

# THE CRISTADELPHIAN TIDINGS

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*of the Kingdom of God*

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# The CHRISTADELPHIAN TIDINGS of the Kingdom of God

Editor: George Booker

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## The Picture of Love

*Human nature combines with history to demand that power must be in opposition to humility and service. In revealing His love to man, however, God shows how false that concept is. He sent His Son for the salvation of man. We look for a revelation of glory and power, but instead we find a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. We wait for the fiery judgment of heaven upon a faithless people, but we see the gentle touch of healing and hear the contented cries of little children. We look for the denunciation of the traitor, but we see the Savior kneeling at his feet with water and a towel.*

Melva Purkis

*Let's ask ourselves if the level of love among us is so high that outsiders would notice it. They would notice how we always go out of our way to do good to one another, to help one another. They would notice how we always speak well of one another — always seem to prefer our fellow believers before even ourselves, always show such high regard for them, always treat them as we imagine Christ himself would treat them. Is that the image that our community projects to the world?*

Colin Attridge

## Editorial

### Footwashing and a New Commandment

*“It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love” (John 13:1).*

The Son of man was about to embark upon a great journey. He was going to the Father. In fulfilling the Passover imagery of his last mortal days, he was about to accomplish his ‘exodus’ at Jerusalem (Luke 9:31) by departing out of the ‘Egyptian’ world, slain as a sin-covering lamb. Associated with this ‘journey’ was the thought of “love”, a divine love, an “agape”.

John says that Jesus loved his brethren right to the end (Greek “eis telos”). This phrase would be echoed by Jesus himself, only hours later, when he said from the cross: “It is finished [‘teleo’]” (John 19:30). The KJV translators seem to pick up this idea, and so translate the phrase “unto the end”, that is, to the end of his mortal life. Other translations take this a step further, and are also fully in keeping with the meaning of the Greek word, when they translate this last phrase, “he loved them *completely*” or “to the *uttermost*”, or, as the NIV, “he now showed them *the full extent* of his love.”

The full extent of Jesus’s love for his disciples is not merely seen in his humble service to them in washing their feet. The full extent of his love for them is demonstrated in his sacrificial death for them, on the cross. The footwashing episode described in this chapter becomes a prophetic act foreshadowing, or acting out ahead of time, his upcoming death on their behalf.

His was a love that never faltered. The washing of the disciples’ feet showed the same abiding love that would sustain him through his trial and crucifixion. The self-sacrifice, the disposition of the servant, and the devotion to others in passionate concern were all as evident here in the ‘little’ task as they would soon be in the great work!

While the KJV says in verse 2 that it was after supper was ended, the modern translations are more accurate: the RSV says “during supper”, and the NIV says it was when “the evening meal was being served”. It was at this time that Jesus, to whom the Father had committed all power and authority, rose from the meal and laid aside his outer garments. Then he took a towel, a pitcher of water, and a basin, and began to wash the disciples’ feet (vv 3-5).

The laying aside of his garments was a preview of his coming crucifixion, when the soldiers would strip his garments from him (John 19:23,24). This earlier incident shows his willingness to deny self, to give up all he possessed, even simple dignity, in a totality of loving service to others.

## Who is the greatest?

Our Lord's actions here arose out of the sad, silly contentions of the apostles as to which of them was the greatest (Luke 22:24). Perhaps the seating arrangements at this special meal had again brought to the surface their underlying rivalries and jealousies. In absolute disregard of Jesus's parable of the high and low seats (Luke 14:7-11), they jostled for position while their leader — we may suppose — looked on in a quiet sadness.

The immediate rebuke of their pretensions was most effective because at first no word was spoken. Jesus rose up from the position he had already taken at the table and, gathering what he needed, began to wash the feet of each disciple in turn. Why had this not been attended to already? Could Jesus have made sure that no one would provide this service, in order to give the twelve an opportunity to show what they had learned from him? If so, then their failure could not have been more complete.

How foolish they appear in hindsight. The more they maneuvered and schemed to win his attention, the more they lowered themselves in his eyes. The more successful they were in achieving a superficial standing above others, the less they impressed the one who could read their hearts. And the simplest deed, that would have won from him the desired smile of appreciation, was the last thing on their minds. Yes, how misguided they seem. But a moment's reflection will certainly reveal to all of us cases of similar shortsightedness in our own dealings with one another.

They all sought honor from Jesus. Yet none of the *men* seems to have realized how great an honor it would have been for them to have washed *his* feet. It had taken a *woman* to realize that, to do it, and then to wipe his feet with her hair (Luke 7:37-50).

So he went systematically from one to the next, performing his humble service. All thoughts of rivalry and pride disappeared for the moment, as each of them realized the service *he* might easily have performed *himself*, but had neglected.

Except for Peter, in whose mind pride, and a false sense of superiority over the others, still resided: "Lord, are *you* going to wash *my* feet?" (John 13:6).

In reply to Peter's protest, Jesus persisted. "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

Still Peter continued to protest, drawing a further rebuke from the Lord: "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me" (v 8).

So now Peter swings drastically to the other extreme: "Lord, not just my feet only, but my hands and my head as well" (v 9).

No, Peter, still you fail to understand. You have been 'washed' already, in your baptism, and you need now only to wash your feet (v 10).

Christ's teaching here is based on the fact that these men walked dusty streets and roads barefoot or in sandals, so that — on arrival, and even though bodily clean

— they would need to have their feet washed before reclining at table alongside one another.

Now the disciples had been washed from their sins in baptism and had risen to newness of life. They wore robes of righteousness, having been cleansed from their past sins. But their ‘walk’ in the Truth made their ‘feet’ dirty; they did not need to be re-immersed on that account, but they did need to have their feet washed. This Christ could do for them, and so necessary it was that, if they omitted his cleansing, they could have no ‘part’ (no fellowship) with him.

Here at once is an exhortation to humility, a rebuke to pride, and a total overthrow of that flimsy fortress called ‘justification by works’! Christ’s lesson was not lost on John, who could write years later:

*“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1John 1:8,9).*

### **A sacrament?**

Finally Jesus was back at the table again:

*“ ‘Do you understand what I have done for you?’ he asked them. ‘You call me “Teacher” and “Lord”, and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you’ ” (John 13:12-15).*

These words have been twisted in attempts to prove that the literal Washing of Feet is as much a commandment (or a “sacrament”) as the Breaking of Bread, and should therefore be practiced along with it. (The Roman Catholic church as well as some Protestant churches make this same mistake.)

This teaching is wrong on at least three different counts:

- (1) Concerning the Lord’s supper Jesus clearly commanded, “Do this.” The verb in 1 Corinthians 11:25 is continuous in action: ‘Keep doing this!’ But concerning the washing of feet Jesus says, “I have given you an *example* (i.e., a sample or a type), that you should do (not *what I do*, but) *as I have done* to you.”
- (2) The witness of the early church is useful. As in Acts 2:42, 46, the Breaking of Bread was the very center and focus of all worship from the earliest days. On the other hand, the ritual of footwashing makes no appearance in the church for more than 300 years.
- (3) Peter offers his inspired interpretation of this incident when he writes: “All of you, clothe yourselves [KJV ‘be girded’] with humility toward one another” (1Pet 5:5), as Jesus girded himself (John 13:4) for performing his service to the apostles. The practical display of humble and loving service had finally made its impression upon the headstrong Peter. Clearly, Peter is intent on the spirit of the incident rather than on the literal washing of feet.

## Judas too

One special part of this scene captures our attention: the picture of Jesus kneeling to wash the feet of Judas. Here is the best and the worst together; the perfect love of the Lord and the hateful bitterness of the betrayer at the same table. Shortly thereafter Philip would say to Jesus, “Lord, show us the Father” (John 14:8), only to receive the answer: “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father” (v 9). Perhaps they had expected a vision of God would be a blinding glory, accompanied by thunder and lightning, and the sound of trumpets. Instead, they saw, simply, a man kneeling as a servant, to perform the most menial job.

All the Father’s love was manifested in him: His goodness, His patience, His forbearance, His kindness even to the sinner and the ungodly. We realize, then, how necessary it was for him to perform this service for all his disciples, even Judas. If Jesus had passed him by, or waited until he left, such an omission would have been obvious to all. Then, with some reason, all following generations of disciples might have said: ‘You see, it’s all right to restrict our acts of kindness just to our friends.’ But the love revealed by Jesus leaves us no such excuse. He who died for those who were yet sinners calls us to follow his example, and to love those who are most unloving and unlovely. It is a difficult task, made more difficult by the mean-spiritedness, self-absorption, and pride of so many around us. So we must remember that our service to others, whatever form it takes, is nothing less than service to Christ.

We know what we should do, but we fail so often. Unless we are constantly aware of it, our outlook can become seriously twisted by regular association with the world’s false principles. Workers’ associations agitate and ‘go slow’ and strike, thinking only of ‘rights’ but never of ‘responsibilities’. Political activists speak and write disrespectfully of elected leaders, in defiance of Bible teaching to give honor and respect to leaders who have been appointed by God. All around us people fret under rules and restraints, ever alert to get the most for themselves, with the least cost or effort. Meanwhile, Jesus tells us:

*“You are not to be like that... the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves” (Luke 22:26).*

Such humble service is not a thing for which we can strive. The more we agonize to achieve it, the more it escapes us. What we need is a quiet transformation of spirit through the continuing influence of Christ’s example, along with a complete disregard for the possible impression our “good deeds” may make upon others.

This incident teaches us something else again. As Christ does, so ought we to do. If he can forgive trespasses, how much more ought we! “Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them” (John 13:17). We may feel as reluctant to forgive a brother’s sin, as we would to wash his feet, especially if he is one we are tempted to consider inferior. But Christ’s example, if it means anything, means that we must. How many ecclesial contentions would be ended, if one of the contending parties would humble himself sufficiently to forgive, or to ask forgiveness?

## A new commandment?

*“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (John 13:34,35).*

How was this a *new* commandment? The command to love had in fact been the most prominent theme of all of Christ’s ministry. Both the greatest commandment, and the second, which was like unto it, involved love. Love was, furthermore, the root and foundation of the law.

This commandment was ‘new’ only in the sense that it was now being given the perfect interpretation in the life of Jesus. For the first time in human history a man stood before his fellows as the absolutely flawless embodiment of the Divine ideal of “agape”. For the first time, a man can stand as the perfect example of *how to love*:

*“My command is this: Love each other **as I have loved you**. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for friends” (John 15:12,13).*

Notice how the Lord’s “as I have loved you” here echoes his “as I have done to you” in John 13:15.

Do we seek to learn some “new thing”, when all along the most worthwhile “new thing” is a greater and deeper insight into an old, familiar commandment?

Of all the challenges that face us in these last days, surely this is the greatest: to exemplify Christ’s love in all that we do and say, and thus — through our *practical* knowledge of his sacrificial life — to “show forth”, in humble service, his death until he comes.

George Booker

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## Happiness, or Blessedness

*“If you know these things, **happy** are ye if ye do them” (John 13:17, KJV).*

*“Now that you know these things,  
you will be **blessed** if you do them” (NIV).*

*Happiness [or blessedness] is not in catering to desire, but in putting desire away. Happiness is not in seeking pleasure, but in recognizing and thankfully enjoying the myriad of pleasures that God showers bountifully on us every moment. In His love, in His Word, in His Purpose, in His marvelous Creation. From the infinitely small to the infinitely great — all infinitely beautiful. Happiness is not in getting, but in giving; not in being served, but in serving (though truly there is happiness in being served — if the service is of need beyond our own capacity to fill, and if the service is in love). Christ tells us where happiness is: in pureness of heart, in meekness, in mercifulness, in hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Don’t look for it anywhere else. It isn’t there. It must be created within ourselves. Its source is of God.*

G.V. Growcott

# Exhortation

## Therapy

*Approximately two years, Bro. Grant Anderson survived a frightfully serious car accident, with devastating injuries. Many brothers and sisters, and others — and especially his family — have given support and help. In this, the first exhortation Grant has been able to give since his accident, he reflects upon his ongoing therapy, and the lessons for all of us.*

I opened an exhortation about three years ago, saying, “How good this morning really is because we are able to breathe, and in breathing we are taking part in God’s wonderful, beautiful creation. Just by sitting here in your chairs and inhaling and exhaling, you are erasing any doubt you had this morning. By listening to yourselves breathe, you are realizing that this morning is not just any Sunday morning, but ‘this is the day the LORD has made.’”

I feel this now more than ever.

As you know, I was in a car accident coming home from an uplifting Bible camp up north on Manitoulin Island; it left me under a semi truck for over an hour. I suffered a severe traumatic brain injury.

I nearly died and my parents were told that, at best, I would be a vegetable.

It’s been almost two years later, and I am still recovering. Due to my injury, I am weak in this body that is here before you. But am I really different than any of you here? While it is always on my mind that I am in a wheelchair, there is a sense in which we are all the same. We are all battling the disability of sin, or the flesh.

In my recovery program, I have a lot of therapies. They include:

- (a) cognitive therapy,
- (b) physical therapy,
- (c) occupational therapy,
- (d) swim therapy,
- (e) music therapy, and more...

all geared to my recovery.

Therapy is just practicing something over and over again to become good at it. By repetition I’m trying to retrain my brain.

You, my brothers and sisters and friends, have also been very helpful in my recovery. Thank you for your love, prayers, patience, time, donations and so forth. Thank you also for this opportunity to exhort for the first time since my accident.

Yes, my life has taken a different path than the one it was on; it’s a path not chosen and a path not expected. My progress is measured in small improvements or in small victories.



I think we can find some similarities in the lives of Bible characters.

## **Moses**

Moses knew that he would lead. He was raised as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He was raised to be leader in Egypt. But events brought an unexpected change in his path, a new direction in life. These events caused him to flee into the wilderness. It was there that he took care of his father-in-law's sheep.

It was during this period that God appeared to him:

*"And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed" (Exod 3:2).*

All the preparation of Moses during his first 40 years was toward being a leader in Egypt.

Instead, Moses got 40 years in the wilderness; we might say that, for him, the LORD prescribed "wilderness therapy".

This new path was one of preparation to be leader in Israel instead of Egypt. He went from 40 years training as a member of the elite ruling class, to 40 years of training in humility, as a shepherd in the wilderness.

Then he led Israel out of Egypt. This was followed by leading the Israelites in the wilderness, where there were many victories, some small and some large. He found joy in God's work: joy in delivering the law, leading Israel, judging Israel, and — more than once — saving Israel.

Finally, there was the water from the rock, where Moses gave himself the glory instead of God. Moses battled sin. Look what God said to Moses because of his mistake:

*"Then the LORD said to him, 'This is the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when I said, 'I will give it to your descendants.' I have let you see it with your eyes, but you will not cross over into it.' And Moses the servant of the LORD died there in Moab, as the LORD had said" (Deut 34:4,5).*

The incident with the rock (Num 20:6-11) takes place at the beginning of the 40th year in the wilderness. The journey was almost over:

*"But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, 'Because you did not trust in me enough to honor me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them' "(v12).*

Moses didn't receive the Promise. He saw the promised land from a distance, but the promised rest in that land was postponed. It was a different outcome than expected. It was a different course taken.

And Moses went through two completely different "course changes" also — the first when he left Egypt, and the last when he was told he would not be entering the Promised Land.

## Gideon

Gideon's life was one of preparation. We know he was a mighty man of valor:

*"The angel of the LORD came and sat down under the oak in Ophrah... where his son Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress to keep it from the Midianites. When the angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon, he said, 'The LORD is with you, mighty warrior' " (Jdgs 6:11,12).*

Gideon had the spirit of a leader and a chief. He remained faithful while others "did what was evil in the sight of the LORD". Imagine how difficult it was for Gideon to live at this time. His brothers were killed, and the ecclesia was in a horrible state, yet he still preached.

Israel was oppressed for seven years — the people "were brought very low" (Jdgs 6:6). But here was Gideon working the threshing floor, beating out the wheat, when he had servants to do this. He took the role of a servant, pointing to Christ, even though he was trained as a mighty man of valor.

We see this man of action, forced into "threshing therapy". This is not what he expected. Gideon was a faithful man, hiding from the Midianites, unable to change these circumstances, and forced into a path of inaction. He was forced to achieve small victories, preaching and providing food for his family, because his brothers were killed by the Midianites.

Then God answers his prayer. Remember the dry fleece on the wet ground?:

*"Then Gideon said to God, 'Do not be angry with me. Let me make just one more request. Allow me one more test with the fleece. This time make the fleece dry and the ground covered with dew.' That night God did so. Only the fleece was dry; all the ground was covered with dew" (Jdgs 6:39,40).*

God was ready, and Gideon had been prepared.

Finally Gideon leads 300 men in winning a great victory over a tremendous host of the enemy.

It was a special sort of therapy: Waiting seven years. Hiding seven years. Small steps leading to victory. A different path, one Gideon would never have chosen for himself.

Real victories only come on God's terms, in God's time, and in God's way.

## David

Starting very early in life, David spent years in "sheep therapy". He was the youngest of the brothers and treated disrespectfully by them. He was alone in contemplation with God. He protected the flock by defeating his enemies, the lion and the bear.

This therapy was preparation for a role not yet revealed; that was to be the king of Israel. Along the way, he won victories over all Israel's enemies. He was the unifier and the peace-giver to the whole nation, again pointing forward to Christ.

When he became king, David desired to build a house for God. Yet he had been

“a man of blood”, “a man of war”, and thus he was denied his heart’s desire; he would not be allowed to build the LORD’s House.

But even on this unexpected road, there were small victories for David. He could take comfort in gathering the materials for the temple, more comfort in planning the project, along with Samuel, and also comfort in developing the music and rituals for the Temple and its service.

David prepared to build, but David did not build. It was a different path than he wanted. Often what we’ve prepared for, and what we want, doesn’t happen.

### **Our “therapy”**

Can we relate this therapy to us? Aren’t we, right now, in spiritual therapy? Let’s take a look at ourselves.

Brothers and sisters, we must practice spiritual rehabilitation now:

- (a) spiritual cognitive therapy, by reading our Bibles and praying;
- (b) spiritual physical therapy, by walking a life in Christ;
- (c) spiritual occupational therapy, by serving others with our hands;
- (d) spiritual swim therapy, by staying ‘afloat’, and not sinking, in a world of sin; and
- (e) spiritual music therapy, by praising God in song!

We must work on these therapies, along with our master therapists, God and His Son. We must work on this with our brothers and sisters, using God’s word as a guide.

With small victories, godliness becomes easier as we practice it more. If we work with a willing spirit, God will help us through our imperfections and carry us the rest of the way.

All of us need to be in therapy; our goal is to work toward our spiritual recovery. If we are not in therapy, why?

We must learn that even very small victories are steps, taken one at a time, on the road to God’s Kingdom. Small victories are small steps, one at a time.

### **Christ**

As we approach the memorials, let us now reflect on our Lord Jesus Christ. Think about some of the things he had to do.

During the first 30 years of his life, he had to undergo “carpenter therapy”. As he grew, he began to realize more and more of what was coming in his life, and what would be expected of him. But he still had to wait out his 30 years of preparation, and meanwhile do the ordinary work he was supposed to do. It was a therapy of practice and repetition, in simple tasks.

Thirty years of practice for approximately three and a half years of work. Three and a half years of work, culminating in the cross. All that preparation, and all that practice, leading to his death on the cross.

It is important for us to remember that Jesus could have chosen a different path. Instead, he chose the path given to him by his Father.

Were there small victories? For some time, there appears to be only defeats. The nation rejected him. His friends forsook him. The leaders condemned him. His enemies crucified him.

In reality, though, each of these “defeats” became a victory, and all together they added up to Christ’s great victory over sin and death:

*“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; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed” (Isa 53:4,5).*

There are small victories in our lives as we undergo therapies and battle sin. There are many paths, which we might have desired, that we have not taken. There are many paths into which we are directed, which we never expected. But all these paths may lead, by God’s grace, to the crown of victory given at Christ’s command, in his kingdom.

Along with Moses, Gideon, David, and the many others who have practiced forms of “spiritual therapy”, may we find places in that future Kingdom. Let us ponder all these things, as we partake of this memorial meal of bread and wine.

*Grant Anderson (Milford Road, MI)*

## **A Late-Night Phone Call**

*Not long ago I had the chance to share my thoughts about coping with my brother’s recent brain injury during a presentation he was giving. Self-expression has never come easily to me, and I found this task to be challenging, but also rewarding. There is always a feeling of release in sorting out what is in your mind and putting it on paper. Afterward I was asked if I would be willing to share those same thoughts through the Tidings magazine. Although it’s a bit frightening to open myself up to so many people, it is worth it if this can be an encouragement to others in some way.*

I am a naturally contented person, and have always felt enormously blessed in the things that I have. Before Grant’s accident, I really felt as if I were floating through life. My family was loving and supportive; I had a wonderful husband, a house, a good job, all that I needed. Despite being a ceaseless worrier, I never really thought that something could happen that would turn my entire life upside down. Then came the phone call late on a Thursday night, and Mom told me that Grant was unconscious in a hospital in Canada. Suddenly all the little worries and thoughts my head had been filled with, about school, housework and so on, were replaced by one all-consuming thought: that God would let Grant be okay.

As we traveled to London, Ontario, and heard the grim prognosis from the doctors, my prayers became more and more intense, while at the same time I found

myself thinking about my life, and whether God would even listen to me. Had I even taken the time to build a strong relationship with Him before this? How repetitive and habitual had my prayers become over the years? How often had I spoken about God to friends, or went above and beyond the call of duty at meeting to help out with what needed doing? I wanted to promise God that if He would save Grant, I would be better, be perfect, not waste time on useless pursuits any more. But I knew that I couldn't make that promise, because I would ultimately fail to fulfill it. So instead, I begged for God's mercy, knowing that so many others in our situation have done the same, many others who were far more dedicated to God than I, but some of them still had to face the pain of losing a loved one.

I still don't know the purpose of Grant's accident, or the purpose God had in saving him, but knowing that He has a plan for our lives has helped me through it. Whatever His purpose, I have decided that I should try to learn something from the trouble that comes into my life, so that I can make some good come from it. For me, the lesson here is to make good use of the time that we have, and to try and cut back the time spent on activities that aren't beneficial. I've tried to find ways to get my head into God's Word more often, to turn more of my leisure time projects into gifts that can encourage others, to step up more at the ecclesia, to volunteer my time, to spend more time visiting with brothers and sisters. Of course, I still find myself frequently sliding into my usual habits of time wasting, but watching Grant and others who are facing enormous challenges in their lives is a reminder to renew my commitment to doing good with my life, not just to avoid doing wrong.

*Sis. Cassie Giordano (Milford Road, MI)*

A graphic consisting of a horizontal oval with a double-line border. Inside the oval, the words "Bible Study" are written in a bold, serif font.

## Bible Study

### To Speak Well of God: (9) Satan's Victory

#### 9.1 Job's final speeches

Once Job interrupts Bildad and terminates the debate he speaks at length. His two speeches are a hybrid of continuing replies to his friends' brutal castigations and announcements to the universe at large: a curious mix of ingenious insight, heartrending testimony, and the poisonous interference of contagious Satan. We must appreciate that the Satan is best defined as the spirit of the friends, pride, more than the friends per se, because it limits the finger-pointing. Any one of us can be Satan at any time — and frequently we are! It also enables our understanding that Satan spreads as a virus. Too long in his presence, and anyone of us can be infected, even blameless Job. It takes more than a righteous man to resist Satan in the Wilderness, as we shall ultimately see.

On the central theme of the book — speaking about God — Job does not speak wrongly about who God is. He does not, as the three friends, assume he can pre-

dict what God can do or why God has acted the way He appears to have done. Job expresses his immense displeasure with his circumstances. But his discourse always allows God to be supreme, in a way that the Satan, right from the start, does not:

*“God understands the way to it  
and he alone knows where it dwells,  
for he views the ends of the earth  
and sees everything under the heavens.  
When he established the force of the wind  
and measured out the waters,  
when he made a decree for the rain  
and a path for the thunderstorm,  
then he looked at wisdom and appraised it;  
he confirmed it and tested it” (Job 28:23-27).*

Chapter 29, the beginning of the following speech, is a chapter of great poignancy, in which Job reflects on the great pleasures he enjoyed in what seems now to be a former life. As with his plea for restoration (Job 19:25-27), we can be encouraged by Job’s incredibly God-centered life. The central tenet of his former happiness is the proximity he felt with God. He mentions the pleasure of his children’s company, as well as the honor he was afforded in the city’s social and governmental structure. But it is the closeness of his Heavenly Father that is at the forefront of his comments and the forefront of his desires (Job 29:2-6).

Thereafter Job’s thoughts turn to the negative again, as he considers the dire consequences his afflictions have had on him in a society thoroughly imbued with the doctrine of exact retribution. Exacerbating his pain is the knowledge that he has helped others in the time of their distress, yet now that he is in need, reciprocal charity is nowhere to be found (Job 30:24-26).

I’m intrigued by the contrasts in Job’s words. Every time he considers God, his spirits rise; every time he considers man, they fall. Job speaks well of God (ch 28) and remembers fondly the time when he felt God’s blessings clearly (ch 29). But as his thoughts turn to the world of men (ch 30) they darken appreciably. His mistreatment at the hands of the Satan provokes him to embitterment and, when he remembers his good deeds, the Satanic force of pride is finally unleashed. The prideful comments of his own justification, to which the friends provoked him (ch 27), are now revisited and augmented (ch 31).

Thus we see the Satanic beast of human pride rearing its ugly head in Job’s speeches. Job is right to rebut his friends’ slanderous insults. But where this could provoke him to speak of God’s inscrutability and faith in His inherent goodness, which he initially does in his dissertation on wisdom, Job cannot resist proudly forming his conclusion around his own integrity, not God’s (Job 27:2-6). This spirit burgeons in Job until he challenges God — never a wise move — to account for Himself, while he is so confident in his own righteousness he can stride into God’s presence with the self-assurance of royalty:

*"I sign now my defense — let the Almighty answer me;  
let my accuser put his indictment in writing.  
Surely I would wear it on my shoulder,  
I would put it on like a crown.  
I would give him an account of my every step;  
like a prince I would approach him" (Job 31:35-37).*

Satan's work is done. Job has named God a false accuser (cf Greek: 'diabolos!'). And though his friends doubtless never intended to hinder Job's relationship with God, their prideful arrogance has so incensed Job that he has, tragically, become infected by it. Job parades his presumed innocence before God and man and, ironically by that very mechanism, is innocent no longer.

We should not be harsh with Job. It is only because he is convinced that his God is just and loving that he rages against the heavens. If Job had believed God were malicious or indifferent, he could have no anger, because all that happened would make sense. Nevertheless, Satan has fought with the righteous man. And Satan has won. Let me be clear: the three friends have not won the debate — they have lost, since Job has exposed their arguments as folly. But the Satan, *the pride the three friends exhibited* (which pride had possessed the three friends before the debate began), has now grasped Job. When Satan struggles with a righteous man, Satan wins. This is not the result we may have anticipated or hoped for, but it is one from which we must certainly learn.

As always with the endeavor of the disciple, there are glimpses of brilliance amongst the failings. Job's poem on wisdom in chapter 28 is a transforming insight into Job's appreciation of the inaccessibility and supremacy of God's wisdom. Some expositors define this chapter as the center-point of the drama,<sup>1</sup> but that is surely overstating the case, since this book contains two speeches from Almighty God! But Job's 'Ode to Wisdom', as it is commonly called, certainly contains a humbling and alluring picture of the inaccessibility of God's wisdom:

*"But where can wisdom be found?  
Where does understanding dwell?  
Man does not comprehend its worth;  
it cannot be found in the land of the living.  
The deep says, 'It is not in me';  
the sea says, 'It is not with me.'  
It cannot be bought with the finest gold,  
, (28:12-15).*

Job's uses some of the language God Himself will use in His forthcoming revelations. This is a fine testament to Job's insight; although Job will proceed to darken that fine counsel with the infections of his own pride. Above all, Job declares the wisdom of God inaccessible to man, which is paramount to speaking that which is right about Him.

It is with a sympathetic sadness, therefore, that we witness Job collapse from this beautiful poem into his embittered entanglement with the Satan. However, we cannot be critical of Job until we have at least attempted to understand the direness

of his circumstances. He has been under sustained pressure from those he had previously thought to be his friends while wrestling to cope with the bereavement of all his ten children, the material losses of all his flocks and herds, his collapsed health, and his social estrangement. Job's world must be joyless indeed: he is in constant pain married with the awareness that, by any realistic calculation, he is shortly about to die. An armchair philosopher might readily discount these factors as irrelevant to the main thrust of the debate; and if the account of Job is merely allegorical we can demand these matters be irrelevant to our hero. But this account details real life experiences of an actual man, so how carefully we must weigh them against his conduct in replying to his accusers!

Only once we have absorbed these thoughts, are we truly qualified to reflect upon Job's final commentary where pride at last had grasped him. His closing comments, unfortunately, do not set this amazing disciple in the best light. But then, at our most pressurized moments, who amongst us would volunteer for the microscope on our conduct?

## 9.2 Reflection

The debate has proven fascinating. This isn't just four humans taking up valuable Scriptural space calling each other names. By the divine Hand, this is a presentation of a pure distillation of righteousness pitted against a distillation of human opposition to God. The righteous man versus the Satan at its most basic level! What an immensely valuable text for any who would be a disciple: to see this battle played out move by move, like a divine chess game, in all the complexity that the humanized form of that battle necessarily adopts. And how sobering to see that Satan wins! McGee also notices Job's Pyrrhic victory: "To all intents and purposes, Job has won the debate. But he hasn't won." <sup>2</sup>

Yet the friends of Job began by sitting in silence for seven days alongside him. This was a valuable act of friendship: a submissive and cooperative act. It is submissive in that it does not attempt to explain answers to the sufferer of why he finds himself in that condition — which good deed they tragically proceed, later, to confound. It is cooperative in that they participate in Job's suffering as much as they are able, their participatory presence doubtless a source of strength and comfort to Job upon the ashes pile.

The friends' vigil is exhortational. Ultimately intense suffering is not going to be salved by logical reasoning. Since emotional or physical pain does not commonly have its root *in* logical argument, it is ironically illogical to attempt to remedy it *with* logical argument. I have noted even in preaching exercises how inadequate it is if all the preacher can do is demonstrate logical articulacy. A human connection needs to be made! And if that is true in a preaching scenario, how much more true in times of comfort! Active comradeship, the presence of a comforter alongside, is more powerful than all reasoned arguments, or intonations to count one's blessings. Beyond this we learn to trust in God, who can directly influence emotional wellbeing.

The Word of God, who knew these things, promised:



*“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you” (John 14:16,17, KJV).*

Even this good deed of camaraderie, sadly, the three friends also promptly proceed to undo. Undoubtedly, the seven days of silence are the wisest things the friends ever said. Afterwards they sink into the folly of the doctrine of retribution and their explanation of the God they believe they can define through it.

Yet God is working with them, too. He brings these three mentally infected children into immediate proximity with Job (just as the physically diseased were brought to the priest for cleansing, e.g., Leviticus 14), and induces circumstances in which the effects can be played out, and God’s truth ultimately revealed. I’m not suggesting that the principal explanation of why sufferings befall Job is to expose the falsehood of the doctrine of retribution. But it’s entirely in keeping with God’s character that He would work at many levels at once, including working the salvation of Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar: the very embodiments of the Satan themselves.

This provides great reason why the debate is included in the Scripture record. A good friend of mine articulately described the reason in an email I received:

“But if the book is as much about the conversion of Job’s friends as it is about the conversion of Job, then the time spent revealing their thinking makes sense. If the Satan mentioned at the beginning of the book is Job’s jealous friends, then how wonderful God is revealed to be in this book. The pages I ‘suffered’ through reveal God’s patience with us in the foolishness of our own thinking. It shows a lot about God that He would be willing to work with these men to bring them to salvation; (literally that God is willing to work with Satan to save even him — just as He worked with Peter after he betrayed Jesus, or Israel after they turned from God in the wilderness and after entering the Promised Land). And it shows how God can use the sufferings of a good man to help him to grow, while also saving the lives of others in the process. It seems to me that, if Satan is Job’s friends, then God’s grace is glorified through this book. Rather than being a depressing book about a good man who had to suffer a lot at the hands of an evil superpower, God allowed Job to be tempted for his own benefit, but also for the salvation of three adversarial men. So this would mean that the book of Job is trying to show us that just because we are in opposition to God, God doesn’t immediately write us off. He will work with us to bring us back to Him. What an amazing picture of God that paints!”

Amen!

### **9.3 The debate’s conclusion: the subpoena**

We’ve reached a vital point in the drama. Job has subpoenaed God (Job 31:35). Job has not *solicited* God to speak with him, he has *demand*ed it. Interestingly, that’s something Job earlier suggested would be a fruitless thing to attempt (Job 9:16).

This has very important implications. If God were now to speak with Job, then it would inadvertently propagate the falsehood that God is answerable to man; that the Creator's presence is required when demanded by His creation. So God does not speak at this point; and I speculate that God *will not* speak whilst this dynamic remains, with Job having summoned the Almighty to his ashes pile. It is not that God *cannot* speak — that would be a foolish statement; nor is it God who needs the stalemate broken. Job has essentially cornered himself by setting up a situation where the one thing he truly desires, a proximate experience of his Maker, is now something he cannot receive. It is Job, who needs a way out of this mess, though he would not currently perceive it that way. Job needs someone to cancel the subpoena he has so unwisely issued, so that he will be able to hear from his God in a way that he understands has not come at his command.

Nor can this subpoena be cancelled by any of the three friends. The relationship between them and Job has decayed to the point where walls of pride have been erected, and neither will take instruction from the other. Thus someone else is now *vitaly needed* to release Job from his own trap.

Enter Elihu the Buzite, seemingly out of the blue; a newcomer to our drama. An entrance so timely, it was as if it were a gift from God...

*John Pople (San Francisco Peninsula, CA)*

**Notes:**

1. L. Baeck, "Job and Kohelet", 1957, in N. N. Glatzer, Ibid, 54
2. J. V. McGee, "Thru the Bible Commentary Series: Job", 1991, Thomas Nelson, Nashville, TN, USA, 156

## Bible Study

### What the Qur'an Says About...

#### (5) Love

Frankly, the Qur'an says very little about "love" as it is used in the Bible; this is quickly evident as the actual word appears only 12 or so times in the entire book. Indeed, the idea of "sacrificial love" (often expressed in the word *agape* in the Greek New Testament), which is the hallmark characteristic of the gospel, does not exist in the Qur'an. It does not exist as a command to Allah's servants or as an attribute of Allah.

#### **Believer to believer**

The distinguishing characteristic of a follower of Christ is his sacrificial love toward fellow believers:

*"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another as I have loved you. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love (agape) one for another" (John 13:34,35).*

The love of the Lord is defined by his giving his whole being for the benefit of his friends:

*“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13).*

The apostle Paul articulates the Christian challenge by saying:

*“And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God” (Eph 5:2).*

Thus the Christian gospel calls for believers in Christ to exercise sacrificial love to other believers.

In the Qur’an, there is great emphasis on *charity*, which we could mistake as a command to practice Christian love:

“Those who establish regular prayer and practice regular *charity* and believe in Allah and in the Last Day: to them shall We soon give a great reward” (4:162);

“We sent them inspiration to do good deeds, to establish regular prayers, and to practice regular *charity*...” (21:73);

“So establish regular Prayer and give regular *Charity*; and obey the Messenger; that you may receive mercy” (24:56);

“And they have been commanded no more than this: to worship Allah, offering Him sincere devotion, being True (in faith); to establish regular Prayer; and to practice regular *Charity*; and that is the Religion Right and Straight” (98:5).

Charity is thus part of the Qur’an’s standard summary of a devoted life and, as we saw in an earlier article, the Qur’an also praises martyrdom for the cause of Allah or in the protection of fellow Muslims. But charity and martyrdom do not equal Christian love:

*“Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned and have not love [agape], it profiteth me nothing” (1Cor 13:3).*

The Christian is to be abundantly generous to his poor brother (James 2:15-17), but sacrificial love includes charity and much more, for it is:

*“...patient, kind, not jealous or boastful; not arrogant or rude, does not insist on its own way, is not irritable or resentful, etc.” (1Cor 13:4-7).*

The love Christ urges upon his disciples is a day to day sacrifice of our own will and fleshly conduct. Such sacrificial love is not commended or commanded in the Qur’an.

### **Husband for wife**

As was noted in last month’s article, the Qur’an exhorts husbands to exercise justice and kindness toward their wives. It provides for wives in the case of divorce or multiple spouses, and in one place briefly mentions the word “love” in connection to the marital relationship (30:21).

This was no doubt an improvement for women in the tribal cultures of the sixth century AD, but it falls far short of the command to Christian husbands:

*“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it” (Eph 5:25).*

Christ “giving of himself” is the language of sacrificing one’s own welfare for the benefit of another. While it includes just and kind treatment on the part of a husband for his wife, it goes much further. In Christ’s case, it involved a life of sacrifice with the objective being our salvation. In the husband’s case, he is to conduct himself as a savior that his wife and children may be blessed with acceptance at Christ’s coming.

Paul’s elaboration of the point goes far beyond anything expected of Muslim husbands in the Qur’an:

*“So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church” (vv 28,29).*

### **Attitude to non-believers**

As any practicing Christian knows, some of the hardest of Christ’s commands are “to love your neighbor as yourself” and to:

*“Love (agape) your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you” (Matt 5:44).*

Contrast that command with the following section of the Qur’an, which is as close as it comes to any command to love neighbor and enemy:

“It may be that Allah will grant love (and friendship) between you and those whom you (now) hold as enemies [that is, non-Muslims who could eventually be converted]. For Allah has power (over all things); and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. Allah does not forbid you, with regard to those who do not fight you for (your) Faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them [you don’t have to be kind to your non-Muslim neighbors, but if you want to, that’s okay!]; for Allah loves those who are just. Allah only forbids you, with regard to those who fight you for (your) Faith, and drive you out of your homes, and support (others) in driving you out, from turning to them (for friendship and protection). [Thus the Qur’an says it is a sin to treat in a loving manner those who openly persecute Muslims.] It is such as turn to them (in these circumstances), that do wrong” (60:8,9).

The contrast to Christ’s command is striking. Whereas the Lord commands his followers to “love” their persecutors and non-believing neighbors, Allah makes it a sin to be kind to the persecutors. The Qur’an reluctantly allows one to treat his non-believing neighbors with justice and kindness, but if he wants to hate and persecute them, that’s not forbidden. By the way, here is part of the Muslims’ support for Jihad, as noted in a previous article.

## Allah's attributes

The Qur'an frequently praises Allah for being merciful and forgiving to those who worship Him:

"Allah forgives whom he pleases, and punishes whom he pleases. For Allah has power over all things" (2:284);

"The punishment of those who wage war against Allah... is execution, or crucifixion or the cutting off of hands and feet... except for those who repent before they fall into your Power: in that case, know that Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful" (5:33,34);

"He [Moses] prayed: 'O Lord! I have indeed wronged my soul! You then forgive me!' So (Allah) forgave him: for he is the oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful" (28:16); etc.

Such passages occur many times throughout the book.

In addition, in some 16 places, the Qur'an says that Allah loves those who please Him:

"Allah loves those who turn to him constantly and he loves those who keep themselves pure and clean" (2:222; 9:8);

"Allah loves the righteous" (9:4,7), etc.

Yet as one readily notes from the tone of these passages, Allah's mercy, love and forgiveness is that of a mighty ruler to his subjects. As one writer comments: "Allah is not characterized by the Qur'an as loving, *except* toward those who have faithfully served him. The divine love is simply the reward of Allah's favor on his obedient slaves, not the personal involvement of God intertwining His heart, as it were, with His people" (Mateen Elass, *Understanding the Qur'an*, p. 86, Zondervan Publishing, Grand Rapids, MI).

The Qur'an does not say Allah's servants should "know" him, or that Allah will include the faithful in his name, or that Allah gives for us something of great value to himself. It would be wholly out of place if we found a passage like the following in the Qur'an:

*"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love" (1John 4:7,8).*

While there may be similarities between what the Qur'an says about Allah and what the Bible reveals about the living God, there are also distinguishing differences. This article has considered one of the most important of these areas.

Accordingly, because of attributes of the god that is worshipped and the lack of commands to do so, the Muslim is not under obligation to practice a sacrificial love.

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*(Next, Lord willing, what the Qur'an says about life after death)*

# History

## Brethren by the Bay

There are few places like San Francisco. Simply hearing the city's name conjures up visions of its charms. You can almost see the magnificent Golden Gate Bridge shrouded in fog, the beloved clanging cable cars, and the gorgeous skyline. With less than a million inhabitants, San Francisco certainly isn't the largest city in California, but there's little doubt that it is the most beautiful. An amazing natural setting of steep hills surrounded by an incredible bay has stolen the hearts of many since Gaspar de Portola discovered the area 240 years ago.

During those years, San Francisco has earned another distinction: the California city with the most colorful history. San Francisco was born out of the California gold rush, suffered the worst earthquake in American history, and is home to America's most infamous prison: Alcatraz. The city itself has always had a scandalous side as well. From the lawless section of town known as the Barbary Coast in the nineteenth century to the Haight Ashbury district of the 1960s to its leadership in gay rights today, San Francisco has always been a city with a slightly wicked image.



**San Francisco in the 1860s**

But despite San Francisco's image, the Truth has been alive in this bustling metropolis almost as long as the city has existed. In 1866, just 16 years after the city was incorporated, William Paine was ordering Christadelphian magazines from San Francisco.<sup>1</sup> If he was a brother at this time (which he definitely was by 1872), he was California's first Christadelphian. Two years later,

George Inwood is also listed as ordering the magazine from San Francisco.<sup>2</sup> When the first Christadelphian in Southern California, Sis. Jane Rosenberg, was being baptized near Santa Barbara in 1870, there appears to have already been California Christadelphians 400 miles up the coast in San Francisco.

In 1866, the same year that William Paine was ordering Christadelphian magazines in San Francisco, 30-year-old Joseph George (J.G.) Tomkins and his 28-year-old wife were baptized in Birmingham, England. A year later they emigrated to Rochester, New York, and then to North Attleboro, Massachusetts, where J.G. taught George Pearson the Truth.<sup>3</sup> In 1872 Bro. and Sis. Tomkins and Bro. Pearson

moved out west to San Francisco. The following was noted in the Christadelphian magazine at the time: "On his [Bro. Tomkins'] arrival he found out brother Payne [William Paine] and brother Cap. Higgins, and proposed meeting for the breaking of bread. The proposal has been acted on by Bro. Payne and himself, and these two have been strengthened by the arrival of brother and sister Tomkins. A little pillar of the truth has been erected in this remote part of the world." Thus the first ecclesia in California was formed in San Francisco in 1872, two years before another small California group, led by Bro. Robert Strathearn, would begin meeting near Santa Barbara. These two groups were the only brothers and sisters in California in these early years as Bro. Robert Roberts noted in a reply to Sis. Oriana Quinn's enquiry to the Christadelphian magazine in 1875: "There are not many brethren in California. To locate in the vicinity of an [established] ecclesia is, we fear, an impossibility. There is a small company of believers in the neighborhood of Santa Barbara, Lower California. Also at San Francisco there are two or three." Oriana's father, Bro. J.C. Quinn would end up in San Diego, and be part of that city's first ecclesia in 1877.<sup>4</sup>

### **William Clark and James Cheetham**



**Bro. William Clark**

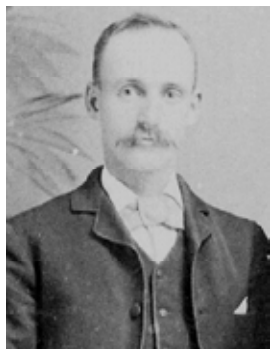
Despite the distances and the difficulty of travel in those early years, there was contact between the Christadelphians in Southern and Northern California. In 1874 Sis. Rosenberg's husband, who would later become a brother and a member of the San Francisco Ecclesia, traveled from Santa Barbara to San Francisco to spend some time with Bro. Tomkins. Thirty-five-year-old Bro. William Clark, originally from Glasgow, Scotland, but lately living in Iowa, also visited around this time, staying several months. He must have liked what he saw because he and his family soon moved to San Francisco.<sup>5</sup>

In 1877, Bro. and Sis. Clark, Bro. and Sis. Tomkins, and Bro. R.C. Bingley were all living in San Francisco but were not fellowshipping each other, according to a personal letter written by Bro. Bingley.<sup>6</sup> The issue of fellowship was one that would plague the Bay Area brethren for many years.

By the time Bro. Bingley wrote his letter, Bro. Pearson had left the Truth (in 1874<sup>7</sup>) and Bro. Paine had died (in 1875<sup>8</sup>) so that the original lightstand in San Francisco had died out. In 1879 Bro. Clark wrote to Robert Roberts notifying him that he was forming an ecclesia in San Francisco.<sup>9</sup> Even then, the city's image proved difficult to overcome as a Bro. and Sis. Faulk arrived from Auckland, N.Z. in 1880, but quickly moved on to Cleveland, Ohio, with Bro. Faulk declaring San Francisco to be "Sodom".<sup>10</sup>

Others seemed to find the area more to their liking. By 1887 Bro. Peter Innes had become a member of the San Francisco Ecclesia.<sup>11</sup> Bro. Innes had previously immigrated to Illinois from Scotland in 1837, and John Thomas and his family lived in Illinois with Peter Innes for a short time. In 1847 Mr. Innes accompanied Bro. Thomas on a speaking tour in Scotland and was baptized soon after.<sup>12</sup>

Bros. Clark and Innes attended the burial of Bro. John C. Quinn (who had arrived from San Diego just three weeks previously) in Stockton, California, in 1888, with Bro. Clark giving the remarks.<sup>13</sup> During the late 1800s, it was quite common for the brethren in San Francisco to get together with those in Stockton. Bro. Clark also gave the address at the burial of Bro. Alva Bowden of Stockton (29 years old) in 1889.<sup>14</sup>



**Bro. James Cheetham**

1889 was also the year 22-year-old Bro. James Cheetham arrived in San Francisco from England. As a member of the Sowerby Bridge Ecclesia prior to coming to America, James was described as “a useful and promising brother”.<sup>15</sup> He would go on to become the recording brother of the San Francisco Ecclesia for over 40 years.

By 1891 Bro. Cheetham was the only Christadelphian living in the city of San Francisco. The ecclesia, numbering eight members (including Bro. Cheetham), had moved to Oakland, where Bro. and Sis. Clark were now living.<sup>16</sup> The meeting place moved again, this time to Berkeley, in 1893. Bro. Peter Innes died that same year.<sup>17</sup>

Now back in Oakland, the ecclesia recorded five baptisms in 1894. That same year, Bro. and Sis. Clark’s daughter, Sis. Lillie Clark, moved to Rochester, New York, to marry Bro. L.T. Wade. A welcome addition to the ecclesia occurred around this time when Bro. J.A. McCarl moved to Oakland from Portland, Oregon. Bro. McCarl was to become a leading speaker in the San Francisco Ecclesia.<sup>18</sup>

As the nineteenth century was coming to a close, the Truth appeared to be doing well in the Bay Area. In 1895 there were 27 members in the Oakland Ecclesia, which was likely the largest ecclesia in California at the time. Only Pomona, in Southern California, would have been anywhere near this size. Bro. Lyman T. Wade, M.D., and his wife joined the ecclesia, having moved to Berkeley, where he opened a medical practice. Bro. Wade sent information from Oakland about the baptism of a sea captain named Lars Furman in 1895.<sup>19</sup> By 1898 the ecclesia had grown to 35 members.<sup>20</sup> While it seemed as if things were going very well for the Bay Area brethren, a very sad event in Christadelphian history was about to occur in San Francisco.

### **Robert Roberts’ visit**

In 1898, Bro. Robert Roberts, editor of *The Christadelphian Magazine*, planned to make a short stay in San Francisco on his way from Australia to Birmingham, England. This visit seems to have come about for a couple of reasons. Bro. Roberts wanted to stop in San Francisco because of a doctrinal issue that was causing problems in the ecclesia at the time, but he may also have visited because of personal connections he had with at least four of the ecclesial members in the Bay Area. Bro. Clark was a relative, Bro. Cheetham was a good friend, and Sis.



Cheetham had been taught the truth by Bro. Roberts. Unfortunately, not everyone whom Bro. Roberts knew in the ecclesia at the time held warm feelings for him. One brother in particular had a longstanding grievance, believing that back in 1867 Bro. Roberts had taken sole credit for a book that this brother had also worked on.<sup>21</sup>

It might be assumed that the doctrinal problem which brought Bro. Roberts to San Francisco was resurrectional responsibility since that issue was the main focus within the brotherhood at the time. In fact, though, the thorny issue that drew him to San Francisco was the belief some held that the Scriptures were not wholly inspired. This subject had caused a painful division among Christadelphians a few years before and was still making things difficult for the Bay Area brethren. One couple in particular had fully accepted the partial inspiration theory and were determined to press Bro. Roberts on the issue. The husband was the same brother who had been upset with Bro. Roberts about the book he had worked on some 30 years earlier.

Bro. Roberts arrived in San Francisco on Wednesday morning, September 21, 1898. That night he went to Bro. Cheetham's home where several of the brothers and sisters had congregated, including the Bingleys and the McCarls. Bro. Roberts was asked to address the group on the partial inspiration question. He began to speak about the controversy by asking if the ecclesia would fellowship someone who believed in the partial inspiration of the Scriptures. Bro. Roberts' presence at Bro. Cheetham's home had been requested by the couple who were caught up in the false belief. The evening ended with the couple staunchly holding their position. Bro. Cheetham later remarked that Bro. Roberts left that evening upset by what had transpired. Despite the evening's negative ending, Bro. Roberts agreed to speak the next night at Bro. Clark's home across the bay in Oakland.

The Bible class at the Clarks' proved to be a much more pleasant affair than what had transpired the night before at Bro. Cheetham's. Bro. Roberts was asked by Bro. Clark to speak on the plan of God from the Creation to the Kingdom. The audience included a number of brothers and sisters and even a few interested visitors. Bro. Cheetham remarked later in the Christadelphian magazine that it was "one of the best lectures I ever heard him give". It would be the last Bible talk that Robert Roberts would deliver this side of the Kingdom.

After class, the brethren escorted Bro. Roberts back to his room at the Cosmopolitan Hotel in San Francisco. They all rode the ferry across the bay and then walked to the hotel. Planning to leave the Bay Area for Vancouver, Canada, the next day, Bro. Roberts said good night and spoke of returning to San Francisco for a longer stay. Unfortunately, this was not to be.

Bro. Cheetham arrived early the next morning to take Bro. Roberts to the wharf where he was to board the ship that would take him to Vancouver. When he didn't get a response to his rap on the hotel room door, Bro. Cheetham went looking for Bro. Roberts. Unable to find him elsewhere in the hotel, and finding the door unlocked when he returned, Bro. Cheetham entered the room. There he found Bro. Roberts lying on the floor, asleep in Christ.<sup>22</sup>

The death of Bro. Roberts was a tremendous shock not only to the brethren by the Bay, but also to the entire Christadelphian world. Their spiritual leader, who had given so much of himself in the advancement of the Truth, was so suddenly gone. Sadly, this was only the first of three shocks that would rock the early brothers and sisters in the San Francisco Bay Area over the next eight years.

## **Separation**

As difficult as the controversy over partial inspiration had been for the brethren, an even more painful dispute was just over the horizon. A new controversy that was shaking the ecclesias worldwide was about to have a long-term effect on ecclesial life in the Bay Area. This new controversy, the resurrectional responsibility question, would soon come between the Bay Area brethren, resulting in a split in 1901. Bro. James Cheetham reported in *The Christadelphian* that year that the San Francisco Ecclesia had chosen to meet under the Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith and listed the names of the ten members in the ecclesia. Bro. William Clark was not among them. So began nearly 90 years of separation for the brethren by the Bay.

The new century had begun with the Bay Area Amended and Unamended ecclesias going their separate ways. The Amended Ecclesia was visited in 1901 by Bro. Henry Sulley (author of *The Temple of Ezekiel's Prophecy*). Twelve brothers and sisters met with Bro. and Sis. Sulley for breaking of bread at the Cheethams' home. Bro. Sulley reported later to *The Christadelphian Magazine* that Robert Roberts' last effort for the Truth had not been in vain: "At this place, brother Roberts closed his eyes in sleep nearly two and a half years ago. His last effort for purity of doctrine was made here. It has borne fruit, but he knoweth it not... In consequence of the last interview which brother Roberts had with brethren in San Francisco, a number decided to associate only with those who faithfully uphold the truth that the Scriptures are inspired." At Bro. Sulley's suggestion, the ecclesia undertook a large preaching effort. Preaching would become one of the main priorities of the San Francisco ecclesias in the early part of the twentieth century.<sup>23</sup>

In 1903 the Amended ecclesia reported to *The Christadelphian* that it had a Sunday school and mentioned the visit of Bro. A.D. Strickler. Bro. Strickler would be at the center of another controversy a few years later that would cause many of the Amended California ecclesias to join the Berean fellowship. The Amended ecclesia in the Bay Area, however, would remain in the Central fellowship. By 1904 there were 22 members and 18 Sunday school students in this ecclesia. The ecclesia seemed to be growing but more trouble lay ahead. In 1905 the ecclesia faced another division for an unspecified reason.<sup>24</sup> Just a year later the very ground under their feet would split.

## **Earthquake!**

The 1906 earthquake left the Oddfellows Hall (where the Amended ecclesia met) in ruins. All of the brothers and sisters escaped injury, but their Bibles, hymn books, and ecclesial records were destroyed.<sup>25</sup> Bro. J.G. Caton's letter to Bro. C.C. Walker, editor of *The Christadelphian*, gives a stunning picture of what it was like to be there when it happened:



San Francisco  
in flames  
April, 1906

San Francisco (Cal.), U.S.A.  
Noon, April 20th, 1906.

Dear Brother Walker,

Great distress here. Things so sudden, and fire as quick. Main waterpipe burst, and so fires burned almost unchecked. Have had to dodge fire continuously; prolonged and severe. No communication. Wires down. All offices destroyed. Food being rushed in, and water. Troops and Marines; martial law. Much loss of life, and most traces destroyed by fire. Post office for outgoing mails started this morning. Still blasting buildings to check fire. We are thankful to God for His mercies to us, that we and other brethren are spared. Things are in a state of chaos at present. We are sending mail by courtesy of strangers, and military post. Our meeting-place is a mass of ruins, and all have lost something. Brethren Baldwin and Cheetham, with their families, are safe. T. and sister E. E. Anderson are safe. My room burnt up — saved some. Sister Anderson's home burnt — saved some.

With kind regards and brotherly love,  
Yours in hope,

J. G. Caton.

### **The difficult years**

In 1907 the Amended ecclesia struggled to get back on its feet after the earthquake. They were meeting every other week in Oakland at the home of the McCarls. The ecclesia continued to be torn by division, but they also continued to preach the Word. The ecclesia held three debates with a Mr. Matlock in 1907, the Truth being represented by Bros. J. A. McCarl and A.W. Baldwin.<sup>26</sup> In 1911, Bros. McCarl and Baldwin again represented the Bay Area Christadelphians in a debate, this time against the Millennial Dawn group.<sup>27</sup> In 1910 the ecclesia began placing Bro. Roberts' book *Christendom Astray* in a number of public libraries including Bakersfield, Visalia, Spreckles, Turlock and Oakland.<sup>28</sup> Two years later, the placement of this excellent explanation of the Truth led to the baptism of Claus Buliman. In



**The San Francisco ecclesia in the early 1900s with Bro. J.A. McCarl at the front of the picture.**

1912, Bro. J.T. Irwin from the Pomona Ecclesia in Southern California lectured in San Francisco to over 40 visitors.<sup>29</sup>

The preaching efforts by the Amended ecclesia continued in the 1920s. In 1921 the ecclesia held a public lecture that attracted 50 visitors.<sup>30</sup> At about this time, my grandmother, sis. Rosamond Cheetham (Bro. and Sis. James Cheetham's daughter), and my grandfather, Bro. Howard Wade (Bro. and Sis. William Clark's

grandson) fell in love and married. Howard was in the Unamended fellowship and Rosamond in the Amended fellowship and neither of them was willing to change. Both families were unhappy with the unwise situation in which the two newlyweds were out of fellowship with each other. Naturally, there was concern that under these conditions Howard and Rosamond's marriage wouldn't last. A few years later, however, Howard left the Unamended fellowship for the sake of their children, and the marriage lasted over 50 years until my grandfather fell asleep in Christ in 1973.<sup>31</sup>

Things were not working out as well for the Bay Area brethren. A new split occurred in the Amended ecclesia in 1922, when eight brothers and sisters living in San Francisco apparently created a Berean Amended ecclesia.<sup>32</sup> There were now two Amended ecclesias in the Bay Area, one in Oakland (Central fellowship) and one in San Francisco (Berean) and one Unamended ecclesia in San Francisco. It was during this time that the Bay Area brethren were again visited by an editor of *The Christadelphian Magazine*, when Bro. C.C. Walker toured California in 1927 in an unsuccessful effort to heal the rift between the Berean and Central fellowships in the state.<sup>33</sup>

The 1920s saw a Berean-Central split in the Amended community, but on the Unamended side the Advocate and Fraternal Visitor groups were able to reconcile. Hoping to continue the success of that effort, the Unamended ecclesia made an attempt to reunite with the Central ecclesia in 1923. The ecclesia sent Bro. Cheetham, recording brother of the Amended ecclesia, a letter requesting his attendance at their Bible class on the subject of fellowship. This endeavor did not produce reunion, but in 1941 there was a new joint attempt to put an end to their division. Efforts by brethren in both ecclesias did lead to a local reunion, but it appears to have been short-lived.<sup>34</sup>

While the local reunion effort ultimately failed, the success of the Berean-Central reunion in North America in 1953 gave new impetus to continuing efforts for a Bay Area reunion. The San Francisco Unamended ecclesia and the Albany and Ukiah Amended ecclesias began reunion discussions. In the years leading up to these discussions, the Unamended ecclesia remained in San Francisco while the Amended ecclesia had moved several times, meeting first in Walnut Creek, then in Albany, and later in the Concord-Lafayette area. The Bay Area ecclesias were encouraged by several regional agreements in North America during the 1960s and released the following statement: "Five years of frequent discussion and conference between the Arranging Brothers of the Concord-Lafayette area and the San Francisco area have shown our complete and mutual agreement in understanding of all doctrinal principles essential for salvation." However, the '60s would end without reunion due to questions about fellowship practices.

The 1970s saw both the Amended and Unamended ecclesias move to new locations. The Amended ecclesia in Lafayette-Concord, with about 25 members, relocated north of the City of San Francisco to San Rafael in Marin County, and chose the name San Francisco (also known as Marinwood) Ecclesia. In 1973 the Unamended ecclesia, with about 50 members, moved a few miles south of San Francisco to the city of Belmont.



**Belmont Ecclesia, 1974**

It was in the 1980s that real progress began to be made toward uniting the brethren by the Bay. The decade began with the Belmont Ecclesia adopting a Statement of Position relating to Resurrectional Responsibility and Fellowship Matters, which it sent to the Marinwood Ecclesia and also to the Unamended ecclesias in Northern California. A number of reunion meetings were held in the early 1980s which included serving board members of the two ecclesias, members of the Unamended and Amended reunion committees, and Bro. Don Styles, editor of the *Tidings Magazine*. Next, the serving brethren of the Unamended San Francisco Ecclesia began to work together with brethren from Southern California to frame a regional proposal that would allow as many Amended and Unamended ecclesias in California to join together as possible. A Basis for Unity in California was presented in 1988 to the West Coast Central Reunion Committee and rep-

representatives of the arranging boards of the Central ecclesias. This was followed in 1989 with an open letter to all Unamended ecclesias in North America. The letter was signed by the Belmont, Mendocino (Ukiah), Mariposa, and Merced Ecclesias; it outlined their beliefs and practices and their desire to reunite with the Central brethren.

## Reunion

The groundwork had been laid to bring an end to 90 years of separation. On Dec. 15, 1991, the ecclesia in Belmont sent a formal request to the ecclesia in Marinwood, the *Tidings Magazine*, and *The Christadelphian Magazine*, seeking acceptance in mutual fellowship by the Marinwood Ecclesia and other Central ecclesias throughout the world. When this request was accepted, the Bay Area brethren were once again united, watching and waiting for the return of our Lord.

By becoming part of the Central community, the four formerly Unamended ecclesias in Northern California have benefited greatly from fellowship with brethren in both Northern and Southern California as well as the rest of the world. The long sought-after reunion has also led to growth for the now united Bay Area ecclesias. In June 2009, the San Francisco Peninsula (formerly known as Belmont) Ecclesia purchased a hall in Redwood City, the first permanent home for a Bay Area ecclesia in the 140 years of Christadelphian presence in the area. Tackling the work which this project requires has brought the brethren of the San Francisco and the San Francisco Peninsula Ecclesias even closer together.<sup>35</sup>

While San Francisco is a stunning city, the beauty of the fellowship that has been restored between the brethren by the Bay far surpasses all the physical beauty the area possesses. The unity that now exists between them took many years to work out but has led to abundant blessings for those who were affected by it. May these brethren continue to work together as one until the day that Christ returns and makes us all one, even as he and his Father are one.

*Gordon Hensley (Simi Hills, CA)*

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## *The Isle of Discussion*

*In the Scottish Highlands, near the village of Glencoe, there is a small island in the lake, or loch. It is reachable by boat, but far enough from shore that swimming back and forth is not a real option. For many centuries now, it has been known to those who live in the area as the "Isle of Discussion".*

*The Scots, particularly in the Highlands, were a quarrelsome lot. Disputes, about boundaries or business deals, personal insults or alienated affections, if left unchecked, could lead to family feuds and local wars. This explains the need for such an island.*

*So it came to be that, before written records were ever kept, village councils made use of the island. When two men fell out, for whatever reason, and the simpler methods for settling such disputes achieved nothing, the council would decree that both be rowed out to the Isle of Discussion. There they would be left all alone, with enough cheese and whiskey and oat cakes to sustain them. And there they would stay until they could sort out their differences, and agree to return in peace to the rest of society. Local historians say that, because of the Isle of Discussion, there has only been one murder among the locals in over 1,500 years.*

*"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift" (Matt 5:23,24).*

## Letters

### Books that have helped

Dear Bro. George,

A while ago you invited details of books which we had found helpful. There are so many that time would fail.

Regarding the *Wide as the Waters* reference (July, p. 288), may I heartily recommend a book about the King James translation committee, *God's Secretaries: The Making of the King James Bible*, by Adam Nicolson. (In Britain it is titled *Power and Glory: Jacobean England and the Making of the King James Bible*.) Enlightening, and not hard to read.

Also *Bible Versions: A Consumer's Guide to the Bible*, by Hugh Dunton. It is refreshing and objective, and helps to put versions in perspective.

I am surprised that no one, as far as I recall, mentioned Robert Roberts' autobiography, *My Days and My Ways*. I found it very reassuring, revealing as it does his flaws as well as his diligence, and showing his faithfulness in spite of his humanity. In conversation with many ardent brothers and sisters over the years, I have been puzzled how so few have read this RR book.

Other books might be of interest:

- *Portrait of the Saint*, by Bro. John Marshall.
- *Narrative of Sojourner Truth*.
- *Sick Heart River*, by John Buchan. I found it to be a powerful parable.
- *The Life of Our Lord: Written for His Children During the Years 1846 to 1849*, by Charles Dickens. A pleasant curiosity.

With love in the Lord,  
Your brother,  
Joe Coutts (Aberdeen, UK)

### Handel's "Messiah"

Dear Bro. George,

I read with interest the three articles about Handel's "Messiah" in the November *Tidings*. I would like to offer a little information concerning its historical background, gained mainly from Professor David Daniell's comprehensive book, *The Bible in English: Its History and Influence*.

Following the work of Tyndale, Coverdale, Matthew and other translators came the King James Version of 1611. By the time of George Frederick Handel, who lived from 1685 to 1759, copies of the Bible in English were well into circulation and its contents and text well known. But at this time there was also the so-called Age of Enlightenment, in which the authority and text of the Bible



were questioned and criticized. One party involved were the deists, believers in natural religion, who thought sins were forgiven without the need of any atoning sacrifice. They encouraged the denigration of traditional beliefs and of Scripture especially. Miracles were ridiculed, and apparent discrepancies between Old Testament and New Testament citations exploited, their main aim being to take out anything supernatural, especially the resurrection of Jesus, and any fulfillment of prophecy.

It was against this background of unbelief and skepticism that Handel wrote his oratorio "*Messiah*" and other Biblical works. Oratorio — oratory by music — was a fairly new musical form; it had been used by Italian composers from about 1700. In fact, previous to writing *Messiah* Handel had written *Esther*, *Deborah*, and *Athaliah* in 1733, *Saul* in 1737, and *Israel in Egypt* in 1739. Despite this output these were bad years for Handel; his compositions at this time were not much liked, his savings were gone, and he was suffering from stress as a result. He was thinking of leaving England and returning to his native Germany. In 1737 he suffered a stroke and virtually lost the use of his right hand, putting further musical composition in doubt. Fortunately a visit to the vapor baths at Aix-la-Chapelle and a prolonged session in them seemed to completely heal this affliction.

In 1741 Handel was invited to take part in a season of Oratorio in Dublin, and in August of the same year he received from Charles Jennens a libretto for *Messiah*, the text being entirely from the Bible. He accepted it with enthusiasm, set to work on it immediately and completed writing *Messiah* in 24 days. It seems incredible to us that a work of such magnitude — more than two hours of music, with parts for solo singers and choir as well as the parts for orchestra, every note having to be written by hand — should be written in such a short time, but apparently this was not unusual for Handel! Having completed *Messiah* he immediately began writing *Samson*, the largest of his Oratorios, and completed it within a month.

*Messiah* was first performed in Dublin on April 13, 1742, at the New Music Hall before an audience of 700, one hundred more than the hall was officially meant to hold, and was repeated on June 3 of the next year. Eight performances followed in London, in which it was only moderately received. In 1750 it was given a special charity performance at a Foundling Hospital in London. It was this performance that endeared it to the hearts and minds of people, and so it has remained ever since.

To quote from the writing of Charles Burnley in 1785: "And from that time to the present, this great work has been heard in all parts of the kingdom with increasing reverence and delight; it has fed the hungry, clothed the naked, fostered the orphan, and enriched succeeding managers of the Oratorios, more than any other single production in this or any country."

Originally written for professional choirs who could perform it after a couple of rehearsals, from the middle of the nineteenth century provincial and amateur choirs have found it possible to learn *Messiah* in two or three months and perform it. As a result *Messiah* has been a long-lasting witness to the Bible and its message of salvation.

Whereas his other Biblical oratorios may have been mainly dramatic storytelling of historical events, *Messiah* has a message for the participant and hearer which goes to the heart. “Comfort ye” are its opening words, and “Iniquity is pardoned” soon follows. But the forgiveness of our sins is made possible only through the sacrifice of the one who is the Lamb of God, who was despised, who bore our griefs, and with whose stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray and turned everyone to his own way — and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. *Messiah* tells us also of the resurrection of Jesus — his soul was not left in hell — he ascended on high and all the angels are bidden to worship him. He will come again and rule despite the fury of the nations, his triumph being celebrated in the Hallelujah chorus. The final praises to the Savior and Messiah are expressed in the words, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain and hath redeemed us to God by his blood, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. Amen.”

Writing *Messiah* touched the heart of the composer. It is said that during the 24 days of its composition Handel left untouched the food his servant brought to him, and that the ink of his pen mixed with his tears. When he had completed the work he is said to have exclaimed, “I did think I did see all heaven before me, and the Great God himself.”

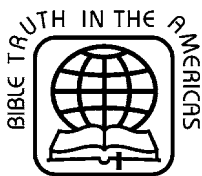
Bearing in mind the attempts of the deists to discredit Scripture and any fulfillment of prophecy, it is worth noting that such a large proportion of the text is taken from the Old Testament. The text comes from the King James Version of the Bible, and whether or not this is one’s favorite translation, it has to be said that its vocabulary and phrases have a musical quality, owed largely to its inheritance from Tyndale. As we read our Bibles we come across many phrases that almost inevitably make us think of how Handel expressed them in his music: “O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion,” “Lift up your heads, O ye gates,” “We shall not all sleep,” and “Behold, I show you a mystery” are just a few examples. As Professor Daniell concludes his section on Handel’s Biblical outpouring, “Handel in *Messiah* made for everyone an unforgettable beauty with English Bible phrases that point to the core of the Christian faith.”

John Boulton (Worcester, UK)

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*My point in writing to you is to urge speaking brethren to be more circumspect in the use of Scripture, particularly prophetic Scripture, and especially when preaching the gospel to others... There are future events about which we can be certain and there are events which are not yet clear. There are prophecies we can interpret from the housetops and there are speculations which are best kept for private thought or for Bible class discussion. Addresses for the preaching of the truth of salvation are no place for flights of fancy concerning the future. How is the interested friend to trust our setting forth of first principles if our dogmatism on unproved theories collapses with the passing of time? Let us keep sound doctrine and personal peeps into the future quite separate.*

(Harry Tennant, *The Christadelphian*, Vol. 106, p. 412)



## Bible Mission News

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### The Beauty of Trinidad and Tobago

The beauty of these two islands is obvious as one views them from the cabin of a commercial airliner. What may not be as obvious at first, but is soon discovered in multiple ways, is the beauty of the loving brothers and sisters who reside there.

Bro. Gary, Sis. Shirley, and I arrived in Tobago on a Saturday. We were planning to visit first the CYC which is held weekly. I was prepared to lead the senior class in a Bible study and a Bible game. Well, to our pleasant surprise both the junior and senior CYC were well underway with a program of their own.



**Tobago Ecclesia Sunday School students**

The seniors were practicing a skit which they plan to present to the ecclesia at the year-end program. The story, written by the CYC advisor, Bro. Angelo, is about a female Sunday school student who “falls in love” with a good looking Muslim and is about to marry him! Fortunately, just before the deed is done she realizes the wisdom of Paul’s words, “Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers”. The young people were enjoying the activity and learning an important Bible principle in the process.

I was able to share a bit of my presentation with the CYC between skit practice and the recreational activity for the evening — a steel pan lesson! Have you ever heard “How great thou art!” played on the steel pan? Well, we did, that night at the Tobago CYC!

We are especially grateful to Bro. Collin and Sis. Elizabeth Campbell who escorted us around the island for two days. This enabled us to make pastoral visits to a number of older brethren and an ill sister, as well as to enjoy a morning at the beach with Collin, Elizabeth, Kezia (their teenage daughter) and two-year-old Elijah (their grandson).

The next stop was the Erin Ecclesia in Trinidad. While this ecclesia has very limited financial resources there is no limit to the love and support they give to their brothers and sisters.

We arrived on the day the ecclesia was planning a “Thanksgiving” for the birthday of three year-old Simeon and the 14th wedding anniversary of his parents, Bro. Abithar and Sis. Neesha Edoo. The evening began with Bro. Sheriff Edoo (Abithar’s father) giving a short Bible talk. Afterward there was fellowship around a lovely meal, cake, and gifts for little Simeon but it was obvious what the priority of this family is: “seeking first the kingdom of God”. Bro. Sheriff’s presentation was an opportunity to strengthen the ecclesia, and also to witness to family members who are not currently members of the ecclesia. There was truly much to give thanks for that evening. In addition, Bro. Rabindranauth and Sis. Cammie Seopaul turned their entire house over to us for the duration of our stay!

We also enjoyed special hospitality at the remaining two ecclesias, Arima and Marabella. An Arima highlight was visiting Bro. George Constantine in a maximum security prison. Bro. Sam Edwards made the arrangements and his wife, Sis. Bernadette, accompanied me. What a refreshing thing it was to hear Bro. George say, “The best thing that ever happened to me was when I became a Chris-



**Some of the Arima Ecclesia with Bro. Brad Butts after the Sunday afternoon lecture/class.**

tadelphian”. This is coming from a man who was just recently taken off “death row”. He has been in prison now for about 17 years and a brother in Christ for eight years. He learned the truth through correspondence courses he saw advertised in the local newspaper. He is a model prisoner whom even the guards respect as a dedicated disciple of Christ. Sis. Bernadette reports that he is always asking about and praying for his brothers and sisters beyond the prison walls.

Finally, I spent a short but sweet time with the Gobins (Bro. Raj and Sis. Marie, Bro. Anil and Sis. Janelle and their two young sons, Josiah and Azariah). I enjoyed the lively discussion following our Bible class on David’s best friend and mentor, Jonathan, and the hospitality so freely given by this loving family.

Much thanks is in order to Bro. David Andrews and his patient wife, Sis. Joan, for providing a shuttle service to and from the airport and between ecclesias. Bro. David was pulled over by the police on one of our journeys! We suspected that they were checking to see if he was running a taxi service without the proper license! Well, it turns out that they were looking for something and someone else, so Bro. David and his passengers were spared any further delay. Special thanks goes as well to Bro. Sam Edwards for all his behind-the-scenes work of organiz-

ing our schedule and for the hospitality and flexibility of his entire family (Sis. Bernadette, Jonathan, and David).

I was very encouraged by what I saw and experienced while in “T&T”. Yes, the true beauty of the islands is demonstrated by the love and fellowship of our brothers and sisters there. It was my privilege to be encouraged by them. It is clear that “he which hath begun a good work in (them) will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”

*Bro. Brad Butts*

*Link Brother for Trinidad & Tobago*



**The CBMT&T Committee plus  
Bro. Gary and Sis. Shirley Smith  
from Ontario.**

**Left to right top:  
Bro. Collin Campbell, Tobago Ecclesia,  
Bro. Sam Edwards, Arima Ecclesia,  
Bro. Gary Smith,  
Left to right bottom:  
Bro. Raj Gobin, Marabella Ecclesia,  
Sis. Shirley,  
Bro. Sheriff Edoo, Erin Ecclesia**

## **Grand Opening of Mocha Ecclesial Hall**

The dedication service took place about two months before we set foot on the shores of Guyana. We saw a few photos and heard the enthusiastic conversations about its lovely features, and it was now the best looking of the ecclesial halls in Guyana!

However, the real “grand opening” was when the doors were swung wide open and brothers and sisters and young people began to gather on the immaculately swept front steps to fraternize before the opening talk of the First Mocha Fraternal. The speaker was Bro. Ted Sleeper who, with his wife Sis. Dolores, lived in Guyana when the plan for a Mocha Ecclesia was first conceived by Bro. Allan and Sis. Stella Barrow. Two of Allan and Stella’s daughters, Sis. Pat Cumbermack and Sis. Lorna Murray, were in attendance at this first fraternal, along with a couple of granddaughters.



The hall was packed. Benches were borrowed from Eccles Ecclesia to supplement Mocha's own benches, and plastic stacking chairs were squeezed in along the outside wall — no constraints of fire codes here. All were comfortably seated while they strained to absorb every spiritual morsel offered over the next few days. Even the young children were engaged. Unlike our

North American children, they lack diversions. I was fascinated to watch two five-year-old girls kneeling on the tile floor with pencils in hand challenging themselves to try to copy in a notebook the headings on the PowerPoint before they were changed. For non-readers, this was quite a task!



On Sunday morning all the Demerara brethren joined together with their Mocha brethren and visiting brethren from Berbice. There was not an empty seat! The singing was heartfelt and full-bodied, flowing out to the streets through the open windows where all the village could hear their praise and thanksgiving. The Mocha sisters provided food for lunches, snacks and a light supper mostly prepared by just a few who labored long into the night and before the crack of dawn to have everything fresh and tasty — a culinary delight! Many hands working together to the glory of our heavenly Father made this a delightful and memorable fraternal.

Many prayers of thanksgiving were uttered and recognition given for the overseas funds provided by the generosity of the Williams Fund and individual brothers and sisters, which made the dream of this hall a reality.

On the third and final day, the fraternal was brought to a close by the thundering torrents of rain rushing over the roofing and quickly overflowing the rainwater barrels set out to catch the rain. It reminded us all of the few finishing touches needed to complete this hall: gutters, downspouts, remaining concrete walkway around the back of the hall, and plugging the gaps in roofing sheets to prevent bats from moving in. Remember this is the tropics — hot, humid, teeming with life amidst brief torrential rainfall. Any gap we leave unguarded, the creatures will quickly inhabit.

As the rain abated, the brethren and young people scurried out of the protection of the hall and headed to the street to bicycle, walk, or take transportation home. The chatter as they bade farewell to one another and headed home was filled with the rejuvenation of a spiritual feast and the peace of satiation. All were anticipating the next year's fraternal.

*Ted & Dolores Sleeper  
CBMC links*

## Sis. Reeta Muniapen



Our visit to Berbice was overshadowed by the pall of the untimely death of our sister, Reeta. She died firmly holding to the hope of the Kingdom but left in her wake her grieving family and neighbors. She was renowned in the small village community for her unwavering kindness and generosity to all who were in need. She grew up never shying from hard labor, helping in the rice fields or at home in whatever way she could. Most of her family is Hindu but her older sister and oldest daughter are both Christadelphians.

A remarkable thing was how much the community came together to support the family in the many nights of wake while family members were flying in from Canada and helping with the preparations for the funeral. The brethren supported the family each night for seven nights of wake preceding the funeral. Prayers were offered, Bible readings shared, and hymn singing lifted spirits. The neighbors and friends prepared food for the many community members who streamed in and out offering condolences. It was a reminder to all of us brethren how we as an ecclesial family can minister with love and devotion in times of need, and the volumes that those acts of kindness speak about who we are.

Our sister Reeta was always very quiet but her presence was always felt. She is sorely missed by all of those who loved her both in and out of the ecclesia. Our



comfort is found in the hope that we share with her as we await our Lord's return to set up God's everlasting kingdom on this earth. Even so, come Lord Jesus!

*Ted & Dolores Sleeper  
CBMC links*

## ThisIsYourBible.com Update

*We have had new ideas about how to use the website in outreach efforts in California, the UK, and Barbados. These ideas were used in the UK this summer, and more recently in Southern California and Barbados.*



Barbados is a little country with a lot going for it! It ranks in the top five countries in the world for literacy and has an internet penetration of 66%! This means that out of a population of 282,000 about 180,000 are internet users! 67% of “Bajans” are Protestant, mostly Anglican, but there is a keen interest in the Bible. On the **thisisyourbible.com** site, 846 students from Barbados have registered! Barbados is the third largest source of students on the **thisisyourbible.com** website, behind only the USA and the UK. Proportional to population it is far and

away the most responsive area we have. On November 20, Bro. Rod Ghent called upon Bro. Mike LeDuke, the TIYB webmaster, to make use of the website to advertise an upcoming public lecture to be held in two different venues in Barbados. At the touch of a button, an email advertisement was sent off to all 846 TIYB students! The good news is that we can do this for any country or city in the world! You may not have over 800 names to work with in your area, but we can put together a mailing list for you and even create and send out advertisements for your local ecclesial activities to all of the students on our database in your area. Contact Bro. Mike at [yourbible@gto.net](mailto:yourbible@gto.net) and let us show you what **thisisyourbible.com** can do to help your ecclesia to witness more effectively!

Stratford on Avon is a popular tourist destination. The Bible campaign there, in the summer of 2009, expected that a significant number of tourists would visit the Bible Exhibition that was held.

The CBM, CBMA, and ACBM web site [www.thisisyourbible.com](http://www.thisisyourbible.com) has a ‘Contact us’ page with an interactive world map. The world map allows visitors to the web site to locate their nearest Christadelphians, worldwide.

Using Mobile Broadband and a laptop computer, visitors to the exhibition were given details of their nearest Christadelphians, as well as introducing them to a resource that they could visit when they got home.

While this information could have been given using the ALS diary, the website, being more interactive, allowed for the visitor to make contact with their local





Christadelphians while at the exhibition — less chance of that contact being lost.

Campaign leaders and ecclesias might consider using this facility in their future preaching activities.

The Los Angeles, California, Ecclesia had a Fall Festival in November to raise money for Agape in Action. In addition to the local ecclesias, the event was publicized in their local community. There were a number of visits from neighbors. Again, using Mobile Broadband and a laptop computer and a slew of other materials, the website was demonstrated for visitors. The purpose here was to draw new students and contacts to their ecclesia.

A combined group of brothers and sisters from several ecclesias in Southern California live in the Santa Clarita

Valley, north of Los Angeles. There is a Farmer's Market held every Sunday afternoon. They asked and were able to get a free booth to set up the same type of display used in other places — a simple table with the *thisisyourbible.com* logo prominently displayed, the Mobile Broadband and a laptop computer available, and the business cards ready to be handed out. The group takes turns manning the booth each Sunday. Again, the purpose here is to draw more neighbors to the website, which also brings them to the ecclesias.

How could your ecclesia use this very important tool to spread the gospel?

Are you handing out the *www.thisisyourbible.com* business cards? Is the website on all your outside advertising as well as that of your local ecclesia? Is your ecclesial website tied to the TIYB website so these contacts you make can be referred automatically to your ecclesia? Please visit the website and contact us if you need help or want to share how you are using the website.

Sis. Jan Berneau  
CBMA/CBMC, TIYB.com Publicity

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*Many men owe the grandeur of their lives to their tremendous difficulties.*

*Charles H. Spurgeon*

## 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](http://www.cbma.net) for an update on current activities as well as to make US dollar online donations. Donations by check should be sent c/o Charles Brinkerhoff, 15925 La Ronda Cir., Hacienda Heights, CA 91745-4244

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

**Williamsburg Christadelphian Foundation (WCF)** supports pastoral and preaching activities throughout the world. c/o Ray Pratt, P.O. Box 88, Deland, IL 61839-0086. Website: [wcfoundation.org](http://wcfoundation.org)

**CBMA Overseas Book Service** welcomes gifts of used Bibles, reference books, and Christadelphian books. Please contact Jan Berneau, 1221 N. Whitnall Hwy., Burbank, CA 91505-2110.

Phone: 818-842-2868  
[jberneau@earthlink.net](mailto:jberneau@earthlink.net)

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

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

**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](mailto:agapeinaction@rogers.com)  
Website: [www.agapeinaction.com](http://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](http://www.cmadfa.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

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

**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](mailto: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 5th of the preceding month; please include full name of ecclesia and recording brother.)

### **BOSTON, MA**

It is with great joy that we announce the birth, on October 15, 2009, of Anna Soraya to our Bro. Mark and Sis. Anita Vincent.

We are also quite pleased to announce two baptisms. After a good confession of her faith, ERICA WARNER was baptized into the saving name of Jesus Christ on July 12, 2009. And on November 15, 2009, RUTH SYLVESTER was baptized as well into the name which is above every name.

We also welcome by transfer Sis. Nancy Warner, from the Cranston, RI Ecclesia.

Our annual spring study day is scheduled, Lord willing, for Saturday, April 10, 2010. Leading our studies will be Bro. Mark Carr (Toronto West, ON) on the subject "He Whom Thy Brethren Shall Praise". This study is on the man Judah and his transformation.

Effective January 2010, the undersigned will be the recording brother for the Boston Ecclesia. My address is 84 Smoke Hill Ridge, Marshfield, MA 02050; phone 781-837-8865; and email jimsullivan@aol.com.

*Jim Sullivan*

### **CALGARY, AB**

Following a change of employment, Bro. Cory and Sis. Nicole Readman and their daughter Laticia have moved to Saskatchewan. We are sorry to lose their company and their enthusiastic support for the activities of the Calgary ecclesia. We commend them to the love and care of the North Battleford Ecclesia, and pray for God's blessing on them in their new ecclesial family.

*John Fairhurst*

### **ECHO LAKE, NJ**

We report with great joy that, after much prayerful discussion, our Bro. Edward R. Opie has been received back into fellowship in November. We thank our heavenly Father for his bountiful mercy, as we with Bro. Eddie seek to walk toward His kingdom.

We have been pleased and privileged to have the company of a number of visiting brothers and sisters, whom we have welcomed around the table of the Lord including: John Elton (Punchbowl, Aust.); Margan Packie, Carolyn Antonaccio, Mabel Knapp, Jr., and David and Maryann Jorgensen (Union, NJ); Edith Machado (Nashua, NH); Margaret Cummings (Moorestown, NJ); and Borgette Charles (Georgetown, Guyana).

*Stewart Marsden*

### **GEORGETOWN, GUYANA**

In July 2009, the Georgetown and Ruimveldt Sunday Schools held their annual joint outing, which was well attended by Sunday school students, young people and parents.

The annual fraternal gathering was held at the Mocha Ecclesia on July 3, 2009. The speaker was Bro. Ted Sleeper, on the topic "Meditation on Creation". We welcomed Bro. Clive and Sis. Christine Drepaul (Brooklyn, NY), and Bro. Joe and Sis. Veronica Badlu (South Ozone Park, NY).

Sis. Rita Neopen of the Kilcoy Ecclesia fell asleep in the Lord. Bro Clifford Semple has undergone minor surgery.

In August 2009, the eleventh Tri-Annual Caribbean Youth Camp was held in Guyana, at the Kuru Kuru Training Centre, some 30 miles from the capital city. A total of 148 young people and brothers and sisters from five Caribbean countries, the USA, UK, and Canada attended. It was indeed a spiritual feast and wonderful fellowship. The speakers were Bro. Tyrone Smartt and Bro. Gideon Drepaul of New York, USA.

During the camp, we rejoiced at the baptism of NATHAN RUPNARINE, son of Sis. Bibi Rupnarine of the New Amsterdam Ecclesia, who currently resides in New York, USA. Bro. Nathan was received into fellowship by Bro. Clive Drepaul of the Brooklyn, NY, Ecclesia.

*Anthony Semple*

## **JASONVILLE, IN**

We report our disfellowship of Sis. Margaret Amos.

*Ted Plew*

## **PITTSBURGH, PA**

We welcomed Bro. David and Sis. Cora Levin (Baltimore, MD) for our May study weekend, and thank Bro. David for his classes and exhortation. The many visitors were appreciated.

We are glad to have Bro. Fred Telles, Jr., back with us from Portland, OR.

We are happy to announce the baptisms into the saving name of Christ of JOSEPHINE BODNAR on August 9, 2009, REBECCA POMMER on November 15, 2009, and HOLLY LAVIA on November 29, 2009. We also announce the marriage of Sis. Josephine Bodnar and Bro. Fred Telles, Sr., on October 17, 2009. Sis. Sarah Telles has transferred to the Paris Avenue, OH, Ecclesia. We miss her helpful assistance.

Bro. Ron Leadbetter (Hamilton, ON) presented classes and an exhortation for our CYC weekend on November 7-8, 2009. We thank Bro. Ron and his wife, Sis. Judy, and all who attended. Bro. Jim Barton (Kingston, ON) visited November 22, 2009, along with his wife, Sis. Ann, and we appreciated his words of exhortation. We also thank our Paris Avenue brethren, Don Weingart, Jack Vogelgesang, Jim Bates, and Tim Cooper, for exhorting. Also visiting from Paris Avenue were Sis. June Weingart, Jan Vogelgesang, Sis. Cheryl and Sis. Victoria Bates, Sis. Annalee Cooper, Bro. Kyle Misko, Bro. Tyler Misko, Sis. Sarah Telles, Bro. Roger and Sis. Joy Snyder, and Bro. Chris and Sis. Rebecca Stillwell. Bro. Ben Link (Baltimore, MD); Bro. Brian Robinson (Kitchener-Waterloo); and Bro. David and Sis. Jennifer Waye (Toronto West, ON) also visited. Lord willing, Bro. Mark Vincent will be the speaker for our May 1, 2010, study day. Beginning January 1, 2010, our recording brother will be Bro. Bill Folkerts. He may be contacted by phone at 724-265-3272; or by email at willfol@gmail.com.

*David Pommer*

## **SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CA**

These past few months we have truly been blessed. VIOLA WILCOX, mother of Sis. Rhonda Vaughan, was baptized on September 2, 2009. SETH TUNNELL, son of Bro. Ethan and Sis. Shawna Tunnell, was baptized on September 27, 2009. We pray our Father will bless them richly in their new life in Christ. Following a recent meeting with the arranging brethren, we welcome back into fellowship Sis. Emily Outkirt who relocated to our area and has been attending regularly.

In October 2009, our ecclesia started a Bible Reading Seminar held at our ecclesial hall. At this point in the series, we have four students regularly attending.

On January 30, 2010, our ecclesia is having a study day with Bro. David Styles (Shelburne, ON). The topic is "Faith in the Last Days". The study will start at 9:30 am.

For more information about our ecclesia and the San Diego CYC, visit our websites [www.sdbible.com](http://www.sdbible.com) and [www.easysite.com/sandiegocyc](http://www.easysite.com/sandiegocyc).

*Nick Parrino*

## **SARASOTA, FL**

The brothers and sisters of the Sarasota, Largo and Orlando Ecclesias thank our Bro. Ian MacFarlane (Hamilton, ON) for leading us in a study weekend on "The Mind of the Spirit." All who attended came away greatly strengthened for facing life's many challenges while we await the Lord's return. He also encouraged us with words of exhortation, reminding us that ours is a faith to be put into action.

In the past several months, we have also been pleased to receive the word of exhortation from Bre. Gordon MacFarlane (Hamilton, ON); Ed Robinson (Kitchener/Waterloo, ON); and Randy Coy (Paris Avenue, OH). We also thank Bro. Ron Leadbetter (Hamilton, ON) in leading our midweek Bible class in a consideration of "King David".

We extend our sympathy to Sis. Betty Schenk, formerly of the Sarasota, FL, Ecclesia, on the falling asleep of her husband, Bro. Dick Schenk. This writer remembers Bro. Dick as a quiet, gentle man who rejoiced that, at a later point in his life he found the path of truth. While saddened by his loss, we know that our separation will be short, for certainly the signs all around us show that our Lord's return is near.

*James L. Wilkinson*

## **SOUTH OZONE PARK, NY**

Since our last communication, the South Ozone Park Ecclesia has been extremely active in several activities. First of all, we thank our heavenly Father for all the opportunities He has afforded us in spreading the gospel through various means. The program "This is Your Bible" is taped and edited at the SOP ecclesial hall by the brothers of the Brooklyn, Manhattan, and South Ozone Park Ecclesias; it is aired weekly on several television channels.

We thank all the brothers and sisters who have visited us over the past few months, and particularly Bro. Jim Harper (Meriden, CT), who recently brought us the word of exhortation and lecture. This past summer, we again engaged in our annual preaching activities, our Parking Lot Preaching/Barbecue Outreach, and a street fair all geared toward community outreach.

Last year, we rejoiced with the angels in heaven over the recent baptisms of two of our young people who were CYC members. On August 24, 2008, SUZANNE HINDS was baptized into Christ. Sis. Suzanne is the daughter of Bro. Errol and Sis. Patricia Hinds. On October 19, 2008, JANELLE VALZ also put on the saving name of Christ. Sis. Janelle is the elder daughter of Mr. Gaston Valz and Mrs. Ann Valz. We pray God's richest blessings on them as they walk toward the kingdom. MICHAEL HINDS, the youngest son of Bro. Eldon and Sis. Desiree Hinds, put on the saving name of Christ on February 15, 2009. Many of our young people attended the Caribbean Youth Camp held in Guyana over the summer. One of them, NATHAN RUPERNARINE, the son of Sis. Bibi Rupernarine, took the opportunity to enter into the waters of baptism at the camp on August 9, 2009. We pray God's richest blessings on him as he continues his walk toward the kingdom. On September 13, 2009 we were blessed again to rejoice in the baptisms of three more young people — LEMUEL HINDS, PAUL HINDS, and PHILLIP HINDS. These young men are the sons of Bro. Leonard and Sis. Pearl Hinds. It is our sincere prayer that God will continue to be with these seven young people in their new lives in Christ and their walk toward the kingdom.

We rejoice with Bro. Eliot and Sis. Naomi Hinds for the joyous addition of Elizabeth Hinds to their family on May 12, 2008. Elizabeth is a wonderful addition to our meeting. Jacob Hinds was born to Bro. Marcel and Sis. Dawn Hinds on June 26, 2009. He is a welcome and wonderful addition to their new family. Lisa Hall was born to Bro. Dexter and Sis. Alica Hall on January 12, 2009. Lisa ensures that her presence is known among her other two siblings and in the meeting. Children are blessings from our Lord; and we are indeed blessed to have all three little people in our meeting.

We welcome with open arms Bro. Jason Porte, who was transferred from the Eccles, Guyana Ecclesia. Bro. Jason joins his wife, Tricia Porte, as they now begin their married life together in Christ. Indeed we are privileged to have him and he has already proven to be an asset to our meeting. Sis. Livonia Blair is a cheerful and welcome addition to our ecclesia, transferring from the Round Hill Ecclesia in Jamaica. Livonia is a college student and is doing excellently in her studies. She has already become part of our CYC, and we are happy to have her with us. We pray that God would protect her in her travels as she makes the commitment to attend the meetings every Sunday.

We were saddened by the passing of two of our elderly sisters in Christ, Sis. Doris Hinds and Sis. Molly Dannels. Sis. Doris fell asleep in Christ on December 29, 2008. She had been one of the stalwarts in our meeting for many years. She was originally a member of the Eccles, Guyana, Ecclesia until she came to this country many years ago. She was an active member of several committees and the sisters' class. She was a counselor, a teacher, and an advisor to many. Sis. Doris was a respected mother, grandmother, great grandmother, and sister in Christ. She was one of those sisters that always had a Scripture verse ready for every situation. In 2006 her health began to decline and this prevented her from attending her meetings that she loved. Sis. Doris is greatly missed by all for her encouraging words of comfort and her kind deeds. However, we take comfort in knowing that she is only asleep in Christ waiting for the moment when the dead in Christ shall rise first.

On March 11, 2009, our Sis. Molly Dannels fell asleep in Christ. Sis. Molly also came from Guyana and then saw the need to put on the saving name of Christ. She had been ailing for quite some time, but Sis. Molly was always a fighter and kept bouncing back. Her wonderful personality was very much responsible for her home health aide joining the Christadelphians. Her kindness and tranquil personality will be remembered by

all, especially by the young people whom she loved to treat. Since death is only a sleep, we take comfort in knowing that we shall see her again.

We were saddened by the passing of our dear Sis. Monica McLeod of the Tobago Ecclesia. Sis. Monica was a regular visitor to our meeting when she visited this country for medical treatment. She was always a joy to be with. While she was with us, she wasted no time in joining our ecclesial choir to lend her voice in singing praises to the Lord. It was always very difficult to know she was ill because she always maintained a pleasant countenance and a wonderful smile. On July 27, 2009, a few days prior to her making another medical visit to New York, Sis. Monica fell asleep in Christ to await the calling of her name. Our sincere prayers go out to the families of these three wonderful sisters in Christ.

*Roy Lindo*

## **THOUSAND OAKS, CA**

During the past few months we have been pleased to welcome many brothers and sisters from our neighboring California ecclesias. In addition, we welcomed from afar Bro. Dan and Sis. Ashley Robinson and Bro. David Wisniewski (Brantford, ON); Bro. Jeff and Sis. Beth Johnson and Sis. Jan Kingsburg (Glenlock, Aust.); Sis. Suzy Mason (San Francisco, CA); Bro. James and Sis. Kristen Styles and Bro. Brian and Sis. Kelly Styles (Livonia, MI); Bro. Henry and Sis. Sharon Wisniewski (Rogue Valley, OR); Bro. Stephen and Sis. Beth Mansfield (Golden Grove, Aust.); and Bro. Tim Wallace (Boronia, Aust.).

Our thanks go out to Bre. Richard Yung, Neal Kaplan, Tony Fratello, and Nathan Lewis of Reseda, and Bro. Jason Hensley of Simi Hills for their exhortations and afternoon classes. We also thank our Bre. Jeff Johnson, James Styles, Jim Cowie (Wilston, Aust.) and Henry Wisniewski for their exhortations and Bre. David Wisniewski and Brian Styles for their classes. We really appreciate our visiting brethen speaking for us.

We are very happy to report that on September 13, 2009, following a good interview, Bro. Karl Kastrup was received back into fellowship after many years absence from the brotherhood. We are very sad to have to report that bro. Karl fell asleep in Christ on October 23, 2009. Bro. Karl was brother in the flesh to our Sis. Sharon Wisniewski and he now awaits his master's return.

We are sorry to lose our Bro. Henry and Sis. Sharon Wisniewski to the Rogue Valley, OR, Ecclesia as they have moved into that area. We will certainly miss them as they were a very vital part of our ecclesia. We are, on the other hand, pleased to welcome Bro. James and Sis. Kristen Styles to our ecclesia as they have transferred from the Livonia, MI, Ecclesia. We look forward to working together in these last days.

Our annual Kids Camp was held in June this year and again was a great success due to the efforts of many of our local brothers and sisters, and especially to the efforts of Bro. Stephen Mansfield. He helped lead our studies on the life of Esther. Our special thanks go out to him and Sis. Beth for their help.

*Tom Graham*

## **WACHUSETT, MA**

With sadness we report the falling asleep in Christ of our Bro. Wesley Trow on November 19, 2009. Wes served 55 years in the Worcester and Wachusett Ecclesias as recorder and elder, and in many other capacities, with calm assurance that the Lord was returning soon. He continued this service until his last days. We are so

thankful for Bro. Wes's love, help, and example all these years. We look to that same hope he exemplified, the hope of the resurrection and the coming kingdom. Our deepest sympathies go to his wife Sis. Esther, his daughter Sis. Deborah Emmons, and his family.

*Richard Corsi*

## **WASHINGTON, DC**

The Washington, DC, Ecclesia has enjoyed many visiting brothers and sisters over the past few months. We would like to thank the following brothers who visited and exhorted: Bro. Ron McPhee (Richmond/Petersburg, VA) and Bro. Nigel Small (Echo Lake NJ).

We also thank the following brothers for giving current events lectures that were offered to the public at our ecclesia: Bro. Alan Laben (Baltimore, MD); Bro. Dan Jorgensen (Echo Lake, NJ); Bro. Ron Hicks (Washington, DC); and Bro. Ryan Mutter (Baltimore, MD)

The 2009 Family Bible Study Weekend at Camp Hashawha was held Nov. 27–29, 2009, and was a wonderful success. We would like to thank Bro. Ian MacFarlane (Hamilton, ON) for the study he gave, “The Mind of the Spirit”.

The Washington, DC, Ecclesia has been blessed in growth over the past few months. We are joyful to announce the following additions to our ecclesial family. In September, we happily received the transfer of fellowship from the Livonia, MI, Ecclesia of Sis. Abi Newth. On November 8, 2009, our ecclesia witnessed another of Adam's race enter into the waters of baptism. After a good confession of her faith, FLORENCE BAILEY was immersed into the saving name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We welcome our new sister and pray that the Lord will continue to be with Sis. Florence in her walk toward His coming kingdom.

On November 18, 2009, our ecclesia was blessed with the births of two future Sunday school students. To Bro. Andy and Sis. Cindy Baxley was born, Alexander Christian Baxley. Also to Bro. Andrew and Sis. Erin Amis, Liam Andrew Amis was born. On November 20, 2009, Bro. David Perry of the Washington, DC, Ecclesia married Sis. Elizabeth Walker of the Shirley, UK, Ecclesia in Palmerston North, New Zealand.

Our “Learn to Read the Bible Effectively” seminar that began in October was attended by six interested attendees. Beginning in December, we plan to follow this seminar with a six-week study in Genesis. We pray that the Lord will continue to bless our efforts to preach His word.

*Cory Crabill*

## **WICHITA FALLS, TX**

Since last reporting our ecclesial news we have welcomed around the table of our Lord the following visitors: Sis. Kimberly Kenneway (Wachusett, MA); Sis. Jeanna McLaughlin (Dallas, TX); Bro. Bill and Sis. Kelly Ellison (East TX); and Sis. Sandra Maggert (Albuquerque, NM). We thank Bro. Ellison for his words of comfort and exhortation. We report that Sis. DeLayne Beutel has resigned fellowship.

We currently are making plans for our annual Spring Gathering to be held, God willing, over the weekend of April 2–4, 2010, at the T4C Camp. Our hope is many will attend this weekend around God's word away from the daily cares of this present evil age.

*John A. Clubb*



## Minute Meditation

### Be Kind

Og Mandino is quoted as saying, "Beginning today, treat everyone you meet as if they were going to be dead by midnight. Extend to them all the care, kindness and understanding you can muster, and do it with no thought of any reward. Your life will never be the same again."

Tenderly caring for the needs of others should be a way of life for followers of Jesus. One of the ways that we demonstrate our love for God is by our acts of kindness toward His other children. James asks, "But if a man has this world's goods, and sees that his brother is in need, and keeps his heart shut against his brother, how is it possible for the love of God to be in him?" Jesus tells us, "But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil." If God is good to the unthankful, how much more should we take great care to be kind to others. Paul tells us, "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." God wants us to be kind, we are commanded to be kind because of the kindness shown toward us by God, and God will give us a great reward if we do so.

Sometimes we are so busy that we don't take the time to stop and help. Instead, we need to take Og Mandino's advice and treat everyone as if they were going to be dead by midnight because, as Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "You cannot do a kindness too soon, for you never know how soon it will be too late." These thoughts take on new meaning when we experience the sudden passing of a friend. Recently we visited someone in the afternoon who died later that night. We have visited other sick folk shortly before their death, and at the time we certainly did not know that it would be the last day of their life. We saw both of our parents just hours before they died some 18 years apart and had no idea that when we said good-bye to each of them that it was our last time together. None of us knows how long anyone has, and so we should take the opportunity to show kindness whenever we can. Mahatma Gandhi said, "I shall pass through this world but once. Any good therefore that I can do or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

James Henry said, "Three things in human life are important. The first is to be kind. The second is to be kind. The third is to be kind." He did not mind repeating himself when it was so important. Some one has said, "Don't wait for people to be kind, show them how." Since Jesus said that God is kind to the unthankful, we don't wait for them, we show kindness even to those that we might think do not deserve it. "You will regret many things in life but you will never regret being too kind or too fair," said Brian Tracy.

How will showing kindness change our life? Jesus explained that we will be God's children, the children of the Highest. Peter tells us that if we add kindness and other

virtues to our character, God will make us fruitful and bring us to His Kingdom: "Add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

Let us look for opportunities to be kind, to initiate random acts of kindness to others, to treat others as we would like to be treated, and to show the care and love that we would show if we knew that their life would be taken from them this night. We need to take Peter's advice to heart and add kindness to all the virtues just as he instructed us to do, so that we will never stumble. Truly our entrance into the Kingdom depends on it.

Robert J. Lloyd

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*"Our time is only once — and never returns. So let us make the best of it while we have it. How to make the best of it — that is the question on which so many make shipwreck" (Robert Roberts).*

## Coming Events (Lord Willing)

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

### JANUARY 2010

**2 Brantford, ON** Study day. Bro. Brian Luke (Adelaide, AUS): "Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty." Classes will begin at 10:30 am. Lunch will be provided and afternoon classes will be available during the second and third classes for children ages 2 to 9

**9 Thousand Oaks, CA** Annual Day with the Word. Bro. Jonathan Bowen. Held at the Union Building in Camarillo, CA, as in years past. For information please contact Bro. Tom Graham [tom@bigbrand.com](mailto:tom@bigbrand.com)

**16-17 San Francisco Peninsula, CA** Weekend with the Word. Ecclesial hall, 1536 James Ave., Redwood City, CA. Classes 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](mailto:ragover@aol.com)

**30 San Diego County, CA** Annual study day, 9:30 am ecclesial hall, Bro. David Styles (Shelburne, ON): "Faith in the last days". Lunch provided. Contact Bro. Kent Ellis [ellisk@san.rr.com](mailto:ellisk@san.rr.com) or 858-674-5645

## **FEBRUARY 2010**

**5-7 Ladore Youth Weekend** in Waymart, Pennsylvania. Bro. Nathan Lewis (Los Angeles, CA): "At the Foot of the Cross." See [www.cyccamp.org](http://www.cyccamp.org) for more details or contact Bro. Ryan Mutter 202-437-0641

**13-14 Saanich Peninsula, BC** Study weekend. Bro. Nathan Badger. Subject to be announced. Classes are Saturday afternoon, Sunday morning, and exhortation. Contact Kevin and Rebekah Hunter [bible@christadelphia.org](mailto:bible@christadelphia.org) for details

**21-26 Palm Springs Bible School** 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](mailto:Register@christadelphianbibleschool.org) or visit [www.californiabibleschool.org](http://www.californiabibleschool.org)

## **MARCH 2010**

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

**27-28 Baltimore, MD** Study weekend with Bro. Steve Davis (Boston, MA): "Second Chances: Lessons From Peter". Saturday, 2 pm, supper served. Sunday 9:45 am, fourth class 11 am, Memorial service, lunch served. Contact Sis. Judy Schneider, 410 609-0336

**27 New England Little Disciples Gathering.** A day at the Barton Center, N. Oxford, MA with classes for children ages 4-12. Pre-work is expected ("Abraham" workbook available shortly). Contact Sis. Tammy Rundle [nelittledisciples@hotmail.com](mailto:nelittledisciples@hotmail.com), 781-829-4410. Fees \$15 per person, \$50 family maximum. Financial aid is available. The website is [www.nelittledisciples.com](http://www.nelittledisciples.com)

**27 Spring Seminar and General meeting.** Sponsored by the Christadelphian Caring Network of Canada. Toronto East ecclesial hall on Cosburn Ave. Speaker: Bro. Dan Richard (IL): "Operation Lost Sheep". Starting at 10 am. Register with Bro. Bill or Sis. Jennifer Lawrence 519-822-8500 [lostsheep@caringnetwork.ca](mailto:lostsheep@caringnetwork.ca), website [www.caringnetwork.ca](http://www.caringnetwork.ca)

## **APRIL 2010**

**2-4 Wichita Falls, TX** Annual spring gathering at the Texas Christadelphian Camp and Conference Center (T4C) in Freestone, TX. Bro. John Pople (San Francisco Peninsula, CA) on the book of Job, "To Speak Well Of God". Contact: Bro. Larry Beutel [lbeutel@alsco.com](mailto:lbeutel@alsco.com) or Bro. John Clubb [jclubb4081@aol.com](mailto:jclubb4081@aol.com)

**10 Boston, MA** Spring study day. Leading our studies will be Bro. Mark Carr (Toronto West, ON): "He Whom Thy Brethren Shall Praise". A study of the man Judah and his transformation. Contact Bro. Jim Sullivan [jimsullivan@aol.com](mailto:jimsullivan@aol.com)

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

## **MAY 2010**

**7-9 Vancouver, BC** Sister's weekend. Beach Acres Resort, near Parksville, BC. Sis. Eileen Henthorn: "Faithful Worship in Serving". Cost \$180. Deposit no later than March 1. For further information contact Sis. Yvonne Rosenau [yvonne2001@shaw.ca](mailto:yvonne2001@shaw.ca)

**21-23 Men in the Truth Camping Weekend** Lake Cachuma, CA. Subject: "Real Men

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Don't Lie". No charge. You can buddy up with someone if you don't have camping equipment. Contact Bro. David Lloyd [davidrllloyd@earthlink.net](mailto:davidrllloyd@earthlink.net)

**21-23 Sussex, NB** CYC Spring Camp. Bro. Nathan Badger: "I Know Who You Are — The Holy One of God!". Contact Bro. David Pearce for more information and registration [dpearce@nb.sympatico.ca](mailto:dpearce@nb.sympatico.ca).

#### **JUNE 2010**

**11-13 New York, NY** New York Metropolitan Sisters' Retreat. Pocono Manor, Pocono, PA. Sis. Maritta Terrell (Austin Leander, TX): "Trials, Trouble, Time, Triumph!". For registration information, please contact Sis. Averil Ferguson 718-881-8705 or email [averilpsm23@juno.com](mailto:averilpsm23@juno.com). Register early since capacity is limited

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

**20-26, California Christadelphian Kids Camp** "The Apostle Paul". Teachers are Bre. Richard Morgan and Nathan Lewis. For children ages 9-16. Registration by Feb. 28, 2010. Registration forms online at [kidscampcalifornia.com](http://kidscampcalifornia.com). Information from Bro. Tom Graham [tom@bigbrand.com](mailto:tom@bigbrand.com)

#### **JULY 2010**

**17-25 Eastern Bible School** Connecticut College, New London Connecticut. Theme: "Heirs According to the Promise". Bro. Michael Owen (Seaton, UK): "Hosea: The Unfailing Love of God" (adults) and "Growing Through Experience: The Letters of Peter" (teens); Bro. Jim Styles (Livonia, MI): "Galatians: Salvation by Grace" (adults) and "God's Wonderful Plan of Redemption" (teens); third class: A series of six one-day study topics focusing on major challenges that affect our walk in Christ today. For registration information contact Sis. Cindy Nevers at P.O. Box 296, Auburn, MA 01501 or [cindy.nevers@tecbs.org](mailto:cindy.nevers@tecbs.org) or visit our website [www.tecbs.org](http://www.tecbs.org)

#### **AUGUST 2010**

**7-13 Niagara Falls Bible School** St. Catherines, ON. For information contact David Brierley at [david.brierley@sympatico.ca](mailto:david.brierley@sympatico.ca) 416-236-5295, [www.nfcbs.com](http://www.nfcbs.com)