

THE CHRISTADELPHIAN TIDINGS

of the Kingdom of God

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The CHRISTADELPHIAN TIDINGS of the Kingdom of God

Peter Hemingray, Editor • George Booker, Associate Editor

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When is a Man Educated?

When is a man educated? When he can look out upon the universe, now lucid and lovely, now dark and terrible, with a sense of his own littleness in the great scheme of things, and yet have faith and courage. When he knows how to make friends and keep them, and above all, when he keeps friends with himself.

When he can be happy and high-minded amid the drudgeries of life. When he can look into a wayside puddle and see something besides mud, and into the face of the most forlorn mortal and see something divine.

When he knows how to live, how to love, how to hope, how to pray — is glad to live... and has in his heart a bit of a song.

Joseph Newton

Editorial

Separation

As you drive through the byways of Pennsylvania on the way to Shippensburg Bible School, it is quite common to come across the horse drawn buggies of the local Amish. And when you leave on Sunday mornings, you can sometimes see whole groups of these buggies gathered around a barn, for their Sunday meetings. These scenes are almost unknown outside North America, where, in addition to the Amish, you can come to know, as I have done, members of such groups as the Hutterites, the Mennonites, and the Brethren. All these groups strive to maintain their separateness in different ways:

- The Amish physically live among other Americans, but by their way of life and their restricted employment live quite separate from others. Their use of technology is strongly limited: no mains electricity, no power use in farms etc.
- The Hutterites work among the general population, (the one I knew was a local school teacher,) but live communally. They have few restrictions on the use of technology.
- The Mennonites are similar to the Amish in their restrictive use of technology, but will use powered implements on farms.
- The Brethren both live and work among the general population, but by their dress are markedly different. They will use modern technology (they drive cars) but are careful to avoid any semblance of “flashiness”.

All these groups carry out the Biblical injunction to *“be not conformed to this world”* (Rom 12:2) by following a set of rules and discipline (German “Ordnung”) that defines in precise detail expected behavior and dress. None actively evangelize: all grow largely by their high retention rate and large families. And none will participate in war under any circumstances: they, along with the Quakers, are known as the “Historic Peace Churches.” Indeed, John Thomas, when he met the Brethren in 1835, was most interested in this aspect of their beliefs.

So are these groups an example for us — or a warning? As I consider the attitude towards separateness in our community, I can sense a tension between the commandment to,

“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord,”
(2Cor 6:17)

and that in John 17:15,

“I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.”

In addition, Paul comments in 1Cor 5:9-10:

“I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extor-

tioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world."

Which is an implied injunction to be very careful before we cut off all friendships with anyone outside our community.

We also have the command in Matt 28:19-20 :

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

So how do we balance these disparate requirements to both be separate, but to make our light shine before men? Is it by withdrawing to our own circle of Christadelphian friends, by keeping our children separate, by dressing in ways that identify us as different, by refusing to use the wonders of our technological age? Or can we keep ourselves "*unspotted from the world*" (James 1:27) without withdrawing from it? It is a difficult balancing act, and different Christadelphians will (and have) come up with different conclusions.

- You can utilize home schooling, and by that reduce the moral perils that association with the children of those not in the Truth provide. Or you can believe in the enhanced opportunity for normal social interaction that a typical school provides, and feel comfortable with imbuing the children with the correct moral imperatives at home.
- You can feel comfortable in having no friends "In the world", and thereby reducing a whole host of temptations to conform to the ways of the world. Or you can cast your net of friendship wide and far, hoping to encourage by word and deed those who might otherwise not seek to acquire the knowledge of Jesus.
- You can be careful to dress at all times in ways that show what you are indeed are following the precepts of 1Tim 2:9 "*that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;*" even if it means dressing in long skirts when most women would wear jeans, or men wearing jackets and ties when most would wear t-shirts. Or you can consider that avoiding the extremes of modern fashion by dressing modestly by current fashion is an adequate response to the admonition of Paul.
- You might consider it quite unacceptable for any to show up for memorial service in anything other than their "Sunday best" — that "*all things be done decently and in order*" (1Cor 14:40). Or you might instead remember the comments by James in his second chapter about the requirement of respect for all persons, independent of their dress.
- You might object to the evil influences of the Internet, avoid any use of such technology, and refuse to allow television in your house. Or you could embrace the advantages that come with the technology embedded in the web, and welcome the way television can enlighten as well as entertain.

It is impossible to derive, from the Bible, a specific set of guidelines in this area. It is clear, however, from the comments by Paul about meat offered to idols, in 1Cor 8, that it is the effect on others of our freedom in Christ that is paramount.

We might be perfectly entitled to do all sorts of things, because it will not harm us personally in our walk. But if it might cause others to offend (and I do not include to cause offense) — of course we should refrain from that action. So we might be quite comfortable in using Twitter, for example, to keep in touch with a small circle of like-minded friends. But if we know one of our members who is addicted to wasting time with such technology, and is using our use of it as a justification — we should perhaps terminate our use. Or we might enjoy a little wine with our meals (medicinal purposes only!) — but if one of our members is a potential alcoholic, our little pleasures might be inappropriate.

But what we cannot do is provide our own set of Christadelphian “Ortnung” — our own set of prescriptions on the length we can grow our hair, the way we dress, the cars we buy — or cannot buy. Our desire is not to separate ourselves from the world physically, but morally. We should not attempt to stand out by our dress, but by the way we behave. We should not stand out, as the Amish do, by refusing to use the benefits of modern technology. We should not separate ourselves into our own little Christadelphian communes, as the Hutterites do. There is no evidence the early Christians were distinguishable by their dress or occupations (apart from soldiering) from those around them. But it is clear that by their faith in Our Lord they convinced multitudes of the reality of salvation through the Lord Jesus. There are many ways we can cope with the temptations that surround us, and we must all make our own decisions as to where and how to draw the lines. But cope we must — as we strive to remain “unspotted from the world”.

It is an area in which there are no hard and fast rules, either given in the words of Scripture or in our Statement of Faith, which includes, of course, the Commandments of Christ. As clause 15 says “Be not conformed to this world: love not the world” (Rom. 12:2; 1 John 2:15). And again, clause 33: “Let your light shine before men: hold forth the word of life. Do good to all men as ye have opportunity” (Matt. 5:16; Phil. 2:16; Gal. 6:10). It is the tension between being in the world, so we can communicate the light of the true gospel, and being not conformed to the world, that lies at the heart of many of the dilemmas we have in this complex, high technology world around us. But if we let Christ dwell in our hearts, by faith in him and his mission, we can ensure all our actions ultimately resound to the glory of our God and His Son.

Peter Hemingray

The Beauty of the Bible

We never get to the end of the Bible. It is as wise in its reservations as in its revelations. Enough is reserved to give faith scope for development. Everything needful to salvation and godliness is written with such clarity that all the simple-hearted may understand; but there are other matters which, with wise divine purpose, are presented less lucidly, or even enigmatically, so as to challenge enquiry — matters fascinating, mysterious, or more intricate, but all yielding rich and sanctifying reward to devout exploration.

J. Sidlow Baxter

Exhortation

Where are We and Where are We Going?

The world, in 2010, philosophizes about “being all you can be, getting all you can in the here and now, doing what you want, when you want, where you want, and above all, flaunting what you’ve got.” This thinking has infected mankind, and we’ve got a pandemic on our hands. It’s worldwide and people are dying everyday, eternally, because of it.

This viral infection has many symptoms, some of which include: idolatry, adultery, fornication, and homosexuality. But the disease presents itself in other ways as well: insubordination, lying, cheating, covetousness, anger, wrath, filthy language, sorcery, jealousy, drunkenness, disobedience to parents, without self-control and the list could go on, but is, overall, adequately diagnosed with one simple word: humanism.

The most dangerous fact about this infectious disease is that as more and more of the population becomes affected by it, less and less recognition is given to prevention and infection control because, surprisingly enough, it is considered that the abnormality no longer rests with those infected, but with those who aren’t. The majority of infected individuals not only think that there is nothing wrong with them, but they also think that they are of excellent health and overall wellbeing.

The disease has become so ubiquitous, that long standing governing principles of society and state are beginning to change so as to reflect the symptomatic nature of the disease. Schools and their curriculums are radically changing. History books and science books are being re-written to better accommodate the diseased population’s needs. The long term effects of the disease have been misrepresented and confused. Some religious leaders are openly asserting that despite the disease, there is yet a future allotment to be extended in some fantastical heaven of heavens.

As such, the disease has, as of late, been advertised as being ‘consequences-free.’ Everywhere, morbidity rates are increasing and the mortality rate is being ignored, and the world at large is ignoring the question, “Is there a cure?”

The individual who is in search of a cure for this insidious disease of mind will invariably find him or herself, in figure, at the foot of a wooden stake standing upright in the ground upon which a man has been nailed, who once spoke the words, “*Follow me.*”

Immediately, the alert mind recalls the words spoken of old, “*If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*” Initially, these words seem counterintuitive; the current philosophy of this diseased world purports that now is the time to chase your desires, to seek your fancies, to gratify your wishes, but as the mind becomes in tune with that of him hanging there, a realization is made, belief springs forth, and an unequivocal proclamation is made, “*Truly this [is] the Son of God.*”

As the murkiness of diseased thinking disbands, what is left is a crystal clear understanding that for each individual, cure of the aforementioned disease is achieved only when one hearkens to the words of he who spoke, *"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light"* (Matt 11:28-30).

Individuals can be saved, but can the world be saved? The extent of disease has spread uncontrollably, beyond the means of human repair. In the words of a man written long ago, *"The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one... The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good"* (Psa 14:2-3).

Is there hope for this world? Minutes before he had his hands and feet nailed to that wooden stake and stood upright, this man was questioned by the ruling power of the known world, "Are you a king?" to which all the world has heard the response, *"You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice."* (John 18:37).

The hope of the world rests in this man and in his truth. He is king and he will reign. He will cleanse away all the effects of this pandemic disease, purifying the society in which we live.

When will this be? He himself said, *"I am going and will come again."* When questioned by his followers, he answers, *"It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."* (Acts 1:7-8).

Who is this man? It is Jesus Christ, Savior of the world.

Do witnesses of Jesus still exist in 2010? Is there anyone who still "follows" after Jesus? Does anyone know that Jesus is coming back to this world to cure it of its rampant illness? Who are the witnesses of Jesus in the year 2010?

There is a group of peculiar individuals who claim to be a Bible based community and who hold the doctrine of Jesus in high esteem. Although only officially becoming an organized group in the not too distant past, they claim no difference to the believers of the first century. Their name: The Christadelphians.

The members consider themselves to be a privileged group for having been called out to know Jesus' truth, and have for years carried on quite successfully as witnesses of Jesus.

But how has history proven to run its course? When considering the Holy Scriptures, when and how long did groups of people hold out and hold onto the cure before humanistic philosophical thinking pervaded the group's ideology and replaced Scriptural reasoning and belief? The answer indicates that it was for short

spurts of time, by few numbers of people, that the Truth was grasped, before the winds of erroneous doctrine and infected thinking blew in to smother the life of the group.

That same Jesus, in his revelation, emphatically states, *“Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.”* (Rev 16:15).

He counsels, *“Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before my God. Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you...Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown....I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see...He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before his angels”* (Rev 3).

The implication: there is a very real tendency for those who hold the cure to loose it in time, as a result of the insidious philosophy of the world around us. The emphasis is therefore to hold true, to not let go, to not give in, even unto death.

The cure to the viral disease plaguing the present world will quickly become ineffective, if it is contaminated with foreign thought, with carnal thought, with diseased thought. It will come to serve no purpose for the witnesses if the doctrine of Jesus is watered down to accommodate the philosophies of man. This is the very real danger that groups, like the Christadelphians, face. If such is the result, the group will by default become a band of individuals who *“have a form of godliness, but who deny the power thereof”* (2Tim 3:5).

If this is the tragic end, what is the beginning? It starts with apathetic attitudes and indifference amongst individuals to disease prevention and control. Individuals no longer check new ideas and thoughts against Scripture. In fact, Scripture tends to become more of a peripheral set of mundane rules and regulations instead of an absolute necessity to living disease free.

Meeting together no longer takes precedence over job and career pursuit or entertainment and relaxation. Lack of support and criticism leads to disillusionment, and negativity begins to spread wildly amongst other members. A willing wholeheartedness is replaced by selfish ambition and self gratification. And the strength of the group is eventually lost and each and every member succumbs to the diseased thinking.

Where do the Christadelphians stand, therefore, in the face of this pandemic? The odds are against them it would seem in all aspects; how are they coping? Have standards slipped? Have values once esteemed been thrown aside? Have the diseased philosophies of this world begun to subtly subvert the anchor in the Scriptures this group claims to have?

Is there a growing discomfiture amongst members that Jesus has not yet appeared, as he said he will? Lack of patience and a growing disbelief in the promised life to come has led to a preoccupation with this life. A general comfort with this age, busyness with ever broadening personal interests, distraction with present pleasures are resulting in dullness to signs of Jesus' imminent return. Attendance records show that increasingly, members are continuing to miss weekly meetings.

In some areas of the globe, in their assemblies, long standing Biblical principle no longer takes precedence.

Biblical roles of men and women are no longer respected, and the worldly ideology regarding rights of men and women have been adopted. Men are no longer accepting responsibility as spiritual leaders and women are asserting their "unalienable right" of equality. Mutual submission is generally despised, seen as archaic and largely viewed as unnecessary.

Christadelphian parents are increasingly encouraging Christadelphian youth to pursue many years of education so as to achieve successful careers. Marriages are being delayed to accommodate this pursuit, resulting in increased levels of promiscuity amongst youth. Lost is the once held ideal of seeking the blessing of a spouse with whom to build a spiritual house and raise a godly seed. Raising children is seen as a burden and not a blessing. Women increasingly find it something to be avoided, as it stands in the way of achieving personal pursuits of career. Men no longer find fulfillment in the wife of their youth, but rather in the social interactions of work cohorts. Longer hours are being worked as individuals feel more and more pressure to keep up with enhanced standards of living.

As career success is achieved, materialism begins to rear its ugly head. The young, successful career man or woman, with his or her new found wealth is faced with many new temptations. Does the extra money get spent on the new expensive car, large extravagant home, multiple vacations to exotic places, fine dining on the town, clothes that speak richness, or does the blessing of wealth get returned in service to the assembly through donations to local and worldwide projects and initiatives?

These witnesses of Jesus are progressively becoming more and more affected and infected by the disastrous disease that has taken the world by storm. Long held values of separation and holiness are being subtly worn away as diseased thinking pervades the walls of each assembly, leaving those in tune with Jesus' call of "follow me" acutely aware that the life of the Christadelphian body is quickly being drained of all vitality.

Forms of entertainment that once were avoided have in these recent years become an inseparable part of daily life. Television and movies serve in many ways as an escape from the stress of daily life, as an easy thing to do when life gets too busy, as a form of relaxation. They have in almost all cases replaced the once valued family time that evenings were made out of, and the study time and reading time that once was cherished by many of this group. Past are the days when individuals actually felt a prick of conscience to be seen at the cinema, the corner pub or bar, the rock music concert. These forms of entertainment are the backbone of

diseased living; it is what diseased individuals live for and almost always becomes the default topic of conversation.

If history stands true, it is expected that more and more of the decisions of some group leaders will be based heavily on diseased reasoning and less and less on sound scriptural principle. The result will be a general watering down of once highly esteemed principle and practice. Some will be devastated by these events, choosing to pull themselves away into isolation, unable to cope with their resultant distress and strife. Others will hardly notice a change and continue on merrily with daily life, with eyes glazed over unable to see and ears stopped up, unable to hear the Truth. Still, others will become so disillusioned by the state of affairs that cynicism results, and gossip and backbiting will increasingly be manifest. And slowly, the threads of a once tightly woven tapestry will begin to unravel, catalyzed by the inroads diseased thinking has made.

The following are words spoken to bygone generations, but that find incredible application to those living presently, *"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, that he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth"* (Matt 24:45-51).

And so the world's coming king questions the people of this very generation, *"Nevertheless, when the Son of Man returns, shall he find faith on the earth?"* (Luke 18:8).

Will there be a body of witnesses who have maintained the testimony of Jesus the Christ when he returns? Will all have gone astray, washed away by the viral thinking now present in mankind? Where will the Christadelphian group be? Will it have maintained a stand for Jesus, witnessing the cure for eternal death to all who would listen? Or will the group be pervaded by corrupt ideology and thought? The time is soon when all will be made manifest, and each will gain his due reward.

Let the reader choose his course wisely — the diseased philosophy of humanism, or the life inspiring teaching of the king who will reign on high, Jesus, Savior of mankind.

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." (Matt 16:24-27)

Where are we, and where are we going?

Paul Jackson (Detroit Royal Oak, MI)

Bible Study

To Speak Well of God: (15) The Suffering of a Righteous Man

It is perfectly reasonable to read the book of Job and ask: “What is Job’s suffering for? Does it have a purpose? If so, what is it?” Let’s try and answer that.

15.1 Priest of Melchizedek’s Order

Early in the drama we see Job habitually acting as a priest for his family (Job 1:4-6). Exactly what state of covenant relationship this particular Gentile experienced with the God of Israel, or what Job understood as the duties of a priest, are issues of endless debate amongst the scholarly doctors (which, Chesterton cheekily remarked, “is the business of doctors to do”). The two critically important points are that Job acts in the spiritual service of other people and, equally importantly, that this is his “regular custom.” He is a man regularly dedicated to atoning for loved ones. Those who offer their lives in the service of others are those who enable themselves to be employed by God as priests.

In case we are concerned that only those descended from Levi should act as priests (Num 18), we remember there is a higher priesthood, the spiritual order; the order of Melchizedek, which requires no bloodline ancestry; named after the man who was simultaneously King of Jerusalem and priest before God (Gen 14:18). Melchizedek’s signature feature was that his genealogy was deliberately obscured from the scriptural record, so that he appears out of the blue. A man from nowhere, as it were, as if specially created by God: “Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life” (Heb 7:3)¹.

Jesus qualifies perfectly as a priest of Melchizedek’s order, because he had no human father and, furthermore, he embodies the Word of God, which literally has neither beginning of days nor end of life. In the same way, the Hebrews passage unlocks an ancient mystery of the Joban tale, concerning Job’s missing genealogy. Job’s genealogy is absent from the entire drama. What highlights his missing family line is the fact that the friends in the book invariably have their heritage trumpeted to the reader: Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, Zophar the Naamathite. Never once is Job attributed a family genealogy and never once are any of the three friends listed without theirs. (Elihu the Buzite’s heritage is occasionally listed.) This reveals Job as a potential member of the order of Melchizedek, by emphasizing the ‘without father, without mother’ theme.

Balchin assists by suggesting the name Job could mean: “no father” or “where is my father?,” which is the icing on the cake². Balchin logically theorizes that this meaning ties in with the absent genealogy for Job, but tragically sees no value in the line of thinking, concluding of Job’s missing genealogy: “Lack of data is not important” and thus failing to spot the Melchizedek motif.

Other factors contribute towards the scripture's presentation of Job as a man with no origin. The facts that the authorship and date of the book are not certainly known, although not unique for scriptural texts, testify to the same theme of a man without origin. It's likely this supports not only Job's office within the Melchizedek priesthood, but also helps reveal Job as a man representing a universal human problem, which Ragaz noted.

All these facts: Job's listing without a genealogy; the contrasting perpetual citation of the genealogies of the three friends, and the uncertain date and authorship of the book; combine to suggest Job is to be understood as a priest after the order of Melchizedek. If this is true, we anticipate Job will fulfill the office of a priest in performing an act of atonement for the people.

Job was a man dedicated to atoning for others, the type of man God uses to bring salvation. I'm not saying God needs this type of person, for clearly God doesn't need anything from us, as Paul eloquently articulated at the Areopagus (Acts 17:24-25). But, just as the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 was based on the five loaves and two small fish that Andrew brought to the Master (John 6:9), even though Jesus didn't need them to produce the miracle, so it seems it is God's desire to use the tiny, ineffectual offerings we can muster in our service through which to perform His will.

This challenges me: Do I regularly dedicate my life to seeking the spiritual atonement of others? Am I that man? Is it true, for example, that the majority of my prayers are actually on behalf of other people, rather than focused on my own needs and desires? If so, I am the type of person God is seeking to operate in the ongoing order of the spiritual priesthood. And if not, what am I going to do about that?

15.2 The Suffering of a Righteous Man

Priests of the order of Melchizedek also exhibit the feature of learning through suffering (Heb 5:7-10). This quote is primarily about Jesus, saying Jesus learned obedience. Therefore, although it sounds very odd, it is not accurate to say that Jesus was always obedient from birth! This is not to imply that Jesus was in any way disobedient, because he was not, as the same author has just specified (Heb 4:15). But it shows he gradually grew in obedience as he learned more about his Father.

We may need to upgrade our understanding of what obedience is. Clearly it's much more than 'not doing anything wrong.' That's a very inadequate understanding of obedience; to relegate it to being the absence of a negative thing: a form of double-negative. Obedience, therefore, is best understood as enacting God's will, or reflecting God's character. Thus God's will and character first have to be comprehended, a process which naturally takes years, even for His son Jesus. In this way we can comfortably understand the scriptures telling us Jesus had to learn obedience, without any implication that he was ever disobedient.

But why does there have to be suffering on the priest's road to obedience? We know God does not enjoy seeing people suffer (Lam 3:32-33).

Primarily, following God's will causes any of us suffering simply because it's not

natural for us to obey God. Following God's way isn't always easy, nor will it always draw respect from one's peers. Fadelle expresses this articulately:

"[Jesus] learned obedience through what he suffered shows that Jesus did not automatically do his Father's will — he had to choose to obey. Making the right choice every time brought suffering. He suffered when he said 'no' to the natural self. He suffered from the hostile reaction of others."

One of the priest's principal duties was to bear the burden of the people; literally carrying the animal carcass from the gate of the Tabernacle to the altar (Lev 1). (Their other principal duty was to communicate God's wisdom to the people, Mal 2:7.) The 'suffering' of the priest comprised taxing physical labor as the sacrifice was prepared.

In the order of Melchizedek, I believe all this is played out on the spiritual plane. The duties of the Melchizedek priest are the same: to represent God to the people and to bear the burdens of those looking to atone. But these burdens are now spiritual burdens, which perhaps answers our question why there has to be suffering for those within this elevated priesthood. Suffering is a natural consequence of sin. This is important: we are identifying the ultimate source of suffering as sin, not God. Nor do we foolishly advance this conclusion in the context of the doctrine of exact retribution, where each sinner suffers only for his own sins and in direct proportion to the magnitude of his sin. Far from it! The conclusion here suggests it is the priest who bears the principal burden of sin. How true that is in the story of Job! Job was blameless: a righteous man. He was also a man accustomed to focusing on the atonement of others, a man who volunteered himself in the service of those he loved. Explicitly in Job's case, God saw that He could afflict Job to draw out of the three friends their self-righteous pride in a distilled and flagrant form, where He could judge it, destroy it and thereby save them. Other commentators have also noted that the suffering of the innocent may operate beneficially in the salvation of the guilty, and parallels between Job and Jesus can be found in the literature as early as the fourth century.

This allows us to appreciate that God is not bullying Job, because the suffering arises from the situations and attitudes of the three friends, not because God needs or wants it.

God plays a direct hand with Job's friends too. The salvation the three friends receive comes because God forgives them. Ironically, He could have treated them according to the doctrine of retribution they believed and destroyed them as they deserved. Instead, God says to Eliphaz the Temanite:

"So now take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and sacrifice a burnt offering for yourselves. My servant Job will pray for you, and I will accept his prayer and not deal with you according to your folly" (Job 42:8).

Amidst the wrath: forgiveness. Atkinson comments: "It is hard to forgive Eliphaz his unjust tirade," yet that's precisely what God does. The same God who is spoken of so poorly because of what happens in the book of Job is actually the first

to forgive the three friends, whom most expositors are very reluctant to forgive! Truly this is a loving God, to the point of forgiving even those we struggle to, so there is irony upon irony in this most remarkable drama.

15.3 Reflection

Job was a priest after the order of Melchizedek and as such he was the mechanism through which God worked to bring his friends to salvation. This was Job's glory and greatest success in foreshadowing the Messiah that was to come. His shortcoming was in failing to disengage from the Satan so that the Word of God could judge the pride of his friends, not him. Job was determined to persist in the fight with Satan to demonstrate his own rectitude. Again, the Joban tale provides excellent education. Don't pick a fight with Satan. When personal attacks are launched by pride-filled opponents, don't go round after round in protracted debate. Ultimately those middle chapters in Job do have a sense of futility to them (as well as a progression teaching us of the nature of the Satan) and that futility communicates a valuable lesson! Even if we are convinced we have the beating of Satan's reasoning on an intellectual level, the infection of the pride that drives the attacker is the truest danger, as Job was to discover empirically.

I'm convinced this is how Jesus knew he should rebuff the Satan in the wilderness and, just as with Job, I think it's vital to identify who Jesus' Satan was. I am convinced that the Satan in Jesus' wilderness temptation was Jesus' own self-will, his prideful desire to serve self not God. In other words, Jesus was tempted by the same Satan we meet in Job. It makes sense Jesus would be attacked by the same Satan, because the opponent of God must also be the opponent of the Christ, since the Christ is the perfect expression of the Father (John 10:30, Col 1:15). In fact I do not believe the scriptures can support any other interpretation for Jesus' Satan, although it is beyond our purview to establish that matter here.

We saw Jesus learned obedience through suffering (Heb 5:8), an early part of which was being "led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil" — a picture beautifully resonant with Job's experiences in Uz. We might ask: Why is the Spirit of God leading people to be tempted? Didn't James assure us that God doesn't do that? James tells us that temptation comes from our own lusts, not God (James 1:13-14), yet Matthew's record seems to contradict, saying Jesus was led "of the Spirit" to be tempted.

I contend the Spirit did not lead or cause Jesus to be tempted. Rather the words in Matthew need to be read very carefully. I suggest what the Spirit did was solely to lead Jesus into the wilderness. No more. The temptation came from Jesus' own lust to sin, doubtless at that specific time because, as the previous verse shows, Jesus had just been baptized and received the Spirit of God without measure. (The chapter break between Matthew 3 and 4 is tremendously unhelpful as it breaks an important spiritual connection.)

Thus the Spirit did not cause Jesus to be tempted. The Spirit saw temptation was inevitably imminent and effectively said to Jesus: "You need to be alone now. The last thing you need is to be surrounded by people. They will distract your

focus, exacerbate the problem of the temptations and, quite possibly, derail your resistance and contribute towards you actually sinning! You need to be led away into the desert, right now, so that the imminent temptation your human nature is causing takes place in an environment free from those additional pressures.” This is how I understand the verse: “*Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil*” (Matt 4:1). The temptation was triggered by Jesus being human and receiving unlimited power. The Spirit merely chose a wise location for the cataclysmic collision to occur.

This interpretation is consistent with James’ writing that God does not tempt us. It is also fully consistent with the central theme of our exposition of Job. God provokes salvation, not suffering, or temptation; even if the latter two may be inevitable pit-stops on the way to salvation by reason of the weaknesses of either ourselves or others.

Jesus was coping with a purely internal Satan, as we do daily, so this helps us resist Satan in our discipleships. Jesus knew that to give mental headroom to the things that tempted him, to let them lurk and fester in his mind, was disastrous. Only immediate banishment of the Satan’s suggestions from his mind would keep him in harmony with his Father. This is a protocol Jesus adopts throughout his ministry: when tempted, he dismisses the temptation immediately and removes himself to a solitary place to pray: just as the Spirit had guided him to do at the outset.

But the bottom line in this thread of the drama is this: The suffering of a righteous man brought salvation to unrighteous men. In this statement alone we see both a profitable reason for that suffering and also a foreshadowing of the Christ. How well Job typifies the Messiah; and what a tantalizing message of salvation this promotes. For if the suffering of one righteous man can bring salvation to three of his friends, how much more can the suffering of The Righteous Man bring the whole world’s redemption?

John Pople (San Francisco Peninsula, CA)

Notes:

1. All quotations are from the NIV
2. See also Clines, David J. A.: Word Biblical Commentary : Job 1-20. S. 10 for an extended discussion on this, and Strong’s definition of “Hated.”

The nature of the tempter in the case of Christ has always been a much disputed question. It is really of no practical importance where the orthodox devil is discarded. It is the principles involved in the temptation that call for attention as applicable to ourselves. Whether the tempter was external or internal, or both; or whether the temptation was done in reality or trance, the guidance of Christ’s example to his brethren is the same. Their temptations take all shapes without altering the principle that achieves the victory. Therefore it is practically immaterial what sort of a devil it was that put Christ to the proof, provided it be recognized that the supernatural immortal fiend of popular theology is out of the question.

Robert Roberts The Christadelphian 1879 p 113

The Joy of Sunday Schooling

Sunday School and the Home: it's a Partnership (Sunday School Initiatives)

The last article suggested ways that parents can actively support the Sunday school program of the ecclesia. There are also things that the Sunday school can do to establish strong ties with the home. The Sunday School Superintendent and his or her staff need one vital thing to forge this partnership and keep it going: commitment. If, as ecclesial servants they “wear a hat”, let it be a hard hat! There is work to be done.

The following list of Sunday school initiatives is extensive. A good way to make use of the list is to sit down as a Sunday school staff and consider the suggestions it contains. If it is determined that some of them would be useful to put into place, then prayerfully:

- Decide to focus on the one or two that will be most useful for your Sunday school;
- Think through how they can be carried out, and
- Make the commitment.

Don't take on more than is practical, but don't back away from the hard work either. Sunday schooling is serving. It's more than just a once-a-week happening.

Sunday Schools can ...

- 1) Communicate directly with the home: teacher with parent; superintendent with parent:
 - In person.
 - By phone.
 - By e-mail.
 - With a personal note or letter. Communicate positive news, not just negative news.
- 2) Visit homes, especially of those who are less ecclesially involved, to
 - Explain the Sunday school program.
 - Encourage parental support.
 - Give parents tips on things they can do to promote spiritual growth in their children (see the previous article in July 2010: “It's a Partnership: Things Parents Can Do”).
 - Seek parental input and listen to parents.
- 3) Hold a parent-student-teacher meeting at the beginning of the Sunday school year to explain the program, define expectations, brainstorm ideas and listen to each other. This could be done over lunch on a Sunday afternoon.
- 4) Establish an occasional Sunday school newsletter. This can feature:

- A calendar of Sunday school events and outings.
 - Curriculum and class highlights.
 - Recognition of student or class accomplishments.
 - Tips for parents and students.
 - Promotion of Bible schools and CYC functions.
 - Lots of pictures of the children and the SS activities. (Digital cameras, computers, and printers make it faster and easier than ever to create a Sunday school newsletter that includes great pictures.)
 - Student birthdates.
 - Recognition of Sunday school student baptisms.
- 5) Establish a Sunday school “telephone tree” for passing information from family to family.
 - 6) Seek specific feedback from parents concerning the Sunday school program; e.g., by questionnaire or evaluation form.
 - 7) Promptly mail, e-mail, or deliver Sunday school work and assignments to a child’s home whenever he or she misses a Sunday.
 - 8) Run a Sunday school extension service for isolated or less active families. I.e., take Sunday school to the home once or twice a month, perhaps on a midweek evening or Sunday afternoon, much as one would conduct a home Bible class with an interested contact. Encourage the entire family to participate.
 - 9) Conduct a strong adult Sunday school class and promote it among all the ecclesial families. A healthy Sunday school program for the children often depends in part on a good adult Sunday school class that involves the parents.
 - 10) Deliberately design some part of the child’s Sunday school homework to be family oriented. I.e., make it necessary for children and parents to do something together on part of the assignment. E.g., include a question that requires talking with parents, or a family activity using materials from a Sunday school resource center (see next suggestion).
 - 11) Develop a working Sunday school resource center (at the ecclesial hall or, if you meet in a rented facility, keep the resources at an ecclesial home). The resource center should house a wide range of supplemental educational materials for Sunday school use.
 - Encourage family use of the center. E.g., provide families with up-to-date inventory lists; even issue Sunday school library cards to families to promote interest in the center, etc.
 - Make up thematic “Bible Bags” containing resource materials. Lend the bags to your Sunday school families for a month. Include such items as a Bible game, puzzle, toy, book, audio or video program, etc. Include a small gift-wrapped Sunday school surprise in each bag for the family to keep when the rest of the materials are returned.
 - 12) Give pre-school learning materials to families with tots not yet old enough for Sunday school. This can establish a positive connection with the Sunday school from the earliest age.
 - E.g., give a Bible toy, picture book, book of verses, song tape, etc. to pre-Sunday

schoolers at birthday times.

- E.g., give a “Future Sunday School Scholar” present to the moms and dads of newborns in the ecclesial family.
- 13) Involve parents as assistants in the Sunday school program when possible.
 - On an occasional basis in one of the classes.
 - As a guest speaker.
 - To help organize or run a Sunday school outing.
 - To share a special talent or hobby at a Sunday school family night (see next suggestion).
 - 14) Plan a Sunday school family night (Family Unit Night = FUN).
 - At least one parent should accompany each child.
 - Plan a meal and Bible game or devotional time that focuses on the family unit doing spiritual things together.
 - 15) Recommit to the annual Sunday school program, play, or open house. Encourage families to attend and support their children.
 - 16) Run a schedule of Sunday school family outings and special events. E.g., hayride, circus, ball game, picnic, skating, camping, museum trip, a play, a concert, pancake breakfast.
 - 17) Get together socially. Sunday school teachers and superintendents make a point of inviting Sunday school families into their homes for a visit or a meal. Forge bonds. Develop good relationships. Look out for families on the fringe.
 - 18) Establish rapport with Sunday school children outside the normal Sunday school setting. E.g., open your home to them for a sleepover; pitch in to do an ecclesial car wash together.
 - 19) Remember birthdays. Send each child a card from the Sunday school.
 - 20) Give some perks to your Sunday school families. E.g., present certificates of appreciation to families at any time for exemplary effort, support of Sunday school, special service. Certificates may be purchased at Bible book stores or generated on the computer. Use the good old-fashioned thank you note, too. Let families know that the Sunday school appreciates them.

Your comments and additions to this list are invited.

Please send them to me at 2harps4u@gmail.com

Jim Harper Meriden, CT

"Education is not the piling on of learning, information, data, facts, skills, or abilities — that's training or instruction — but is rather a making visible what is hidden as a seed... To be educated, a person doesn't have to know much or be informed, but he or she does have to have been exposed vulnerably to the transformative events of an engaged human life... One of the greatest problems of our time is that many are schooled but few are educated" (Thomas Moore).

Youth Speaks

Jeroboam: (4) Apostasy in Israel

As we have seen in the previous article (July 2010), Jeroboam fell into false worship — he had been confronted with a paradox and never recovered from it. Since all of Yahweh's worship was bound up in the city of Jerusalem, the capital of Judah, the king believed that if he decided to follow the Truth, his nation would inevitably begin to cling to Rehoboam once again. In order to keep this from taking place, Jeroboam strayed from the correct way of life and set out to create a form of worship which would still appear to be right, yet kept the people out of Jerusalem. In this article, we will examine the subtleties of his false religion, specifically looking at the cities of Bethel and Dan, the feast of the eighth month, and also the expulsion of the Levites. Though all of these things, the insidiousness and deception of apostasy will become apparent.

The Strategy

All of Jeroboam's new form of worship was carefully crafted — there was nothing that was an accident. For him, there should be nothing done that would cause a stir among the people, nothing which would allow skeptics to criticize, everything had to seem as though it was still in line with the Truth; but at the same time, it would keep the people away from Judah and Zion. He wanted his brethren to think that they were still worshipping the God of Israel and still following the Hope of Israel. The fallen ruler would succeed in doing so. Jeroboam's apostasy created a form of worship which looked almost identical to the Truth. It was something that only had slight changes in it, changes that were hardly even noticeable to people, and in fact, went unnoticed by almost everyone in the nation of Israel of those days. It was insidious and slippery, and the deceit only becomes apparent when the worship is put under scrutiny.

The first item of deception is found in the locations that he chose. Jerusalem, the feared city, is nowhere to be found. Instead, it has been replaced with Bethel and Dan.

“Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan” (1Kgs 12:28-29).

Bethel and Dan

Bethel had a rich heritage of being a city of God, of being a special city in relation to God's people. It was in Bethel that Jacob, Israel's namesake, had his vision that is now commonly called “Jacob's Ladder.” It was there that he saw the throne of God, with angels ascending and descending. It was there that he said “surely

God is in this place and I didn't know it." It was there that he was first given the promises to Abraham.

"And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen 28:13-14).

Shortly after the promises were given, Jacob declared that God was in that place:

"And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not...And he called the name of that place Bethel: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first" (Gen 28:16, 19).

Upon waking up from his dream, Jacob declared that God was dwelling in that place, and he had not known it. Soon after, Jacob changed the name of the place to "Bethel," meaning "house of God." Keeping this in mind, try to picture what Jeroboam might have said if someone were to have opposed him, saying that Jerusalem is where they were to worship: "I know that you think we should worship in Jerusalem, but there's nothing wrong with worshipping in Bethel; why, it's the very place where Jacob, the 'prince with God' worshipped. In fact, he, himself, declared that this city was the 'house of God.' Why would we not worship here?" Jeroboam had not chosen this city by accident; his false worship was insidious and it was difficult to oppose. The same type of craftiness is seen when the city of Dan is studied. Dan, just like Bethel, was also an ancient center of worship, presided over by the family of Moses:

"And they called the name of the city Dan, after the name of Dan their father, who was born unto Israel: howbeit the name of the city was Laish at the first. And the children of Dan set up the graven image: and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land" (Jdgs 18:29-30).

Since the time of the judges, Dan had been used as a center of worship in the north. The worship that took place there was idol worship, but nevertheless, notice its high priest — "Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manassah." Jonathan, the grandson of Manassah, was their leader; yet this passage probably isn't referring to the grandson of Manassah, but the grandson of Moses. Here is another translation of the verse:

"And the Danites set up the graven image for themselves; and Jonathan the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, and his sons were priests to the tribe of the Danites until the day of the captivity of the land" (Jdgs 18:30 RSV) see also the ESV and NKJV.

"Moses," not "Manassah," is probably the correct translation; not just because of the above versions, but also because we know that Moses did have a son named "Gershom" (Exod 2:21-22), yet we are never told such about Manassah. In addition, Manassah's grandchild would have died two or three generations previous to the

time of the judges; however, the chronology fits perfectly with Moses' grandson. Thus, the worship that took place at Dan was presided over by the family of Moses.

Again, we can see how well the city of Dan fit Jeroboam's purpose. It was an ancient site of worship which was "sanctified" by the family of Moses, the one who had originally given them the law, the one who had led the people out of Egypt! Moses was a great hero to the people, and his family ruled over the worship that took place there! Jeroboam could have easily pointed to this fact to show that Dan was an acceptable city for worship. Yet these cities are only the beginning of his "cunningly devised fables."

The Feast

Not only did Jeroboam change the places where worship would take place, but he also changed a feast:

"And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah, and he offered upon the altar. So did he in Bethel, sacrificing unto the calves that he had made: and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made" (1Kgs 12:32).

Jeroboam took the feast, probably the feast of tabernacles, which took place on the fifteenth day of the seventh month (Lev 23:34), and moved it forward just one month. This wouldn't have seemed like a very big problem, but it is just one more way that Jeroboam was subtly undermining God's authority. Yahweh had commanded the people to celebrate the feast in the seventh month! Jeroboam moved it back, creating a precedent for slightly tweaking the Word of God; and then, probably twisted the law of Numbers 9 to cover himself. Once again, we can see his subtlety.

"Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If any man of you or of your posterity shall be unclean by reason of a dead body, or be in a journey afar off, yet he shall keep the passover unto the LORD. The fourteenth day of the second month at even they shall keep it, and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs" (Num 9:10-11).

The law had a provision for moving the passover feast back one month (it was normally celebrated in the first month; Leviticus 23:5). Jeroboam could have easily pointed to this passage in order to show that his moving of the feast to the eighth month actually did have a Biblical precedent. Yet he had skewed the whole principle, and maligned the Scriptures.

However, Jeroboam's sin was not fully complete. He also went on to push all of the knowledge of the Truth out of the country, just so that there would be no possibility that anyone would oppose him.

Expulsion of the Levites

"And he made an house of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi" (1Kgs 12:31)

The Levites were essentially out of a job (see also 1Kgs 13:33); now that anyone who wanted to serve in the temple was able to become a priest, the Levites no longer had any position. For this reason, many of them fled out of Israel and into Judah (2Chron 11:13-14), exactly as Jeroboam had hoped. The Levites were the ones who were the teachers of the people, they were the ones who knew the Word of God and could stand up against his idolatry (see Mal 2:7; Neh 8:7).

He carefully made moves so that little by little, so that he could move the people away from the worship of Yahweh, and keep them hooked into his false religion. He made his teachings look as though they were based upon Scripture, yet in reality they were founded upon dust and lies. The historian Josephus claims that Jeroboam spoke the following words as he was instituting his new religion. As you read this, note the deception dripping from his speech:

“I suppose, my countrymen, that you know this, that every place hath God in it; nor is there any one determinate place in which he is, but he every where hears and sees those that worship him; on which account I do not think it right for you to go so long a journey to Jerusalem, which is an enemy's city, to worship him. It was a man that built the temple: I have also made two golden heifers, dedicated to the same God; and the one of them I have consecrated in the city Bethel, and the other in Dan, to the end that those of you that dwell nearest those cities may go to them, and worship God there.” (Josephus; Antiquities of the Jews; 8:8:4)

The evil of this speech is almost overwhelming. Jeroboam was filled with lies. He twisted the law of God, and twisted God's principles. Almost every part of his religion would appear as though it was standing upon the Scripture, yet in reality, God's word completely condemned it. So often this is the case with apostasy. It looks right, it looks as though it is good, yet our God condemns today's apostasy it as the “Man of Sin” and a “great whore.”

Christendom Today

In seeing the subtleties of Jeroboam's apostasy, we can also see the deceit of apostasy today. All around us, Christendom is claiming that their doctrines are based upon Scripture, that they truly know the Lord Jesus Christ, and that they have the key to salvation. Just like Jeroboam's harlotry, their doctrines can subtly and insidiously creep into our thinking. This is truly the lesson that comes from the apostasy of Israel — apostasy is not easy to recognize. We may feel as though we can easily spot some of the false doctrines of Christendom when they begin speaking about “heaven-going” or the Trinity, but what about when their books begin to talk about the atonement, or the Antichrist? While some of their teachings are easy to point our fingers at and say “I can filter them out,” some of their other ideas are more deceptive and harder to pinpoint. If we are constantly putting their material into our minds, we may find that one of their blasphemous ideas had entered into our thinking, even before we had the chance to realize that it was wrong. This is what happened to many in Israel. Throughout the history of the nation, the people continued in the worship of Jeroboam, never realizing that it was false.

“Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts” (Amos 5:22).

The people still thought that they were offering to Yahweh, yet they were far from it. This is the danger of apostasy. May we take this lesson to heart.

In the next article, we will see how God felt about Jeroboam's new religion.

Jason Hensley (Simi Hills, CA)

First Principles

The First Principles of the Oracles of God

Introduction

We would like to welcome the readers to a new section of the Tidings dedicated to **first principles and the defense of the gospel**.

Each one of us, who have taken on the saving name of Jesus, were impacted in some way by the pure simple logic of the Bible. The basic teachings of the gospel touched our hearts, gave us hope and moved us to action. No one wants to lose that feeling but over time the luster tends to get tarnished.

It is our intention through these articles to reinvigorate the brotherhood in the foundation principles, making them exciting, and spurring us on to preaching the good news. For those searching, it is our hope that they will provide a good deal of food for thought and a prick in the heart. It is also our aim that those new in the faith will grow more and more in Jesus Christ. For those familiar with the subjects there will be new avenues and approaches for preaching the truth.

First Principles

It may be of some surprise (it was to me) that the phrase “first principles” is used only once in scripture.

*“For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the **first principles** of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat” (Heb. 5:12).*

A similar phrase starts the next chapter accompanied by a list of six foundation principles.

*“Therefore leaving the **principles** of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment” (Heb. 6:1-2).*

So the term “first principles” that Christadelphians use quite often is scriptural but not frequent. Furthermore, based on the context it refers to Law of Moses, or what we consider to be the first five books of the Bible. John Carter comments that, “the six items enumerated as belonging to the foundation are thus seen to be elements of the Jewish religion. They are not called foundation truths of the

Christian religion, although some of them, in amplified form, find a place there.”¹ Bro. Carter has good reasons for drawing this conclusion but in this article I want to bring out other reasons why we should still regard this passage as referring to Christian “first principles”.

The Context

At this point in Hebrews the writer goes into a lengthy digression of reprimand and exhortation. He has spent time considering the aspects of the Sabbath (ch. 4) and now is developing some key principles on the priesthood (ch. 5, 7ff). It is this subject that he admonishes them that they have “*become dull of hearing*” (RSV), need to be “taught again” and have “become such as have need of milk.” So it seems these believers had been regressing on these aspects of the Old Testament.

Word Study of “First Principles”

The phrase “first principles” is translated from the words *arche* and *stoicheion*. The word “first” (*arche*) has the meaning of chief in order, time, place or rank. Most modern translations say “basic” or “elementary” but the literally meaning is more likely in relation to timing², like the NET Bible’s, “beginning elements.”

Vine’s dictionary says that “principles” (*stoicheion*), “primarily signifies any first things from which others in a series, or a composite whole, take their rise; . . . it was used of the letters of the alphabet, as elements of speech”³ It is a word used six other times in scripture (Gal 4:3,9; Col 2:8,20; 2Pet 3:10,12) translated as “elements” or “rudiments”. In Galatians and Colossians it obviously refers to the ordinances in the Law of Moses and it can be argued to be the same in 2 Peter.⁴

The phrase “oracles of God” emphasizes the connection even more because it refers directly to the Law of Moses in Acts 7:38 and Rom 3:2. Would the “oracles of God” then be a contrast with the “words of righteousness” (v. 13) with which they were unskillful? The writer (probably Paul) must be emphasizing the familiar argument of justification by faith versus works of the law.

The word “principles” in Hebrews 6:1, “the principles of the doctrine of Christ” is a translation of the word *arche*. This is confusing as the same word is translated as “first” in 5:12. Literally then the phrase can read “the word of the beginning of Christ.” Despite the chapter break this has the same meaning as 5:12.⁵

Context and consistency in word usage would indicate then that the phrase “first principles” in Heb. 5:12 and “principles” in Heb. 6:1 refer to the initial basic teachings in the Law of Moses. How then could the Law be “the principles of the doctrine of Christ”? Simply, in that every aspect of the Law we see Christ taught. Jesus himself said in John 5:46, “*For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.*”

This, essentially, is what the writer to the Hebrews is trying to do. He is taking the basic elements of the law and showing how the Lord Jesus Christ fulfilled them. The Sabbath, priesthood, day of atonement, sacrifices and tabernacle are all used in the teaching of Hebrews. The first principles established in the Law then become essential teachings in understanding the faith as it is in Jesus Christ.

Perfection

The key exhortation is for the believers to continue to grow from a babe on milk to a grown up on solid food. Milk is good, but if that is all an adult consumes then they will be unhealthy. The milk in this case represents a following of the Law simply based on external observance. The meat represents the ability to discern the deeper spiritual meanings and use these to make right judgments. We do not work on a set of rules but principles that must be exercised to discern between good and evil. In essence, the word must live in the heart, the conscience. With this exercising our senses, being not dull (cp v. 11), they will be so sensitive as to pick up and differentiate between good and evil. This is perfection.

This is not the perfection of being completely 100% pure and sinless. The truer sense of the word is being mature or complete. That is why it is translated as “full age” in 5:14. Therefore, when he says “*leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection*” (6:1) it must be kept in the context of growing unto maturity in the doctrines first established in the Law.

Perfection is something the writer to the Hebrews continually stresses throughout the letter⁶. First of all, it was something that Jesus had to attain.

“For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings” (Heb 2:10).

“And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;” (Heb 5:9).

Perfection therefore became an attainment for the believers as the law could never have done.

*“For the law made nothing **perfect**, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God” (Heb 7:19).*

*“For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto **perfect**” (Heb 10:1).*

The Law’s shortcoming being that it did not purge the conscience.

*“Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service **perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;**” (Heb 9:9).*

It is only through the sacrifice of Christ that one can be perfected.

“For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified” (Heb 10:14).

The Foundation

Earlier the writer had said they needed to be taught again (5:12). He doesn’t really want to have to do this as he now says, “*let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation.*” The foundation must be the doctrines exemplified in the Old Tes-

tament as fulfilled by Jesus Christ, the chief cornerstone, and as witnessed by the Apostles. Vine’s Dictionary says that the word foundation when used metaphorically stands for “ ‘the ministry of the Gospel and the doctrines of the faith,’ Rom. 15:20; 1 Cor. 3:10, 11, 12; Eph. 2:20, where the “of” is not subjective (i.e., consisting of the apostles and prophets), but objective, (i.e., laid by the apostles, etc.).”⁷

Surely, the use of the word “foundation” indicates that the following six items are key essentials for our first principles. He has already taken some of the Christian teachings from the “first principles” of the Law of Moses and expanded upon them. These would include such things as the priesthood and the mediatorship of Christ and the Sabbath as typically of the kingdom age. So in this further list of six elements we would expect him to expand upon them from the Law of Moses as he will do if God permits (6:3).

The Six Elements

There is no reason to expect that the six elements in 6:1-2 were meant to be a complete list. They seem rather to be paired in couplets to give good examples of foundation principles. Following are the groupings:

repentance from dead works,	Internal experience
and of faith toward God,	
the doctrine of baptisms,	External rites
and of laying on of hands,	
and of resurrection of the dead,	Future facts
and of eternal judgment.	

If they are essential Christian doctrines then we would expect to see them preached in the Acts. Bro. John Martin⁸ shows how all six are in Acts 2.

Christian Fundamentals	Acts 2
Repentance	v. 38
Faith (belief)	v. 41, 44
Baptism	v. 41
Laying on of hands	v. 38
Resurrection	v. 32
Judgment	v. 40

The first two are mentioned together as the foundation of Paul’s preaching in Acts 20:21, “*Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.*”

Less noticeable is Paul’s use of four of the six in Acts 17:30-31, “*And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to **repent**: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will **judge** the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance⁹ (mg. “**offered faith**”) unto all men, in that he hath **raised him from the dead.***”

Repentance and Faith

Repentance has to be the initial reaction of anyone who wants to follow Christ. Therefore, the first foundation element is appropriately “repentance from dead works” or, as in Acts 11:18, “repentance unto life.” “Dead works” is a term repeated in Hebrews 9:14, *“How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from **dead works** to serve the living God?”*

It is hard to tell from this verse if “dead works” means just the acts of the law. Similar wording of “wicked works in the mind” is used of Gentiles in Col. 1:21 (see also Eph 2:1, 3; Titus 1:15-16). This fits with Heb 9:9 and 10:2, 22 where we see it is also a matter of the conscience or mind.

*“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from **an evil conscience**, and our bodies washed with pure water”*(Heb 10:22).

Hebrews 10:22 has an important connection between the purging of the “evil conscience” and “our bodies washed with pure water”. Washing away sins is baptism (Acts 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21) which is our next foundation element.

Baptisms

The astute reader will notice the word “baptisms” is in the plural. The other three places it is used it refers to ceremonial washings connected with the law (Heb. 9:10) or the traditions of men (Mark 7:4, 8). This has led some commentators to see this as only referring to Jewish rites and not Christian fundamentals.

The single usage of the word can also refer to ceremonial washing (Mark 7:4) as well as Christian baptism. So, it is possible that the writer could also have in mind various New Testament baptisms such as John’s baptism, baptism by water and baptism by the Holy Spirit. It is true that there is only “one baptism” necessary for salvation but during the first century all the baptisms came into question. A good example of this is in Acts 19:1-5 where we have the baptism of John, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

*“And he [Paul] said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto **John’s baptism**. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were **baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus**. And when Paul had **laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost (Spirit) came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied**”(Acts 19:3-6).*

It is very likely that in Hebrews the writer is not drawing a distinction. Rather, in the style of Hebrews, we would expect some sort of lesson or connection between washing in the Old Testament with baptism in the New Testament as in Heb. 10:22, “our bodies washed with pure water.”

Laying on of Hands

The act of “laying on of hands” also draws equal weight from both Testaments. In

the Old Testament the laying of the hands was an act where the person sacrificing identified with the offering. There are four main passages in the law connecting washings with laying on of hands.

Washing	Laying on of hands	
Exod. 29:4	Exod. 29:10	Aaron and his sons at the dedication
Lev. 1:9	Lev. 1:4	The burnt offering
Lev. 16:4, 24, 26, 28	Lev. 16:21	The day of atonement coming into the holiest (cp. v. 2-3 with Heb. 9:7 and 10:22)
Num. 8:7, 21	Num. 8:10, 12	Consecration of the Levites

The main one here is the Day of Atonement in Lev. 16 where the high priest went into the Most Holy. This is picked up in Hebrews chapters 9 and 10 and brings us back to the passage in Heb. 10:22 where the believer, by the act of association with Jesus, now has access into the very presence of God. So once again, we see the author drawing first principles out of the Old Testament and providing the greater spiritual lesson in Christ.

The connection between baptism and laying on of hands is also prominent in the New Testament. But is it really a Christian first principle? Based on a survey of Acts (6:6; 8:17-19; 9:17; 13:3; 19:6; 28:8; also 1 Tim. 5:22) it would seem to have been even though the cessation of the spirit gifts has made it less so during our day and age.

The Resurrection of the Dead and Eternal Judgment

This brings us to our last couplet of “the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.” The resurrection of the dead and judgment to come permeate the whole of the New Testament teachings (especially in Hebrews). The resurrection of the dead is certainly a foundation of Christian doctrine.

Jesus said to those who did not believe in the resurrection, the Saducees, “*Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God? ... ye therefore do **greatly** err.*” (Mark 12:24-27 cp. 1Cor. 6:14). This same dangerous belief confronted the Corinthians (1Cor. 15:12) and Paul brings out the dire consequences of their “faith being vain” (v. 17) if there was no resurrection. Paul also defended the importance of the timing of the resurrection in 2 Tim. 2:17-19, “*And their word will eat as doth a canker [gangrene]: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure...*”

Notice here the mention of the foundation of God, His truth, which stands sure in those who uphold the truth. Faith in the resurrection is a basis of salvation (Rom. 10:9). It is the foundation of our hope and of our godly life (e.g. Col. 3:1-5).

The phrase “resurrection of the quick and dead” is always in the context of the judgment to come. For instance, the tandem is preached by Peter in Acts 10:42, “*And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.*”¹⁰

Even in Acts 24:15 Paul’s preaching about the resurrection of the “just and unjust” imply a judgment. “***And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.***”

Paul brought such power to this core teaching of judgment to come that it made the hearer, Felix, tremble (Acts 24:25).

But no passage is more apt at showing the relationship and import of the resurrection and judgment than Jesus’ words in John 5:21-22, “*For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:*” (be sure and read the fuller context from 5:20-30).

Conclusion

The letter to the Hebrews has some great examples of first principles taken from the Law of Moses and put in the context for the believer today. They are solid foundation principles upon which to build a more complete life in Christ. So as we begin more studies in these basic doctrines let us never forget that these are more than simple lessons or debating points but are the power of God unto salvation.

Tim Young (Cambridge, ON)

Notes:

1. John Carter, “*The Letter to the Hebrews*”, 1939, The Christadelphian, Birmingham, UK, pg. 59.
2. Arche is translated in respect to timing in Hebrews 2:3 “at the first” and 3:14 “beginning”.
3. Vine’s Amplified Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, “*Elements*”, World Bible Publishers, 1991, pg. 253
4. See John Thomas, “Contending for the Faith”, Logos Publications, 1981, pg. 19ff
5. John Morris argues that the phrases in 5:12 and 6:1 have different meanings but this is based on a dubious translation of 6:1 from the English Revised Version. See John Morris, “*A Letter to the Hebrews*”, The Christadelphian Magazine, Vol. 123, 1986, pg. 21.
6. The full list of verses in Hebrews mentioning perfection are 2:10; 5:9, 14; 6:1; 7:11, 19, 28; 9:9, 11; 10:1, 14; 11:40; 12:23.
7. Vine’s Amplified Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, “*Foundation*”, World Bible Publishers, 1991, pg. 326
8. John Martin, “Hebrews Study Notes”, CSSS, 1976, pg. 43
9. This is the only place the word for faith (pistis) has been translated as assurance.
10. See also Rom. 14:9; 2Tim. 4:1; 1Pet. 4:5.

*“We are all builders of a sort. Some build houses, computers, cars, products of every sort, but one thing we all build — whether we are aware of it or not — is character. Laying the foundation of good character means never taking ethical shortcuts, but doing the right thing simply because it **is** the right thing. You can never maintain the integrity of your character through deceit and dishonesty. The true test of a person’s character is in what he would do if he knew that no one else would ever know” (Alexander Lockhart).*

Letters

Community and Connection

Just wanted to say how much I enjoy the Tidings.

I love all the vignettes and excerpts from various sources.

I have a suggestion for a magazine series featuring descriptions of various ecclesias' activities: preaching, prayer, outreach, pastoral, etc. This proposed series could generate a lot of ideas within and between ecclesias. Ecclesias can become quite insular for all kinds of reasons, and never know what innovative ideas other meetings are undertaking. Sharing practices within these pages could inject variety, distribute knowledge, bridge between ecclesias and improve upon ideas (as they are modified and adapted for use elsewhere). It would be interesting to hear from ecclesias all over the world, and discover how cultural perspectives influence ecclesial life.

Community and connection would be the values underpinning such a series.

Thanks for all your hard work!

Love in Messiah,

Shannon Stevens (Saanich Peninsula Ecclesia, CA)

An Ecclesial Mission Statement

As an avid reader of Tidings, which ranks highly on my reading list of Christadelphian publications, and in view of your editorial in the May edition, I thought you might be interested in the following.

In February 1983, jointly with our daughter and son-in-law (both Christadelphians) my wife and I bought an old farmhouse with attached stables. The stables we converted into accommodation for us while our family lived in the house with their children. Upstairs there was a large room (a former hayloft) suitable for a meeting room, to which there was also access by an outside staircase ('an upper room furnished'). There were a number of brethren and sisters living in the area who were willing to join us in establishing a 'house church'.

In June 1983 twelve of us from various ecclesia's met together to discuss and agree how the ecclesia would operate. The following week the West Sussex Ecclesia (now known as Horley Ecclesia) met and 'broke bread' together for the first time and started a Sunday School with nearly as many children as members. Light refreshments after the service gave opportunity for a real family feeling of fellowship and friendship — a practice that has continued.

Over the next few years the number of members and visitors grew and so did our Sunday School; although the meeting room could hold about 40 people, it was time to move on, first to a local village hall; still growing, to three other schools

in succession. During these years we have been blessed with the baptisms of 30 Sunday School scholars, three of whom were school friends of our members' children and our ecclesia now numbers 83.

In your editorial you mentioned 'mission statements'. About 1 year after the start of our ecclesia we decided it would be appropriate to define our purpose and set out our ecclesial objectives. It was remarkable how easily our thoughts could be summarized into what was, in effect, a 'mission statement' agreed by all members and given to all members who joined us. It now forms the preface to our half-yearly programs.

The statement has stood the test of time — 26 years — only added to recently by the inclusion of a sentence on the 'environment'. Although we propose to call another special meeting, I do not anticipate any major amendments being made.

Bob Webb (Horley ecclesia, UK)

Horley Ecclesia Mission Statement

With God's help we will endeavour that our Ecclesia will be:

A centre of prayer, praise and worship to God in which:

We are aware of the presence of the Lord Jesus

We uphold and teach 'the faith once for all delivered to the saints'

We truly practise Christian living

We accept the discipline and responsibility of membership

We observe, in all our decisions, principles of good environmental stewardship

We are prepared to be flexible in matters of organisation

We rejoice in being part of a worldwide fellowship

A source of God's light in the world in which:

We encourage and motivate each other to be enthusiastic in our service

To the Living God —

In preaching by all means

In teaching by word and example

In nurturing our children and each other

In supporting and helping those in any kind of trouble

In welcoming warmly all those who visit us

In trying to find and restore the 'lost sheep'

A haven, a safe and caring place apart from and in contrast to the world in which:

All members of the ecclesial family are valued

All can be honest and open

All are listened to with attention and non-judgmental love

We share our time, our homes and, where necessary, our resources.



Bible Mission News

A visit to Argentina, Chile and Peru in May of 2010

For the first two weeks of our trip we had the pleasure of visiting the brethren and sisters and friends in Córdoba, Argentina and Santiago de Chile. Jim gave several public talks on basic Bible teachings, each one beginning with a saying of Jesus then going on to point out the confirmation and support in the rest of the Bible. In both cities there was good support from the local brethren and sisters and an attendance of 10 interested friends. In addition, some private classes were held with the most advanced students to help them along the way to baptism. God willing, we hope to return later in the year to perform these baptisms.

In Córdoba we were saddened to find that Sis. Elizabeth (Eli) de Gilardoni, Bro. Pancho's wife, was suffering from fibrosis of the lungs and therefore unable to get out to the meetings (though Pancho, who is 92, never missed!). We went to their house with Bro. Hugo Petrilli to hold a breaking of bread, and Sis. Eli managed to sit up long enough for the meeting. Once she was able to recline once again she could breathe more easily and we were able to have a long and happy visit. We pray that God will bless with Eli the strength to bear up under her condition and confidence in the soon return of Jesus and his kingdom, when all sickness and pain will be done away with.

In Santiago we were happy to see that most of the earthquake damage to the hall had been repaired. The place was also restocked with a new supply of literature to replace that which had been destroyed when the water pipes broke in the quake. We were glad to be able to spend time with our new sister Sandra Ovalle and meet some of her family members. Private classes were also held with several interested friends. We pray that God will bless these little groups of believers and help them to grow in size and spiritual maturity.

We spent the third week in Lima, Peru, where it was lovely to see our brethren and friends again. There were 13 contacts out to the talks, some for the first time. It is always encouraging to find that the postal courses we mail out from the US are reaching our students and producing fruit. We had wondered why more of our Peruvian student didn't return their answer sheets, but a trip to postal office was enough to answer the question. Stamps are sold at only one wicket and it can take nearly a hour in line to buy even one stamp!! Not only that, but mailing a letter to the USA costs about 2 hrs. wages for the average Peruvian worker. For this

reason we have acquired a Lima PO box so that course answers can be returned locally at a much lesser cost, but even the time and effort required to buy a stamp is rather discouraging for the students.



Group at baptism of Flavio Carmona in Lima, Peru, May 23, 2010

The highlight of our time in Lima was the baptism of our friend Flavio Carmona, 68. Flavio requested the postal course more than three years ago via an ad placed in a local newspaper, and along with his wife and son he quickly became a regular attendee at the public talks which are given in Lima several times a year. Bro. Flavio joins Bre. César Franklin and Julián Enríquez to solidify the nucleus around which with God's

help it is hoped to form a growing ecclesia in Lima. There are two or three other friends who hope to be baptized later this year, God willing.

In late July, in the course of their move from Quito, Ecuador to La Paz, Bolivia, Bro. Paul and Sis. Naomi Osborn and family plan to spend a week in Lima, where Paul will give another series of public talks. The brethren and friends are looking forward to their visit.



On the left is newly-baptized brother Flavio Carmona, along with Bre. César Franklin and Julián Enríquez.

Please keep the work in South America in your prayers. Most ecclesias are small and rather isolated and badly need the support of the greater Christadelphian community.

Jim and Jean Hunter

Quito, Ecuador

New Meeting Place for Quito

About seven months ago the Quito Ecclesia in Ecuador was told that their meeting place was up for sale and they would have to vacate earlier this year, but they were allowed to stay after the deadline, month to month. They almost had another location finalized, when the owner pulled the plug on the deal. They have been searching ever since. They found a very adequate location recently and below are a few details. This was a very good matter to get settled before our missionaries (the Osborns) were scheduled to leave for La Paz.

The new meeting place has two bathrooms downstairs, a large kitchen with hot water, a storage room, a laundry area, a covered garage, two upstairs patios, two downstairs patios, a small garden, two Sunday school rooms, a large hall and a smaller hall we use now for socializing, a library room, and, upstairs, a bathroom with hot water and a shower and three bedrooms, which we have designated for missionaries. The owners live right next door.

The best thing by far about the new place is the location. It is very close (within a block or two) to the three major routes that the members from the north and south use. It is also close to major landmarks, like El Parque La Carolina, El Jardin mall and another mall.

*Submitted by Sis. Jan Berneau
CBMA/C Publicity*



First Visit to Jamaica

The brotherhood in Jamaica is known for its hospitality, fellowship and love of the Truth, and when three directors of the CBMC visited Jamaica from May 21 to 24, 2010 — they found out that this was certainly true. Brethren Rod Ghent, Don Luff and Phil Snobelen had previously arranged, on behalf of the CBMC, to have a special meeting with the CBMJ officers and ecclesial representatives, as well as other brothers and sisters who were interested in attending. There were 22 brothers and sisters in attendance, when the work of the CBMJ and the Jamaican Ecclesias, with the support of the CBMC, was reviewed. We were pleased with good open discussion on various matters related to the agenda at the meeting held on Saturday, May 24th at the May Pen Ecclesial Hall. A number of suggestions were made with respect to the present and future efforts of the CBMJ and the ecclesias related to preaching and ecclesial development.

On an annual basis, the North American brotherhood through the CBMC provides practical and financial assistance in a number of areas, such as, fraternal gatherings, travel subsidy to Youth Conferences (in Guyana in 2009), for ecclesial hall modifications and additions, and to subsidize overseas speaker visits. See the photo below of an addition to the May Pen Ecclesial Hall of two Sunday school rooms.

Sunday school scholars standing outside the entrance to the two-classroom addition to the May Pen Ecclesial Hall



The Christadelphian Save the Children Fund (CSTCF — London, ON) supplies all the Sunday school lessons and support material for the ecclesias that have Sunday schools in Jamaica. The **www.tiyb.com** website is now being used to generate contacts on the island. The CBMC would like to increase its assistance to the Jamaican brotherhood in the area of preaching, in particular, wherever possible. The Jamaican ecclesias are very grateful for the



spiritual and financial support received from other countries!

All three CBMC brethren provided exhortations and Bible studies at different ecclesias on Sunday, May 23rd — Rod Ghent at May Pen, Don Luff at Round Hill and Phil Snobelen at Broughton. Fellowship and good Jamaican food was enjoyed in all three locations. Although this was the first time that brethren Luff and Snobelen had visited Jamaica, they would certainly like to return to share with their brethren in ecclesial activities there.



Don Luff
CBMC

This was the first Sunday School classes at the May Pen Ecclesial hall.



At the Round Hill ecclesia

May 2010 Baptism — assisted by ThisisyourBible.com

Sis. Esther Hughes from Melbourne, Australia is one of our TIYB tutors. Sometime ago she spoke very excitedly about a new Czech student. Whilst she wasn't the only point of contact for Vitek she clearly was a great influence. After completing the courses and additional studying, he gave a confession of his faith in May to two UK couples (One was Bro. David Smith who does a lot of Mission work in Africa.)

On Saturday, May 29th — Vitek was baptized at the Prague Bible Weekend. He had to travel across the Czech Republic to attend. He was baptized in the river watched by about 20 of the attendees. The photos show the process and the joy of the gathering. It was great to see Vitek relaxing with his brothers and sisters — at last enjoying fellowship.

Now he is back in complete isolation again. He is completing his Machine Engineering degree this year. Vitek needs our prayers as he continues his walk..

*Submitted by Sis. Jan Berneau
CBMA/C Publicity*





Give To United Way — For CBMA!

During the latter part of the year, if you are working, your company may have a big campaign for donating through United Way, which represents many, many charitable organizations. You can specify which organization you want your donation to go to or just let United Way make the decision. For many corporations this is a time when they really encourage participation in United Way. In some cases the company may even match donations to your charity of choice, and the donations are taken directly from your paycheck. We have verified that the Christadelphian Bible Mission of the Americas (Tax ID #23-7075338) is identified as a registered donation option on their list. United Way tells us that it may not be allowable in all places nationwide, but where it is allowed, CBMA is available as an option.

Please consider donating in this manner if your company participates in United Way. A dollar or two a week is hardly noticeable if given this way but translates to an important amount on an annual basis, especially if your company matches the donation. Please contact me at jberneau@earthlink.net if you need any additional information.

*Submitted by Sis. Jan Berneau
CBMA/C Publicity*

"Better a diamond with a flaw, than a pebble without one"

In this Chinese proverb there is, to my mind, the assertion of a great Christian truth, and of one that reaches deep down to the very foundations of Christian morality... Taking the Scripture testimony about David, that he was the man after God's heart, and putting beside this the record of those grievous sins in which he was entangled, his enemies sought to set these grievous, yet still isolated, offences in the most hateful light; and thus to bring him, and the Book that praised him, and the God who found pleasure in him, to a common shame. But all this while, the question concerning the man, what he was, and what was the moral sum-total of his life, to which alone the Scripture bore witness... this was a question wherewith they concerned themselves not at all; while yet it was a far more important question than what any of his single acts may have been; and it was this which, in the estimate of his character, was really at issue. Of the flaws there can be no doubt, in him, as in every other except the one "entire and perfect" — but were they flaws in a diamond? If so, then we are bold to affirm that the one diamond even with these flaws outvalues a mountain of pebbles without such.

R.C. Trench

Addresses for Bequests and Donations

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

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

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

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

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. 519-837-9094, Email: agapeinaction@rogers.com
Website: www.agapeinaction.com

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

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

Christadelphian 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

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

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

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

Christadelphian Care Line fully confidential help with emotional and spiritual problems as well as family issues. 866-823-1039

Alcohol Help Line fully confidential help for overcoming alcohol dependency. 866-823-1039

News & Notices

(Please send in News and Notices by the 5th of the preceding month; please include full name of ecclesia and recording brother.)

BARRIE, ON

Since our last correspondence we have received as members by transfer from the Toronto Church St. Ecclesia, Bro. Bill Roberts, and Bro. Jack and Sis. Sandra Smart as they are now living in Bala. We pray our fellowship together will be mutually beneficial as we await our Lord's return.

Our ecclesia has been blessed with the additions of two babies so far this year. To the family of Bro. Kevin and Sis. Kim Cooper, Hazel Phoebe was born on January 31, 2010. To the family of Bro. Ryan and Sis. Beth Lockwood, Zackary Levi was born on June 5, 2010. We ask for God's blessing on these children and their families as we grow together.

We are holding our annual fall study day on October 30, 2010. Bro. John Perks (Ottawa, ON) is leading a study on "1 Thessalonians," and all are welcome to join us.

Our ecclesia would also like to thank the many brothers and sisters who have visited us over the past year, especially the brothers who provided words of exhortation and encouragement to us. We are planning preaching activities in Barrie and Orillia this fall with the assistance of ASK in hope of finding those searching for the truth.

Grant Abel

BEDFORD, NS

The Bedford, NS Ecclesia warmly welcomes Bro. Ken and Sis. Wendy Dickson as members. The Dicksons have transferred from the Sussex, NB Ecclesia. Their move brings the membership of our active and growing ecclesia to seventeen.

We would also like to invite brothers and sisters to our annual Fall Study Weekend, to be held Lord willing, on September 25-26, 2010. This year our speaker is Bro. Wayne Coutu (Hamilton, ON), who will speak on the topic "A Generation of Faith: The Women in the Genealogy of Christ".

Our ecclesia is still seeking new members to help us maintain our witness on the Atlantic coast in the vibrant city of Halifax which has a population of 370,000, and the beautiful province of Nova Scotia with a population of almost one million. Those curious about the prospects of relocating to Halifax are encouraged to contact the undersigned at thesnobelens@hotmail.com.

Stephen D. Snobelen

BOSTON, MA

It is with great joy that we announce the baptisms, on April 11, 2010, of both BROOKE and JENNY STYLES the daughters of Bro. Jonathan and Sis. Danielle Styles. May our heavenly Father bless them in their walk toward His kingdom. Sadly though, we had to say good bye to our new sisters in Christ and their parents as the whole family has recently moved to Australia. We wish them God speed on their journey "down under".

Also, on July 11, 2010, we were blessed to witness the baptism of CHARLENE HOBAN into the saving name of Jesus Christ. Charlene is the fiancée of Bro. Nathan Dineen who has just recently requested and been brought into our fellowship.

We are happy to receive the transfer of our Bro. Tracey Nichols to our ecclesia from the Washington Ecclesia. It is also our pleasure to announce that after a long absence our Bro. Bob Dixon has returned to fellowship.

We've been blessed with a number of visiting speakers over the past few months and we want to thank our brothers Kevin Mayock, Don Styles, Ray Calese, Josh McInturff, Aaron MacAdams and Mark Carr for their encouraging words of exhortation. Bro. Mark also led our annual Spring Study Weekend in April and we would like to thank him for his informative classes on "The Life of Judah".

Jim Sullivan

BRANTFORD, ON

Our Sunday school year finished wonderfully with the baptism of one of our teen scholars. BEN MILLER, the son of Sis. Christine Miller was baptized into the saving name of the Lord Jesus Christ on June 25, 2010. May our heavenly Father bless the walk of our new young brother.

By way of transfer, effective July 18, 2010, we welcomed back to our light stand Sis. Ann Jennings of the Greenaway Ecclesia. May God bless her as we labor together in our Master's service.

Don Luff

DETROIT ROYAL OAK, MI

Since the last report from the Royal Oak Ecclesia, there have been many happy events to report from this light stand. We are pleased to report the following baptisms into the saving name of Christ: MELISSA COMITO in November 2007; and JAMES COMITO in November 2009. Melissa and James are the daughter and son of our Bro. Ken and Sis. Joyce Comito. Also CHRISTI HALTOM, daughter of our Bro. David and Sis. Joanne Haltom, was baptized in June 2008.

Many of our young people have been united in marriage recently. In May 2007, Sis. Michelle Clubb was married to Bro. Matthew Cooper (Manitoulin Island, ON). In June 2008, Sis. Jerusha Haltom was married to Bro. Ryan Vaughn, both of this ecclesia. In August 2008, Bro. Thomas Muniz was married to Sis. Sarah Gagnier (Jackson County, OR). In May 2009, Bro. Tim Styles was married to Sis. Hadassah Mindorff (Brantford, ON). Also in May 2009, our Sis. Laura Clubb married Bro. Luke Colby (Hamilton Book Road, ON). In November 2009, our Bro. Matt Jackson married Sis. Samantha Beckerson (Ann Arbor, MI); and in June 2010, our Bro. Paul Jackson married Sis. Bethany Carrick (Toronto East, ON). We wish all our young couples well in their united walk toward the kingdom.

In connection with these marriages, we commend Sis. Michelle Cooper to the Manitoulin Island, ON Ecclesia; Sis. Laura Colby to Hamilton Book Road, ON Ecclesia; Bro. Tom Muniz to Jackson County, OR Ecclesia; and Bro. Tim Styles to Brantford, ON Ecclesia. We also commend Sis. Jennifer Stormont to the Simi Hills, CA Ecclesia; and Sis. Meaghan Vaughn to the San Luis Obispo, CA Ecclesia; and Bro. Matthew Wilhoit to the West Houston, TX Ecclesia. We are sure all these brothers and sisters will be of great assistance in their new ecclesias, as they were in ours.

We are pleased to welcome Sis. Samantha Jackson from the Ann Arbor ecclesia and also Sis. Bethany Jackson from the Toronto East ecclesia.

We are also happy to note the following additions to our Sunday school: Hope Lilly to

Bro. Jake and Sis. Joyce Kauffman; Dominic Louis and Olivia Katelyn to Bro. Jon and Sis. Katie Soave; and Ella Zion and Esther Moriah to Bro. Peter and Sis. Karly Styles.

We also wish to acknowledge the ninetieth birthday of our most senior member Sis. Ruth Rankin, on June 7, 2008.

We are proceeding with our Seminar preaching work. We have several active attendees and pray that our Lord will bring some to a true acceptance of the truth.

Bucky Wilhoit

ECHO LAKE, NJ

We are now on our summer schedule and the memorial meeting starts at 10.00 am; this will continue until September 12, 2010. We thank our Bro. Andrew McGeorge for providing us with the word of exhortation during his and Sis. Bron's recent visit.

We sorrow with our Bro. Mike and Sis. Sarah Robinson and their family at the recent falling asleep of Bro. Mike's father, our Bro. Jim Robinson in Canada. Bro. Jim served our ecclesia on his visits to see his son and daughter-in-law. He now sleeps awaiting that glorious time of resurrection and the restitution of all things. We pray that his wife, Sis. Patty, along with his family will be strengthened and comforted at this sad time.

We sorrow also with our Bro. Reuben Washington in the falling asleep of his sister, Sis. Rebecca Thomas of the Washington Ecclesia. Our sister also sleeps awaiting that glorious time of resurrection and the restitution of all things. We pray that the families will be strengthened and comforted at this sad time.

We have once again been pleased and privileged to have the company of a number of visiting brothers and sisters and we have welcomed them around the table of the Lord. These include: Margan Packie, Virginia Packie, Carolyn Antonaccio and David and Maryann Jorgensen (Union, NJ); Tom and Sally Davies (Pomona, CA); Reuben Sandy (North Houston, TX); Dan and Kim Langston, and Sue Cheetham (Moorestown, NJ); Andrew and Bron McGeorge (Enfield, Aust.); Celia Kuang (Cumberland Aust.); Seon Levius (Barbados); and Kamice Bailey (Georgetown, Guyana).

Stewart Marsden

KITCHENER-WATERLOO, ON

We are happy to record the marriage on June 26, 2010, of Sis. Alicia Puim to Bro. Benjamin Knowles of the East Torrens, South Australia Ecclesia. The ceremony and reception following was a good witness to many attending who are not in the Lord, of the great hope that Alicia and Ben share. We pray that the Lord will bless them in their new life together.

We are also pleased to report that Bro. Fred Bouttell has returned to fellowship and we have gladly received him at the Lord's Table. We have welcomed many visitors from local ecclesias and from afar who have come to worship with us. We thank those brothers who have ministered to us in exhortations and Bible classes.

Martin J. Webster

LARGO, FL

It has been a while since our last submission and we wish to thank all who have visited and given their support to our ecclesia, especially those brethren who provided uplifting words of exhortation.

With joy and gladness and the Lord's grace we celebrated the one hundredth birthday

of our Sis. Viola Valborg Johnson Adams at the ecclesial hall. Sis. Viola was born August 19, 1909, in Boston, MA. She was baptized January 11, 1935, in a metal tank at Bro. and Sis. Dugard's home and became a member of the Worcester Ecclesia. She married Elmer Leroy (Roy) Adams on February 20, 1937, and they were married for 44 years. They had one son, David Adams, who with his wife, Jane, has two children. Sis. Viola was taught the truth by Bro. Roy Adams and Bro. William Tunstall, who was Sis. Ruth Wilkinson's father and Bro. Albert Jones' uncle. Sis. Viola and Bro. Roy moved to Florida in the 70's where they became members of the Largo Ecclesia. She has long been a faithful and willing worker in the truth. Sis. Vi now resides in an assisted living facility very near Bro. Charles and Sis. Pat Ghent, where she has her own apartment.

We are sad to report the falling asleep in our Lord of Bro. Frank Bryan, Sis. Chris Johnson, and Sis. Flo Profeta after long illnesses. They were shining examples of keeping the faith and always had a smile to give. We rejoice as they await resurrection at the Lord's return. We are sad to lose long-time visitor and supporter, Sis. Betty Pokol, who also fell asleep in the Lord after a long illness.

The undersigned is the new Recorder for the Largo Ecclesia.

Walt Dodrill

LONDON, ON

It is with great joy that we announce the baptism of PAT MOAURO on Sunday, July 4, 2010. Bro. Pat has been attending our meeting off and on for the last eight years searching for truth from various religions and coming to the conclusion after years of study and searching, that "the Christadelphians have the truth," as quoted from his baptismal letter of request. We pray that our walk together will benefit both Bro. Pat and ourselves in shared fellowship as we await the return of our Lord.

Dave Birchall

MILFORD ROAD, MI

Since our last correspondence, we have welcomed visitors from the following ecclesias: Ann Arbor, MI; Avon, IN; Lismore, Aust.; Livonia, MI; London, ON; Royal Oak, MI; Texas, and Worcester, MA. We are grateful to the following brothers for providing us with the word of exhortation: Matt Jackson, Bob Jarvela, Kevin Mayock, Mark Newth, John Soave, and Joe Sparacino. Our Bro. Paul and Sis. Erin Sparacino transferred their membership to the Avon, IN Ecclesia. They will be greatly missed as they were involved in every aspect of our ecclesia.

Like all periods in ecclesial life we had high points and low points. We celebrated with our Bro. Dave Shaw on his ninetieth birthday. Bro. Dave has been an ongoing presence in the lives of many of us for all of our lives. We rejoiced with our Sis. Kellie Lewis in her marriage to Bro. Duncan Movassaghi of the Shirley, UK Ecclesia. It is heartwarming to see our sister start a family in ecclesial service that will be centered on the Word of God.

We were all saddened by the falling asleep in the Lord of our Sis. Margaret Birney. Auntie Marg was baptized in 1942 and became a tireless worker in the ecclesia that always had a smile and pleasant greeting for her brethren and sisters. We pray that our heavenly Father will comfort our Bro. Harry and help keep the warm happy memories in our minds as an example of how much one sister can contribute to an ecclesia.

Jeff Livermore

NEW WESTMINSTER, BC

We welcome Bro. Roly and Sis. Sharon Pretty, commended with love from Edmonton, and look forward to their fellowship and service among us. We have removed Sis. Jessica Couto from our registry.

Art Bull

PANAMA CITY, PANAMA

We are saddened to report that Sis. Lucy Yetman of the Colon Ecclesia in Panama fell asleep in the Lord Friday, June 25, 2010, at the age of seventy seven. She had not been able to attend regularly for a year or so for health reasons and eventually succumbed to cancer. In past years, as Sis. Ashley Robinson indicated, "She was a cheerful and consistent addition to the ecclesia." She was baptized in 2001. She now awaits the resurrection along with all God's faithful saints.

The arrival of Bro. Ian and Sis. Nishla Neblett to Panama at the end of May, and their addition as members of the Colon Ecclesia in particular, has been a real boost. They moved to Panama from the Toronto East, ON Ecclesia. They are working with the Colon Sunday School and have started a bi-weekly CYC at the home of Nishla's parents, Bro. Luis and Sis. Vanessa Sobers. They have 12 attending. Nishla was born in Panama, but lived in Canada for several years, after marrying Ian. This move to Panama is a real blessing, since a number of members from Panama have immigrated to other countries in the past.

Don Luff

PARIS AVENUE, OH

The members of the Paris Avenue, OH Ecclesia have enjoyed fellowship with brothers and sisters from many other ecclesias during the spring semester of 2010. Words of exhortation were given by several of these visitors, namely: Bre. David and Bob Pommer (Pittsburgh, PA) and Bro. Mike Livermore (Detroit Livonia, MI). The March Study Weekend was led by Bro. Bryan Styles (Detroit Livonia, MI) on the topic, "Paul's Letter to the Hebrews". Bro. Jim Cowie (Aust.) was passing through the area in February and gave us a class entitled "Apocalypse in the Time of Ahab and Jezebel".

In May, we rejoiced in the marriage of our Sis. Madison McNutt, daughter of Bro. Larry and Sis. Lisa McNutt, to Bro. Mike Narges of the Toronto Church Street, ON Ecclesia.

We were privileged to witness two baptisms in the last six months. LORI COY, wife of Bro. Mike Coy, was baptized in February and SCOTT SCHEINER, who came to us via the seminar, was baptized in May. We rejoice that two more children of Adam have put on the saving name of Jesus Christ through the waters of baptism.

Sadly, we mourn with our Sis. Melinda Flatley the death of her father, Bro. Don Wilson, who leaves behind his widow, Sis. Jean. We await Bro. Don's resurrection to judgment and the kingdom. On a positive note we are happy to announce the birth of Gwendolyn Grace on June 25, 2010, to Sis. Pauli and Bro. Jordan Canady. We offer our love and encouragement to them as they raise their daughter in the way of truth and righteousness.

Our September 18-19, 2010, Study Weekend will be led by Bro. Paul Billington (Brantford, ON) on the topic of, "The Christadelphians: Latter Day Witnesses". Contact Bro. Greg Misko, Jr. for details at: gmisko@neo.rr.com, or by phone at: 330-784-7159.

Jack Vogelgesang

SAANICH PENINSULA, BC

It has been quite some time since our last update, so we have many items to report. Since our last notice, CASEY BROWN, DALLEN BENNETT, and JOEL FERRIE were baptized. We also have welcomed by way of transfer Sis. Sheila Douglass from New Westminster, Bro. Greg Howe from Vernon, and Bro. Philip and Sis. Stephanie Crawford from Victoria. Additionally a rash of new babies have contributed to our numbers: Ethan French to Bro. Tim and Sis. Rebecca; Emma Blacker to Bro. Pete and Sis. Kim; Quinn Kenzie to Bro. Austen and Sis. Crystal; and Ezra Hunter to Bro. Marc and Sis. Melissa.

We have welcomed many visiting speakers since our last update including: Bro. Brett Maletic, Bro. Simon Snobelen, Bro. Steven Darley (Surrey); Bro. Clive Daniel, Bro. Dan Cawston, Bro. Mark Snobelen, Bro. Clyde Snobelen, Bro. Gordon Dangerfield (Victoria); Bro. Eric Hoult, Bro. Tom Alexander (Nanaimo) and Bro. Rafeek Soolaman (Maple Ridge). Additionally Bro. Andrew Walker gave two talks, one on Hosea, and one on CBM activities in Zambia. Bro. Nathan Badger (Cambridge, ON) spoke at our Study Day this last February.

In other items of note, our ecclesia hosted a two month "Bible Exploration Centre" in downtown Sidney over the last summer, and we were very grateful for the assistance of the brothers and sisters from the Victoria Ecclesia, as well as Truth Corps which put in a bit of time with us. The Vancouver Island Bible Camp is scheduled for this summer once again, God willing.

Marc Hunter

SOUTH OZONE PARK, NY

We are happy to report that God again has blessed us with many baptisms as more and more people are recognizing the need for "leaving those things that are behind and reaching for those things that are before us."

On April, 3, 2010, VERNON SOLOMON embraced his new life in Christ with vigor and enthusiasm, bringing us to remembrance of the first century Christians. Although Bro. Vernon is wheelchair bound, yet his zeal to know more and do more for the things of God has surpassed understanding. Bro. Vernon is the brother of Bro. Clive Solomon who is currently doing missionary work in Antigua. We welcome Bro. Vernon and pray God's blessings for him as he journeys onward to the kingdom. On April 18, 2010, PREM KOBLALL who has been studying with us for a while decided to brave the storm, take up his mantle and move forward in battle, and was accordingly baptized. Bro. Prem is motivated to know more and more of the things of God as he moves forward on his journey. We pray for God's richest blessings to be on our Bro. Prem. A teenager in CYC, MARK SMARTT embraced the truth on May 9, 2010. Bro. Mark is a college student; however, despite the challenges which we know he'll face in college, he has decided to seek his Creator in his youth before the evil days come. Mark is the son of Bro. Tyrone and Sis. Carrol Smartt of the South Ozone Park Ecclesia. We pray that God will travel with our Bro. Mark as he strives to serve Him in spite of the teenage challenges he faces. On June 27, 2010, DEBORAH BADLU embraced the truth in baptism. We welcome Sis. Debbie and pray that God will be with her through her challenges during her walk toward the kingdom. She is the daughter of Bro. Joe and Sis. Veronica Badlu also of the South Ozone Park Ecclesia. Welcome Debbie.

Congratulation to Bro. Jason and Sis. Tricia Porte on the birth of their baby daughter, Judah Taryn. We pray that God will bless them with the wisdom and understanding

to bring her up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

The NYC *"This Is your Bible"* program can be viewed live stream anywhere from BCAT Public Access TV on Sundays at 11.30 pm at the following website address: <http://www.bricartsmedia.org/community-media/bcat-tv-network>.

Roy Lindo

TOLEDO, OH

After giving a good confession of faith, we announce with great joy the baptism of CHRISTINA KIRIAN on July 25, 2010. Christina is the daughter of Bro. Chris and Sis. Polly Kirian. We welcome our new Sis. Christina to the table of the Lord, and rejoice with her as she begins her walk toward God's kin

Bro. Gary Cline is recovering from recent surgery, and is back at Meeting and resuming his normal duties. We wish him a complete recovery.

Doug Henzler

TORONTO CHURCH STREET, ON

We are saddened to report that Sis. Georgina Struthers fell asleep in the Lord on March 15, 2010, in her eighty fifth year. Our sympathies are extended to Bro. Jim Struthers, her children and grandchildren. Also we are saddened to report that Sis. Marguerite Pohill also fell asleep in the Lord on June 15, 2010, in her ninety third year. Our sympathies are extended to her children and grandchildren. Both our sisters were long time members of our ecclesia and demonstrated a good example to us of dedication to the things concerning the kingdom of God, being active participants until age and illness forced them into retirement homes. Sis Georgie was baptized on December 3, 1944 and Sis. Marguerite was baptized on July 21, 1974. We look forward to the great day when we will be able to rejoice together with them once again in the kingdom of God.

The following members have chosen to transfer to other ecclesias and we wish them well in their new ecclesial homes: Bro. Jack and Sis. Sandra Smart to the Barrie Ecclesia on May 8, 2010; Bro. Bill Roberts to the Barrie Ecclesia on May 8, 2010; Bro. Don and Sis. Doris Curry to the Hamilton-Greenaway Ecclesia on May 10, 2010.

We wish to thank all the brothers who have assisted our ecclesia with exhortations, lectures and Bible classes over the past several months. We also wish to thank the brothers and sisters who have assisted at our Memorial Service with playing the organ. The ecclesia is most appreciative of your labor in the Lord for us.

Timothy Narjes

TORONTO EAST, ON

Bro. Ian and Sis. Nishla Neblett, along with their infant daughter, Nylayah, left in June for an extended stay in Panama where they plan to involve themselves in missionary work on behalf of the CBMC.

Bro. Dan and Sis. Maribel Archibald and their four children, also departed in June for an 8-month, round-the-world trip to India, Ecuador, and places in between. We look forward to hearing of their travels upon their return next January.

We welcomed by transfer in June from the Dhaka, Bangladesh Ecclesia, Bro. Ken and Sis. Nipun Easson and their infant daughter, Krystal. We look forward to a mutually beneficial relationship as we walk together toward His kingdom.

We rejoiced with family, friends and brothers and sisters in witnessing the marriage on June 26, 2010, of Sis. Bethany Carrick and Bro. Paul Jackson. We pray for God's continued blessings and guidance in their lives as they begin their walk together toward God's kingdom and thank the many brothers and sisters for their support shown during the months leading up to their wedding.

Sis. Bethany Jackson has transferred her membership to the Detroit Royal Oak, MI Ecclesia. We commend Sis. Bethany to the loving care of the brothers and sisters there and are confident that she will be a welcome addition to their membership.

Bro. Brian and Sis. Lynne Carrick, and Sis. Emily Carrick have transferred their membership to the Toronto West Ecclesia. We thank them for the love and fellowship we shared together over the past 12 years and pray for God's continued blessings in these last days.

Bro. Andrew Webb has assumed the duties of Recording Secretary as of July 1, 2010.

Brian Carrick

CBM BIBLE COURSE EMAIL PAL

A young man who is a primary school teacher in Africa is in the midst of receiving the CBM Bible Course, and would like to have an email pal to correspond with in North America. Further details are available from me at quantum-space@shaw.ca.

Art Bull

HONG KONG

"The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye, therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest" (Luke 10:2). This we have done and will continue to do. We do so as we post this appeal. Please consider coming to Hong Kong to help in the pastoral and preaching work here and in China. Come for one month, three months or a longer stay, there is plenty of work to be done and much to be personally gained in edification. For a fuller version of this appeal please visit www.globalorient.com/aigraphai and click on "Come over and help us".

Peter Heavyside

IN REMEMBRANCE OF BRO. JOHN LINK

We cannot foresee when our life will end, but our worth is measured by viewing our entire journey. In the sea of life the waves impact again and again leaving us nary an opportunity to catch our breath. Nevertheless we always strive to rise to the surface. God sees our struggles and we have faith our sojourn, however brief and painful, must be for the perfecting of our character.

Bro. John Link, who was baptized in 1941 in the Philadelphia Ecclesia, faced many trials in his life. He grew up in the Great Depression era and when World War II came along he was sent as a CO first to a work camp in North Carolina, then to North Dakota, then to work on the roads in Virginia, and finally was conscripted to work in a psychiatric hospital in Maryland. Later in life he lost a beloved son, age 11, to a horrible accident. A year and half later he lost his beloved wife to cancer leaving him alone with four children. In February of this year he himself was diagnosed with thyroid cancer and was gone a month later. We were with him when he died on March 15, 2010 at age 89, three of his four children, one of his sons-in-law and his eldest grandchild. There were no pretty words at the time, no parting Bible verses were offered us. What he did leave us was the example of his life and how he never once waived in his faith in God.

We're thankful for the portion of the journey we shared with our father and will always remember the lessons we learned from him.

Dorothy Bilello and Loraine Spechler

SIS. MARG BIRNEY

We have all heard young children tell us what they want to be when they grow up. Often it centers around rocket ships, sirens and super heroes. Our concern, as brothers and sisters of Christ, is growing up spiritually. While Jesus is our example, we can be blessed by having a special person in our life who provides an example to us as we walk with Christ. We in the Detroit area have recently lost our Sis. Margaret Livermore Birney at age 84. She was baptized in 1942, and has been most recently a member of the Milford Road Ecclesia.

Having lost our dear sister has made me realize that, if I could be like her, I would make tremendous progress growing up spiritually. If my attendance at all ecclesial functions was as excellent as hers, my preparation for Sunday School and the midweek class as visible as hers, my genuine concern for others as great as hers, and my disposition as strong and pleasing as hers, I would grow spiritually. Yet these qualities dwarf the overwhelming love she had for the Truth, trust in our heavenly Father, and hope for His Kingdom. May her rest be short.

Rose Madge (Milford Road, MI)

VICTORIA CHRISTADELPHIAN HOUSING

Simon Manor is seniors' housing located in Victoria, British Columbia. It provides rental accommodation for brothers and sisters 55 years and older and is situated behind the ecclesial hall. We have a vacancy and we would love to have someone move in to enjoy the fellowship of other brothers and sisters. The unit is one-bedroom and unfurnished. However, it does come with drapes, curtains, carpets, stove and fridge and free use of laundry facilities. The tenant must pay for electricity, which includes heat, and telephone and cable connections. We would also be happy to take applications for future tenants. Rents are low.

A visitors' unit is also available for short and long-term stays. This unit is completely furnished including all linens. The cost is \$35 a night for one or two people and then \$5 for each additional person. There are twin beds in the bedroom and a sofa bed in the living room. Plan your holiday now! For information, please contact Bro. Bob Stodel at rwstodel@telus.net or 250-384-4456.

An eminent preacher once said to a great English actor: "I wish you would explain to me something."

"Well, what is it? I don't know that I can explain anything to a preacher."

"What is the reason for the difference between you and me? You are appearing before crowds night after night with fiction, and the crowds come wherever you go. I am preaching the essential and unchangeable truth, and I am not getting any crowd at all."

The actor's answer was this: "This is quite simple. I can tell you the difference between us. I present my fiction as though it were truth; you present your truth as though it were fiction."

G. Campbell Morgan

Minute Meditation

Dodging Our Responsibilities

The British economist Josiah Charles Stamp once observed, "It is easy to dodge our responsibilities, but we cannot dodge the consequences of dodging our responsibilities." The truth of this statement is one of those life lessons that many must learn the hard way. The book of Proverbs is full of warnings about consequences when we neglect our duties. "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep, but while you are asleep, poverty will attack you like an armed robber." "The one who works his land will be satisfied with food, but whoever chases daydreams will have his fill of poverty." Even people who don't believe the Bible realize that the consequences of dodging responsibilities can be unpleasant. They keep busy maintaining their houses and cars and businesses because these things need regular attention to avoid costly breakdowns. Sadly, in our secular society, most neglect their duties to their God.

On this higher level it is important to realize that the Lord holds us responsible, especially when He has called us and revealed His precious promises to us. James makes it very clear when he tells us, "To him therefore who knows to do good, and doesn't do it, to him it is sin." We cannot be defiant to God's call and blind ourselves to his commandments without consequences. Jesus warns of judgment to come when he says, "I have come into this world for judgment, so that those who are blind may see, and those who see may become blind." Jesus clarifies who is responsible when he answers the next question: "And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, are we blind also? Jesus replied, 'If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin, but now because you say that you can see, your guilt remains.' " The Pharisees were responsible because although they saw and understood the message of Jesus, they refused to respond to it.

Paul tells the Colossians, "Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done." Our work in this life should be done with the attitude that we are serving our God and all that we do is for His glory.

Paul warns of judgment to come, "[God] now commands all men everywhere to repent because he has appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness." However, although the gospel has been preached worldwide, there still are many people who live and die without ever being exposed to the Bible or the saving message it contains. God is merciful and He will not raise to judgment those who do not know Him. The Psalmist tells us, "Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish."

The secular world is much more demanding that people be held responsible for its regulations. The rule is that ignorance of the law is no excuse. For instance,

when it comes to driving a car, the driver needs to know the laws of the state in which he is driving. It is no use saying to the police, "Officer I did not know that you are supposed to drive on the right side of the street since I just came from England where we drive on the left."

Since the Lord knows exactly what we each know and do not know, He will not make a mistake and raise from the dead those who were ignorant of His commands.

How much knowledge makes us responsible? Deciding not to obey God implies we know we should. Our former friends who liked to party with us before we accepted the call of the gospel could well be judged by Christ after resurrection because they did not make the choice to serve God. Peter explains, "You have spent enough time in the past doing what the heathen like to do. Your lives were spent in indecency, lust, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and the disgusting worship of idols. They insult you now because they are surprised that you are no longer joining them in the same excesses of wild living. But they will have to give an account of themselves to him who is ready to be the judge of the living and the dead." These words from the apostle Peter, an inspired writer of scripture, give a sober warning to fun loving rejectors of the truth who could well have to face the judgment seat of Christ. The words, "judge of the living and the dead" make it clear that this judgment happens after the resurrection because the dead are judged. Truly these who reject the call of the gospel dodge their responsibilities to God, but they will be unsuccessful in dodging the consequences of avoiding their responsibilities.

Abraham confidently affirmed, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" We know that God always does that which is right. God knows those who choose not to serve him. Let us not dodge our responsibilities, because we certainly will not be able to ignore the consequences of our responsibilities. We will have to face our Lord and answer for those things we did and did not do that either pleased Him or displeased Him.

Let us make sure that we are putting the Lord first in our life. We long to hear from his lips those words he has promised to say to the faithful; "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

Robert J. Lloyd

Coming Events (Lord Willing)

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

SEPTEMBER 2010

4-5 Victoria, BC Fraternal Gathering. Bro. Noel Greenwood (UK): "To Whom Then Will You Liken God?". Contact Bro. Clyde Snobelen csnobelen@csl.ca 250-652-3318

11-12 Los Angeles, CA Youth Summit 2010. Bro Gary Steele (Campsie Ecclesia, NSW Aus) will be speaking to the subject of "How to Help in Times of Need". A study weekend for

youth leaders, counselors, parents of teens and baptized members who care about this subject (Age 18+). Please register at www.cycresource.com. Email inquiries to cycresource@gmail.com or Bro. Ben and Sis. Elissa Brinkerhoff blissbrink@yahoo.com

12-17 Adult study week. Daily interactive Bible studies at Wildwood Manor, Ballinafad, ON. Contact Bro. Jack and Sis. Shirley Robinson jcrobins@worldchat.com 519-448-1696 or Bro. Peter and Sis. Margaret Stonell thestonells@hotmail.com 905-627-9428

18 London, ON Fraternal Gathering. Speaker Bro. Jim Harper (Meriden, CT): "Beatitudes", three talks starting at 1:00 pm. Location Ecclesial hall, 101 Wistow Street, London. Contact Bro. Dave Birchall, 519-668-7081 or dalefinancial@rogers.com

18-19 Baltimore, MD Study weekend with Bro. Jonathan Bowen, (Brantford, ON): "God Who Commanded The Light to Shine Out of Darkness". Saturday 2 pm, supper served. Sunday, 9:45 am., 4th class. Memorial Service at 11 am. Lunch served. Contact Sis. Judy Schneider 410-609-0336

18-19 Paris Avenue, OH Study Weekend. Bro. Paul Billington (Brantford, ON): "The Christadelphians: Latter Day Witnesses". Please direct inquiries to Bro. Greg Misko, Jr. 330-784-7159 or gmisko@neo.rr.com

25-26 Bedford, NS Study Weekend, Bro. Wayne Coutu (Hamilton, ON): "A Generation of Faith: the Women in the Genealogy of Christ". Contact Julie Snobelen thesnobelens@hotmail.com or 902-820-2815

25-26 North Houston, TX Study Weekend. Bro. Dennis Paggi: "The Potter and the Clay — God's Hand in the Life of the Believer". Classes start Saturday at 2pm, dinner following. Sunday school at 9:30 am, and Memorial at 11 am on Sunday. Contact Bro. Shannon Strickland 281-794-9932 or shannon.d.strickland@exxonmobil.com

OCTOBER 2010

2 Ottawa, ON Eastern Ontario Study Day. Bro. John Bilello: "The Bible and Science", 1 pm to 5 pm. Contact Sis. Ethel Archard at elpis@sympatico.ca or 613-592-7733

9-10 Calgary, AB Calgary/Edmonton fraternal gathering will be held in Calgary. Bro. Geoff Higgs (Victoria, BC) on the theme "Angels of God" — a study of what God has revealed concerning his Holy angels. Accommodation is available with brethren and sisters, please contact Bro John and Sis Linda Fairhurst, (403) 375-0955 or linjohn@telus.net.

9-10 Echo Lake, NJ Fall Study Weekend. Speaker will be Bro. Roger Long (UK). His theme will be "Rejoice in the Lord — A Study in Philipians".

9-10 Hamilton MacNab, ON Gathering. Bro. Jay Mayock and Bro. Ryan Mutter will speak on "The Life of David". Contact Bro. Carl Foster carlfoster@mountaincable.net

9-10 Sussex, NB Thanksgiving gathering. Bro. Ken Curry (Toronto East, ON): "Guiding Principles of a Godly Life". Contact Bro. Brad and Sis. Debbie Goodwin 506-433-6681 or email braddeb@nb.sympatico.ca for accommodation or further information

9-10 Vancouver, BC Fraternal Gathering. Speaker Bro. Dev Ramcharan: "Themes from Galatians". Contact Bro. Jonathan Stodel jnthn@telus.net.

30 Barrie, ON Study Day. Speaker Bro. John Perks: "1 Thessalonians".

5-7 Victoria, BC Fall Study Weekend. Bro. Martin Webster (Kitchener Waterloo, ON): "Discourses in the Gospel of John". Contact Bro. Clyde Snobelen csnobelen@csl.ca 250-652-3318

6 Brantford, ON "Signs of our Times" Prophecy Study day. Copetown Community Centre, 1950 Governor's Rd., Copetown, ON. Doors open at 12:00 noon, first class begins at 1:00 pm. Theme: "The Vision Tarrieth Not". Bro. Don Pearce (Rugby, UK): "Milestone Events to the Kingdom". Bro. Nicholas White (Pershore, UK): "Christadelphians & the Hope of Israel 1848 - 1948". Bro. David Billington (Brantford, ON): "The Hill Country of Judah in the Latter Days". Contact Bro. Gary Smith 519-758-0362 hgarysmith@yahoo.ca

6-7 Kouts, IN Fall Study Weekend at Woodland Park Community Center, 2100 Willowcreek Road beginning at 10:00 am. Bro. Jonathan Bowen (Brantford, ON): "Surviving Perilous Times". Contact: Bro. Joe Bennett at 219-762-2704 or jkb8275@comcast.net.

12-14 Kitchener Waterloo, ON Brothers Weekend, Hidden Acres, New Hamburg, ON. Bro. David Lloyd: "Five Biggest Mistakes Men Make". Contact Bro. Nathan Badger natebadger@yahoo.com

13-14 Pittsburgh, PA CYC Study weekend. Bro. Daniel Osborn (Maple Ridge, BC): "Jehoshaphat".

26-28 Washington, DC Family Bible Study Weekend. Camp Hashawha, Westminster, MD. Bro. Ron Leadbetter (Hamilton Book Road, ON) is scheduled to lead us in classes entitled "David a Man after God's own Heart". Contact Bro. Robert Kling, 301-498-5245, rkling@acm.org

DECEMBER 2010

25-Jan 1 Texas Youth Conference A Bible Study conference for young Christadelphian adults, 17-35. Held at the Texas Christadelphian Camp and Conference Center (T4C) near Freestone, TX. Theme: Biblical Symbols, Types and Parables. For registration information please see our website www.texasyouthconference.com

FEBRUARY 2011

27- March 4 Palm Springs Bible School The speakers at this year's school will be Bro. Karam Ram (Birmingham, UK) and Bro. John Launchbury (Portland, OR). The School offers a wonderful environment for the mature adult to study God's Word and enjoy the fellowship of other brothers and sisters. To register contact Bro. Jeff Gelineau Register@christadelphianbibleschool.org or visit our website www.californiabibleschool.org