pieces in Part II where higher register voices are used for solos — one alto and one soprano solo. It seems Handel has chosen tenor and bass voices as more fitting for the subject material in this section.

The first ten pieces consider Jesus as the Lamb of God, and this mini-section in Part II begins with a choral selection (the only one in this section with words taken from the New Testament), “Behold the Lamb of God” (John 1:29). To describe the despair of Jesus a remarkable Old Testament quotation is used from

Lamentations 1:12:

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger."

Jeremiah felt great sorrow in his heart over the captivity of Judah. Some of his feelings are applied to the feelings of Jesus at the time of his death, sung appropriately by a tenor voice.

The next five pieces begin with a tenor solo, in a major key, joyously proclaiming, "But Thou didst not leave his soul in hell." This mini-section concludes with a bass solo, "Thou art gone up on high."

Of the concluding eight pieces in Part II, three speak about the Gospel being preached after Jesus' ascension. There is a well-known soprano solo:

"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things" (Rom 10:15).

The last four pieces of Part II set the world scene at the return of Jesus — nations raging and wishing to break their yokes, but God laughing and placing the nations in derision, and finally breaking them with a rod of iron and dashing them in pieces like a potter's vessel (Psa 2:1-3,4,9). These are loud, dramatic musical portrayals of divine intervention and judgment.

Part II concludes with the most familiar chorus from the Messiah — the "Hallelujah Chorus". While this chorus is being sung audiences usually stand.

Consisting of nine pieces, Part III is the shortest section in the "Messiah". In live performances usually there is no break between Part II and Part III. All but the last piece present Scriptural thoughts and aspects of the resurrection, beginning with a soprano aria, "I know that my Redeemer liveth". The aria's first part is two verses from Job's often quoted declaration concerning his hope:

"I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God" (Job 19:25,26).

The last section of this aria is quoted from 1 Corinthians 15:20:

"For (but) now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that sleep (slept)."

When these quotations from the Old and New Testaments are combined, Job's hope, expressed many years before Jesus' birth, is now effectively linked by music to the resurrected savior.

In the succeeding pieces various components of resurrection are presented:

- A choral piece — "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead, For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1Cor 15:21).
- A recitative (narrative) piece — A recitative is a musical form that provides a framework for dialogue to be presented in a concise, unembellished manner. This recitative quotes two Bible verses in only eight bars (or measures) of music: "Behold, I tell you a mystery, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be

chang'd in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet" (1Cor 15:51,52).

- A bass solo — "The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be chang'd" (1Cor 15:52,53).
- A short alto recitative — "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallow'd up in victory" (1Cor 15:54).
- A duet for alto and tenor (the only duet in the "Messiah"): "O Death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law" (1Cor 15:55,56).
- This is followed by a jubilant chorus singing "But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, thro' our Lord Jesus Christ" (1Cor 15:57).
- A soprano solo: "If God be for us, who can be against us? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is at the right hand of God, who makes intercession for us" (Rom 8:31,33,34).

"Messiah" concludes with a majestic choral number, sung at a slow tempo: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by His blood." Immediately following this is a section with a quicker tempo that is appropriate for the words, "...to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

These contrasting sections are sung twice. Then the pace quickens slightly and the words, "Blessing and honor, glory and pow'r, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever" are sung to a lively accompaniment.

Next, an even quicker tempo is indicated for the single word, "Amen". To convey the beauty of this concluding section Handel has the four voices of the choir sing in what is called a contrapuntal style (with independent voice lines). This beautifully portrays in music the depth, grandeur and appreciation of God's plan of redemption through the work of Jesus — the plan that began in Genesis and continues through to the end of the Revelation.

"Messiah" is a remarkable composition that honors the Son of God. May this music not only thrill our ears but also touch our minds and hearts to bring fuller appreciation to our Precious Savior.

Joan Curry (Toronto East, ON)

Note:

1. An "arpeggiated chord" is a chord whose pitches are sounded successively, usually from lowest to highest, rather than simultaneously. Taken from *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music*, ed by D. Randel, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1986, p. 52.

Score Used:

The Messiah, An Oratorio, G. Schirmer, Inc., New York, Ed. 38, 1912.

"Every man's work, whether it be literature or music or pictures or architecture or anything else, is always a portrait of himself" (Samuel Butler).

Reflections

The One Body

Of all Scriptural principles, this may seem the simplest. Almost any brother or sister could expound it, could exhibit the beauty of the apostle's simile and reveal the folly of any member being either puffed up with an impression of superior office or depressed by lack of qualification for any particular form of service. Eye and ear and foot and hand all have worthy parts to play. A well equipped mouth is of no service if it fails to arrive at the place where it is wanted. The feet have to bring it. It may follow therefore that an inferior mouth would render better service if only it could be supported by better feet.

The principle is recognized at least in theory, and it needs no further theoretical exposition. Is it recognized in practice? Do we realize the object "that there should be no schism in the body"? Have members "the same care one for another"? So that if "one member suffer, all the members suffer with it"?

The apostle truly presents a high ideal, but it is the ideal at which we must aim if we want to be saved. All that we are told of the judgment seat tends to show that the supreme test is in these matters. If we are repudiated then, it will be because we have failed to live the Truth and not for inability to understand it. We are told that some will be punished for errors committed without adequate knowledge of their Lord's will; but assuredly it will not be because of inability to understand. It is our duty to know our Lord's will. The necessary instruction is given to us, and if we fail to hear and understand it is almost certain that an obstinate self-deception is at the root of the difficulty. Such obdurate self-deception is deserving of stripes.

A simple test will probably prove to all who are able to receive instruction that they have far to go in pursuit of the apostolic ideal. Have we the same care one for another? If one member suffers do we all suffer in sympathy, or if one member is honored do we all rejoice? The natural tendency of the flesh is in the wrong direction under each of these headings. It is natural to have care for those who are the objects of our especial regard, and to be indifferent to all others. Of course, there will be special friendships in the Brotherhood, with different degrees and even different kinds of love. This is inevitable, and not at all incompatible with true fellowship. It is well to understand the distinction between the two words. Friendship is individual and peculiar. You cannot have ten thousand close friends. Fellowship is collective and comprehensive. You can be in true fellowship with any number. Friendship is at liberty to make selection of special companions. Just as a man in the Faith is at liberty to marry whom he will "only in the Lord", so is he at liberty to choose his special friends, assuming, of course, in both cases, that the desires are reciprocal and that the choice made is in harmony with the other commands of the Lord. Fellowship does not give us such liberty. We fellowship each other on the basis of the one Faith, and this may draw together

men and women who are utterly different in taste and temperament. These differences will inevitably affect our choice of special friends but they ought not to affect our “care for one another” in the fellowship of the Gospel. The point can be illustrated without departure from the most ordinary experiences of life. If a brother or sister who is a very dear friend shows signs of weakness and a need for special help, we are ready to give any amount of care and attention to nurse the feeble one back to healthy faith. We would reprove any impatient critic, and find plenty of Scripture to assist our advocacy of gentle methods. What long-suffering, patience, gentleness and compassion are shown in our great example! How many injunctions there are to be kind, considerate and forbearing! But are we quite as ready to think of these passages if the straying sheep is one whose personality repels us? Are we as ready to sacrifice rest and comfort in trying to assist the unattractive wanderer?

The question whether brethren attract us or repel us personally does not in the least degree affect the truth of their being members of the One Body, and we ought to have the “same care one for another”, because of our fellowship in the Truth, unaffected by the affinities and preferences which belong to human personality. This, of course, as with many other duties, is unnatural. The natural tendency is to be “partial” in judgment. We may be quite innocent of showing any undue respect to the man with a gold ring or disrespect toward the one who is poorly clad, yet we may fall into an exactly similar error on a different basis. A dear friend has erred. Well, we remember how forbearing our Lord was with sinners. We must restore him in the spirit of meekness. One who always repelled us has erred. We remember how Samuel treated Agag; we remember the apostle’s instructions to withdraw from those who are disorderly. We must be valiant for the Truth.

It is not suggested that all are under the sway of such fleshly instincts leading to such partiality of judgment. This, however, is the natural tendency, and it is questionable whether even those who are most conscious of the weakness have overcome it entirely. Has there never been a time when, in dealing with a friend, you have shown a consideration and patience far beyond anything you can muster for that other offender who does not interest you or possibly repels you? If there has been any such partiality, has it been an instance of weakness in dealing with a friend when you should have been valiant for the Truth? Or has it been harshness in dealing with another when you should have remembered the meekness and gentleness of Christ? True fellowship demands that we should have the same care one for another, “that there be no schism in the body”. When we are least inclined to remember the rights and the interdependence of members, then we should try our hardest. When we are least attracted to members, then we have the best opportunity for increasing the duties of fellowship. Where our sympathies are least engaged, then we have the best opportunity of showing that we can be impartial, having the same care one for another.

It is easier for us to conform to the apostolic command under the second heading we have mentioned. We can suffer with those who suffer, more readily than we can rejoice with those who are honored. The suffering, however, has to be near and obvious, or we can easily forget and ignore it. We have heard of the millionaire who

was so touched with the pitiful story of a caller that he said to a servant, "Send this poor fellow away at once, or I shall have no appetite for dinner." Perhaps there are many even in the Brotherhood who would find it too painful to regard the lives of their fellows very closely. A tragedy in the house of a next-door neighbor will cast a gloom over us when a far greater tragedy in a distant land hardly affects us at all. In the same way we shall be partial in our treatment of brethren near and distant unless we make a great effort to enlarge our sympathies.

When we are called upon to rejoice with the member who is highly honored, the task is still more difficult, especially for some natures. There are men who could sympathize with a friend's misfortune and even make a generous effort to assist him; but they can never forgive him for being successful. The jealous feeling is well disguised, of course. They fear that the friend's good fortune will turn his head and spoil his character, and we may rest assured that they will find ample confirmation of their worst fears, act how he may. Such people are capable of killing an old friend with pinpricks; shaking their heads all the while, and deploring his supposed weakness.

It is only too true that even brethren are often very unkind to each other without ever owning the fault or recognizing the tortuous self-deception which leads to the cruelty. The evils in the world are reproduced among those who are supposed to have come out from the world. It is easy to forget that there are any obligations in connection with the One Body or that if we sin against any of the members we sin against the Head. The One Body is formed on the basis of the One Faith; the essentials of which remain as in the days of the apostles. They do not change from year to year with the exigencies of human policy. Faith has been corrupted repeatedly both by the neglect of essentials and by the additions of human ideas. We must hold fast to the Word which is the only true light. It does not matter what men may think or say of us; what would the Lord have us do? That is the supreme test, and it is well for us to use it now in the day of opportunity and before the day of judgment. If we can really bend our spirits to "learn of him", we find at once that our duties are constructive and that they begin with the nurture and care of the One Body which is being developed on the basis of the One Faith.

Islip Collyer (Principles and Proverbs)

"Wounded and Bruised"

Have we ever carefully considered the experience of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ written about by the prophet Isaiah?

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities" (Isa 53:5).

The Hebrew word for "wounded" ("chalal") means to bore (as in wounded by boring). The word is found in Zechariah's famous passage:

"And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced..." (Zech 12:10).

So he was wounded, pierced, for our transgressions, literally, because we have "missed the mark" (chata).

The Hebrew word for “bruised” (“daka”) means to crumble, collapse, crush, beat to pieces and break (in pieces), and hence, to bruise. So he was crushed very small for our “iniquities” (“avown”), for our perversity, our crookedness, because we have bent our wills away from God.

Now where is this iniquity?

The Bible says much of it (if not all) comes from the heart of man (Matt 12:34-37), out of his mouth.

The apostle James, the brother (in the flesh) of the Lord Jesus, may have been guilty of this iniquity (Psa 69:8; John 7:5; Mark 3:21,31-35) for he says:

“The tongue is a fire (of destruction), a world of iniquity” (James 3:6-10).

“We admit, that we have not accepted the slanders and reproaches bestowed upon us with that gratitude the word inculcates. Born and educated in a country where character is more precious than gold, we have, in time past, felt like Ephraim unaccustomed to the yoke, when suffering under the galling imputations of reckless assailants. Experience, however, has taught us, that in this country, slander is the people’s broadsword with which they seek to slay the reputations of all who aim to serve them otherwise than in subservience to their passions, in the things of time or eternity. But, blessed be our foes in their basket and store. We thank them for their persecution, and opposition with which they have encountered us. But for these, we should have been, perhaps like them, ‘in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity’. Their course has compelled us to study more diligently than we might have done the Holy Scriptures, that we might be better able to give an answer to every one that should ask a reason of the Hope that is in us. Had they let us alone, it is probable we should have been in good repute indeed with them and their leaders: and might even have been teaching the same fables; which, however, would have deprived us of the pleasure of confessing our errors and mistakes, and of thus publicly renouncing and bidding them adieu” (John Thomas, *The Faith in the Last Days*, p. 42).

When Bro. Thomas had been the subject of some very hostile comments he penned the following prayer: “O, Lord God in heaven above, merciful and gracious Father, what can we render to Thee for Thy goodness? Thou hast appointed a day in which Thou wilt judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ! Blessed be Thy holy name. We shall all be judged before his tribunal and not man’s. Then the hidden things of men shall be brought to light, and their secret thought shall be unveiled, to their justification or reproof! Thou God seest us all, for all hearts are open before Thee! If Thou beholdest any thing in me displeasing in Thy sight, let me fall into Thy hands, and not into the hands of those who thirst for my destruction! Grant me patience to endure their unrighteousness, and by fidelity and perseverance to overcome the iniquity of their doings; and may the word of the truth concerning the hope of the glorious gospel of Jesus be established in these countries; and may those who now oppose it, in ignorance and unbelief, find mercy of Thee, repenting of their waywardness, and purifying their hearts by faith, that they may be accepted when the Lord comes! ‘Forgive them, for they know not what they do’; and may we all at length find an abundant entrance into

the kingdom of the future age, to the glory of the great Immanuel's name! Amen! Amen!" (*Ibid.*, p. 43).

My dear beloved brothers and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ, isn't our Lord's suffering on our behalf enough for us to show in a tangible way our gratitude and appreciation for what the emblems of the bread and the wine represent this morning?

"Who, when he was reviled (abused verbally) reviled not again (did not return the abuse); but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (1Pet 2:20-25).

Anthony Semple (Georgetown, Guyana)

Bible Exposition and Exhortation

"I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching... always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry" (2Tim 4:1,2,5, RSV).

Paul urges Timothy to preach, convince, rebuke, and exhort, functions we readily associate with the work of an evangelist. Then the apostle adds supportive advice, perhaps not as obviously related to this role: to be unfailingly patient and steady, and to endure suffering. He is drawing attention to the unavoidable connection between theory and practice.

The validity of our own Bible exposition and the value of our exhortation will inevitably depend upon the degree to which the Word of God has shaped our thought processes and influenced our way of life. If we allow it, the transforming influence of Scripture will become apparent in the way we live. The exemplary life of a dedicated disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ offers expositional and exhortational value far in excess of any eloquent words uttered from any platform, or assembled in any article. Similarly, the way an ecclesia handles difficult situations is more revealing of its collective character than any list of doctrines to which its members give intellectual assent.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly," says Paul, for this is the prerequisite to being able to *"teach and admonish one another in all wisdom"* (Col 2:16).

Here is one aspect of the ideal: we read the Bible attentively, thoughtfully, prayerfully, thankfully, every day. We read the whole Bible every year. In spiritual matters, we all fall short, but the closer we come to this ideal the more we will have to offer. If we neglect Scripture because we are always too busy with other matters, if we fall far short of this ideal, our expositions will be of little worth; our exhortations, little more than motivational fluff.

As we read, we need to keep asking questions like these:

- What is this actually saying?
- What is it not saying?

- What principles are being taught?
- How does this relate to other Scriptures?
- How does this relate to my life?

As we read, we jot down the questions that occur to us. As we continue our Scriptural explorations, we remain alert for the answers suggested in other portions of the inspired record. We consider each passage in its context. We compare one part of Scripture with another. We allow the Bible to be its own interpreter.

Over the years, I have conducted a number of classes on “first principles”. My approach has always been the same. I prepare a list of basic Bible topics. Well ahead of each class, everyone would know which topic or two would be addressed. In preparation for the class, it was the responsibility of each participant to identify a number of relevant Scriptures. In class, we would read each passage, in context, and discuss its implications. From all these passages, each participant would decide which ones to add to their own list. We each ended up with our own personally selected collection of Scriptures, classified by topic. My own is a handwritten set produced long before I started to use a computer. Those notes still provide the raw material needed for me to write or chat on any of those subjects.

In my current role as a professional speaker, I evidently have an impact on an audience, using my own original material. My stories, my questions, my photographs, my philosophy, my humor, my acronyms. But for an exhortation or a Bible talk, the speaker’s own original material is largely irrelevant.

A powerful Bible passage provides a far better opening for an exhortation than does any personal story. Another apt Scriptural quotation offers a better conclusion than does any eloquent rhetorical flourish of our own uninspired composition. And in between, the core material should consist of a series of carefully selected Bible passages, arranged in an appropriate sequence. The speaker’s notes should provide reminders of the points to be drawn out of the divine text.

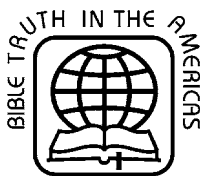
The role of the exhorter, the expositor, is to draw attention to the message of the Word of God, to point out precisely what each passage is saying, the way it relates to the context and to other Scriptures, and how its lessons and principles should be applied in our own lives.

Certainly, we should offer our own insights into Scripture, but such insights come not from developing our own thoughts and ideas, but from assembling and pondering the pertinent Bible passages. The role does not involve putting across a message we have dreamed up ourselves, punctuated by a few Bible verses that might appear to back up the opinions we wish to convey.

The more beneficial, Bible-based technique is not complicated. All it takes is the diligent study of the Scriptures that flows from the commitment of dedicated discipleship.

“And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified” (Acts 20:32).

Philip Jones (Calgary, AB)



Bible Mission News

News from San Salvador, El Salvador

In the firm conviction that Jesus will soon come and that he is presently interceding with the Father so that the family of the Truth will continue to grow in El Salvador, I would like to share with you the events of last weekend.



**Bro. Edwin Chevez
and Sis. Claudia Avila**

July 12, 2009, was a great day for the Christadelphian family because we were blessed with the addition of a new member. She is Claudia Elizabeth Sánchez Avila, a friend of our Bro. Edwin Chevez, who requested baptism after completing a course of preparatory Bible classes. Sis. Claudia was brought to meeting by Bro. Edwin so that she would come to know the Truth. Bro. Edwin's example led her to come out every Sunday and to ask to join an ecclesial baptismal preparation class, in addition to receiving personal instruction from Bro. Edwin.

Sis. Claudia's family have accepted her friendship with Bro. Edwin but have not changed their own convictions, being firm Roman Catholics. However Sis. Claudia is happy that although her family did not approve of her being baptized nor attend the ceremony, neither did they disparage the idea. She believes they have realized that what she is doing is good for her. For her part Sis. Claudia has shown herself to have an excellent understanding of

Bible teaching and a firm faith, so that our ecclesia has gained a strong new sister and we are delighted to welcome her.

We have also been blessed with the visit of Bro. Ed Binch of Indiana, USA. Actually we feel as if Bro. Ed had simply returned to El Salvador after taking an extended

vacation abroad, because by now he is as Salvadoran as we ourselves are. On Saturday, July 11, Bro. Ed began a series of studies based on the letter to the Hebrews, describing Jesus' role as high priest and the importance of our praying continually to the Father through him.

Bro. Ed also gave the public lecture on the day of Sis. Claudia's baptism, when our ecclesia's regular attenders were augmented by the members and friends of our satellite ecclesias in Sonsonate and Usulután. There is not really enough space any more in the San Salvador hall for all three ecclesias in the country to meet at the same time, especially because the Usulután Ecclesia brings such a large group of young people.

Next weekend Bro. Ed will again lead us in meditating on the Word of God in our lives. And to the joy, glory and honor of God, another of our young people has begun studying for baptism. He is Herbert Carrillo, older son of Bro. Herbert Carrillo Sr. and Sis. Lorena Ayala. We are very pleased by Herbert's decision and ask for your prayers to support the new members of our ecclesia and all others who feel themselves motivated to become members of the great family of God.

We are also happily looking forward to our upcoming Bible school, to be held in late December. The Sunday school students have begun selling fruit at the end of our services to raise funds to help defray the cost of the school. For this also we are very grateful to God.

*Sincerely,
Sis. Silvia Fernández
San Salvador Ecclesia, El Salvador*

Guyana Glow

It began early July, with the ministry of Bro. Ted and Sis. Dolores Sleeper at the annual fraternal gathering held at the new Mocha hall. It is still in animation after the Triennial Caribbean camp, with the extended stay of a few Jamaican camp leaders and Bro. Andy Bradshaw of the Manchester-Sale Ecclesia in U.K.

Bro. Andy is no stranger to Guyana, and especially the New Amsterdam Ecclesia, this being his sixth visit. He is continuing pastoral work this season, that was begun by Bro. Wesley Butler of the Vancouver Ecclesia, B.C. and Bro. Clive and Sis. Christine Drepaul of New York, NY.

In New Amsterdam there were also preaching activities engineered by Bro. Joe and Sis. Veronica Badlu of New York, NY, in the form of a five-day Gospel Proclamation followed by a three-week seminar. The members and CYCers of the New Amsterdam Ecclesia, and a few members from the Kilcoy Ecclesia gave encouraging support.

There was also a two-week Vacation Bible school at the New Amsterdam ecclesia, led by Bro. Wesley. The CYCers and Sunday School scholars were in attendance.

Besides ministering at the New Amsterdam and Kilcoy ecclesias, the visiting brothers and sisters were able to meet at Plegt Anker (the third Berbice ecclesia), and all three Demerara ecclesias.

It was wonderful to have the support of the Demerara ecclesias (Georgetown, Eccles and Mocha) for the Breaking of Bread meeting at the campsite, Kuru-Kuru Training Center, to usher in the 11th Triennial Caribbean Youth camp. Over 150 campers from Guyana, Barbados, Trinidad, Tobago and Jamaica attended and were uplifted by two timely series of classes: “Nehemiah — A Man For All Seasons” by Bro. Tyrone Smartt, and “Hide Thy Face From My Sin” by Bro. Gideon Drepaul.

After the camp, Bre. James and Danny of the Spanish Town, Jamaica, Ecclesia, and Bre. Davion and Garfield of the Kingston, Jamaica, Ecclesia, remained in Guyana and continued ministration.

One of the highlights of our visit was meeting with three senior members, whose combined ages average to over 90 years, with frail physical bodies but amazing mental faculties. Sis. Amy Washington, 103 years old, tops the list; Bro. Vernon Yearwood and Bro. Eric Joseph are the other two seniors. Sis. Amy referred to pleasant events with Georgetown members dating back almost 50 years; Bro. Vernon offered a closing prayer at the Breaking of Bread in his Vryheid home, which included most of the faithful Bible characters; Bro. Eric, at the Mocha meeting, was amazing in his prayer for the emblems.

*Bro. Clive Drepaul.
Brooklyn Ecclesia, NY.*

ThisisYourBible.com

We will be soon drawing to the end of four years of actively preaching through the This is Your Bible.com (TIYB) web site. The Lord has blessed us greatly with thousands of wonderful students and matched them with 520 dedicated brothers and sisters that serve as their tutors. The pamphlet, “The Christian and Politics”, assigned to go with the leading question this month was read 252 times. We are so thankful that the Internet provides an effective and inexpensive method for taking the Word of God to almost any corner of the world.

¿Habras Español?

One of our clear limitations has been that our web site almost exclusively offers materials in English. Of course, English is spoken widely around the world, but in fact, those who speak English as either a first or second language represent just over 13.4% of the world's population. It's clear that being able to provide Internet preaching resources in most of the other major global languages is highly important.

Therefore, we are very pleased to announce that TIYB and LaBiblia.com will be merging within the next couple of months. This really represents a major upgrade to our current Internet preaching process. Spanish-speaking students around

the world will now experience most of the current TIYB resources in Spanish through LaBiblia.com. LaBiblia.com has long established itself as an effective tool in Spanish language preaching. In fact, the number of visitors to LaBiblia.com almost matches our *global* response for TIYB.

This merger will leverage the powerful “back-end” administrative and contact management tools that are currently housed on TIYB. It will provide LaBiblia.com with the ability to administer both postal and online correspondence courses in Spanish, as well as to have a team of Spanish language tutors that can access the data online. Soon, the site will be redesigned for improved navigation and artistic appearance and both the TIYB and LaBiblia.com sites will share the same look.

The LaBiblia.com site is managed by Bro. Robert Alderson and Bro. Kevin Hunter. Bro. Kevin developed the site several years ago and has found the site highly effective in identifying new postal correspondence students throughout Latin America. Bro. Robert and Bro. Kevin will lead a team of tutors for the Spanish language correspondence work as well as the localized follow-up coordination with ecclesias and mission workers.

With the addition of LaBiblia.com, we are able to reach another 420 million people who speak Spanish either as a first or second language. Combined with the English language preaching on TIYB, this now provides us with a worldwide audience of nearly 1 billion people!

We are very thankful to expand our language outreach. However, we look forward to the day when language will no longer divide this troubled world. As Zephaniah prophesied, the LORD will “turn to the people a pure language, that they may call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent.” May that day come soon!

*Submitted by Sis. Jan Berneau
CBMA & TIYB Publicity*

A Whole Armory of Weapons

Scripture is not only an armor, but also a whole armory of weapons, both offensive and defensive; whereby we may save ourselves and put the enemy to flight. It is not an herb, but a tree, or rather a whole paradise of trees of life, which bring forth fruit every month, and the fruit thereof is for meat, and the leaves for medicine. It is not a pot of manna, or a cruse of oil, which were for memory only, or for a meal's meat or two, but as it were a shower of heavenly bread sufficient for a whole host, be it ever so great; and as it were a whole cellar full of oil vessels; whereby all our necessities may be provided for and our debts discharged.

Myles Smith, Preface to the KJV, 1611

Addresses for Bequests and Donations

Christadelphian Bible Mission of the Americas (CBMA) supports preaching work throughout the Americas, Domestic Truth Corps, etc. Visit 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 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

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

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

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

Agape in Action provides help for Christadelphian families and children living in extreme poverty. Donations may be sent to 39 Manor Park Crescent, Guelph, ON, Canada, N1G 1A2.
Phone: 519-837-9095,
Email: agapeinaction@rogers.com
Website: www.agapeinaction.com

Christadelphian Meal a Day Fund of the Americas funds projects to support those in need in North and South America and the Caribbean. www.cmadfa.com

Christadelphian Save the Children Fund provides Bible learning materials, personal items, and scholarships to needy mission areas. For details see: www.christadelphianchildren.com

Christadelphian Heritage College
c/o Brantford Ecclesia, 442 Dunsdon St., Brantford, ON, Canada, N3P 2B1

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

Spanish language literature is available at P.O. Box 947, Monrovia, CA 91017-0947.
Email: jdhunter@gte.net,
Phone: 626-303-2222

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

(Please send in text-only News and Notices by the 10th of the preceding month; please include full name of ecclesia and recording brother.)

BRANTFORD, ON

On September 17, 2009, the light stand in Brantford rejoiced once again to witness the baptisms of two more of our Sunday school scholars. After sound confessions of faith, HEATHER JENNINGS and NAOMI JENNINGS, daughters of Bro. Jim and Sis. Shirley Ann Jennings, were immersed into the saving name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Two days later, on September 19, 2009, the ecclesial family celebrated the marriage of Bro. Andy Glen and Sis. Allison Jennings. September was truly an exciting time for the Jennings family. For those family members asleep in the Lord, their joy shall truly be marvelous on resurrection morn.

Michael Moore

ECHO LAKE, NJ

We thank our Bro. Eric Hall (Manhattan, NY) for his word of exhortation during the month. We wish to express our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to our Bro. John Hellawell for his study and exhortation at our recent study weekend. We were encouraged and built up in the 'things that we hold most precious' in these days before the return of our King.

We have been pleased and privileged to see a number of visiting brothers and sisters and we have welcomed them around the table of the Lord including: John and Angela Hellawell (Peterbrough UK); Eric and Bernice Hall (Manhattan, NY); Lori and Abigail Rayner, (Toronto, ON); Gaby Kilburn, and Joe and Veronica Badlu (South Ozone Park, NY); Paul and Dorothy Zawdzki (Boston, MA); Keena Charles (Georgetown, Guyana); Margan Packie, Carolyn Antonaccio and David and Maryann Jorgensen (Union, NJ); Edith Mochado (Nashua, NH); Tom and Sally Davies (Pomona, CA); Aaron and Kelly MacAdams and Ruthann Jorgensen (Worcester, MA); Jay and Barbara Mayock, and Bob and Bobby Faust (Moorestown, NJ); and Venessa Flatley (North Industry, OH).

Stewart Marsden

HAMILTON GREENAWAY, ON

It is with heavy heart that we announce the falling asleep in Christ of our dear Sis. Gail Anderson. Sis. Gail grew up in the Greenaway Sunday School and was a baptized member of Greenaway all her life. She was a provider of loving care to all who needed a helping hand, a true mother in Israel. We will miss her caring concern and nurturing spirit but rejoice that she will live again when the Master calls her from the grave. Our thoughts are with her family who mourn her loss.

The Father has blessed us with a new brother in Christ. DAVID GALLOWAY responded to the call of the gospel and was baptized into the only one who can save us, Jesus the Christ. We pray that Bro. David's journey with us may be a blessing for him and for us. We also welcome as new members: Sis. Margo Maier who joins us from the Shelburne Ecclesia; Bro. Craig Scott from the Hamilton MacNab Ecclesia;

and Bro. Paul and Sis. Roxana Chalifoux from the Brampton Ecclesia. We look forward to their help and company in our walk together.

The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.

Tom Thorp

KITCHENER WATERLOO, ON

On August 24, the ecclesia was very pleased to host “Operation Monday.” This year two events were being promoted: a lecture entitled “Russia’s Re-emergence — A Sign of Christ’s Coming” and the “Give your Life a New Perspective” seminar. This seminar was developed by the Pershore ecclesia. See *The Christadelphian*, May 2009, page 171.

Approximately 60 young people supported the members of the Kitchener-Waterloo ecclesia and delivered 10,000 handbills to the district surrounding the lecture and seminar location. Following a morning of handbill delivery, the group met for an afternoon of recreation and barbeque picnic in the lovely Laurel Creek Conservation Area. We thank all those who worked hard to make this effort a success and trust that they enjoyed the day of lovely weather as much as their hosts.

The lecture (as advertised in “Operation Monday”) was held on Wednesday, September 2, and was given by Bro. Jonathan Bowen. The lecture was well supported by brothers and sisters from a number of ecclesias. We had seven visitors from the advertising and several people expressed interest in attending future lectures and follow-up discussions. We thank Bro. Jonathan for his work on our behalf. The “Give your Life a New Perspective” seminar began, God willing, on September 14.

We are sorry to lose the company of Bro. Nathan Badger who has transferred to the Cambridge ecclesia. We appreciate the work he has done during the past few years. Bro. Fred Bouttell has resigned from the ecclesia, and Bro. Ryan Robertson is no longer in fellowship.

We have enjoyed the visits of many brothers and sisters during the summer months. We thank Bro. Roger Gore (Enfield, Australia) for his ministrations.

Martin J. Webster

NEW WESTMINSTER, BC

With the prayers and good wishes of the ecclesia, we are pleased to announce the wedding, on August 1, 2009, of Bro. Jeremy Prasad and Sis. Abigail Hart. May our heavenly Father bless their union as they commence their life together on the firm foundation and common bond of the truth.

We will miss the fellowship and service of Bro. Thomas and Sis. Esther Cawston, who have moved to Victoria, BC. We commend them to the love and fellowship of the Victoria Ecclesia.

Art Bull

VERNON, BC

We rejoice with Bro. Matt and Sis. Leah Siegler on the birth of a daughter, Kaylen Faith, on May 6, 2009.

We are saddened to report the falling asleep in Christ of our Sis. Hazel Holweg at the age of 97 years. She lived over 45 years in the Truth, and was a wonderful example

to many. We sympathize with her son, Bro. Don Holweg, and other members of her family for their loss.

We have transferred Bro. Lucas and Sis. Margaret Jones and family to the care of the Sussex, NB, Ecclesia. Also, Bro. Greg Howe has returned to Vancouver Island after many years in our area and we commend him to the Saanich Peninsula Ecclesia. Likewise, our Sis. Claira Young has moved to the Kamloops area, and will be attending the Kamloops Ecclesia. Bro. Joel and Sis. Diane Siegler leave us this week, as they hope to relocate to Ontario. We wish God's blessings on all of our members who have left us for new homes. We shall miss them all.

David Zantingh

New Book

Unlocking the Mystery — An Introduction to God Manifestation

There is a new book carried by the Thousand Oaks Library, *Unlocking the Mystery — An Introduction to God Manifestation*, by Bro. Jason Hensley

God manifestation is an extremely important topic to all of us; it encompasses our hope, our understanding of God, and our concept of His son. This book seeks to explain the relationship between God and Jesus, see how that relationship applies to us, and also open up the meaning of the cross.

Price: \$8.50. For all orders in the US under \$15, add \$2 shipping. For orders over \$15, the shipping is free. For orders in Canada, please contact Bro. Tom as below.

Copies may be obtained from the Thousand Oaks Library at www.bigbrand.com/library. You may contact Bro. Tom Graham at tom@bigbrand.com or 2621 Riata Ct., Camarillo, CA 93012, Phone 805-491-2527, Fax 805-491-2547

Run for the Everlasting Cure

God willing, we will be globally praying and running in the 5th annual "Run for the Everlasting Cure" on November 28, 2009! Please put this event on your ecclesial calendar! website <http://www.christadelphia.org/rftec/>

Texas Youth Conference 2009

December 26-January 2 at the Texas Christadelphian Camp and Conference Center near Freestone, TX. The speaker will be Bro. Max Wickham (CA) on "The Life of Joseph." Registration information and workbook at www.texasyouthconference.com.

"One never knows the meaning of what he may be doing for the time. It may be a lane into a larger road that may lead you to a harbor that may take you out into the ocean; or it may be a lane ending in a waste heap, though lanes don't generally end there, if a man has eyes. Whether waste heap or the ocean, you must take the steps before you.

"If God be your guide, you may go ahead without fear: but He will not guide you if you don't go. Do not lie down, for that is death. Do not go ahead with recklessness, for that is tempting God. In modesty commit your way to Him, exercising your best judgment in the steps you pick in the labyrinth; and if you don't get to the ocean, you will at all events get to some wholesome highway where life will be tolerable during the present evil" (Robert Roberts).

Minute Meditation

“Be ye angry and sin not”

The Greek philosopher Epictetus said many years ago that “any person capable of angering you becomes your master; he can anger you only when you permit yourself to be disturbed by him.”

When talking to my staff at work over the years, I often used Epictetus’ observation after a client had really upset them. I would tell them that no one can make you angry without your permission. One day a gentlemen came into my office, and we had a discussion with my door open, and they heard his conversation with me. Later, after he left, I walked out and they all looked up at me smiling and reminded me that no one can make you angry without your permission. I replied, “That is true and I just gave him permission.” We all had a good laugh.

We are in control of our emotions, and we must control them if we hope to please our heavenly Father. Anger itself is not a sin. We are told that “God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.” We know that God cannot sin, so His anger is righteous, His judgments are just, and it is right for Him to feel indignation over the failings of mankind. Our anger is not always justified, and often we sin when we react while we are angry.

We know that what made the Lord Jesus angry on many occasions was the hardness of the hearts of those he had come to save. In one instance, a man with a severely deformed hand was brought before Jesus by the authorities who hoped to use the man’s deformity to discredit Jesus. Mark tells us, “And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.” Jesus was angry but he did not sin. We need to take care not to sin when we are angry.

What should we do when we begin to feel the flush that anger brings, when our heartbeat quickens and our temper rises? We must take immediate action to take control of ourselves, and many times the action to take is to retreat and not respond. Back away, turn around, bite the tongue, but do not react. It is when we respond too quickly to the anger that fills us that we use inappropriate words and excessive actions that are sinful.

We can do something in anger that cannot be undone. They tell the story of Alexander the Great who in a fit of anger grabbed his spear and threw it at his best friend. It hit a vital spot and the friend fell down dead. Overcome with grief, Alexander fell on the dead body weeping, bitterly regretting not having controlled his fit of anger. We know that King Saul many times cast his spear at David as he was playing the harp trying to soothe Saul’s feelings of depression. In a moment of anger, Saul even attacked his own son, Jonathan, with a javelin. Fortunately

the LORD was protecting David and Jonathan and they were able to escape the fate of Alexander's best friend.

When angry, we can say things that hurt, we can act in a very un-Christlike way, and sadly, we can do it towards those we love the most. We need to learn to be in control of our emotions. While anger is not a sin, we must be very careful that we do not react in anger and sin in the process. We must be in control of our emotions at all times. We need to plan how to bring our emotions under control when we feel anger.

There is a story about a time when Abraham Lincoln's secretary of war, Edwin Stanton, was accused of inappropriate actions by a general. Lincoln suggested that Stanton respond by writing the general a letter. When Stanton finished the letter, he showed it to Lincoln who praised him for the strong, direct language he used in the letter. "What are you going to do with it?" Lincoln asked. "Send it," Stanton replied. Lincoln shook his head. "You don't want to send that letter," he said. "Put it in the stove. That's what I do when I have written a letter while I am angry. It's a good letter and you had a good time writing it and feel better. Now, burn it, and write another."

Abraham Lincoln's method for avoiding an angry knee-jerk reaction was to write a letter, which gives cooling off time and a chance to plan a more balanced response. It has been said, Speak when you are angry and you will give the best speech you will ever regret. Rather than blurting out our thoughts, we need to walk away from a situation when we're angry, count to ten, take some deep breaths, and perhaps write a letter so that we don't react hastily and sin. Usually, as Lincoln found, that letter written in anger should never be sent. We should rip it up and then rewrite it to soften our language, remembering as Solomon tells us, "A soft answer turneth away wrath." So often the actions we contemplate when angry are actions we would later regret if we acted on them.

We can read in the book of James how to control our emotions by listening more and slowing down our reactions: "My dear friends, you should be quick to listen and slow to speak or to get angry." Let us keep in mind this good advice, and remember the words of Paul who tells us, "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath".

Robert J. Lloyd

The Builder of History

Behind 10,000 events stands God, the builder of history, the maker of the ages. Eternity bounds the one side, eternity bounds the other side, and time is in between — Genesis-origins, Revelation-endings, and all the way between God is working things out. You can go down into the minutest detail everywhere and see that there is one great purpose moving through the ages, the eternal design of the almighty God to redeem a wrecked and ruined world. The Bible is one book, one history, one story, His story.

Henrietta Mears

Coming Events (Lord Willing)

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

NOVEMBER 2009

6-8 New England Bible Study weekend Barton Conference Center, North Oxford, MA. Bro. Andrew Bramhill (Bracknell, UK): "Returning From Exile — Leaders And Prophets". Contact Bro. Craig Nevers at craignev@cox.net or Sis. Judith Nevers at jnevers@verizon.net

7-8 Kouts, IN Fall study weekend at Woodland Park Community Center, 2100 Willowcreek Road, Portage, IN, 10:00 am. Bro. John Pople (San Francisco Peninsula, CA). Theme: "To Speak Well of God: A Study in Job." Please contact Bro. Joe Bennett at 219-762-2704 or jkb8275@comcast.net

7 Moorestown, NJ Fall Study Day. Bro. Paul Billington (Brantford, ON): "World Wars 1 & 2 in the Apocalypse". Contact Bro. Dan Langston for more information: dklangston@gmail.com 856-630-8979

7-8 Sarasota, FL Study weekend. Bro. Ian Macfarlane: "The Mind of the Spirit." Contact Bro. James Wilkinson 239-849-3301 or jameswilkinson@hotmail.com

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

13-15 Austin Leander, TX Annual Fall Gathering at the HEB Camp by Leakey, TX. Bro. Dennis Bevans (Reseda, CA): "Daniel: God Rules in the Kingdom of Men". Contact Sis. Maritta Terrell mt-ct@swbell.net, or P. O. Box 3729, Cedar Park, TX 78630.

13-15 Kitchener-Waterloo, ON Brothers' Weekend

20-22 Seattle, WA Seattle Youth Conference at Cornet Bay ELC, WA. Bro. Dev Ramcharan (Toronto West, ON). Classes on Ruth. Contact Sis. Abby Cooper seattlecyc@gmail.com

27-29 Washington, DC Family Bible Study Weekend at Camp Hashawha, Westminster, MD. Bro. Ian Macfarlane (Book Road Hamilton, ON): "The Mind of the Spirit". Contact Bro. Robert Kling, 301-498-5245, rkling@acm.org

28 Run for the Everlasting Cure. God Willing, we will be globally praying and running in the 5th annual "Run for the Everlasting Cure" <http://www.christadelphia.org/rftec/>

29 Ann Arbor, MI 12th Annual Thanksgiving Gathering. 11 am Memorial service. Lecture to follow lunch. Speaker: Bro. John Warner (San Francisco Peninsula, CA). Exhortation: "The Booth of David", and lecture: "The Holy City". Contact Bro. Peter Bilello p.bilello@cimdata.com

DECEMBER 2009

26-31 Ontario Winter Bible School Escape winter and join in warm fellowship around the Word of God with brothers and sisters. The theme for the week is: "Be Watchful and Strengthen the Things that Remain". Speakers: Bro. Brian Luke (Australia), Bro. Roger Long (UK), and Bro. Ron Kidd (London, ON). The School will be held at the Best Western Highland Inn, Midland, Ontario. For details and registration forms see our

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webpage www.ontariowinterbibleschool.com. Registrations to be sent to Sis. Barbara Kidd rbkidd@rogers.com 519-690-0391

26-January 2 Texas Youth Conference at T4C. Bro. Max Wickham on "The Life of Joseph". Workbook and registration at www.texasyouthconference.com

JANUARY 2010

16-17 San Francisco Peninsula, CA Weekend with the Word. Ecclesial hall, 1536 James Ave., Redwood City, CA. Classes will begin at 1:00 pm on Saturday and end with the exhortation on Sunday. Bro. John Pople (San Francisco Peninsula, CA) will lead classes on "The Sign of the Dove." Saturday evening, the Norcal Preaching Committee will provide an update about the intention of the San Francisco Bay Area ecclesias to host a week-long P2P training session and coordinate volunteer/preaching activities in July 2011. Contact Sis. Ruth Ann Gover at 650-260-2694 or ragover@aol.com

30 San Diego County, CA Annual study day, 9:30 am ecclesial hall, Bro. David Styles (Shelburne, ON). Lunch provided. Contact Bro. Kent Ellis ellisk@san.rr.com or 858-674-5645

FEBRUARY 2010

21-26 Palm Springs Bible School. The speakers will be Bro. Peter King (Birmingham, UK) and Bro. Clyde Snobelen (Victoria, BC). The school offers a wonderful environment for the mature adult to study God's Word. To register, contact Bro. Jeff Gelineau at Register@christadelphianbibleschool.org or visit www.californiabibleschool.org

MARCH 2010

13-14 Paris Avenue, OH. Spring study weekend to be held at the ecclesial hall. Our speaker will be Bro. Bryan Styles (Detroit Royal Oak, MI)

APRIL 2010

10-17 Florida Christadelphian Bible School. The speakers will be Bro. Stan Isbell of the North Houston, TX, Ecclesia and Bro. Bill Link, Jr. of the Baltimore, MD, Ecclesia

JUNE 2010

20-25 Bozeman Bible Camp located at Bro. Paul Bottomley's property. Speakers are Bro. Stuart Pearce (UK): "New every morning"; Bro. Mark Giordano (VA): topic to be announced. Contact information at bozemanbiblecamp.com. For registration and accommodations please contact Bro. Steve Faver sfaver@unitedagencies.com or 406-388-3378

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

History

John and Elizabeth Reith



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

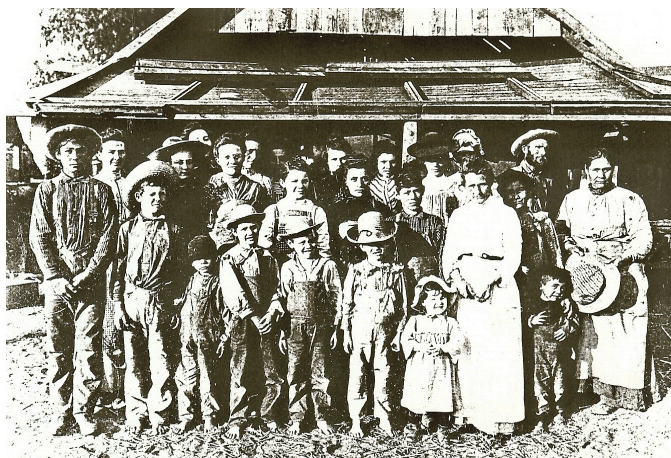
Few tragedies are as hard to understand as the death of a vibrant young person. But the hand of God can move in our lives in ways we might not expect or even desire, and it has the power to bring salvation through circumstances like sickness and death that to us might seem senseless. Such was the case 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, 1875.¹ 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.² 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.³

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."⁴

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" ¹⁴ in Los Angeles.



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