

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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"The game is only half over"

Georgia Tech played the University of California in the 1929 Rose Bowl. In the game a player recovered a fumble, but became confused and ran the wrong way. A teammate tackled him just before he would have scored a touchdown against his own team. At halftime all of the players went into the dressing room and sat down, wondering what the coach would say. This young man sat by himself, put a towel over his head, and cried.

When the team was ready to go back onto the field for the second half, the coach stunned the team when he announced that the same players who had started the first half would start the second. All of the players left the dressing room except this young man. He would not budge. The coach looked back as he called him again, and saw that his cheeks were wet with tears. The player said, "Coach, I can't do it. I've ruined you. I've disgraced the University of California. I can't face that crowd in the stadium again."

Then the coach put his hand on the player's shoulder and said, "Get up and go back in. The game is only half over."

Editorial

Christadelphians In Isolation

And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching (Heb 10:24-25).

Introduction

With the vast size of the North American Continent, it is not surprising that many of our community find themselves geographically remote from any ecclesia. From the limited information available, perhaps 5% to 10% are so remote from an ecclesia it is almost impossible for them to attend a meeting regularly. This means that at least 200 are essentially cut off from the physical assembly of Christ. And many more are so remote that they find it difficult to attend except for Memorial Service. Added to these, there are some ecclesias that are so small (some with only a husband and wife) that they are also effectively cut off from ecclesial life: it is hard to exhort one another when there are only two. So is this likely to be a good condition to be in for our walk towards the Kingdom? Can it work for good — or is it always undesirable?

Basics

It must always be stressed that the whole basis of fellowship in our community is ecclesially based. We are only a brother (or sister) in Christ if we are a member in good standing of a recognized ecclesia — recognized as such by the local ecclesias. Thus we cannot be “in isolation,” detached from any ecclesia; we can only be a remote member of an ecclesia. In the directory listing of the North American directories of members, there is no section of “in isolation,” nor should there be. There is often a section for “associate members, but this only stresses that this ecclesial relationship should be (and normally is) the main focus of those in isolation.

Going Into Isolation

To deliberately cut oneself off from the mutual encouragement and up-building involved in ecclesial life is a serious and potentially dangerous step. To do so for reasons of personal conflict or disagreements is not the correct path for a disciple. And in particular, to move into isolation, for whatever reason, when there are children involved can be potentially disastrous to their involvement in Sunday school and CYC activities. Absent these relationships, the likelihood of these children putting on the name of Christ is reduced, although perhaps by taking advantages of the opportunities of Bible Schools and CYC weekends contact with like-minded friends can be maintained.

On the other hand, we must perhaps remember the examples of those who, although forced by circumstance to move into isolation, by their efforts established

some of the current ecclesias that we take for granted, and such formation is still taking place. There are possibly advantages in reversing the common process whereby numbers attract numbers, thereby making large ecclesias larger, and those already small even smaller. But this ability to create new ecclesias, by spreading the gospel among friends and neighbors, seems to be more difficult and unusual than in days gone by.

As is common with many, I personally have had to look for alternative employment several times in my career, twice because the company that employed me changed locations. I have had many attractive offers in regions of the country remote from ecclesias, but with young children to consider, I found it impossible, in all good conscience, to accept these. Others have made different decisions, and I must say I understand the dilemma you face when confronted with the prospect of no employment. However, I must counsel those considering employment, when such will remove them and their family from their ecclesia, to consider the spiritual as well as financial impact. Obviously I know of cases where those in isolation have helped others in their path to the gospel, and maintained their own strong faith, but we should acknowledge that the price of isolation can be great in terms of the trials and heartache it presents.

We must recognize that these situations are becoming increasingly common with the current economic turmoil. As it is certain that such problems will only be truly overcome by the return of our lord Jesus, we must be prepared for what is potentially an increasing number who find themselves in isolation, because they have been unable to find employment near an ecclesia. Of course, defining such proximity is very much dependent on individual circumstances as well: I remember cases in former years where a move of ten miles resulted in members considering themselves in isolation. These days, many travel close to 75 miles to attend memorial service, although such a distance makes attendance at midweek classes and other functions virtually impossible. So when you look at a map of North America, it is clear that there are large swaths of the country devoid of ecclesias – although I estimate that greater than 70% of the population are less than 75 miles away from an ecclesia.

In Isolation

If you do find yourself in isolation, what can be done to replace the spiritual help we get from our fellow brethren and sisters, and how do we continue the moral guidance our children get from association with their fellow contemporaries? In years gone by, this was largely confined to receiving written exhortations and bible classes, exchanging letters, and perhaps engaging in a remote bible study course or correspondence lesson. For example, many have been helped by reading such collections of exhortations as “Seasons of Comfort” by Robert Roberts (still a classic) or any of the collections by Dennis Gillet. These aids are invaluable for those in isolation, but modern technology offers other alternatives. For example (and this should be encouraged) you might find your home ecclesia does record their memorial service or (less often) their Bible classes, and make them available by mailing out the recordings. In fact, if you do find yourself wanting to take

advantage of this, perhaps you might consider transferring to an ecclesia where you both have friends or relatives, and that does record their services. It is always nice to hear familiar voices from afar.

In addition (and maintaining ties with your “home” ecclesia in any way possible is always the first choice), there are many other resources: the Internet, for all its problems, offers much in this area. There are several ecclesias in North America that make their memorial services available for download: perhaps I might mention the Simi Hills ecclesia in California as one example. And the Christadelphian Vault has a huge archive of Bible School and other talks (<http://www.christadelphian-vault.net/>). These are only two examples: I have a list of about 40 Christadelphian websites with audio talks, and a few with videos. It would be nice if the technology existed to easily search these web sites for a given speaker or topic. But I should not complain: I can listen to speakers like John Carter I had only thought to access in written form. It is also possible to watch a memorial service over a video streaming service like Skype, but I know of few who do this.

There is also the Christadelphian Isolation League (<http://www.isolationleague.org>). This is an organization, based in the UK, whose objective is “the spiritual welfare of the Brethren and Sisters and their children worldwide, who are isolated from their Ecclesia, by distance, ill-health, advancing years or by any other cause.” By contacting this website and registering, using the password as from the most recent ALS diary, one obtains written exhortations either by e-mail or via “snail” mail, and audios as well. The work is largely handled from the UK, but there is a USA representative, Bro. Jeff Adams who can be reached at jeffadams86@yahoo.com. (The Canadian agent is Sis Pat Williamson: a6a64420@telus.net)

In addition, there is an active USA branch of the Sunday School Isolation league, run for many years by Sis. Judith Nevers. This serves by supplying teachers for a remote Sunday school for those whose home ecclesia is unable to run remote classes – but as always the involvement of the home ecclesia is to be encouraged. She can be reached at jnevers@verizon.net. The Canadian agent is Sis Judy Winter (leslie.winter@sympatico.net)

So there are many resources to enable those in isolation to maintain contact with others of the body of Christ on this continent. However, I cannot close other than by restating the best form of contact is by a face to face personal relationships. However much technology may help, physical proximity is by far the best way to enable us to *“consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works... exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”* And the best way of doing this is by attending an ecclesia whenever possible, and to ensure that you and your whole family (if you have one) attends one or more of the many Bible Schools in North America. Indeed, I would argue that it is these Bible Schools that have enabled the Christadelphian Community in North America to maintain their cohesiveness and vitality, whether it be those in isolation or the larger community. Let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, in the service of our Lord and Master, and in the companionship of our fellow believers.

Peter Hemingray

Exhortation

The Bread and the Wine

It's amazing how sometimes the simplest things can have the most profound meaning. If we think about it, our lives are full of these simple things. I wear a wedding ring on my hand. In symbol it relates the never-ending love I share with my wife of five years. But absent the meaning I attach to it, it is an over-priced piece of metal, which I purchased from Robbins Brothers, a local jewelry store.

I use that example for its obviousness. But we'll all agree that symbols have meaning to the extent that we consciously grant them meaning. We come together on Sunday morning week after week to share a very simple ceremony, to which we attach meaning. That ceremony is taking the bread and the wine. And if we are honest with ourselves, we would probably say that some weeks we strain to see the meaning in these symbols that we know that they deserve. Indeed, I've had discussions with newly baptized young people where I ask them they think about when they take the bread. The answers vary, but in general they say that they think about all the rotten things they've done for the past week. I ask about the wine then, and the answer is the same. "Why," I ask "do you think about same the rotten things you've done this past week when taking the bread *and* the wine?" "I don't know," the answer goes, "No one ever mentioned what I should be thinking about."

We will look closely at the Bread and the Wine in the symbolic sense. By doing so, we hope to find ourselves better able to appreciate our Lord Jesus and the incredible blessings on the table before us every first day of the week.

The Passover in the Upper Room

Jesus asks two of his disciples, Peter and John, to go and prepare the Passover. When considering the feast in symbol before us, one of first questions we're faced with is this; was the meal that Jesus shared in that upper room the Jewish Passover? The answer is (probably) simply no. John in chapter 13:1-2 begins his recounting of the last supper by saying: "**Now *before the feast of the passover*, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end *and supper being ended.***"

John later calls the crucifixion day the "Preparation of the Passover" in John 19:14. Jesus died according to Matthew after the 9th hour (Matt 27:46) which would have been about the time the Passover lamb was slain, as scripture commanded for it to be done between the evenings. Note as well that the Jewish authorities were in a hurry to apprehend and try Jesus so that they could eat the Passover.

This Passover

Yet we cannot deny Jesus words, Luke 22:15, "*And he said unto them, 'With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.'*"

So there was a sense in which the meal itself was a Passover. It was *our* Passover and the symbol is very important. We've already noticed the great lengths the Father took to ensure that his son was offered up at the same time as the Passover lamb. And we are to be reminded each Sunday that death has passed over us as well and that we have a responsibility as a result. Paul in 1 Corinthians 5:7-8 calls Christ our Passover lamb:

"Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our [Passover] lamb, has been sacrificed. Let us, therefore, celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

The Symbol of Bread

In the process of calling Jesus our Passover, Paul points us directly to the symbol of bread. As you know there are two general types of bread, leavened and unleavened. Paul makes clear that the leavened bread represents malice and evil, whereas the unleavened bread represents sincerity and truth. And from the Greek it is quite likely that it was leavened bread that was broken by Jesus in the upper room, although there is no explicit New Testament requirement for this as part of the memorial service.

To better understand the symbol of the bread, it is helpful to recall where it is first mentioned in the Scriptures. That is in Genesis 3: 19:

"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

We see the first mention of bread is in relation to mortality and the punishment for sin. It's no wonder Paul associates bread with malice and evil in 1 Corinthians. But why is bread with its sinful connotations an appropriate symbol for Jesus' body?

To answer that question, let me ask another. It's a well-established principle that Jesus was tempted in all ways like us. What does that mean practically?

Temptation to me feels like a motivating heat in my body. I get excited and tense. I want to release that bodily tension by getting the object of my desire. Sometimes, the temptation is an agitated and angry feeling and makes me want to lash out and hurt others. Sometimes my temptation is a proud heart that wants to make me feel self-important.

The common theme with most of all temptations is that they are felt in our bodies. The body, as it moves us to satisfy its cravings, is cast as the source of sin. Christ was tempted in all ways like us, meaning that he felt the same cravings and lusts in his body.

So what was Christ communicating in that upper room before when he said of the bread *"This is my body which is given for you?"*

Paul remains consistent when he comments later in Romans 6:6, *"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with [him], that the **body of sin might be destroyed.**"*

The body is related to sin, death, and the crucifixion.

So bread here, specifically Christ's body on the cross, *is* that body of sin that must be put to death. Why is that so important? Because it takes us squarely to where our mind should be as we prepare and partake of the bread.

According to Paul in 1Cor 11:24, Jesus says, *"This is my body which is broken for you."* But what was broken? The power of sin and the body of sin was destroyed. It's important to note that when Jesus said that this was his body given for us, he was speaking of his natural body for he had not yet his glorified body.

What do we think of when we see others break off a small piece of bread? What about when we break our own? We must get this analogy right. Christ died once, but sin, by symbol, is broken for the saints repeatedly. As we contemplate this, we think of our own bodies and the sin that rages through and we compare our sinful bodies, desires, lusts, and passions to Christ and think about how he put down every rebellious thought and submitted, despite himself.

Paul goes on to say in 1Corinthians 11:28, *"Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup."*

But it's not just an examination; scripture also says it's a remembrance of Christ. So the examination must be in the context of remembering Christ.

The Symbol of the Wine

Just as Christ's body was symbolized in the bread, his blood is symbolized in the wine. We're given a curious note with the wine in Matthew 26:27–28:

"And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink of it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.'"

What are those curious notes?

- Firstly, the wine is associated with a covenant. In Luke 22:20 it's called the New Covenant. That's not the case with the bread. The bread is never associated with the new covenant. Did you ever notice that?
- Secondly, the wine is specifically associated with the forgiveness of sin
- And lastly, the wine is poured out.

Why is the wine associated with salvation and the new covenant? Romans 6:4 gives us an insight here.

Recognizing now that the bread represents the body of death that Christ destroyed, we see that Paul makes the analogy two fold, not just concerning death but also resurrection.

"We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.... But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. For we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died

he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus."

So as the bread represents the body of death, the wine represents the resurrection to life — thus its association with the new covenant and forgiveness.

Think back to your baptism, you're probably thankful that the baptizing brother didn't decide to just leave you underwater. And if, when we entered the water and went under, it was a symbolic death, what was coming up out of the water? It's a symbolic resurrection. And so Paul says in Romans 6:4 that we are symbolically raised from the death (represented by bread) that we too might walk in newness of life (represented by wine).

The old covenant of sin and death thus dies. But the new covenant symbolized in our risen Lord lives. The malice and evil of leaven can no longer hurt him or sway him. Paul puts it that "Death no longer has dominion over him." So the life he lives he lives to God and Paul says that we must consider ourselves dead to sin — and alive to God.

So in breaking bread you recognize that the body of sin was broken, now the question remains: are we alive to God? The new covenant in the wine is symbolized by a new man and looking at the character of the new man in Colossians 3:12-14 can help us determine if we are alive:

"Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, and patience, forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony."

Perhaps I can offer you another object lesson to help you as you focus on the new covenant you have in Christ as symbolized in wine (i.e., being poured out). As Christ was poured out for many, we also must be poured out for others.

- I mean your body could compel you to be angry, but you are kind.
- Your body could compel you to hold a bitter grudge, but you forgive.
- Your body could compel you to be proud, but you are lowly.
- Your body could compel you to be callous, but you love.

You pour yourself out, just as our Lord did in providing us an example. We'd like to be selfish with our lives and keep things in, but we cannot. We must pour outward even as we have been poured into that others may share in the gift we've been given. By doing so you are sharing life and living the new covenant, where the power of sin is broken.

Ben Brinkerhoff (Los Angeles, CA)

"If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant: if we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome" (Charlotte Bronte).

Bible Study

To Speak Well of God: (16) Beyond the Ashes

In the last article we considered God's work, through Job, with the three friends. In this article we consider His work with Job.

16.1 From Fear to Faith

In the very beginning we're told Job is righteous and blameless (Job 1:1). But equally early we learn the *motivation* for Job's blamelessness: he serves God from fear. It's implied in his opening statement (Job 1:5) and, after destruction hit, Job confesses it more openly (Job 3:25). Pollock also deduces Job's piety was "largely influenced by motives of fear" and he offered sacrifices from an "over scrupulous conscience."¹ Job was heartbroken when tragedy came, because he had supposed his life's purity could prevent it. Later he poignantly details his blameless life (ch 31), explicitly specifying that it was fear of God's punishment that kept him blameless:

*"For I dreaded destruction from God,
and for fear of his splendor I could not do [immoral]
things" (Job 31:23).²*

By saying Job served God from fear, we imply his knowledge of God's loving nature was incomplete. Job was praised for being blameless and upright but, as the twelfth century Jewish scholar Moses Maimonides observes, Job's experience of God was never described as perfect.³

It's not wrong to serve God out of fear. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge (Prov 1:7); and fear has value redirecting a destructive life into a productive one. The Satan certainly had no fear of God, leaving him a long way from wisdom or godliness. But the scriptures clarify that serving God from fear is not the best one can do, nor is it an enjoyable way to live! Job's fear-based discipleship affected his fine service as a priest, too. While he offered sacrifices for his children from fear, the Great High Priest of Melchizedek's order sacrificed for his friends from love (John 17:9-26).

So God finds a solution for Job. He brings the very destruction of which Job is terrified. It looks like a bit of a brutal solution, if I'm perfectly honest; though that's doubtless because of the limitations of my perception, not any limitations of God's love. The solution is logically perfect: by bringing the destruction Job feared was triggered by disobedience, entirely *without* disobedience, God proves that fearful service, even blameless fearful service, is not the discipleship He seeks. It also proves God cannot be controlled by blameless service. He cannot be controlled at all. But He does love His children. If Job is prepared to *trust* that God is a loving parent, he can learn to love his Father while relaxing to enjoy his discipleship; all without compromising his piety.

God always intends that fear of Him should blossom into a love-centered communion; with love directed upwards to Him and outwards to fellow children

(1John 4:16-18). Love elicits trust. We can bear times of suffering when we trust we're not victims of malicious wounding or profitless pain.

This was the work God performed with Job. Using exactly the same mechanism He used to bring salvation to the three friends (Job's intense suffering), He brings Job from a life of fear to a life of faith: a victory in Job's own discipleship.

16.2 Repentance Of Dust and Ashes

When Job saw he had been employed as a priest in the salvation of his friends; and had been saved from Satan's infection — the pride with which his friends had assaulted him — he would have felt a tremendous release. The suffering through which he had persevered suddenly had a reason — a fantastic reason — it saved his friends' lives! More personally important, Job realized that if God was utilizing his suffering then his most intense pain, his perceived separation from God, was unfounded. God had never left his side. So he cries:

*"Surely I spoke of things I did not understand,
things too wonderful for me to know.
You said, 'Listen now, and I will speak;
I will question you,
and you shall answer me.'
My ears had heard of you
but now my eyes have seen you.
Therefore I despise myself
and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:3-6).*

Previously we noted the closing sentence starkly contradicts the suggestion that Job is feeling joyful and relieved. It sounds like a man beaten into submission by a Powerful God rather than released from pride by a Loving One.

But the context is vital. First, Job has been sitting in dust and ashes for the entire debate (Job 2:8). So to 'repent in dust and ashes' is almost an absurdity: Job is already sitting there!

Job also explained *why* he is sitting on the ash heap:

*"[God] throws me into the mud,
and I am reduced to dust and ashes" (Job 30:19).*

I suggest Job's comment is not, unfortunately, a man's humility recognizing his mortal state, because Job is not saying he has *always been* dust and ashes. This is a man's embitterment complaining of God's destruction. To use a modern metaphor, Job is saying: "God has trashed my life. He treats me like garbage. So I guess the garbage heap is where I belong!" His presence on the ashes pile, I suggest, is Job's silently angry enacted complaint of God's injustice. Yet after God's revelations, Job sees God hasn't been cruel at all! God has, through his intense suffering, saved his three friends. What a revelation! Job has been highly honored to be a chosen vessel employed in God's eternal plan of salvation.

But how does that square with the apparent lament: "Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes"?

The apparent contradiction is not in the Hebrew: specifically the preposition “in” (dust and ashes) is absent. Prepositions are only *inferred* in Hebrew, making it notoriously difficult to translate. In fact, the original Hebrew verse has only four words: “despise, repent, dust, ashes.”

Gutierrez proposes an excellent solution,⁴ based on the work of Patrick,⁵ which interprets the verse: “I despise and repent *of* dust and ashes.” This has two significant upgrades from the common translation. First, Job no longer states he despises *himself*, (although he doubtless felt foolish that he had railed against the God who had employed him so powerfully), so there is no longer a demoralized tone. (Other commentators ratify this view.⁶) More importantly Job is saying he repents *of* dust and ashes! This has massive impact on our appreciation of God’s work in Job’s life! Job can now be seen to be saying:

“I’ve seen God first hand! I was never abandoned! I was completely wrong about God reducing me to dust and ashes. I should never have seated myself on this ashes pile and I’m leaving immediately!” (Job 42:5-6, my paraphrase)

By contrast Balchin suggests any revelation of God is a debilitating experience which drives us *to* dust and ashes, not beyond them: “[Job] returns to his mound of dust and ashes. This is what the privilege of seeing God does for a man: to keep the vision he must recant in dust and ashes.”⁷

I wholeheartedly disagree! I see Job repenting *of* dust and ashes; and I find that beautiful. It resolves the contradiction between the relieved happiness we anticipated Job to feel from God saving him from Leviathan and the traditional rendering of the text portraying him as disconsolate. Best of all, it confounds the notion that God was only interested in demonstrating that “He was number One,” which is tragically all that some expositors are able to see. God is not so insecure that He needed to prove to Job, Satan, or anyone else that He controls the world! God’s primary interest is the salvation of any and all who are willing to be His children, and always improving the closeness they share with Him. No wonder Job abandons dust and ashes! At that moment, I am convinced he got up from the ashes pile and, though yet unhealed from his physical ailments, limped away with lightened heart, never to seat himself there again.

16.3 The Promise of Resurrection

After Job had prayed for his friends, the LORD made him prosperous again and gave him twice as much as he had before (Job 42:10).

Ironically, where Job’s suffering causes many readers to be angry at God, his restoration seems to irritate expositors just as much! Gutierrez morosely concludes: “the ending evidently displays a certain naivety,”⁸ while Weiss goes further: “the story ends... with an inadequate attempt by God to make amends to Job by making him wealthy and respected once again, and by endowing him with a new set of children.”⁹ Worse yet, since righteous Job is rewarded, doesn’t this imply the doctrine of retribution was right all along? After all, the good guy finishes with all the toys!

The doctrine of retribution is not justified by the ending. God was not obliged to reward Job's faithfulness. Is Job's blessing completely random, then? Again no, but its causal trigger is the goodness of the *Father*, not the goodness of His faithful servant. Jesus reveals God has a desire to give pleasurable gifts to His children (Matt 7:9-11). In fact, since the doctrine of retribution *demand*s God must reward Job, then when God does so we cannot praise Him. So it is belief in the doctrine of retribution that prevents us from speaking well of God.

This philosophy is non-trivial. Now we have seen Job's faithfulness, we must not fall into the trap of insisting that God is not allowed to reward him simply to ensure we can prove that the doctrine of retribution is false. The falsity of the doctrine of retribution does not constrain God from blessing His children as and when He chooses. And He chooses to do so here, in which we can rejoice.

The scripture tells us Job received a 'double portion' of all he had before (Table 16_1)

	Job's 'double portion' blessing (Job 42:12-13)	Job's initial quantity (Job 1:2-3)
Sheep	14,000	7,000
Camels	6,000	3,000
Yoke (pairs) of oxen	1,000	500
Donkeys	1,000	500
Sons	7	7
Daughters	3	3

Table 16_1: The arithmetic of Job's double-portion blessing

An obvious contradiction stares us in the face. The treasures Job will value more than anything are doubtless his children, yet precisely here the double-portion appears to have fallen short. Job hasn't received twice as many sons and daughters as previously. Why not?

The subtlety and beauty of what God is doing here is profound. Only one explanation is possible (if we dismiss the spurious notion that God has cheated Job). The only way Job can have 14 sons and 6 daughters, the 'double portion,' is if the original ten children can, in some way, be considered to be alive. I'm not suggesting they somehow survived the collapse of the house; that simply contradicts scripture. But they are alive in a way in the deceased animals are not. I believe God is giving Job assurance that his children will be resurrected! This makes God's actions in the epilogue all the more beautiful, as we witness Job's first illumination of resurrection. We've already considered how much joyful relief Job felt to realize he was employed as a priest to salvation. How much greater will that joy amplify to perceive the fullness of God's plan!

This also clarifies why Job's flocks and herds were explicitly numbered in the prologue (Job 1:3). We could be forgiven for thinking: "Why would I possibly need to know Job had 3,000 sheep? What a pointless verse!" Yet without that fact we would have been unable to perceive God's promise of Job's children's resurrection.

The timescale over which Job came to know his blessings is also fascinating.¹⁰ It's not recorded that Job knew he would get twice as many flocks, yet only the same number of children. Only as the years passed, and the window of human fertility drew closed, would he realize that he would not father twenty more children, but only ten. I can only imagine how the realization would have gently and beautifully blossomed in the heart and mind of both Job and his wife of what God was therefore promising concerning their former children. And thus, by the same token, I can only imagine how deeply the import of that gift was imprinted.

Job and his wife are not the only couple to have lost their children. But they are, perhaps, unique in receiving the assurance that *all* original children are secured a place in the Kingdom of God!¹¹ And this message comes embedded within numbers of flocks, herds and children, a message medium so subtle it won't be noticed by any but the most careful listener. But Job is such a careful listener to God, as we have seen. This is a unique and amazing promise given to a unique and amazing man. Most importantly of all, it enables us to speak well of God, as it powerfully illustrates the unfailing love our Father displays towards His children.

Another subtle hint at Job's double portion may be seen in his resulting life length.¹² Job lives 140 years after the drama's events and at the start he had ten children, suggesting a total lifespan of ~200 years. He is likely a contemporary of Moses, who was blessed to live to 120 (Deut 34:7), which implies Job likely received a 'double-portion' even of life itself.

I muse on how God viewed Job's development. Job was stuck in the mode of serving God because he was terrified of otherwise being crushed by a Mighty Blow from Above. What a tragedy! I sense God observed his blameless servant with some sadness. While Job tiptoed around in faultless service, for fear of calamity pouncing like a huge, hidden predator, God must only have lamented from above: "Job! You're my dear son whom I love. Why serve Me this way? Neither of us is enjoying this relationship as we could!"

Consider the corollary. What parent wants their child's obedience solely derived from naked terror of being soundly thrashed otherwise? Is that any decent parent's dream? What parent wants to be viewed as an exacting overseer by the child for whom they would gladly sacrifice everything? Even if the child's resulting obedience is flawless, as Job's was, if it is fear-based it necessarily implies the parent doesn't know love or mercy.

So we have to know who the Father is, to enjoy a meaningful relationship with Him. Interestingly, scripture defines "knowing God" as the very essence of eternal life.

"Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent" (John 17:3).

This verse fascinates me, because I believe the statement cuts both ways. It is eternal life to know God. Therefore, the fact we *don't* live eternally proves we *don't* know God. I believe the reversible logic can change our driving motivation towards salvation. The ultimate promise of salvation is not to live eternally; living eternally is the *consequence* of the promise. The ultimate promise of salvation is to know God.

And the more I know God, the more I am enabled to speak well of Him.

John Pople (San Francisco Peninsula, CA)

Notes:

1. S. Pollock, "Stubborn Soil," 1946, in N. N. Glatzer, Ibid, 270
2. All Bible quotations are from the NIV
3. M. Maimonides, "The Guide of the Perplexed," 12th Century AD, English translation, 1963, in N. N. Glatzer, Ibid, 21
4. G. Gutierrez, "On Job, God-Talk and the Suffering of the Innocent," 1987, Orbis, New York, NY, USA, 86
5. D. Patrick, "The Translation of Job XLII, 6," 1976, Vetus Testamentum, Germantown, NY, USA, 26
6. N. C. Habel, "The Book of Job: A Commentary," 1985, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, PA, USA, 576
7. J. Balchin, Ibid, 112
8. G. Gutierrez, Ibid, 12
9. P. Weiss, "God, Job and Evil," 1948, in N. N. Glatzer, Ibid, 184-185
10. I am grateful to Jessica Miller for provoking my thoughts in this direction.
11. This rebuffs the theory that Job's children are evil and that the ritual feasting they enjoyed together (Job 1:4) was debauched activity.
12. I am grateful to Keren Robertson for this suggestion.

The Parable of the Two Builders

The parable of the wise and foolish builders makes up the closing words of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus' first long public address that stretches from Matthew 5 through 7. Luke gives a much condensed version of the same sermon in Luke chapter 6. Jesus was in the second year of his ministry when he gave this speech, and this was his year of greatest popularity. It was most likely the spring season, and he was in familiar territory: the Capernaum and Galilee area where he had been preaching and teaching for almost a year, and where he would stay until the following autumn. He had just selected his twelve disciples, and his group of followers was growing. Matthew 4:24-25 tells us that *"his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them. And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan."* The last time that such a crowd from all of these locations had gathered was probably in the days of Solomon, almost 1,000 years before Christ! If we could put a finger on the peak of Jesus' popularity, it would be around this time.

As the crowd gathered on that gently sloping mountainside on the northwest corner of the Sea of Galilee, Jesus' Sermon on the Mount began, with some of the most familiar words in the Bible: *"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth"* (Matt 5:3-5). Ten times over, Jesus gave this encouragement of a future reward in the Kingdom; but then Jesus began to describe what would be expected of those who wish to take part in those blessings.

The moral teachings given in the Sermon on the Mount are some of the most challenging of Jesus' ministry. It is here we learn that:

- a lustful look is on the same moral level as adultery
- anger is akin to murder
- we must love those who hate us
- give to those who take from us
- never seek revenge
- preach without compromise
- never divorce
- give generously in secret without expecting to receive anything in return
- forgive always
- set aside worry and concern for material goods
- to be perfect just as God is perfect.

Jesus anticipated that there would be a natural kickback reaction to his teaching. The bar of God's expectations was high, and Jesus knew that most of his hearers would be uncomfortable with it. Plenty of people would like to hear Jesus' teaching, and many would like to call him "Lord," but few would be willing to really try to put Jesus' words into practice. Men would love to be associated with the seemingly positive aspects of Jesus' ministry, but human nature would balk at the uncompromisingly high standards set forth in his teachings. Thus, in Luke 6:46, Jesus' parable of the two builders begins with the question; *"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"* That which followed was about being doers of the word, and not hearers only.

The same parable begins in Matthew 7:24: *"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock".*

If we look in Luke 6:47-48, we see an additional detail: *"Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock."*

Let's look more closely at what Jesus says in this familiar parable about what it means to be a doer of the Word. Matthew mentions only the building of the house on a rock, but Luke says more about the process the wise builder endured to accomplish this. In Luke, the man building the house *"dugged deep"* to lay his foundation. Luke's details bring out three points that we might not otherwise have known:

- 1) The rock wasn't on the surface; presumably, it was covered by sand. Have you ever tried digging a hole in the sand before? For a somewhat extreme example, imagine digging a hole on the beach — it takes twice the work of digging a hole anywhere else, because as soon as you pull some sand out, the sides cave in and refill the hole you're trying to empty!
- 2) The wise man had to dig deep to find the rock. Though it's difficult to be certain how deep one would have to dig in the first century, we know from the

journals of British visitors to Palestine in the 1800s that it was not uncommon to have to dig 30 feet around sandy Galilee to hit rock.

- 3) Luke's account of the parable implies hard, sweating, manual labor. There's a reason we have large machines to dig our foundations for us today! Additionally, the parable describes this as a solo effort. Imagine the footprint of your house. Now imagine that you have to dig a hole of that size... and it has to be thirty feet deep... and you're digging in the sand. On top of that, once your hole is finished, your work has just started — you then need to lay a foundation that will fill in that 30 foot hole! Think about how you would feel at the end of each day with your arms burning from exhaustion, your back aching from the heavy lifting, your shirt stained with sweat, and the back of your neck blistering with sun burn.

The gospel of Luke emphasizes that it is hard work to lay a foundation on a rock, just as it is hard work to put Jesus' teaching into practice. The question for us is: do we imagine ourselves spiritually laboring for Jesus to the point of sweating? This idea of laboring for the Lord comes up elsewhere: in 1 Timothy 5:17, elders are mentioned as "laboring" in the Word and doctrine, and 2 Timothy 2:15 says that the good Bible student is a laborer that should not be ashamed of his work. Jesus was showing that real work is involved in putting his words into practice.

Now to the foolish builder; Matthew says that the foolish man built his house on the sand, while Luke's gospel says that the house was built on the ground without a foundation. Imagine the scenario:

With no foundation to worry about, the frame of the foolish man's house would have gone up quickly. The siding would have been nailed on and windows installed not long after. While the wise man was still dragging buckets of dirt out of his hole in the ground, the foolish man would be out shopping for light fixtures for his nearly-completed home. By the time the wise man had reached the rock, the foolish man would have been reclining on the front porch of his finished house, sipping lemonade and wondering what would possess a man to dig in the dirt like that.

If both the wise and foolish builders had the same amount of money to build their homes, the foolish man's house would have looked considerably nicer. Depending where you live, a good excavation and foundation can account for 25% of your building costs; in more hazardous areas, the price is much higher. Since the foolish man didn't bother with this expense, he could have used that extra money to make his house look bigger and better.

The foolish man's house would have seemed perfectly adequate when it was built. It was the ideal good-weather house. In fact, all of the wise man's digging would seem a bit ridiculous — like Noah building an ark when there was no sign of rain.

When both houses were completed, it would be difficult to tell which house had a deep foundation. All the labor of the wise man would be hidden under his house. This is true with our lives, as well; much of our spiritual work will be done in secret — as will many of our sins. Think about the things Jesus warned against

in the Sermon on the Mount: lustful thoughts, jealousy, anger, all of which can occur secretly in our minds. Two believers, standing side by side, might look like their spirituality is similar, but there's no obvious way to look at them and see what their foundation is, because it is largely hidden inside of them. However, with our words and our actions, we can invite others inside of our spiritual lives and show whether we have a firm foundation — you can, after all, tell more about a house from the inside than from the outside.

We see the result of all this building in latter half of Luke 6:48: *“And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock”*. This time, the gospel of Matthew is the account with more detail, in Matthew 7:25: *“And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock”*. Matthew indicates that this was more than just the common flood that would wash through the ravines of Palestine. Rain poured onto the house from above, streams swelled and spilled over their banks, and wind pushed at the windows and doors — it sounds just like a hurricane!

While this could possibly symbolize trouble that overtakes us in life, the symbolism of the rain and flood seems scripturally tied to the judgment. God used a flood to judge and destroy the wicked in the time of Noah. Jesus says in Matthew 24:37 that his coming (and subsequent judgment) would happen suddenly, like Noah's flood. 2 Peter 3:5-7 also uses a flood as a symbol of judgment, and Isaiah 28:17 speaks of the day of judgment being like hail which *“shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place”*.

In the Day of Judgment, the work of the wise man — the digging deep and laying a foundation on Christ by putting his words into practice — will be shown to be worthwhile. The full benefit will not be apparent before then. In the Day of Judgment, a life full of hearing God's words, but not really allowing them to break the surface of our minds, is not worth much. Jesus Christ is in the business of changing lives, and that means allowing his teachings to sink in and truly change us so that we are doers of the word, and not hearers only.

Allen Laben (Baltimore, MD)

A Working Philosophy of Life

The teaching and precepts of Jesus expressed in the clear symmetry of the Sermon on the Mount are not abstract ideals, as beautiful as mountain peaks and as remote, to be preserved and worshipped in devotional hours and ignored in the hurly-burly of daily living. They form a working philosophy of life which is the only road a disciple can tread. A steep and difficult road truly, but one which Jesus himself was treading. Nor did he demand that his disciples should tread it alone. He reached out his hand and led them toward its summit.

Melva Purkis

The Devil, A Roaring Lion

Subject text: 1 Peter 5:8,9 *“Be sober, be vigilant; because your **adversary** the **devil**, as a **roaring lion**, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that **the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.**”*

The bolded texts are the ones I zeroed in on....

- 1) The word adversary, interestingly enough, is NOT *satanas*. I would have thought that if Peter wanted to associate the “devil” and “satan” together he would have used “*satanas*” but he did **not**. The word is “*antidikos*”, Strong’s #476, and is made up of two primitive roots; *anti* — (against, oppose), and *dikos* — (judgement, sentencing, judicial, vengeance)

I thought that odd, that the definition of the word is a very specific one, referring to a specific kind of opponent in a judicial system, or a court trial.

So let us look at its uses in the New Testament:

- Matthew 5:25, *“Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.”*
- Luke 12:58, *“When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, [as thou art] in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison.”*
- Luke 18:3-6, *“Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.”*

Notice the specific way this word ‘adversary’ or ‘antidikos’ is used, it is never used with reference to anything except an opponent in a court of law... and by its very definition to boot, this is the same way in which Peter used it

- 2) Next, we have “devil” which simply means false accuser, or slanderer... in keeping with the previous adjective “opponent in a court of law”, a “false accuser” i.e. “devil” makes perfect sense, there is nothing else said or implied in the text up to this point
- 3) So now we are left to determine, just who this “false accuser in the judicial system” is... I would suggest it can be found by the next term “a roaring lion”

Notice:

Proverbs 19:12, *“The king’s wrath [is] as the roaring of a lion; but his favour [is] as dew upon the grass.”*

Proverbs 20:2, *“The fear of a king [is] as the roaring of a lion: [whoso] provoketh him to anger sinneth [against] his own soul.”*

Proverbs 28:15, “[As] a roaring lion, and a ranging bear; [so is] a wicked ruler over the poor people.”

Ezekiel 22:25-29, “[There is] a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof, like a roaring lion ravening the prey; they have devoured souls; they have taken the treasure and precious things; they have made her many widows in the midst thereof. Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed [difference] between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. Her princes in the midst thereof [are] like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, [and] to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain. And her prophets have daubed them with untempered [mortar], seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord GOD, when the LORD hath not spoken. The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy: yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully.”

It seems so clear why both Paul and Peter would use the symbol of a roaring lion... at the time, Rome was doing **exactly** what Israel had done in the past

2 Timothy 4:17, “Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and [that] all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.”

- 4) And finally, the phrase “the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren” ... now let us think about this. Peter said the afflictions were “accomplished” which literally means “to bring to an end, finish”.....seeing as how this passage is supposed to encourage the brethren to persevere, what benefit would it be for Peter to remind them that a supernatural “devil” had “accomplished” his work, i.e. devoured the brethren all around the world? It wouldn't, and he didn't say so. On the contrary, the thing which was “accomplished” was the “false accusations and slanderings” that the Roman “judicial system” had brought against the Christians, like a “roaring lion”

These are the only precedents for the term, roaring lion...

The specific use of the word “antidikos” and **not** “satanas” directs us to the true intention of the writer... and I believe, the solution to the “problem”

Rick Brower (Troy, IL)

Search for the seed of good in every adversity. Master that principle and you will own a precious shield that will guard you well through all the darkest valleys you must traverse. Stars may be seen from the bottom of a deep well, when they cannot be discerned from the mountaintop. So will you learn things in adversity that you would never have discovered without trouble. There is always a seed of good. Find it and prosper.

Og Mandino

The Joy of Sunday Schooling

My Sunday School Life Line

Name recall has always been a challenge for me, so after sixty years it is interesting that I can remember the name of the ten-year-old girl that sat next to me at school. Doreen introduced me to a Christadelphian Sunday School: "I'm going on an outing to the seaside with the Delfins," she proudly announced.

Now this was post-war Britain, struggling with extreme austerity measures. Those who were fortunate to possess a car had to cope with petrol rationing, so journeying to the coast from the central city of Birmingham was but a dream. Never backward in coming forward, I pleaded to accompany her. "They only let you go if you belong to the Sunday school," came her curt reply. That was the carrot that enticed the registration of a new scholar!

My atheist parents were somewhat bemused, but the teachers were traumatized by the disruptive behavior of this child who had a learning disability and received negative attention by acting out. Running around the room and hopping over the desks to enjoy the horrified looks of the more demure pupils was not something to be tolerated. Dear sweet Aunt Dorothy resigned (still a course of regret to the protagonist). The superintendent delivered an ultimatum: "Behave or no outing!" The admonition was gentle and empathetic; very unusual to one hardened by frequent beatings at regular school and at home. The result was a desire to please and a subsequent interest in the lessons. To everyone's surprise, not least my own, I achieved the highest marks at the end-of-term examinations and was presented with first prize. The process was repeated during the next four years. My low self-esteem improved, and my confidence was elevated, and success spilled over to regular school activities.

The Small Heath Ecclesia, founded in 1878, was very active in the 1950's. Canvassing by teachers and word of mouth insured that many attendees came from non-Christadelphian homes. The curriculum included the annual outing to the coast on a bus called a charabanc¹, picnic, sports day, and prize-giving with plays depicting Bible stories. At the end of the year there was a wonderful Christmas party where both teachers and pupils took part in humorous skits. Parents were encouraged to attend and even my skeptical father was impressed.

We all loved the teachers, who, although kind and interested in the children, nevertheless brooked no nonsense. Lessons were well prepared and presented. The hymns were appropriate for young people and we sang with gusto, straining our necks in order to see the words displayed on a big board at the front as hymn books were scarce. Sometimes Uncle John accompanied us on his trumpet. Then to our dismay we were told that he was very ill and was mentioned in the prayers. We cried when it was announced that Uncle John had died, being only twenty

years old. The opportunity was taken to introduce the hope of resurrection and everlasting life; a lesson I never forgot.

All of this came to a halt when I was fourteen. My father found me intently scanning the sky. When I explained that I was looking for Jesus who was to come in the clouds, he was horrified: "You're not going there any more to have your head stuffed with such rubbish!" So that was the end of my Sunday school experience.

But the seed had been planted, and, by the providence of the Lord, throughout my teens and early professional life I came into contact with many Christadelphians. I was a staff member at the Christadelphian nursing home when Bro. John Carter, then editor of the Christadelphian, finally prepared me for baptism, building upon the foundations laid down at Sunday school.

Patricia Bartle (Picton, ON)

Notes:

1. Charabanc (pronounced SHAR uh ban) literally means a carriage with wooden benches. The earliest ones, quite common in Britain in the early part of the 20th century, were open-topped, horse-drawn vehicles. Sis. Bartle assures us that she does not go back that far! "By my day," she says, "the bus was enclosed but very primitive and bumpy; we loved every minute of the journey, singing hymns and songs all the way! What is more, we had an ice cream, something unknown during the war years."

Heartfelt thanks to Sis. Bartle for sharing her Sunday school story with us. She expresses the hope that it will encourage Sunday school teachers to persevere in their faithful work. Surely, many *Tidings* readers have their own Sunday school stories to tell. They are clear reminders that God works through our Sunday schools to bring many to His saving truth. Please consider sending your story to my e-mail address: 2harps4u@gmail.com.

Jim Harper (Meriden, CT)

*"A commonplace life," we say, and we sigh;
But why should we sigh as we say?
The commonplace sun in the commonplace sky,
Makes up the commonplace clay.*

*The moon and the stars are commonplace things,
And the flower that blooms, and the bird that sings:
But dark were the world and sad our lot
If the flowers failed and the sun shone not.*

*And God, who studies each separate soul,
Out of commonplace lives makes His beautiful whole.*

Sarah Chauncey Woolsey

Youth Speaks

Jeroboam: (5) Jeroboam's Legacy

The hearts of the people had been captured and drawn to a false god.

Jeroboam had created a form of idol worship which so twisted and skewed the Scriptures, that it was difficult for those in Israel to see its evil. It still claimed to worship Yahweh, yet it blended Truth with the worship of the world. Its centers of worship — Bethel and Dan — were strategically chosen, and the teachers of Israel were craftily pushed aside. The new worship fit nicely into the minds of many in Israel and did not cause any issue; only a remnant fled to Judah. It would seem as though Jeroboam had assured himself the earthly kingdom and set himself up to leave a lasting and powerful legacy for his children and descendants; but that notion is utterly false. This final article will look deeper into the lasting effects of Jeroboam's apostasy. It will show how his worship shaped future generations and how it impacted him and his family.

Hybrid Worship

The generations to come after Jeroboam would have an extremely difficult time if they tried to follow the Truth. The fallen king had so cunningly worked his system that he convinced many in Israel that his method was an acceptable way to worship the true God. Note the emphasis that Jeroboam put upon his religion when he presented it to the people — he didn't introduce it as a new form of worship or a new god (despite the fact that it was!). Instead, he was much more underhanded:

"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" (1Kgs 12:28).

Jeroboam tried to tell the people that these calves were the gods who had brought them forth out of Egypt! He wasn't trying to replace Yahweh — that would make his intentions too transparent. Instead, he was using the calves as representatives, saying that they were images to help the people set their minds upon the true God. This understanding is reinforced when we realize that Jeroboam's words are actually a quote from another incident in Israel's past:

"And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me... And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt" (Exod 32:2, 4).

The situation was almost exactly the same — a golden calf had been made, a nervous new leader had created it to win the people, and that new leader had just come out of Egypt. Yet in the case from Exodus, notice that Aaron wasn't seeking

to create a new god, but rather to give the people a visible representation of the God whom they were following:

“And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, Tomorrow is a feast to the Lord” (Exod 32:5).

They were going to use this calf in their worship of Yahweh! Aaron was not replacing the God of Israel, but trying to add his own ideas to how He should be worshipped. It was the exact same situation with Jeroboam. He had not sought to start a new religion, but wanted to twist God’s way of worship so that it was easier for him.

A Confused Generation

Once Jeroboam passed from the scene, his apostasy lived on. Without the Levites, there was almost no one to carry the Truth to the new generation, and so only Jeroboam’s false interpretation of the law continued. As a result, the people of Israel totally lost all sense of who Yahweh was. They had no idea what His character was and no idea how He wanted to be worshipped. Hence, when we read prophets like Hosea, who testified to Israel many generations after Jeroboam’s death, we see the people’s lack of knowledge to be a consistent theme:

“Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel: for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land” (Hos 4:1).

Again, a few verses later:

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children” (Hos 4:6).

Jeroboam had created a nation which was utterly bleak in their understanding of Yahweh’s purpose and which had no concept of God manifestation — because they had no idea who God actually was. They could not possibly serve Him correctly, because they didn’t know what it was that He wanted. They didn’t realize that He sought for steadfast love (Hos 6:6) — for their whole heart, rather than just part of it. They had no understanding. God’s law was foreign to them:

“I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing” (Hos 8:12).

Thus, not knowing the character that Yahweh sought to develop within them, and not knowing His plan, future generations would continue to worship at the calves of Bethel and Dan — still believing that they were worshipping the God who had delivered them from Egypt. As time passed, they would not only worship the calves, but would do homage to the idols of other lands. They would bow down to these idols and in the same day try to offer sacrifices to the God of Heaven.

“Israel shall cry unto me, My God, we know thee. Israel hath cast off the thing that is good: the enemy shall pursue him. They have set up kings, but

not by me: they have made princes, and I knew it not: of their silver and their gold have they made them idols, that they may be cut off” (Hos 8:2-4).

Israel would cry out to God saying “My God, we know thee.” They would approach Him with sincere hearts, truly believing that they knew who He was, truly believing that they were worshipping Him according to His commands, yet “of their silver and their gold have they made them idols.” And thus, when they did try to worship Him, God refused to hear a nation drunken with idolatry.

“They shall go with their flocks and with their herds to seek the Lord; but they shall not find him; he hath withdrawn himself from them” (Hos 5:6).

They would bring their flocks and their herds to God, presumably to sacrifice them, yet they would not find the Lord. He had hidden Himself from them because they were not looking for Him earnestly — they had not set aside their other gods; they were trying to worship Him in addition to the others. The prophet Amos shows us how Yahweh felt about this hybrid worship:

“I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. 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... Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel? But ye have born the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves” (Amos 5:21-22, 25-26).

God hated Israel’s worship. When they offered sacrifices to Him, He didn’t want them. When they would celebrate their feasts, He despised their celebrations. Yahweh was disgusted with the combined idol worship that had started with Jeroboam — the one who originally had so much potential for good. Jeroboam had buried the Truth — he made it that much more difficult for his children, or his children’s children to have any opportunity of salvation. He created generations which knew nothing of God, which were destroyed because of their lack of knowledge. He spawned a people who sincerely believed that they were pleasing God — yet God hated their worship. Eventually, this apostasy and false worship made Israel so disgusting in the sight of Yahweh that He destroyed the nation and carried them into captivity.

“For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them; until the Lord removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria until this day” (2Kgs 17:22-23).

Israel never left Jeroboam’s sin. The only remedy was to tear apart the leprous house.

Impact upon Jeroboam

This worship not only led to the destruction of the nation, but also to the swift destruction of Jeroboam himself and his entire family. The man who had been hand-picked by God to be a savior to Israel, was now hand-picked by God to be an example of how Yahweh feels about apostasy.

“But hast done evil above all that were before thee: for thou hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, to provoke me to anger, and hast cast me behind thy back. Therefore, behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel, and will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as a man taketh away dung, till it be all gone. Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat: for the Lord hath spoken it” (1Kgs 14:9-11).

His house would be treated as dung. All of his family would be cut off and decimated. The punishment was severe and astonishing, but God was showing us the passion with which He despises falsehood about Himself. Jeroboam's calves led to the fall of the nation, and also to the swift collapse of his entire monarchy. Thus, the legacy of Jeroboam was complete desolation for his family and a darkening of the Truth to all of Israel for the rest of the nation's existence. Jeroboam's legacy is that he destroyed his loved ones, and made Israel to sin — for generations.

A Motivation

One man had an incredible amount of potential. He was a type of Christ. He grew up in the reign of Solomon — he saw the temple being built. He was hand picked by the Father to deliver the nation. Instead, he destroyed it.

Jeroboam was a man just like us. He knew the Truth and started off his reign with great zeal and fervor, but was confronted by an urgent decision — would he forsake God, or lose everything he had? He chose to forsake God, and became known as “Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin” — the one who would later be cursed by the Father.

By looking into Jeroboam's apostasy, we can have a better understanding of how our God feels about false worship. He abhors it. Even though people may be sincere, if they don't know who God is, if they don't know His plan, they can't worship in spirit and truth. Without an understanding of the Word of God, they can't have true faith (Romans 10:17). Without true faith, they can't please God (Hebrews 11:6). When we recognize this, it should be a powerful motivator to encourage us to go out to fallen Christianity and any other false religion of the world and help them understand the Scriptures! We have one of the greatest treasures that one can be given — a knowledge of the character and intention of God. Let us share that with those who are lost in falsehood. Let us preach at every opportunity. Let us give hope to those who are dying.

This is the legacy that Jeroboam leaves for us. While he destroyed his family, ruined his nation, and threw out his potential, his story still gives us a lesson and an impetus for change. May we break our silence and share the Word with all of those who are floundering in apostasy today.

Jason Hensley (Simi Hills, CA)

Music in Worship

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A Gifted Hymn Writer, Isaac Watts

In our current green hymnbook, Isaac Watts wrote the words of Hymn 46, “O God our help in ages past,” and the words of sixteen other hymns. Watts was born at Southampton, England on July 17, 1674 and died at Stoke Newington, England on November 25, 1748 at the age of 74. He was a brilliant child who loved books from an early age. His genius included learning many languages including Latin, Greek, French and Hebrew by the age thirteen. He loved rhyme and verse and wrote or spoke in both.

After graduation from college at age nineteen he returned to his birth town of Southampton, England. Watts was in Southampton for two years and this was the largest hymn-writing period in his life.

While in Southampton Watts complained to his father about the dismal singing in his church. The singing at that time is described as “...often distressing. Since there were only a few hymnals in most churches, the Psalm-versions were read out, one line at a time, by a ‘clerk’. The people sang that line and then waited for the next. Only a few hymn-tunes were used, as the clerk had to choose those that everyone knew, and they were droned out to a tedious length.”¹ His father challenged him to write a hymn. Watts took up the challenge and by the time of his death he had written approximately six hundred hymns.

Watts spent a substantial amount of time on a project to adopt the book of Psalms for Christian worship. In 1719 *The Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament* was published. In this publication Watts worked through the 150 Psalms, paraphrasing most of them. He integrated teachings from the New Testament into the hymn words. Watts described his creative objective in this way.

“Where the Psalmist describes religion by the fear of God, I have often joined faith and love to it. Where he speaks of the pardon of sin through the mercies of God, I have added the merits of a Savior. Where he talks of sacrificing goats or bullocks, I rather choose to mention the sacrifice of Christ, the Lamb of God. Where He promises abundance of wealth, honor, and long life, I have changed some of these typical blessings for grace, glory, and life eternal, which are brought to light by the gospel, and promised in the New Testament.”²

Watts lived during a period in religious history where the only songs thought suitable for worship in many of the branches of the Reformed Church, were versions of the Psalms. Watts belonged to this type of church. He was a dissenter, who were Christians that separated from the Church of England in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. They opposed government interference in the matters of religion, and established their own churches, educational establishments and communities. Psalms were thought suitable for worship because they were taken directly from the Bible and were God's words. "Hymns of 'human composure,' not taken from the Psalms, were said to be very wrong. The would-be hymn writer was called 'conceited' and 'vain'; a man who thought he could improve on God..."³

The words of Hymn 46, "O God, our help in ages past" are based on Psalm 90:1 to 7. Following is a comparison of the thoughts in Psalm 90 and how Watts expresses the words of Moses, in this Psalm, in his own words.

"Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations" (Psalm 90:1 NIV).

In verses one and two of Hymn 46 Watts writes, "O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come. Our shelter from the stormy blast, And our eternal home. Beneath the shadow of Thy Throne Thy saints have dwelt secure; Sufficient is Thine arm alone, And our defense is sure."

"Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God" (Psa 90:2).

Watts writes in verse three of Hymn 46, "Before the hills in order stood, Or earth received her frame, From everlasting Thou art God, To endless years the same."

"You turn men back to dust, saying, 'Return to dust, O sons of men.' For a thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night. You sweep men away in the sleep of death; they are like the new grass of the morning" (Psa 90:3,4,5).

In verses four and five of Hymn 46 Watts expresses these ideas in the words, "A thousand ages in Thy sight, Are like an evening gone; Short as the watch that ends the night, Before the rising sun. Time, like an ever-rolling stream, Bears all its sons away; They fly forgotten, as a dream, Dies at the opening day."

Truth is expressed in this verse. Time does roll on and over time human life ceases. The cares and fears that fill the human mind are then gone. In all of our weaknesses and in the mortality of our lives, and in all the changes we experience where we learn that the help of human beings is fleeting, one can call on God who has been "...our help in ages past" and is "our hope for years to come." In our helplessness we can rely on Him who is "...our guard while troubles last," and eventually will be, by His blessing, "our eternal home".

This hymn was published in 1719. It is often used as a New Year's hymn and as we considered the lyrics they are very appropriate for singing at the beginning of a new year.

Watts wrote the words on which are based 17 of the hymns in the Christadelphian Green Hymnbook. They are numbers 11, 19, 46, 47, 101, 199, 184, 223, 243, 278, 293, 299, 304, 306, 374, 392, and 396. Lyrics for nine of these hymns are based on the Biblical Psalms.

Ken and Joan Curry (Toronto East, Ontario)

Notes:

1. Stories of Hymns We Love, Cecilia Margaret Rudin, 1940, p 9.
2. Then Sings My Soul, Robert J. Morgan, 2003, p37.
3. Rudin, Op Cit., p9.

A Defining Moment

When we sing a hymn or anthem sometimes it brings to mind memories of a previous singular occasion when we sang that particular sacred song. The hymn triggers memories because it was sung during a time of stress or joy or for a special event, some defining moment in time.

For me one of those moments came during a Sunday evening public lecture. At the end of the Bible talk, an announcement was made. A sister who we knew very well, who was a member of another meeting, had lost her husband (not a brother) to cancer that afternoon. Our mind was filled with memories of our dear sister in her moment of grief and loss and the extra sadness of losing a life partner that had not embraced the hope of the Gospel. To conclude the lecture the hymn was sung, "O God, our help in ages past." The words of that hymn had extra-special meaning and poignancy because of the news we had just heard. Sadly the sister's husband did not personally hope for an "...eternal home" in God's Kingdom and he had not chosen to make God his "...hope for years to come." The words of the hymn struck me in a way they had not before. Now when that hymn is sung memories flood my mind of that moment in time.

Have you had a similar experience? Does a hymn or anthem hold special memories for you? Or does it bring to mind an event that had an impact on your thinking or your direction in life? We invite you to share with us a particular hymn or anthem that impacted your thinking, creating a defining moment or future direction in your life. Please write and share your experience with the readers of the Tidings Magazine.

Joan Curry (Toronto East, Ontario)

How Can I Keep From Singing?

*My life flows on in endless song;
Above earth's lamentation
I hear the sweet though far-off hymn
That hails a new creation:
Through all the tumult and the strife
I hear the music ringing;
It finds an echo in my soul —
How can I keep from singing?*

(From an old Quaker hymn, author unknown)

Reflections

Go Not in the Way of Evil

There is no doubt, the world has shrunk. No longer do we need weeks of lead time in order to send messages, we can communicate instantly to anywhere in the world. Our next door neighbor was the person living in the house adjacent to us but now with the Web our “neighbor” can be 10,000 miles away.

From the Truth’s point of view this has proved quite beneficial; the proclamation of the gospel can now extend to anybody who has a computer linked to the Internet. Some of the advantages of Internet proclamation are evident when we consider how easy it is to disseminate pamphlets or correspondence courses. These can easily be downloaded straight from the website. Ecclesial arrangements can be more efficiently managed; speaking appointments, fraternal announcements, etc., can be handled with greater speed and less cost. It is even possible to deliver reimbursements without writing a check; you simply send the money electronically.

But there is a down side to this instant communication, and it is a trap that the Christadelphian community has fallen into with great gusto. With a little technical knowhow and a small annual fee anybody can set up a personal website. At first such websites were set up for the purpose of posting family photos and such like, and access to view the material was granted only to family and friends. Then came along Facebook and Twitter offering the same features, but to a wider clientele. Also they are free, so the personal website was dropped by many users. However other uses have been made of personal websites, and in many cases not for the good.

Anyone wanting to know all about Christadelphian problems can do so by accessing the Internet, and many brethren are now using this medium as a vehicle to engage in controversy. One website we accessed had photographs of well-known brethren posted and comments criticizing their beliefs on certain topics. Is this the proper use of this mass communication vehicle? Why do we feel the need to hang out our dirty laundry for all to see? This is one worldly approach that we would do well to avoid. If you have access to Facebook you can read ongoing discussions about ecclesial issues and the names of brethren and sisters highlighted to the point of slander. What are we coming to? Have we become so influenced by this humanistic world that we are unable to see that our conduct is no better?

The apostle Paul wrote: “*And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away*” (1Cor 7:31). The Greek word for *abusing* conveys the idea of *overuse* or *misuse* and Rotherham in his Emphasized Bible translates the verse as follows: “*And they who use the world as though they used it not to the full*”. In other words, in the Internet context, by all means take advantage of technology but don’t lower the Christadelphian standard by the use thereof. Paul’s final comment in this verse offers a warning: the fashion of this world is passing away, therefore let us not become caught up with its ways so that we pass away with it.

Websites such as Facebook can be particularly damaging. It is not uncommon for brothers and sisters to post photographs which are compromising to the principles of the Truth; some show themselves enjoying environments which I am sure they would be unwilling to disclose to the ecclesia. Why is it thought acceptable to lead a double life; this flies in the face of the words of our Lord when he said, “*Ye cannot serve God and mammon*” (Matt 6:24).

Solomon said in the book of Proverbs, “*Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall*” (Prov 4:14-16). How can this verse apply to our use of the Internet?

First of all, it is all very well to say that the Internet is a useful tool if used properly. While this may be true we should not lose sight of the fact that much of the material on the Internet is altogether unacceptable. The world does not always use it properly, and it is just as easy for us to slip into the same frame of mind, and use the web in an unscriptural fashion. Secondly, our unwise use of the Internet can become the downfall of our brethren and sisters (not forgetting ourselves also). This illustrates just how offensive our own conduct can be.

Unfortunately we are living in a society that no longer cares about other people. Everybody has a right to do this or that. We do not and should not come under this category; we are servants of the living God, we are “*not our own*” (1Cor 6:19). What we do in the sight of God can affect our brethren. When using the public forum of the Internet to publicize our own particular positions, and at the same time we comment openly about Christ’s brethren, identifying them by name, we are contradicting the word of God. Paul wrote, “*None of us liveth to himself*” (Rom 14:7); how then should we conduct ourselves, “*Let us therefore follow after things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify one another*” (Rom 14:19).

Ron Kidd (London, Ontario)

About Judging

James

The Letter of James, presumed to have been written by the half-brother of Jesus, was written to the Jews in Dispersion. James would see Jesus learning of God’s ways, through his prayers and thoughtful meditation. They probably worked together along-side Joseph and learned of the trade of carpentry. They would eat and laugh together as young children, and as they grew older, Jesus would pass on to James and the rest of the family, those things he himself was being taught by his Heavenly Father: those things that were right and true. James would have learned a lot by Jesus’ example. Even at the age of 12 years old, he stayed behind when his parents returned from Jerusalem. Upon his parents seeking and finding him in the temple, Jesus replied to Mary and Joseph “*did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?*”¹ Mary kept all these things in her heart. Afterwards,

Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man (Luke 2:49-52). It was probably during and after these years that James would learn much about God's wisdom and the royal law. He would see and hear what Jesus had to say about judging.

Judging

Judging comes in many forms: it can be in the tone in which we speak, the look upon our face, the way we walk, and the way we use our hands.

So judging is not just considering what another person has said or done; pondering it; or deciding whether a person has been right or wrong according to what God says in His Word; or even deciding what we personally consider to be right or wrong. (I include myself in everything that I have written because I know that I am not perfect and in need of much learning.) So what does God say about this matter?

This subject is talked about throughout the whole Bible, but I have chosen to stay with the Letter of James, with the exception of a few references. James 2:13 says *"judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy; yet mercy triumphs over judgment."* In the beginning of this chapter, James talks to the brothers and sisters about showing partiality about their actions towards a certain man coming into their assembly, dressed in rich (expensive) clothing, and towards another man dressed in poor and shabby clothing. They were showing more attention to the well-dressed man, giving him the best seat in the room, and then telling the poorly dressed man to stand in a certain place or to sit at someone's feet.

Those who were showing partiality, did so in the way they spoke and acted — they were using body language as well as speech and we can well imagine the looks on their faces. James has to remind them that it has been the "rich" who have oppressed them and dragged them to court. It was the "rich" who were blaspheming God! James reminds them also that God has chosen the "poor" in the world "to become rich in faith and heirs of the Kingdom." James warns that by their actions they were making distinctions among themselves, becoming judges with evil thoughts and dishonoring the poor among them. He says that if they show partiality, they SIN. He tells them to fulfill the ROYAL LAW.

This royal law was taught by Jesus to a Lawyer who in Matt 22:35-40 *"asked him a question, to test him. 'Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?' And he said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets.' "* Jesus also says do to others as you would have them do to you (Luke 6:31 and Matt.7:12). Do we really stop and wonder if we personally fulfill this? When someone says something to you that hurts, do you not want to hurt back? This is called vengeance, but God says *"vengeance is mine"* (Rom 12:19) quoting from Lev 19:18. This chapter covers everything that God wants us to do and how to behave (see verses 2-3;9-10;13,14-18,33,35,36).

Do Unto Others

Jesus takes this up in the New Testament. This whole process of doing unto others as you would have them do to you is part of our growing in Christ. We start off as babes and gradually grow to mature adulthood, until we learn to walk with God and Jesus in our life, until we have the spirit of Christ dwelling in us. This is not an easy process because we fail many times and stumble on the way. It can be made easier if we yoke ourselves to Christ: *“Come unto me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light”* (Matt 11:28-30). Jesus, in this part of the chapter mentions that he has hidden certain things from the “wise and understanding” and revealed them to “babes”. So these verses about yoking ourselves to Christ are spoken to the babes in Christ, but I think they can apply to anyone at any stage of their growth.

We have also been promised the help of God through His messengers — His angels — and through the forgiveness of our failings through the blood of Christ, his sufferings and death. With all this Spiritual help offered to us, why do we still continue to judge or condemn? First of all, because we are human and prone to do what is wrong. We wrestle with this every day just as Paul did, but Paul said that it was only through Christ that he could overcome (Rom 7:21-25). Secondly, in James 3:1-12, we are told that we all make mistakes, that the tongue is a fire, both blessing God and cursing man. We are told that no human being can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. James says that this cursing should not be allowed to happen. It is with our tongue that we also judge our fellow man.

Wisdom from God

This is the dilemma we are in, but James points out that the root cause of this is our “mind-set.” We have to seek the wisdom of God as mentioned in the first chapter, walking in faith without wavering. This is not mere book knowledge, but spiritual knowledge, having the spirit of Christ in us, our hearts and minds. Without this wisdom there is jealousy and selfish ambition and it is earthly, unspiritual, devilish, resulting in disorder and every vile practice (James 3:13-17 and Matt 7:1-2, 12). The wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, without uncertainty or insincerity (James 3). James goes on to say that God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you, cleanse your hands, purify your hearts, be wretched and mourn and weep, let your laughter be turned to mourning and joy to dejection. Humble yourselves before the LORD and He will exalt you. Do not speak evil against one another because it is the same as judging one another. Who are you that you judge your neighbor? (James 4:6-12). We are left at the end of chapter 4 with a very challenging statement that should always be at the forefront of our minds (remember mind-set). We should MEMORIZE this. It will help us to control our thoughts and our tongue and in turn, prevent us from judging one another.

The Royal Law

“Whoever knows what is right to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin”

We often follow men’s writings as though they were inspired, but it is God’s words we must follow. These were expressed in Jesus’ words and by his example of suffering and obedience. This is the answer we need to prevent us from judging others — in other words the ROYAL LAW. In our growth in Christ, we are also told as a part of not judging others, we are to test the spirits (1John 4:1), be wise as serpents and innocent as doves (Matt 10:16). During our walk in Christ, we are warned against those who are false prophets, who come to us in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. How? By the fruit they produce — their actions, behaviors, and whether they prefer to succumb to man’s words or Gods Word. We do this in silence, asking again for the wisdom of God to guide us. Jesus gave us the perfect example of how to behave towards each other. He humbled himself, became a servant and washed his disciples’ feet — even those of Judas.

With all this said, we must try and be patient until the coming of our Lord and Savior. It is said that this will establish our hearts, and we will see how the Lord is compassionate and merciful, long-suffering, the fairest judge of all. He knows our hearts and how our minds work. He can and will seek vengeance on those who deserve it. We have to be satisfied that vengeance is from the Lord and his only. Therefore, in asking for God’s wisdom, we pray that we use it rightly, being confident in God’s promises that our Lord will be with us, to help us, and guide us. We will know that he is there: beside us and in us and offering forgiveness when we fail.

By doing so, may we really and truly fulfill the ROYAL LAW and not judge others.

Kathy Green (Brantford, ON)

Notes:

1. All references are from the RSV

An Inquiring Teenager

I was born in Montreal, the largest city in Canada at that time, the population being mostly French speaking Roman Catholics.

When I was in high school my history teacher said “an amazing thing has happened, the Jews have their own homeland after two thousand years of being scattered throughout the world”. I did not understand the great significance of this at the time, but since my teacher was so excited about it, I put it in the back of my mind.

Several years later, when in my late teens I was turning the dial on the radio, not looking for anything in particular, I came across a Baptist preacher who said “Jesus is coming back to the earth again” and the proof he gave was that Israel had become a nation in 1948 (Ezekiel 37:21,22). Immediately my mind went back to

my history teacher. Never in my life had I heard that Jesus was to return to this earth to establish the Kingdom of God from Jerusalem, because I had been taught that I was going to heaven when I died.

I remembered the next week to tune into the same radio station and learned that the preacher was from a Baptist church in downtown Montreal. I was determined to go and find out more, although I had to travel the long trip by streetcar. The leader of the young people was enthusiastic. He urged me to join their young people's group which I did, and began discussions with them about the Bible.

One day I was thumbing through the small local newspaper which came to our house. By God's grace I came across an advertisement offering a free magazine on prophecy which was inserted by "The Christadelphians." I couldn't get enough of the Bible and this subject fascinated me. I asked the Baptist preacher if he thought it would be all right for me to read the magazine. Although he had never heard of Christadelphians, he said he thought it would be all right. So I received the magazine, which was called the "Dawn", and it had various articles with some on prophecy. On the back of the magazine it advertised a publication called "Anastasis" by John Thomas, MD, but I had to send away to London, England for that. A terrible feeling came over me as I thought that the only Christadelphians may be over there in England and perhaps there were very few in Canada or elsewhere. No member of my family had ever heard of them, yet my Mother said that my Grandmother must have taken her to every church in Ottawa, Ontario.

A friend John Morrison of that Baptist Church asked me to visit a Seventh Day Adventist he knew, who was familiar with Bible prophecy. I met him and his wife but I was disappointed when he said that Israel was not fulfilling Bible prophecy today. He tried to evade the many scriptures that I quoted and like the Jehovah Witnesses today, applied them to his own church! (This is an impossible interpretation, but many so called Christian denominations try such hoodwinking)

Sometime later, while playing tennis, I got into a discussion with my Baptist friends concerning the state of the dead. I realized the Bible did not teach heaven going, but they brought up arguments that I was unable to answer. I prayed to God asking for help. A day or two later I received another issue of the "Dawn" magazine and a pamphlet on the mortality of man by Robert Roberts. It gave me the Bible answers. I noticed a return address and decided to look the name up in the telephone book. I called the number and asked Mr. Harry Baines if the Christadelphians had a church and was told they were just a small group meeting in the Montreal YWCA. I attended and found there were about a dozen of mostly older members. What could I think or do? These people, the Christadelphians, taught exactly what I was already reading in my Bible.

Thanks be our Heavenly Father, within four months I was baptized into Christ, to put on Christ (Galatians 3:27) for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38, Acts 22:16).

Arthur Armstrong (Detroit Livonia, MI)

Book Review

“Parenting by the Book” by John Rosemond

As a “seasoned” parent of four grown children and now a grandmother to five, I am a bit perplexed by the family dynamics I have observed between my grandchildren and their parents. Why do the families appear always on edge, and how come I never have a problem when I am in charge of the little ones?

A magazine article caught my eye one day: “The well behaved child”, by John Rosemond. Is there such an animal in this day and age? I read on. It seems that John Rosemond is a psychologist who has seen the error of his past understandings and now vigorously promotes bringing up children “By the Book”, and as you have correctly surmised, this means the Bible. I eagerly ordered and read one of his works, “Parenting by the Book” and was relieved to learn that although I did not do everything correctly, I was close to the mark. I believe his viewpoints hold great validity. There is hope for all families wishing to raised balance, independent children of character, but you must put aside the false concepts which have crept into society via the media and humanism.

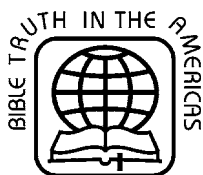
The book jacket reads: “Picture respectful, responsible, obedient children, who entertain themselves without television or video games, do their own homework, and have impeccable manners. A pie in the sky fantasy? Not so, says family psychologist and bestselling author John Rosemond. Any parent who so desires can grow children who fit that description — happy, emotionally healthy children who honor their parents and their families with good behavior and do their best in school.”

In the 1960’s, American parents stopped listening to their elders when it came to child rearing and began listening instead to professional experts. Since then, raising children has become fraught with anxiety, stress and frustration. The solution, says John, lies in raising children according to Biblical principles, the same principles that have guided parents successfully for hundreds of years. They worked then and they still work now!

Knowing that it would be difficult to get my children to read the book, I searched the authors web-site, and found a two hour seminar (Parenting according to Grandma), which puts child raising concepts in a nutshell. I highly recommend the program to all for their consideration in childrearing.

John Rosemond specifically deals with the authority and leadership of parenting. When authority and leadership are respected, much of the rest of parenting falls in line. I was overjoyed to read that there is indeed hope in teaching young parents to bring up their children in a Godly manner.

Connie Bonvechio (Treasure Coast Ecclesia, FL)



Bible Mission News

Quito, Ecuador Nine months in South America

My Dad often told us how wonderful travelling is: exciting things to see and brilliant adventures to be had. And while I've been in Ecuador (as well as Peru and Bolivia, for the month of April) I certainly have had some amazing experiences! Watching the sun rise over Machu Picchu, exploring the jungles of Ecuador and taking in all the dazzling colours of South American markets are only a few. Yet, my Dad always concludes, without fail it will be the brothers and sisters you meet on your travels who will really make the experience. How true this has proved



Quito, Ecuador Ecclesia



**At
Machu Picchu
in Peru**

while I've been in South America! As I continue on from this time in Ecuador, it will be the relationships and connections with the brothers and sisters, the love of the brothers and sisters, and the renewed realization of just how great our bond in God's Truth is that will go with me and truly last.

Without a doubt this has been one of the most challenging experiences of my life. But I'm so incredibly thankful; it's in the challenging circumstances where my inclination to self-reliance and pride are broken and the opportunity to draw closer to God is presented. Although it wasn't my primary objective in travelling to South America with Spanish Truth Corps, I've learned so much about myself: in particular, how much room I have to grow!

Each day brought new lessons: sometimes, this was the daily routine of three hours of Spanish class, struggling my way through the 'subjunctive' — a tense which doesn't have an equivalent in English! Sometimes the lesson would take a rather practical route: for example, discovering that cooking at high altitudes does indeed present changes that must be taken into account! Or the importance of remembering my Spanish/English dictionary when heading out to do the readings with a sister or an interested friend — there's nothing quite like being in the middle of an exciting Bible discussion when you find yourself absolutely floundering for a word. In the beginning I felt a little embarrassed about needing my dictionary at my side but all such inhibitions dissolved very quickly! I discovered in short order that it was better to feel a bit silly about conducting a conversation with my dictionary in hand rather than to be scrambling for a Spanish translation:

Conquering the Spanish language *was* a constant challenge throughout my stay; I often found myself in situations which were humorous, frustrating, embarrassing, and entertaining... all in the course of one conversation! There were times when I felt as though I would never be able to follow (much less participate in!) the discussion, but eventually the Spanish became easier to comprehend and speak.

By the end of my time I was at least able to understand when I was being teased or when the brothers and sisters thought one of our ideas was more than a bit “loco”!



Sister's Class in Quito

The letters, cards and emails from home became a life-line: I've never before realized just how much of a joy and refuge a postage stamp can bring. Being in Ecuador gave me a new perspective on the commentary of Acts 28, when Paul and his companions were travelling towards Rome: *“And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii forum, and The Three Taverns: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.”* Hearing from friends and family from home (along with the really special treat of having friends and family come visit!) were truly an opportunity for us to thank God and take courage in the work. I can't express just how much it means, while you're far away from everything and everyone familiar, to hear of even the most seemingly mundane things from a friend who simply took the time to write.

Among the most valuable of lessons I've learned is that in every situation, wherever I am, my part is to do the will of God with thanksgiving. As I prepared to leave Canada and as I arrived in South America, various levels of subdued panic would overtake me: *what am I THINKING?! Who am I to do be doing this? I don't know enough...I don't even know how to speak the language!! I can't be a missionary.* But I have realized that I really didn't understand what a missionary is, or what the job of a missionary is: the purpose of a missionary is to do the will of God. As Paul wrote to the brothers and sisters in 2 Corinthians 8:12, *“If there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have.”*

The work I was involved in while in South America was very different than I expected and frequently I was challenged with the thought that I truly was not doing anything effective or all that helpful — and yet, being effective or even helpful

really isn't the purpose of a missionary: the purpose of a missionary, in Ecuador, in Canada, in India, in every place we find ourselves, is to do the will of God with a ready and willing mind. And often, it seems, a *mind willing* to follow in obedience doesn't appear as anything spectacular at all: a mind willing to step outside of its comfort zone; a mind willing to be challenged by incredible loneliness; a mind willing to believe that it is God who gives the increase, a mind willing to keep on keeping on in the face of disappointment or the lack of response or results.

Like the prophet Isaiah, and all those who seek to serve God, Yahweh has formed us primarily to be His servants. If doing His will is my daily goal and purpose, I need not be dissatisfied with the apparent "smallness of my sphere or the limited nature of the service I can render." The very purpose for which we have been created is to be a servant, eager and ready to work with a willing mind, an individual in whom the Father is glorified by a constant striving to do His will.

It's difficult to believe that it's almost time to return home and although there are so many stories, adventures and even a few Spanish things I could share now as I reflect on the past nine months, what I most certainly will say is that I'm thankful: I'm thankful to the Father for this incredible experience. I'm thankful for the faith of families who are willing to move to very different world for the work of the Truth; I'm thankful to have met some of the brothers and sisters in Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia who live in relative isolation and face challenges that we in North America really can't appreciate, brothers and sisters who love the Word of God and from whose example I have so much to learn.

Travelling to South America and participating in the work of the Truth there, in whatever capacity you may be able, will challenge you and change you in unbelievable ways: and it's "vale la pena" — worth it! If I could offer a little encouragement to anyone thinking and praying of considering the possibility, here it is! I'm leaving Ecuador with a powerful reminder that as servants of God, our lives must be about service and we can't allow fear or failure or nervousness, thoughts of inadequacy or anything at all keep us from serving: the work God can accomplish through us is in direct proportion to our willingness to serve and be willing to let Him. How true it is that "God can do much with our little" and as I leave Ecuador I'm so thankful for the opportunity I've had to learn this lesson and pray that the Father will keep providing opportunities to serve so that it will be something I won't soon forget.

Note: contact Bro. Don Luff at luffs@sympatico.ca if you are interested in the Spanish Truth Corps (STC) Program or similar activities in the Caribbean where English is the main language.

Sis. Rachel Wilson (Quito, Ecuador)

"Good character is more to be praised than outstanding talent. Most talents are, to some extent, a gift. Good character, by contrast, is not given to us. We have to build it piece by piece — by thought, choice, courage and determination" (John Luther).

Bro. Kenson Fortuné — from Haiti to Panama

We are pleased to report that after the CBMC. and the CBMA jointly decided on a course of action to relocate the Fortuné family — God has blessed our endeavors. On August 17th, Bro. Kenson, along with his wife Rosena and daughter Kensiah, arrived in Panama to begin a new life in the Truth. After reviewing all the unique circumstances subsequent to the January 12th earthquake in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and the unprecedented challenges facing us, relocation was deemed the best manner to utilize the donations from brothers and sisters, plus provide the necessary support to Bro. Kenson and his family. The most important benefit of this relocation to Panama is that now Bro. Kenson is a member of the 13 member Colon Ecclesia, who along with his wife and daughter will enjoy the environment of ecclesial life. Prior to this, Bro. Kenson had been in isolation, since his baptism in 2004, except for a visit in 2009 from Bro. Dan and Sis. Ashley Robinson.

With the assistance of Bro. Luis and Sis. Vanessa Sobers of the Colon Ecclesia, an adequate house was located on the outskirts of Colon near to bus routes, shopping areas and other members of the ecclesia. The Colon Ecclesia has opened their arms and their hearts, welcoming the family to the ecclesia. All three of them have obtained a one year visa for Panama and are now in the process of acquiring resident's status. In due course, Bro. Kenson will also seek to obtain a work permit, in order to obtain employment. We estimate that the donations received in response to our earlier appeal this year should support Bro. Kenson's family until they are established and self-sufficient.



A welcome meal in the home of Bro. Luis and Sis. Vanessa Sobers in Colon, Panama — after the Fortunes arrived from Haiti. Front row, left to right: Sis. Miriam Luff, Kensiah, Rosena, Bro. Kenson, Sis. Nishla Neblett and their daughter Nylayah. Back row standing, left to right: Bro. Luis and Bro. Ian Neblett

The hand of God has been evident many times during the last three months guiding the Haitian and Panamanian authorities to allow all the necessary documentation to be available to permit this new beginning for the Fortuné family. If you have followed the recovery activities in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, in recent months, you will know that after all the millions of dollars in donations, relief has been limited for the over 100,000 Haitian people who were left homeless. Kensons' family was among those who lost their homes and many personal belongings.

The CBMC and the CBMA expresses our gratitude to the worldwide brotherhood for all the concern and support demonstrated towards the Fortuné family. At the same time, Bro. Kenson and his wife also wish to thank all of you for such a blessing in their lives — an opportunity for a new beginning, after such a traumatic event. They have felt the love of the brotherhood in so many ways — and although they left their natural families behind, they are experiencing the warmth of the spiritual family in Panama. We would also like to inform you that the CBMC has provided modest funding to assist Bro. Kenson's parents to erect a basic metal on wood structure on their property, which will replace the concrete block home the whole family once lived in, before the earthquake.

May our Heavenly Father bless the Fortuné family as they make their adjustments to a new country, which in a number of ways is very similar to Haiti. We will update the brotherhood during the course of the year regarding resident's status, employment and other related matters.

*On behalf of the CBMC and the CBMA.
Bro. Donald Luff.*

On Nature

At the gates of the forest, the surprised man of the world is forced to leave his city estimates of great and small, wise and foolish. The knapsack of custom falls off his back with the first step he makes into these precincts. Here is sanctity which shames our religions, and reality which discredits our heroes... Here no history, or church, or state, is interpolated on the divine sky and the immortal year. How easily we might walk onward into the opening landscape, absorbed by new pictures, and by thoughts fast succeeding each other, until by degrees the recollection of home was crowded out of the mind, all memory obliterated by the tyranny of the present, and we were led in triumph by nature.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Addresses for Bequests and Donations

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.)

AUSTIN LEANDER, TX

We are pleased to report the baptism of DORIS MONTGOMERY on June 26, 2010. She is the friend of Bro. Steve Burkett. We welcome by way of transfer, Sis. Wallesha Wallace (Freehill, Jamaica) and Sis. Stacy-Sue Stewart (Portland, OR). We rejoice with Bro. Antonio and Sis. Susan Howell in the birth of their daughter, Alexis, on May 25, 2010.

We have been blessed with two weddings this year, also. Bro. Adam Booker wed Sis. Wallesha Wallace on May 15, 2010, and Bro. Steve Burkett and Sis. Doris Montgomery wed on July 9, 2010. May God bless each couple on their walk as one in the Lord.

We would like to thank all who helped in our Sunday school workshop in February. Bro. Shannon Strickland led classes before our breakout sessions. We also had a successful Youth Weekend March 13-14, 2010, and wish to thank Bro. Stan Isbell for his classes.

We have been blessed with much ecclesial support as we have prepared to acquire a new building to help with additional classroom space. The building has arrived, and Lord willing, we will take occupancy soon.

We have welcomed the following visitors from other states or countries: Bro. Michael and Sis. Jane Ashton (Shirley, UK); Bro. Matt Norton, and Bro. David Clark-Smith (Lismore, Aust.); Sis. Marion Clayton and Bro. Johnny Iwama (Brantford, ON); Sis. Blance Wallace (Freehill, Jamaica); Sis. Renee Schwartz (Hudson, NH); Bro. John Seagoe (Santa Barbara, CA); Sis. Jane Tunnell (San Diego, CA); Sis. Mary Cheetham (Moorestown, NJ); Sis. Rose Madge and Sis. Linda Putnick (Milford Road, MI); Bro. Chris and Sis. Tina Hall (Reseda, CA).

We wish to thank Bre. Michael Ashton, Shannon Strickland and Paul Wade for their words of exhortation.

Fred Bearden

BOSTON, MA

Once again our ecclesia has been blessed with a baptism. On August 15, 2010, after a solid confession of her faith, KATIE HINTZ, daughter of Sis. Kristen Hintz, put on the saving name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We are also very happy to announce the marriage of Bro. Nathan Dineen to Sis. Charlene Hoban on August 7, 2010. Our hopes and prayers go out to them as they begin their journey together in Christ. Also, we're happy to welcome Sis. Ashley Therien to our ecclesial family. Sis. Ashley recently transferred her membership from Worcester to Boston.

We also want to thank our Bro. Michael Owen for his exhortation on Romans 9 and the subject of free will. During the week following the Eastern Christadelphian Bible School, Michael traveled extensively around New England offering words of encouragement and exhortation to our regional brethren and we were truly blessed by his efforts.

Jim Sullivan

CRANSTON, RI

The Cranston Ecclesia has been richly blessed with a number of baptisms into the saving name of our Lord Jesus Christ. BRANDON ENTWISTLE, son of Bro. Ray and Sis. Lori Entwistle was baptized on February 28, 2010; TARA LEWIN, daughter of Bro. Elliott, Jr. and Sis. Kim Lewin and MEGHAN MACADAMS, daughter of Bro. Jim and Sis. Kim MacAdams were baptized on April 3, 2010; EMILY PRIDE, daughter of Bro. Michael and Sis. Nancy Pride was baptized on June 13, 2010, and ELIZABETH PENO on June 19, 2010.

Bro. Ray Calise and Sis. Liz Peno became one in Christ Jesus on August 6, 2010. Our Sis. Gloria Drake, mother of Sis. Linda Lewin and Bro. Lloyd Drake, fell asleep in our Lord on June 23, 2010.

We thank the following brothers who presented public Bible talks for our Spring Series on the theme, “The Glory of the Kingdom Age”, and also brought us the word of exhortation: Mark Drake (Westerly, RI), Jim Dillingham (Granite State, NH), and Bruce Waite (South NH).

The Cranston CYC held its 10th Annual Bible Study Weekend on the theme, “First Principles of Prayer”. Bro. Bill Link, Jr. (Baltimore, MD) led the classes and also brought us the word of exhortation.

We have had the pleasure of many visiting brothers and sisters, young people and families at our memorial services on the occasions of our baptisms and study weekend. We also thank Bro. John MacAdams (Wachusett, MA); Bro. Jim Boyko (Boston, MA); and Bro. Ben Isbell (Westerly, RI) for bringing us the word of exhortation.

Bro. Michael Owen (Seaton, UK) kindly stayed on in the New England area following the Eastern Christadelphian Bible School and spoke at a number of ecclesias. We were pleased to have our brother lead a Bible class at Cranston on the subject, “Holding on to Our Inheritance”, and a CYC get-together and class on the subject “Counting Our Blessings”.

We have presented the Learn to Read the Bible Effectively Seminar in conjunction with the Westerly Ecclesia and are now presenting the follow-up Genesis Study with two ladies who have continued throughout the series.

Paul Haughton

DETROIT LIVONIA, MI

We rejoiced on April 11, 2010, when MARK AMIS was baptized, and again on May 23, 2010, when ALICIA KISELIS put on Christ's saving name.

The Detroit area ecclesias put on a joint Sunday School Entertainment on April 17, 2010, in which our children put on a wonderful dramatization of events in the life of David.

In May, Dave Jennings led our study day on “Transformation”. We had visitors from our Detroit area ecclesias, and many other ecclesias in the US, Canada, UK and Aust.

We thank our visiting brrothers Ken Burkaw, Mark Newth, Ryan Vaughn, Ken Styles and John Gore for their words of exhortation.

Bro. Steve, Sis. Felicity and Sis. Sarah Styles are all living in Dubai for the next year and would welcome visits from any who happen to be passing through.

Jim Styles

ECHO LAKE, NJ

We thank our Bro. Steve McKay (Cambridge, ON) for his word of exhortation. We look forward to our fall study weekend when we have the company of our Bro. Roger Long (Coventry, UK).

Our Sunday School Picnic was held during the month and a nice time was had by all. We sorrow with our Sis. Vilma Beverly in the loss of her sister in Florida who was not in the truth.

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: Bro. Steve and Sis. Cheryl McKay (Cambridge ON); Bro. Ken and Sis. Lyn Dyer (Castle Hill, Aust.); Bro. Reuben Sande (North Houston TX); Sis. Margan Packie, Sis. Carolyn Antonaccio, and Bro. David and Sis. Maryann Jorgensen (Union, NJ); Bro. Josh and Sis. Edwina Wallace (Boronia, Aust.); Sis. Kamice Baliey (Georgetown, Guyana).

Stewart Marsden

THOUSAND OAKS, CA

During the past few months we have been pleased to welcome many brothers and sisters from our neighboring CA ecclesias. In addition, we welcomed from afar: Bro. Jonathan Bowen and Bro. Dan and Sis. Ashley Robinson (Brantford, ON); Bro. Brian and Sis. Keleigh Styles, Bro. Paul and Sis. Belinda Styles and Bro. Jason and Sis. Mary Bobis (Detroit Livonia, MI); Bro. Tim Wallace, Bro. Andrew and Sis. Pam Wallace, Bro. Steve and Sis. Becky Brumbey, Bro. Paul Harrington, and Sis. Deb Harrington (Boronia, Aust.); Bro. Cliff Week (Mt. Waverly, Aust.); Bro. Ryan McClain (Beijing, China); Bro. James Davidson (Mt. Barker, Aust.); Bro. Steve and Sis. Mindy Faver (Bozeman, MT); Bro. Henry and Sis. Sharon Wisniewski and Bro. Steve Pursell (Rogue Valley, OR); Bro. Richard and Sis. Esther Morgan (Hamilton Book Road, ON); and Sis. Naomi Gaston (Mendocino, CA).

Our thanks go out to Bro. John McConville (Reseda, CA), Bro. David Jennings (Pomona, CA) and Bro. Charlie Brinkerhoff (Los Angeles, CA) for their exhortations and afternoon classes. We also thank our brothers: Tony Cipriotti (Reseda); Brad Styles (Simi Valley); Steve Faver and Tim Wallace for their exhortations. We really appreciate our brothers speaking for us when they visit.

Our special thanks go out to Bro. Jonathan Bowen for leading us in our weekend around the Word with studies based on the cherubim, and to Bro. Nathan Lewis (Reseda) and Bro. Richard Morgan for their efforts in leading our studies at our kids' camp this year. Our theme was based on the life of the apostle Paul.

We had two sisters transfer to our meeting during this period, Sis. Jen Stormont from the Simi Hills Ecclesia and Sis. Suzy Mason from the San Francisco Ecclesia. We indeed welcomed both to our ecclesia. However, after only a short while, Sis. Jen Stormont married Bro. Tim Wallace (Aust.) and now makes her home in South Australia. We certainly wish her God speed in her new ecclesia.

We are sorry to report that our Bro. Jerry Michaud fell asleep in Christ on February 8, 2010. Bro. Jerry was 79 years old and finally succumbed to cancer. He never missed an ecclesial function if at all possible and we will certainly miss him as he now waits for the return of his Master from heaven.

Tom Graham

TORONTO WEST, ON

The ecclesia welcomes by way of transfer the following brothers and sisters from various ecclesias: Ruth Dunford on December 6, 2009, from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; Brian, Lynne and Emily Carrick on July 4, 2010, Roger and Kim Brown on August 22, 2010, and Bob and Barbara Fenner on August 29, 2010, all, from Toronto East, ON. From St. John's, Newfoundland, Benoit and Leah Mukendi on August 22, 2010. We lose by transfer Daniel and Linda Wilton on May 13, 2010, to Manitoulin; and Luke Groothuis on August 29, 2010, to Mississauga West. We pray our brothers and sisters will continue to encourage and be encouraged to hold fast to the truth once delivered unto the saints in these last days.

We thank the following brothers for their ministrations to the ecclesia during the past year: Jay Mayock (Hamilton Book Road, ON), Brian Luke (Brighton, South Aust.), and Tom Wilson (Cambridge, ON). Bro. Bill Link Jr. will lead our ecclesial study weekend, October 16-17, 2010, with the theme, "The Lord Shall Yet Comfort Zion."

Rod Ghent

WICHITA FALLS, TX

Since last reporting our ecclesial news, we have welcomed around the table of our absent Lord the following brothers and sisters: Bro. Steve Bryan (Kouts, IN); Sis. Sandra Maggart (Denver, CO); Sis. Jeanna McLaughlin (Dallas, TX); Bro. Garth and Sis. Kerri Maier, Sis. Sarah Maier, and Bro. Bill and Sis. Kelly Ellison (East Texas, TX); and Bro. Jorge and Sis. Julie Garcia (Houston Wilshire, TX). We thank Bro. Jorge for his words of comfort and exhortation.

We are very pleased to announce that Bro. Aaron and Sis. Loretta Clubb moved here from Macon, GA in early June. They are welcome additions to our small ecclesia and we rejoice they no longer live in isolation. Since their arrival God has blessed them with their second daughter, Iris. We are certainly thankful for the blessings we receive from our heavenly Father!

John A. Clubb

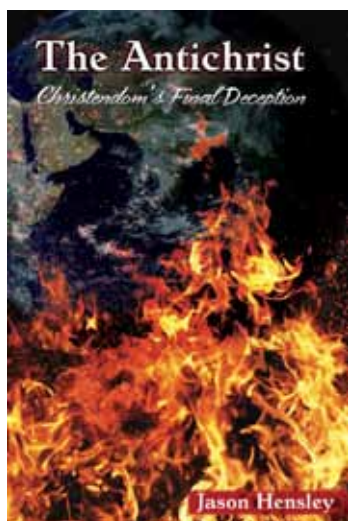
AUSTRALIAN CHRISTADELPHIAN CONFERENCE ADELAIDE, 2012

The next Australian Christadelphian Conference, God willing, is to be held in **Adelaide, Australia, April 8th-15th, 2012**. We live in urgent and impetuous times in these last days, and our next Conference will provide a wonderful opportunity for a time of fellowship and encouragement together in our Lord as we prepare for His near return.

This Conference will have special significance as the **Centenary Conference**, being held 100 years after the first Conference in Sydney in 1912. On the basis of previous Conferences we would hope that approximately 1,000 brothers, sisters and young people might attend for a week of fellowship in Adelaide.

Our Conference Theme "**Lift Up Your Heads**", taken from Psalm 24 and Luke 21, will focus our minds and our living upon the coming of our Lord from Heaven, and raise our sights and daily aspirations to the heights of our spiritual calling and our comfort and hope in Christ Jesus, Our Lord and King. **Bro. Tec Morgan** (Washwood Heath, UK), and **Bro. Chris Sales** (Shelburne, CA) have both gladly accepted our invitation to be Guest Speakers.

**NEW BOOK: THE ANTICHRIST:
CHRISTENDOM'S FINAL DECEPTION
BY JASON HENSLEY**



Many in this world have set themselves up for a colossal mistake when Christ returns. The doctrine of a future and a coming Antichrist is one that is so pervasive and so forcefully taught in Christendom that it is easy to believe it. This book compares the teaching of modern Christianity with the teaching of Scripture, demonstrates the gap between the two, and gives a reason as to why this gap exists.

Price: \$9.00.

For all orders in the US that under \$15, add \$2 shipping. For orders over \$15, the shipping is free. For orders in Canada, please see source below.

Copies may be obtained from the Thousand Oaks Library at www.bigbrand.com/library

The Right Balance on Prophecy

In Habakkuk 2 we are told to be patient because the vision or prediction will speak, and although it is for a time appointed by God we are to "wait for it", and it will surely be performed at the "appointed time".

It is evident from what has been already said that the prophets could not have had a perfect understanding of all the prophecies they were inspired to utter; there must have been many uncertainties as regards the time and the manner of their fulfillment, though none about the final outcome. So Peter says that, concerning the salvation of God's people,

"The prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come upon you: searching what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow them" (1Pet 1:10-12),

for they realized that they were not God's ministers just for their own sake, nor just for the sake of their contemporaries, but for future generations who would see their words come to pass. The prophets, then, must have been aware that their words possessed a scope and a relevance which went far beyond any obvious application to their own day.

Fred Pearce, The Christadelphian, Vol. 111, pp. 507,508

Minute Meditation

Forgiveness

“Forgiveness is unlocking the door to set someone free and realizing you were the prisoner.” Max Lucado.

When we forgive, we release hold of the resentment, bitterness and desire for vengeance that may have consumed us, and discover, to our surprise, that we are the one who is set free. We all want to be forgiven, but far too many of us refuse to forgive others. When we hold those hostile feelings bottled up inside us, we can be like the person who drinks poison and then waits for the other fellow to die. When we refuse to forgive others, we are like the one taking the poison, we are the one locked up, and only when we forgive will we be set free. William Arthur Ward said, “Forgiveness is the key that unlocks the door of resentment and the handcuffs of hate. It is a power that breaks the chains of bitterness and the shackles of selfishness.” Yet many of us find it hard to forgive.

Did you know that the mercy of God is limited? How can that be? Doesn't it say in the Psalms, “As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us”? This verse clearly indicates God can and does grant unlimited forgiveness by completely taking away our transgressions. But there is a catch. God's mercy can be limited for us personally. Jesus tells us, “For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.” We will only receive as much mercy as we show, and based on this principle, there are many who will find to their dismay that not forgiving their fellows has limited the mercy available for them.

In the parable of the unmerciful servant, when the servant who was forgiven the debt of 10,000 talents refused to show mercy to a fellow servant who owed 100 pence, the forgiveness was revoked and the debt reinstated. Jesus explains the lesson of the parable: “So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses.”

How many times have we heard it said, “I will forgive but I can never forget.” This statement alone is proof that the one saying it has not really forgiven. We do not want the LORD to remember the sins we have committed, and thankfully He has promised not to, only if we choose to become children of God and show forgiveness to our brethren. Hezekiah said, “In your love you kept me from the pit of destruction; you have put all my sins behind your back.” Hebrews tells us about a future time when, “They shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.” “‘This is the covenant that I will make with them after these days,’ says the Lord: ‘I will put my laws on their heart, and write them on their minds,’ and then he adds, ‘I will remember their sins and their misdeeds no more.’”

Truly sins forgiven must be sins forgotten. David prayed, after he had an affair with Bathsheba, "Have mercy on me. O God, according to thy steadfast love; according to thy abundant mercy blot out my transgressions..." "Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities."

David understood how unforgiving human nature can be and realized that God is far more merciful than men. When David had to choose which judgment would be inflicted on him, we read, "And David said unto God, I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the LORD; for His mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man." People find it hard to forgive. We find it hard to forgive.

Jesus did more than command us to forgive. He explained the principle, "And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins." He also showed us by example when he hung on that cruel cross and prayed to his Father saying, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Stephen also learned from Jesus' example, and as he was dying from the stones hitting his body, "he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep."

There is no lesson we need to learn that is more important than that we must forgive those who have sinned against us. None of us have ever been crucified or stoned to death, so no one has ever wronged us more than those who wronged Jesus and Stephen. Yet most of us find it very difficult to forgive someone who has wronged us. Both Stephen and Jesus were living examples of obeying the principle we ask in the Lord's Prayer where Jesus taught us to say, "Forgive us our sins, as we also forgive everyone who sins against us." We need to concentrate our thoughts when we pray those words. We need to focus not only on our need for forgiveness of sins, but on our need to be forgiving to others, in order to receive the forgiveness we need.

Forgiving others brings a double blessing upon us. The door of resentment is unlocked and we are freed from the bitterness and anger that we feel when we are wronged, and our forgiving spirit unlocks the door to the bountiful mercies of our heavenly Father, who is able to forgive all our sins and remember them no more. As the apostle John assures us, we just need to ask. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

Robert J. Lloyd

Good works are not the purchase price of salvation; they are the thank-offering. We do not live in righteousness and maintain good works in order that we may be redeemed, but because we are redeemed. We do not do good in order that we might be justified, but because we are justified. We do not walk in 'the Way' in order that we might stand on holy ground, but because we already stand on holy ground.

Alva Huffer

Coming Events (Lord Willing)

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

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
- 16-17 Toronto West, ON** Study weekend. The speaker will be Bro. Bill Link Jr. (Baltimore, MD). Theme: "The Lord Shall Yet Comfort Zion"
- 30 Barrie, ON** Study Day. Speaker Bro. John Perks: "1 Thessalonians"

November 2010

- 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 Southern CA Fraternal** LA County Arboretum, Bro. Jim Harper (Meriden, CT). Sponsored by the Christadelphian Preaching Committee of SoCal

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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

APRIL 2012

8-15 Australian Christadelphian Conference Adelaide, Australia. Theme "Lift Up Your Heads"". Speakers Bro. Tec Morgan (Washwood Heath, UK) and Bro. Chris Sales (Shelburne, CA). Please note the year **2012**.