

THE CHRISTADELPHIAN TIDINGS

of the Kingdom of God

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No. 11

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The CHRISTADELPHIAN TIDINGS of the Kingdom of God

Peter Hemingray, Editor • George Booker, Associate Editor

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Building the Tombs of the Prophets

"Woe to you, because you build tombs for the prophets, and it was your forefathers who killed them. So you testify that you approve of what your forefathers did; they killed the prophets, and you build their tombs" (Luke 11:47,48).

Might not the Pharisees have replied that, by honoring their remains and their memory, they condemned their murderers?

The greatest sin of Israel and of the world was, and is, apostasy from the true God and His worship by idolatry; and the most prevalent mode of this apostasy is sacrilegious reverence for dead men's tombs and bones... Now, it was for rebuking this and other kinds of idolatry, that "the fathers killed the prophets"; and those who built their tombs would, in like manner, kill anyone who condemned their idolatrous reverence for these very sepulchers. Thus the Pharisees, by the very act of building those tombs of the prophets, and "honoring" them as they did, showed plainly that they were activated by the same spirit that led their fathers to kill them; and, to make this matter self-evident, they very soon proceeded to crucify the Lord of the prophets because of his faithful rebukes. Nor has this spirit changed in the least during the subsequent eighteen hundred years.

W.M. Thomson, *The Land and the Book*

Editorial

The KJV of 1611

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" ((2Tim 3:16).

Introduction

The above quotation

- Establishes, with other similar passages, the great importance our community attaches to the reading, understanding, and application of the Bible in our lives
- It is also quoted, not from the original language, but in the words of the KJV, or King James Version, also known as the Authorized Version (AV).

This version is the one most commonly used in The Tidings. By convention the use of other versions is usually acknowledged, although perhaps half of the articles do use one or other of the modern versions. And if you turn to the front of most copies of the KJV, you will find the "Epistle Dedicatory" to King James, dated to

16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, & is profitable for doctrine, for reproofe, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,
17 That the man of God may be perfect, & thoroughly furnished vnto all good workes.

1611. So as 2010 draws to a close, we come next year to the 400th anniversary of the publication of this version. It is indeed remarkable that this version is not only still being published, but is in common use not only among Christadelphians but by many others.

I might mention, in passing, that most of us would barely be able to read the original version of 1611 as shown. Not only is the typescript difficult to read, but the spelling is not that in modern usage. But this original translation is very close to the one we use, which is in fact that of the revision of 1769. (For those curious, the words in "roman" type, such as "is", rather than in gothic script, serve the same function as words in italic do in modern versions. They indicate that the English words are not in the original Greek, but added to give sense.)

It is amazing, in our modern ever-changing society, that no significant translation was produced between 1611 and the Revised Version of 1881. Although this RV version is very little used today, until quite recently, an AV-RV (or KJV-RV) interlinear version, as shown here, was almost the "standard" version of

16 "Every scripture
is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which
is in righteousness: 17 that the man of God may be perfect, & thoroughly furnished vnto all good workes.

Christadelphians. This version is now very expensive and quite rare. (It is quite interesting to note that the RV version, shown in the upper words, is based on Greek which is identical to the source of the KJV — but is here translated quite differently.)

It is not my intention to describe the origin of the KJV, although we must acknowledge much of it was based upon the work of William Tyndale, who was burned at the stake in 1536, and is famous for saying “I will cause the boy that driveth the plow to know more of the Scriptures than thou [the Pope] dost.”¹ And it is not my purpose to address the controversial topic of the advantages (or disadvantages) of the modern versions, or of the various Greek versions that underlie them. But instead I will focus on the longevity of a translation that, despite its archaic language, is still capable of transmitting the gospel message to most who hear it. Despite the fact that Hebrew, Greek (and Aramaic) are understood by very few, the Truth is still transmitted to all who will hear it.

Longevity of the KJV

The very fact that the KJV was so dominant for so long lead scholars to undertake the immense task of developing concordances and the associated aides, with which one can search and further understand the message of the Bible. Despite the acknowledged dangers of “translating by concordance,” the use of such guides as the Strong’s concordance are very helpful. (I personally have the principle that if the usage I, or anyone else, would like is not supported by any modern translation, I am most reluctant to use it.) With the use of such a concordance, it is quite easy to find other uses of the same word in the original languages. But it is clear, simply by looking at the various usages of words, that the same word can mean different things depending on the context. We only have to think of the English word “dear.” Referring to an animal, I see many in my back yard. Referring to a person, it describes a relationship. Referring to an item, it describes its cost.

There are similar cases in any language. In Hebrew, “Ruach” can mean, as most know, both “breath” and “spirit”: not only this, but there are almost twenty other words that can be used to translate this one Hebrew word. Who would guess that it is this Hebrew word that is translated “courage” in Josh 6:11. So any translator must judge from the whole context which English word is appropriate, and this requires, of course, a deep and thorough knowledge of, in this case, Biblical Hebrew.

Strong’s concordance is the best known such tool, as it ascribes numbers to each Greek and Hebrew word, enabling anyone to find the same word elsewhere, despite different English translations. Young’s concordance is less well known, but it has the advantage is that for each English word, the various original words used are listed separately. It also has a special place in my library, as it was my first major purchase of a Bible tool. It still sits on my desk and is frequently consulted: it was quite a major purchase for an impecunious student.

Both works were published in the late nineteenth century, and both were the results of thousands of hours of work, with the authors and assistants confident in the fact that there was only one translation in common use. It is interesting to me that

Young's was published in 1869; Strong's in 1890. This basically coincides with the major expansion of the Christadelphian community, with its major emphasis on Bible study and its distrust on academically trained clergy. Although John Thomas was reasonably fluent in Hebrew and Greek, few later members were so blessed. But, with the help of such tools, the depths of at least some of the riches of the original languages can be appreciated by all. From the first pages of *The Christadelphian*, exposition included references to such works as Parkhurst's *Greek Lexicon*, published in 1809. Thus a lay congregation, with its members without academic training, could and did form a knowledgeable Bible based community, and debate on equal terms with other groups, with their professionally trained leaders.

Of course, with the advent of computer based Bible study tools, the need to consult the KJV to utilize the various concordances has somewhat disappeared, but the value of employing such tools in such contexts as Bible Seminars still remains, as many can testify. And I still turn to my Young's, and the KJV which sits on my desk, more often than most other tools.

The last 400 years

As we look back 400 years, the ability of the population at large to read the Bible for themselves, and the consistency the domination of one version, has greatly helped to acquire familiarity with the word of God. This would lead, during the reformation, to many reject the erroneous non-Biblical doctrines of the Catholic Church. For hundreds of years, the priests could hide behind their restricted access to the Scriptures, but this disappeared with the advent of the KJV. (Other English translations preceded that of the KJV in 1611, but by the 1640's the KJV had displaced all the others.)

So we follow in the footsteps of those who had searched out the Scriptures for themselves, as pride ourselves (perhaps more in intent than in actuality) as being the "people of the Book." In North America of late our greatest preaching successes have been with the utilization of Bible Seminars, which seem to fill a hunger in many to obtain a better understanding of the Scriptures. And it is still the KJV that we most commonly hand out.

Other Versions

It is no part of our acknowledgement of the debt we owe to the KJV to suggest other versions are either unacceptable or to be discouraged. Indeed, many Christadelphians in England were brought up in the Suffolk Street fellowship, which used the RV as "their" Bible — and this continued for decades after the reunion of 1955. The version we use of little significance, as almost all are free enough from bias to let the true message shine through. The default version of the Tidings will remain the KJV for the foreseeable future, but as I scan the pages of this issue, I see many authors use different versions.

UK Website

So as we approach the 400th anniversary of the KJV, let us appreciate and celebrate its heritage. Our UK brethren have developed a preaching initiative, with most

relevant information to be found on the website www.thebible4lifededication.org. This includes

- Bible — Hard back New King James Bible.
- Insert — This is planned to cover how the Bible came to us, translations, why we can trust the Bible and help on how to read the Bible.
- Newspapers — Designed to be able to be used for billing or in other ways you can think of.
- DVD — A selection of short films explaining why brethren trust the Bible, for example Archaeologists, Medical Doctors, Historians etc.
- Bible Reading Handbook and Planners
- Life's Big Questions Distance Learning Course & DVD's
- Other Seminar materials — for example Bible in an hour and Bible in a nutshell.

I know of no such initiative in North America, but if one is developed we would be pleased to publicize it in The Tidings.

Peter Hemingray

Notes:

1. A further brief article on William Tyndale appears elsewhere in this issue

"The way of the translator is hard!"

If, according to the traditional rendering of Proverbs 13:15, "The way of the transgressor is hard", the way of the translator is scarcely less hard. Not only does the work of translation demand the utmost in concentrated effort, but the result will seldom please everyone, least of all the conscientious translator. Since not all the nuances in a text can be conveyed into another language, the translator must choose which ones are to be rendered and which are not. For this reason the cynic speaks of translation as "the art of making the right sacrifice", and the Italians have put the matter succinctly in a proverb, "Traduttore, traditore" ("The translator is a traitor"). In short, except on a purely practical level, translation is never entirely successful. There is always what [one translator] called the misery and the splendor of the translation process.

The work of translating the Bible presents special difficulties. Since the Scriptures are a source of both information and inspiration, Bible translations must be accurate as well as felicitous. They must be suitable for rapid scanning as well as for detailed study, and suitable for ceremonial reading aloud to large and small audiences. Ideally, they should be intelligible and even inviting to readers of all ages, of all degrees of education, and of almost all levels of intelligence. Such an ideal is, of course, virtually impossible to attain.

Bruce Metzger

Exhortation

In the Last Days

Sometimes we can get exhortations from places we would never consider: sometimes an exhortation can come from someone who doesn't know God, or who is expressing ideas inconsistent with God's teachings and directives.

An article in the local morning paper hit the mark. It was taken from "The Hartford Courant", on Wednesday, September 22, 2010. It was found in the Parent & Child column by John Rosemond¹, who is a family psychologist, and it was titled "Why a Child's High Self-Esteem Threatens America's Future".

Here are some highlights from that article.

- "Research ... has clearly shown that high self-esteem is closely associated with anti-social inclinations.
- "At this writing, two generations of parents were persuaded to devote themselves to creating child-rearing environments that were rich in praise and reward but lacked reality, elevating their children to idol status.
- "... the last generation of American kids who were not allowed to possess high self-esteem ... were taught ... 'It would be good for you to remember that no matter what you accomplish in this world, you are really just a little fish in a big pond'. It's helpful today to remind myself (the author) of this on a regular basis.
- "Today's typical parent seems to think his/her child is the only fish in the pond worth noticing, which is really too bad for his/her child.
- "It's bad for all of us, actually, because research also finds that the higher a person's self-regard, the lower his regard for others.
- "People with high self-esteem want to be paid attention to and served.
- "They believe in their entitlement.
- "On the other hand, folks with high regard for others pay attention to others and look for opportunities to serve them.
- "Entitlements weaken, and a culture-wide entitlement mentally weakens the entire culture.
- "This is corrosion. It threatens America's future."

Compare that article with this quote.

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;" (2Tim 3:1-4).

Even in this world and with its corrupt thinking, occasionally the danger of this

world's philosophy is clearly seen and clearly expressed. No one will question or debate that we live in the "last days", an era so corrupt, so bereft of God's teachings and God's righteousness, that God's judgment out of necessity must come. And will He be able to find a small contingent of faithful believers left on this earth?

Whenever we have seen the advent of God's judgment and destruction it has been precipitated by a very consistent phrase. "... *every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*" The Prophet Isaiah clearly warns of this behavior: "*Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!*" (Isa 5:21).

When humanity raises its position to be equal that of God; when they use their own eyes as a measure for rightness; then God's judgment is close at hand. All the perversions that the world has perpetrated do not bring judgment; it is this philosophy of high self-esteem, high regard for self that brings destruction.

"There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.. And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Gen 6:4-8).

Mighty men, men of renown, men of high regard for themselves and their accomplishments. These men were sinful, yes; but they were men who had high regard for themselves. It seems that all the other sins that man does should bring about judgment, but judgment is always precipitated by this philosophy of self-regard. The reason is that its affect is so devastating to the faithful. Every aspect of our lives is influenced by this type of thinking. We are forced into acceptance by society for all the sins of this world.

If you do not think so, consider the consequences of vocally disapproving of gay marriage, gay rights, abortion, pre-marital sex, babies out of wedlock, and the list goes on. To voice an opinion that considers these wrong, will label you as unmerciful, close minded, small-minded, bigoted, and intolerant. In fact, to voice an opinion other than "anything goes" will get you tagged with these negative labels. So we are forced to keep quiet.

"Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit."
(Prov 26:4, 5).

It has no benefit to speak out to those who have no ears to hear. We live in perilous times, not because sin is rampant, but rather because sin is not considered wrong. Within the household of the faithful we hear of divisions within ecclesia's because of the acceptance of abominations, and of the corruption of God's laws so that all things are considered good for the sake of peace. God's judgment must

come or there will be no one left that is righteous.

The Psalmist clearly expresses the danger:

“The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes. For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found hateful. The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: he ceased to act prudently, and to do good. He deviseth mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself in a way that is not good; evil he doth not refuse” (Psa 36:1-4).

We would never make this choice, but it is our surroundings that continue to press upon us; to slowly manipulate our thinking, to slowly transition our perceptions and philosophy to fall in line with their beliefs, their philosophy.

The generation that I am from or the generations before me do not fall prey as easily to this present world’s philosophy. As the article in the paper mentioned, it is only the most recent generation that has been exposed to this universal philosophy of entitlement and high self-esteem. My generation and those before me were taught to think of others, to live godly lives, with society’s moral barometer more in line with those living Godly lives.

The generation that followed, lives in an age where the erosion of society’s moral compass has been completely destroyed. As in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah, the depraved and corrupt are considered normal. Our children suffer the effect of this lifestyle. They are bombarded with perversions that are considered normal, right, and good. Even constant reading of Scripture does not fully defend against this philosophy. It is on TV, in books, on the radio, advertisements, packaging and products; we can’t escape it.

For the older generations, we have a point of reference, we lived in an age when these things were wrong, but today’s generation has no point of reference. Today it is hard to keep a Godly perspective; these are dangerous times. In Proverbs we are warned over and over of the danger of this present world’s philosophy.

“Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil” (Prov 3:7). *“Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the Lord pondereth the hearts”* (Prov 21:2). *“The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise”* (Prov 12:15). *“A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself”* (Prov 18:2). *“He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered”* (Prov 28:26). *“There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother. There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness. There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up. There is a generation, whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men”* (Prov 30:11-14).

We live in this generation.

The answer is not to remove ourselves and hide; it is to hold on and pray for

strength to endure, to continue to teach our own against these perversions. In the wilderness Israel was given a reminder against these same philosophies. Their garment was to have a ribbon of blue on the bottom edge.

“And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring” (Num 15:39).

Whoring is a term that is better rendered from the Dictionary as; “To compromise one’s principles for personal gain.” Talk about hitting the mark. Substituting that definition into the quote from Numbers it now reads as;

“And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to compromise one’s principles for personal gain.”

This is the generation we live in. Christ has instructed and warned us of these last days.

“And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name’s sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved” ((Matt 24:3-13).

“And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened” (Matt 24:22).

“And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other” (Matt 24:30-31).

The most chilling and poignant words he spoke are “but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.” As in the days of Noah ... if God did not destroy the world then, there would not have been anyone to save today.

We must constantly re-evaluate our thoughts and beliefs and measure them against the standard the lies before us in symbol today, at this table. We must become

blind and deaf to this world's philosophy and have eyes to see and ears to hear the direction of God alone. Although this generation has many dangers and weakens us continually we must remember the words of the prophet Isaiah.

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

Rob Hammond (Meriden, CT)

Notes:

1. Observant readers might remember that in the October 2010 Tidings there was a review of his "Parenting by the Book."

Bible Study

To Speak Well of God: (18) To Speak Well of God

18.1 Reflection

Remember how the drama began. God started it. Not Satan. It was God who provoked Satan to consider Job (Job 1:8), not the other way around. And now, at this late stage in the analysis, we are well set to appreciate exactly what it was that God was starting.

I recall an episode involving a school-friend of mine who, when we were both nine, went around the school playground challenging everyone to arm-wrestling matches. He was a good kid, no bully; it was just that he had recently obtained some newly developed strength and proficiency at arm-wrestling and so was delighted to tour the playground encouraging anyone of our school year to compete. He generally won, obviously, else I presume he'd have stopped issuing the challenges; such is the nature of nine-year old boys after all (and perhaps some older ones, too!). This kept him entertained for many days that summer term, I recall. There's a certain degree of immaturity and self-promotion at work, obviously; arguably combined with a certain degree of insecurity. Yet as long as the conduct is confined to nine-year-olds arm-wrestling in the schoolyard, it's all pretty harmless.

But the problem is this. Is the book of Job teaching me that my God is the same? That He is no more mature than a braggadocio nine-year-old? After all, God can confidently challenge Satan in order to prove him wrong, because His divine omniscience guarantees Him full knowledge concerning Job's true character. But is the Joban drama showing me no more than the Almighty wandering around the celestial playground issuing intellectual arm-wrestling challenges He knows He can't lose? Is this my God?

If I'm under the impression that God performs all this to demonstrate Satan's error, presumably the answer has to be 'yes'. Unfortunately, for under those circumstances, the only thing resulting from the barter between God and Satan is

a victory for God and a defeat for Satan — which victory God knew He would secure. But understanding the three friends who ended up being saved as the embodiments of the Satan, I see a God whom I can speak well of very easily. No wonder God initiated this interaction with Satan — He was concerned with saving their lives, even of those opposing Him! That's what my God goes around provoking: Salvation.

My God is indeed an awesome God.

18.2 The Big Picture

The book of Job is a book of wisdom. It is delightfully small in plot: just three main characters and the all-too-revealing interactions deriving from their inherent natures. The characters are:

- God, whose inherent nature is Life (not counting His armor-bearer Elihu as a separate character in his own right, which is appropriate).
- The Satan, Leviathan, human pride, the second most powerful force in the universe, who is in essential opposition to God. He appears in the triumvirate form of the three friends of Job; (yet it is also true to say that the three friends are victims of Leviathan as much as they are unwitting promulgators of him).
- Job, the Righteous Man, who attempted to wrestle with the Satan to defend his God, and through whose intense suffering God was able to free the three friends trapped in their own pride.

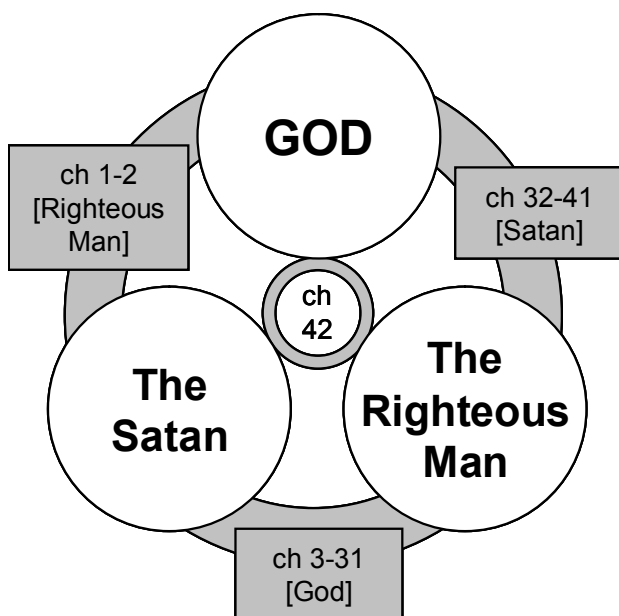
What is now tremendously attractive is the simplicity of the whole drama. The book simply presents the three fundamental forces in the spiritual universe: God; Good; and Evil (I am using 'Good' to mean obedience to God and 'Evil' to mean rebellion to Him). God directs the drama to show how each of these fundamental components interacts with the others.

Since there are only three characters in the spiritual universe, there are only four potential interfaces in that universe (and life is lived at the interface). I don't wish to sound unapproachably mathematical but in general, for any three-component system A B & C, there are four potential interfaces: A-B; B-C; A-C and the triplet A-B-C. In our case, that translates to the interfaces between: God & Evil; Good & Evil; God & Good; and all three together. The drama of Job, with superb simplicity, steps through these combinations in turn and reveals the inherent nature of each interaction (see Figure 18_1).

So, per Figure 18_1, we can summarize the book of Job this way:

- The Prologue (ch 1-2) where God interacts with the Satan. The subject is how the Righteous Man, Job, behaves.
- The Debate (ch 3-31) where the Satan interacts with the Righteous Man. The subject is how God behaves.
- The Intervention (ch 32-41) where God interacts with the Righteous Man (initially through one sent before to straighten the way and then directly). The subject is how Leviathan, the Satan, behaves.
- The Epilogue (ch 42) where all three parties collide and the conclusion of the

matter is revealed. God speaks concerning all three parties. The Righteous Man speaks concerning God and himself. The Satan is left with nothing to say. (I suspect it will also be this way at the ultimate conclusion, at the end of days.)



Destruction => <= Salvation

Figure 18_1: The book of Job. Circles represent the characters, grey bars the interfaces between them. Interestingly, the subject of conversation at the interface, shown in square brackets, is invariably the third party.

As a further symmetry, God empowers both the Satan and the righteous man to have an effect in each other's life (Figure 18_1). In the prologue, God empowers the Satan to affect the life of Job. The Satan, being Satan, can only act destructively. His self-centered jealousies operate to destroy Job's life as much as he is (they are) able. In the epilogue, God empowers the righteous man to affect Satan's life. God can confidently announce that the righteous man will act to bring salvation, even to the ones responsible for afflicting him; because it is the inherent nature of the righteous to reflect God and therefore propagate salvation, which Job faithfully does.

There is symmetry upon symmetry, yet all within a beautifully simple integrity, in this remarkable book.

18.3 To Speak Well of God

This structure reveals the book of Job as the classic education of wisdom. It lists simply and completely all the elements and interfaces in the spiritual world, so that a profound and complete understanding of spirituality can be attained by the

attentive reader. Overriding the plotline of interactions is the theme itself: “theology”: the words that a man, whether he is in opposition to God or in resonance with Him, (i.e. whether he is satanic or righteous), will speak about his God.

It also teaches us that we are guaranteed to have an effect upon the universe every moment we are alive. Every moment that we are filled with pride, our influence is constantly destructive on those with whom we interact. Conversely, every moment that we are resonant with God, our words and behavior have a saving influence. The book of Job suggests there’s no possibility of sitting passively on the fence. We’re constantly generating effects either towards salvation or destruction.

Whence then Job’s suffering? Ironically, it was a consequence of sin, just as the three friends had said all along. But not his sin, as they had wrongly supposed: it was theirs. Their intractable pride kept them from union with their God. But because God loved them, and saw the persevering faith of His servant Job, He devised a plan. By this, their pride would be brought into such sharp relief that they would be able at last to recognize their error, repent and find grace. And what an immense degree of suffering Job had to bear for this to happen! Such is the degree of damage human pride inflicts upon the world. Yet now that we can see the true source of the suffering, human pride, God is justified even as Job suffers.

And through it all, the righteous man spoke that which was right about his God, which God affirmed.

“You have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has” (Job 42:8).

Spongberg comments on God’s vindication of Job:

“Hence we learn the importance of being right. Sound doctrine is vital!!”

While Spongberg’s commendation to the vitality of doctrinal rectitude can indeed be Scripturally supported (e.g. 1Tim 4:16), I do not believe this is the point the Joban drama is trying to achieve. The point of Job’s account is not to speak well of ourselves when we speak well of God; to pat ourselves on the back perchance we should accurately perceive, or more likely receive, knowledge of some divine construct of the universe. The message of the book of wisdom is simpler than that, as wisdom often is. The wise speak well of God, which Job did; and for which the Father commends him.

By contrast, we revisit our three highly regarded friends of the common era, who presumed to speak knowledgeably of the drama. Jung, who praises man above God: “The reason He doubts Job is because He projects His own unfaithfulness upon a scapegoat”; Murray, who sees God’s behavior towards Job as: “like torturing your faithful dog to see if you can make him bite you”; and Weiss, who supposes: “God, just to make a petulant point, proceeds to do almost everything the most villainous of beings could want.” God had worked His plan of salvation successfully, and so Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite, three former emulations of the Satan, were transformed by His grace. And all that arises from the Earth in response to this miraculous work are hate-filled epithets, the like of which we see above. Yet from whom do such comments come? The Satan! Those whose characters are filled with the pride of their own supposed

intelligence: ironically the identical mindset to the three friends whom God had — successfully! — worked to save.

Most amazing of all, God knows that by working in this way He causes those who will only cast a cursory glance in His direction to be more likely repulsed by what they see, than enchanted; yet He works that way anyway. I find this is a common and deliberate methodology of God: He supplies a picture which, on the surface, will appear almost as the exact opposite of what it really is. Those who are opposed to Him will find adequate evidence to continue rejecting Him; just as those who dig deeply into an investigation of what is really happening will find the evidence that relays the beauty of the work in progress and thereby heighten their pleasure and strengthen their faith. Jesus confirms this:

“For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him” (Matt 25:29).

“Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: ‘You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. For this people’s heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.’” (Matt 13:13-15, quoting Isa 6:9-10)

The “they” in Jesus’ latter quote is necessarily those who are predisposed to disbelieve in a loving Father. Those who come to God, perhaps, not only with a view that they have a ‘right’ to live, but to have that life filled with (their concept of) blessings and, perchance even that is not enough, also an explanation, in terms they can understand, for every event in the world they perceive as unjust. With that disastrously unfortunate attitude, their interpretation of the book of Job must conclude that God is either uncaring or outright malicious. It is a true tragedy, but those who have closed off spiritual perception are sadly left in a very black darkness indeed.

So through all the years that God has worked this type of salvation, He has equally patiently borne the vitriol of those who professed themselves to be wise and castigated the very process of salvation He initiated. How fascinating it is that even their evil-speaking of God allows the disciple to further speak well of Him! We are enabled to see His almost endless patience in bearing these attacks, in addition to the loving care He provides for those he seeks to save. Again: this is an awesome God.

And He has provoked these various revelations through a single question: ***“Have you considered my servant Job?”***

Finally, I can say that I have. I have considered this most excellent servant of the One who has no servants. I am enabled to see a Father who provides, even provokes, salvation wherever He works. Sometimes this work is straightforward and His loving nature is plainly apparent; and my theology remains unchallenged. Yet

sometimes, as in the drama of Job, we see those most desperate paths to salvation. In these paths God reaches out even to those trapped in the deep-sea lair of the fiery, thrashing beast that is the near-indomitable Leviathan. No easy road to salvation this; and consequently the price exacted from the priest of the very highest, ancient order of Melchizedek is stiff indeed. But God had not underestimated the righteous man Job, and He achieved the salvation He sought. God endured throughout the centuries thereafter, with almost unending patience, those who spoke of Him viciously, precisely because He initiates this particular route to salvation, along with all the others, for us.

So, yes, I have considered God's servant Job. And consequently, I am proud of my Father.

Book on which the series is based is available

Author's note: These studies are now concluded. My grateful thanks to *The Tidings* magazine for letting me serialize about 50% of the material from the book "To Speak Well of God," available at Lulu.com <http://tinyurl.com/pople-on-job/>. Cheaper copies (about \$17 USD, or equivalent) are available from the following brethren:

- US & Canada: Bro Tom Graham, tom@bigbrand.com
- United Kingdom: Testimony magazine, c/o Sis Thelma Marshall, eric@marshalle.co.uk
- Australia: Sis Fran Caudery, francaudery@optusnet.com.au
- New Zealand: Sis Jenny Luxmoore, delux@xtra.co.nz
- South Africa: Bro Anthony Oosthuizen, antoost@mweb.co.za

John Pople (San Francisco Peninsula, CA)

Notes:

1. All references are from the NIV

God Works for Good in All Things

The believer knows that God is always wise, and, knowing this, he is confident that there can be no accidents, no mistakes; that nothing can occur which ought not to occur. He can say, 'If I should lose all I have, it is better that I should lose than have, if God so wills; the worst calamity is the wisest and the kindest thing that could happen to me, if God ordains it.'

"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." The believer does not merely hold this as a theory, but he knows it as a matter of fact. So he can in the spirit of true resignation pray, 'Send me what Thou wilt, my God, so long as it comes from Thee; never came there an ill portion from Thy table to any of Thy children.'

Charles Spurgeon

Bible Study

Leviticus and the Tabernacle (1)

This series of articles will offer insights on Leviticus, on the Tabernacle, and on the relationships between the two. It will highlight patterns in these inspired texts, including detailed links between the literary structure of Leviticus and the layout of the Tabernacle, as well as relationships to other parts of Scripture. The primary texts of interest will be Exodus 25-40 and all of Leviticus. Unfortunately, people sometimes find these chapters difficult. I will do my best to make them interesting, because they are important.

Enjoying the Boring Parts of the Bible

I have known people who set out to read the Bible cover to cover, only to founder on the second “half” of Exodus and Leviticus. They turn off because they find these chapters dry, repetitive, difficult to understand, foreign, and tedious. In short, they find them boring. Philip Rosenbaum addresses this issue head on in an interesting book called *How to Enjoy the Boring Parts of the Bible* (Wolgemuth & Hyatt: Brentwood, Tennessee, 1991). He rightly points out, “We cannot fully understand the work of Christ unless we know the Law and the Prophets. He came to fulfill them. How can we know them, if we always skip the boring parts?” (p. ix). He writes, “Some people dismiss the boring parts as irrelevant sections of the Old Testament. I wonder how they account for the beginning of the New Testament, for the first twelve verses of Matthew are taken directly from Old Testament genealogies. Evidently God values every portion of His Word, even as Christ values every member of His body” (p. 1).

Rosenbaum states his purpose in this way: “This is a guidebook to that much-avoided desert, the boring parts of the Bible. It will help you to know the desert, to learn how to live in it, to enjoy its beauty, and to find its treasures... One purpose of this book is to bestow greater honor on certain parts of the Bible which have long been without honor. If we can enjoy ourselves in the process, so much the better” (pp. ix, 2). Although we would not agree with every detail of his expositions, there is no doubt his motives are good, his methods fruitful, and many of his specific suggestions worth considering.

It is my hope that this series of articles will fulfill the same goal, making Leviticus and the Tabernacle more enjoyable.

Leviticus in the New Testament

The importance of Leviticus is clear from its frequent citation in the New Testament.

Love thy neighbor. Perhaps the best known example is Jesus’ reference to “*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself*” (Lev 19:18) as the second commandment. When combined with the first and greatest commandment, “*Hear, O Israel; the LORD*

our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deut 6:4, 5), Jesus says: "There is none other commandment greater than these" (Mark 12:31); "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matt 22:40); "This do, and thou shalt live" (Luke 10:28). If there were no other example, this one alone would make Leviticus worth studying.

Be holy as I am holy. Peter challenges us with an exhortation based on the primary theme of Leviticus. The Spirit through him says, "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1Pet 1:15, 16). Leviticus repeats this lesson several times (Lev 11:44, 45; 19:2; 20:7, 26; cf. 21:8). Again, Leviticus is the source for understanding the character of our Heavenly Father, our relationship to Him, and its implications for our behavior.

The man that doeth them shall live by them. Twice (Gal 3:12; Rom 10:5) Paul quotes Leviticus 18:5 in his arguments for including Gentiles into the family of God. The original context is the key to understanding its use by Paul:

"And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, I am the LORD your God. After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances. Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: I am the LORD your God. Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the LORD" (Lev 18:1-5).

The contrast is between the doings and ordinances of the land of Egypt and of the land of Canaan, which the children of Israel were not to do, and the LORD's judgments, ordinances, and statutes, in which they were to walk. The principle is extended beyond Israel with the phrase, "which if a man do, he shall live in them", where the reference to "a man" (*anthropos*, Greek) includes Gentiles as well as Jews. Gentiles, like Jews, must give up the ways of the Gentiles, and keep the ways of God. If they do, then they will live.

That this is the proper understanding of the passage is confirmed by the contexts of the quotations: "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed... That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Gal 3:8, 14). "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him" (Rom 10:10-12).

The Day of Atonement. The argument in Hebrews 9-10 draws detailed exhortations from the specific laws concerning the Day of Atonement described in Leviticus 16. As the high priest entered the most holy place every year through

the blood of bulls and goats, which was a pattern of things to come, Jesus entered into heaven itself through his own blood. And by his blood we are sanctified, just as the tabernacle and its furnishings were cleansed by the shedding of blood, especially on the Day of Atonement.

Many more. It has been said that Leviticus is the seventh most quoted Old Testament book in the New Testament. If we did nothing but look up these passages when they are referred to, we would do well. But to get a full understanding we need to understand them in their original contexts.

These examples show the key role that Leviticus plays in our understanding of fundamental principles. It is God's book of ABCs to instruct us on His holiness and the principles of sacrifice essential to our approach to Him.

Christadelphian Books

Christadelphians have always been interested in Leviticus and the Law of Moses more generally. Here is a brief list of some of the literature we have on these topics:

- Bro. Robert Roberts, *The Law of Moses*, The Christadelphian: Birmingham, 1979 (first printed 1899).
- Bro. W.F. Barling, *Law and Grace: A Devotional Study of the Law of Moses*, The Christadelphian: Birmingham, 1981 (first printed 1952).
- Bro. H.P. Mansfield, "Leviticus" in *The Christadelphian Expositor*, Logos Publications: South Australia, 1978-1980.
- Bro. John Martin, *The Schoolmaster: An Exposition of the Book of Leviticus*, Christadelphian Scripture Study Service: South Australia, 2005.
- Bro. Michael Ashton, *The Beauty of Holiness: God's Call in Leviticus*, The Christadelphian: Birmingham, 2007.

The Tabernacle

Exodus 25-40 divides into three major sections: (a) Plan for the Tabernacle (Exod 25-31); (b) The Golden Calf (Exod 32-34); (c) Building the Tabernacle (Exod 35-40).

The importance of the Tabernacle is emphasized from the outset: "*Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them*" (Exod 25:8). The Tabernacle was to be God's dwelling place in the midst of the children of Israel; He would "tabernacle" among them. More precisely, following the plans for the ark, mercy seat, and cherubim, the LORD tells Moses, "*And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel*" (Exod 25:22).

Apparently, Moses had to wait till Numbers 7 for this to become a reality. That long, 89-verse chapter, with its twelve-fold repetition of the detailed list of offerings from each of the tribes for the dedication of the altar, concludes, "*And when Moses was gone into the tabernacle of the congregation to speak with him, then he heard the voice of one speaking unto him from off the mercy seat that was upon the ark of testimony, from between the two cherubims: and he spake unto him*" (Num 7:89).

Why the Detailed Repetitions?

The detailed plan given in Exodus 25-31 is repeated nearly verbatim in the description of the execution of the plan in Exodus 35-40. In *The Law of Moses*, Bro. Roberts summarizes the situation:

“Besides being shown the pattern on the Mount, Moses received very full specifications, which are twice set forth, first in a ‘thou shalt make’ series, and then in an ‘and he made’ series. He was fully informed by word of mouth of what was to be done in the construction, erection, and dedication of the tabernacle. And these detailed specifications occupy seven long chapters (Exod 25-31). They are so full and complete, in the first instance, that one would naturally have supposed that it would have been unnecessary afterward, to do more in the way of record than the addition of a brief statement to the effect that the work was performed according to all these directions. Instead of this, a very particular account is given in chapters 36-39 of every step in the execution of the work—almost corresponding item by item with the specifications. The two accounts are in many particulars nearly identical. The difference is chiefly in the tense of the verb. The one reads, ‘thou shalt make’ this, that, and the other; and the other, ‘and he made’ this, that, and the other” (p. 98).

From our modern ideas of literary style this is odd. Why does God repeat all these details? Here are three answers to this question.

God’s way of providing assurance. Bro. Roberts writes:

“Pondering whether there can be anything in this apparently needless duplication of details, we may note the Divine interpretation of doubling a matter in the case of Pharaoh’s dreams: ‘For that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice, it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass’ (Gen 41:32). We have already seen that the tabernacle was ‘a figure for the time then present’, ‘a shadow of good things to come’—therefore a prophecy in enigmatical form. It had a reference to something that ‘God will shortly bring to pass’. Therefore the thing, as a matter of record was ‘established’ in being doubled” (*The Law of Moses*, p. 98).

God’s pattern of purpose first, then realization. Bro. Roberts continues:

“There is also an observable analogy in the two sets of specifications to the two phases in which all Divine procedure towards man appears: first plan, then fulfillment; first command, then obedience; first prophecy, then history; first the Divine purpose unfolded in the Gospel and illustrated in the prophetic Scriptures; and then its realization in the setting up of the kingdom in due time, when there will probably be as deliberate an execution of the programme and as complete a rehearsal of the facts achieved as there was in the building of the tabernacle in harmony with the fully-recorded preliminary specifications” (p. 99).

Following the style of the day. Umberto Cassuto argues persuasively that such

repetition was common practice in that time and place:

“The theme of the founding and building of a shrine was a stereotyped literary category in the early writings of the Eastern countries; and it was usual for such passages to record first the divine utterance describing the plan of the sanctuary in minutest detail, and thereafter to give an account of the construction, which repeated in identical or similar phrasing the description given in the divine communication. This is, indeed, only a specific facet of the general technique of repetition, which was dearly beloved of the writers of the ancient East. The literary tradition of the land of Canaan, which is continued in Biblical writings, is also fond of this practice. It will suffice to cite here one example from the Canaanite works found at Ugarit... [After giving the details, he continues]...precisely what we find in the present section of the Book of Exodus. In light of this style of composition, our section is not only not to be regarded as a later addition, but is required where it is, and, were it not here, we should have to assume that it was missing from the text” (*A Commentary on the Book of Exodus*, p. 453).

A Memory Device

A fourth reason may be the most important. Repeating the details is a wonderful way to help listeners remember what they have heard. It becomes etched in their memories. This is all the more likely because, in the case of Exodus 25-40, besides the details being repeated in the “thou shalt make” and the “and he/they made” sections, there are five further summaries of the tabernacle’s structure, making a total of seven!

- 1) “*Thou shalt make*” (Exod 25-30): the detailed plan is given.
- 2) “*I have called Bezaleel...Aholiab...all the wise hearted...that they may make all that I have commanded thee*” (Exod 31:1-11): the workers are provided and the plan summarized.
- 3) “*And every wise hearted among you shall come, and make all that the Lord hath commanded*” (Exod 35:1-19): after the episode of the Golden Calf, the summary is repeated.
- 4) “*And he/they made*” (Exod 35:20-39:32): they execute the plan, building all the elements, with all the details repeated.
- 5) “*They brought the tabernacle to Moses*” (Exod 39:33-43): the completed tabernacle is brought to Moses, with a repetition of the list of all the elements.
- 6) “*Thou shalt set up the tabernacle*” (Exod 40:1-16): God tells Moses to erect the tabernacle, repeating the list again.
- 7) “*And Moses reared up the tabernacle*” (Exod 40:17-33): finally, Moses rears up the tabernacle, repeating the summary given in the instructions.

Seven times we are told the elements, three times in the last chapter and a half. The intent is clear: we are expected to remember the components of the tabernacle and their relationships to each other. They are significant and we need to know them.

Joe Hill, Austin (Leander), Texas

Bible Study

The Glory in the Number of His Name (Part 1)

Introduction

The veiling of the glory of our Creator defines the very principle of God manifestation, the doctrinal foundation of the Christadelphian faith. Our Heavenly Father does not reveal Himself directly, but radiates Himself through His son, angels, features of creation, prophets, priests, kings, faithful believers, rituals, laws (religious and natural) and even pagan kings and armies. He should not be approached casually or disrespectfully. Despite this intentional filtering of divine glory and divine principles, we know that the understanding and appreciation of our Creator is the primary motivational feature of creation. Regardless of the intentional, distancing layers in His revelations, our God offers a reward to us, based initially upon faith, knowledge and then a behavioral response to that knowledge. Eventually, knowledge of the Creator will not be an elective option... *"for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea"* (Isa 11:9). Enlightenment will be forced on a truth despising global society.

"Therefore, behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know mine hand and my might; and they shall know that my name is The Lord (Yahweh)" (Jer 16:21).

While we still enjoy the 'voluntary' freedom to lovingly pursue the knowledge of our Heavenly Father, we can respect His communication policies by realizing there is no end to the height, depth and breadth of the complex symmetry between His written word and His spoken word. The spoken word of God is creation, which we can examine all around us. The Creator 'spoke' and incredibly complex, interdependent features of creation obediently developed into full maturity over each of six evenings and mornings. Only the arrogant minds of those who worship gods in their own image and likeness would dare to presume that the spoken word of God (creation) would not perfectly mirror the written word of God (Bible), communicating the exact same principles, promises and prophecies. Underestimating our Creator is as common as breathing in our global generation, especially among the vast hordes who actually claim to worship a creator of one capacity or another. In our voluntary, loving pursuit of the divine intention for filling the earth with the knowledge of our Heavenly Father, we first must recognize that what we seek is intentionally hidden, as well as the fact that there will be no end to the depth of that knowledge. It won't be easy or obvious, but the value to be realized is unimaginable.

The Gospel's Exclusive Avenue for Progressive Enlightenment

Empowering our capacity to witness the veiled glory of God's spoken and written word is our understanding and acceptance of the basic truths of the gospel. Ignorance of the true nature of our Creator, the true nature of man, the nature of

redemption and the outworking of the divine plan, is an impenetrable blackness that only reflects back the artificial light generated by the self-worshipping presumptions of men's hearts. We are properly armed against the relentless seductions of the human heart. We have the sharp, two-edged sword of truth to painfully circumcise our hearts... rejecting the shallow comfort of wallowing in the heart generated delusions of society. We can see genuine light. The more we love and seek that particular light, the stronger it becomes.

Ground Zero for Our Ascent into the Light

Let's apply this understanding to a simple but interesting observation about the name of our Messiah. We are probably already aware of the unique number of the name of Jesus.

Just as the man of sin is numerically identified by triple sixes (Rev. 13:18), so the man of righteousness is numerically identified by triple eights. The six letters of the Greek name of Jesus add up to 888. Iota=10, eta=8, sigma=200, omicron=70, upsilon=400 and sigma=200... totaling 888. This is a simple observation, easily verified by referencing a Greek alpha-numeric chart. This is simply a ground zero observation.

It would take very little mental effort to see how the number eight is consistently associated with specific features of the Messiah's appointed role. His kingship is identified by inheriting the throne of his ancestor, David, who was the eighth son of Jesse (1Sam 16:10-11). We can see his sacrificial status projected from the divine law that an animal sacrifice was acceptable at the bronze altar as of the eighth day of its life (Exod 22:30). Christ's victory over sin is demonstrated by the token of the Abrahamic covenant of faith: circumcision. The crown of flesh was cut off on the eighth day (Gen 17:12). Christ's victory over the curse of sin and death is projected through the completion of the cleansing procedures for those who had been healed from leprosy or a bodily issue or had touched the dead. Completing each of the seven day cleansing procedures, they were therefore 'clean' as of the eighth day. In the same sense, it is the eighth millennium since creation when the Creator will be all and in all (1Cor 15:28), enjoying total harmony with all of His creation and suffering no contradictions to His principles. There will be a rest from sin during the seventh divine day in the Millennium Kingdom but sin and the flesh will be completely cut off (circumcised) at the eighth 'day'. The priesthood of Jesus is hinted through the priestly ordination at Sinai requiring an eight day procedure (Lev 8:33 thru 9:1). Jesus was the eight components of the heaven and earth covenant in Genesis 15, with six halved earth-bound animals with their 12 legged foundation and two whole fowl of heaven. The savior status of Jesus is exhibited by the eight people saved in the gopher wood ark of Noah.

The Doubled Four Jesus Pattern

This ark application initiates a doubled four pattern in connection with the Messiah, the man of eights. The ark had four men and four women. This doubled four pattern can also be seen in that heaven and earth covenant from Genesis 15. Those eight animal carcass components, representing Jesus, were laid out in two

rows of four. Jesus was also the two sets of four surfaces upon which the finger of God wrote the Ten Commandments. These stones were called “the Covenant” just as Jesus is called the covenant (1Kgs 8:9,21; Isa 42:6). The divinely designed wilderness encampment for the Kingdom of God was formatted into two sets of four. There was an outer foursquare design formed with the political application of the twelve tribes. There was an inner foursquare design with a spiritual application seen in the three Levite divisions along with the priests. Ezekiel’s vision of the cherubim represented the multitudinous Christ. There were four cherubim with four faces. Their four wings covered their four bodies. They traveled above four wheels within four wheels (Ezek 1:16). Each of the divinely designed altars was foursquare with four horns. The foursquare bronze altar received four categories of blood sacrifices (burnt, peace, sin and trespass). On the Day of Atonement the High Priest brought two handfuls of incense (composed of four equal ingredients in each of those two hands... doubled fours) into the Most Holy Place. He put this incense into the flame he brought from the altar of burnt offering, converting this dust to a cloud so that he would not die (Lev 16:12-13).

Seeing Beyond the Shadows of Christ

This Day of Atonement application is an example of how only the enlightened have the capacity to witness the glory within the veiled beauty of God’s word. This incense application offers a hint toward the reason why the name of Jesus is identified by three eights specifically. The physical transition of the aromatic incense dust, into a cloud embracing the mercy seat, is a picture of the immortalization of the ultimate High Priest, Jesus Christ. It is a change in nature from dust to cloud, from the curse of “dust thou art and to dust thou shalt return” into a cloud. Throughout Scripture clouds consistently are identified with the presence, power and glory of Yahweh. This is what the unenlightened cannot see. Those who suffer under the spirit of antichrist, denying the flesh of Christ (1John 4:3; 2John 7), cannot conceive of a Messiah that needed immortalization. That would be a progression from flesh to spirit following the three days of his death. They see the progression as exactly the opposite, from spirit to flesh at his ‘immaculate’ birth. This reverse progression is declared to be an impossibility (1Cor 15:46); but the heart generated doctrine of a god that had to reshape himself into our image and likeness, in order to save his wrecked creation, is far more emotionally preferable to the heart dominated mind. The ritual-parable of the four equal incense ingredients in the two hands of the High Priest is invisible to anyone who doesn’t realize the Messiah needed salvation for himself first. They were transformed from dust into a single cloud on the Day of Atonement, to preserve the life of the High Priest. It was after this procedure that the High Priest entered the Most Holy:

- A second time with the blood of the bullock for the atonement of his entire priestly family.
- A third time with the blood of the goat for the atonement of the rest of the nation (Lev 16).

This progression of the three activities on the Day of Atonement within the Most Holy Place is a demonstration of the reason that the name of Jesus translates into

triple eights. They are a ritual portrayal of the three great immortalization events in the divine plan.

Eight is a number that is Scripturally and by creation related to immortality. Interestingly, the global scientific community accepts a sideways eight as a symbol for infinity. True science will always confirm divine principles as science is the study of the features of creation (the spoken word of the Creator). It will be the eighth millennium in the divine plan when everything will be infinite, when creation will no longer be dependent on replenishment according to the curse of a life and death rotation. The Creator will be in perfect harmony with His creation in that eighth divine day, that eighth 'time,' following the third and last immortalization at the end of the Millennial Kingdom.

To Be Continued

In the following two commentaries we will extend this observation to see just some of the depth of the glory of the number of our Messiah's name. We will see how microscopic but foundational features of creation perfectly mirror the principles shadowed within the six letters of his name with their cumulative total of 888. Then we will pursue our staircase reasoning into Scriptures' shadows that can only be seen by the enlightened who have circumsised away the naturally self-worshipping perspective of the human heart.

Jim Dillingham (Granite State, NH)

What the Word of God Does...

The Word of God enlightens (Psa 119:130).

The Word of God converts (Psa 19:7).

The Word of God convinces (2Tim 3:16).

The Word of God teaches (Psa 119:99; 2Tim 3:16).

The Word of God quickens (Psa 119:9; John 15:3).

The Word of God washes (Eph 5:26).

The Word of God sanctifies (John 17:17).

The Word of God dwells (Col 3:16).

The Word of God works effectively (1Thes 2:13).

The Word of God prospers (Isa 55:11).

The Word of God bears fruit (Matt 13:23).

The Word of God exhorts (Heb 13:22).

The Word of God builds up (Acts 20:32).

The Word of God guides (Psa 119:105).

The Word of God strengthens against sin (Psa 119:11).

The Word of God endures (1Pet 1:23).

The Word of God corrects (2Tim 3:16).

The Word of God judges (John 12:48).

The Joy of Sunday Schooling

Challenges We Face: Just One Student!

What suggestions can you offer to a Sunday school teacher who has just one student in his or her class?

- 1) Get this in perspective. If a next-door neighbor came to us for one-on-one Bible instruction, we would be thrilled. This Sunday school class is a one-on-one opportunity.
- 2) Don't minimize the importance of just one student. A life has been placed in your hands. Look at it as an advantage and not a problem. It is possible to do things with a single child that would be much more difficult to do with bigger classes. For example: Customizing the entire learning experience. Planning can focus on the needs of one child. Instruction can directly address his or her needs.
 - a) Interacting. This can proceed on a personal level without having to divide your time.
 - b) Capitalizing on the strengths of the child. Sunday school projects and extra-curricular activities can build specifically on what this child does best.
 - c) Addressing the weaknesses of the child. Remediation can be entirely individualized.
 - d) Scheduling. Planning and carrying out in-class and out-of-class activities will almost certainly be easier than it would be with a larger class.
- 3) Do a lot of listening. Find out where the child is coming from. This is important with all children, but can be especially critical when working with an older child.
- 4) Talk with the parents. Find out what the child's needs and interests are. Find out how he or she learns best; i.e., what his or her learning styles are. Use this information to develop relevant Sunday school lessons and teaching strategies. Personalize.
- 5) Talk with parents that home school their children. Find out how they handle the individual needs of their children.
- 6) If the child is older, involve him or her in decisions about the Sunday school lessons and class format in general.
- 7) Be prepared to drop a planned lesson to deal with a problem that has immediate relevance for the child. Be flexible; be approachable.
- 8) Use every opportunity, in class and out of class, to build a good interpersonal relationship with the child.
- 9) Be willing to meet and interact outside the formal Sunday school setting if this can help the child's spiritual development. Again, this may be particularly important with an older child.
- 10) Combine classes occasionally with another teacher. Involve your child with

others in the Sunday school in as many ways as possible.

- 11) Bring in 'resource people' to get varied inputs and broaden the kinds of interactions that take place (e.g., ask another brother or sister in Christ to join you on a given Sunday to deal with a special topic).
- 12) Bring in an 'extra' (e.g., ask a respected young person/role model to join the class, possibly someone who is a little older or more mature). This can help enliven discussion and interaction. This has been known to work fairly well with mid- to upper-teen students, but it may not work in all situations.
- 13) Encourage the child to bring a friend to Sunday school.
- 14) Recruit new Sunday school students to enlarge the Sunday school class. (Of course, new students create an entirely new dynamic in the class!)
- 15) Be willing to relinquish the reins and bring in someone else if it is evident that another teacher may have more success with this child than you are having. But don't be too quick to give up! Pray.

Jim Harper (Meriden, CT)

Your comments and additions to this list are invited: Please send them to me at 2harps4u@gmail.com.

Boys of the Hills

*Boys of the hills grow larger views.
For are the hills not high?
And does not climbing exercise
The will of those who try?*

*The highest peak is first to see
The glory of the dawn,
And that same peak can see the sun
When others think it's gone.*

*Up to the hills he lifts his eyes;
From whence shall come his aid?
His safety cometh from the Lord,
Who heaven and earth hath made.*

*And thus the little Son of God,
In Galilee's green hills,
Soon learned to trust God's staff and rod
To keep him from all ills.*

*O Nazareth, thy very streets
Should shout aloud for joy,
For they did feel the happy feet
Of God's own little boy.*

W.B. Tunstall

Letter

Comments on Ron Kidd's Article (October, 2010) regarding the use of the Internet and Social Networking sites.

Bro. Kidd's letter is useful but I believe it somewhat overlooks the positive value the Web provides, and overstates the potential "evils" of social networking sites.

Christadelphia has embraced "the Web" to make a wider footprint than could normally be achieved by traditional means. Many ecclesias have websites to provide a neutral space for friends to learn about Christadelphians, how to contact them, and so on.

Bible school recordings and even papers that would (or should) normally be distributed within ecclesias are widely available on the Web. In addition, Wikipedia provides a wealth of information about Christadelphia. Entries include biographies, descriptions of fellowships, as well as other issues that have afflicted Christadelphia.

Recently, social networking sites such as Facebook and LinkedIn have been embraced by thousands of Christadelphians around the world. They provide a level of connection unheard of before, a sort of "high tech pen-pal" site. Facebook provides several discussion forums that are very popular, with participants numbering over 500 people.

Christadelphian online discussion forums, in fact, have existed since the early 1990's, when initially only a handful participated. These activities are well established in Christadelphia.

Of course, as in all discourse, even in ecclesias, discussions can sometimes lead to tone and words that are unChrist-like. Errors in discussions on the Web tend to be corrected by other participants. There is a well-established online culture that exists which, for the most part, is respected.

These forums also provide a safe place where issues of importance can be freely discussed by brethren and sisters who hold a wide range of views and opinions. Ultimately, all learn more about what it means to be a disciple of Christ. However, they also realize that ecclesial problems are not solved there but by individual members of ecclesias and within ecclesias.

Most significantly, these forums offer a space for reaching out to the dissatisfied, to those who feel like leaving the truth, to those who for whatever reason do not feel comfortable being a Christadelphian, or feel disillusioned with their experiences being a Christadelphian. They can safely express their thoughts freely. Often someone may have a caring word that makes a difference between that person leaving the Truth or giving it another chance. This is not hypothetical. It is real and I have seen it happen more than once over the several decades that I have

participated. I have even received messages of thanks by some who were ready to leave the Truth and were glad to have someone who was willing to hear their story.

The Lord God indeed works in many ways, and He is quite capable of using brethren and sisters in another part of the world to gently encourage someone in their time of difficulty. These forums can do this because participants often have open ears and hearts and are ready to listen to other's concerns, and through these means, God brings back the lost sheep to the fold.

Glenn Lea (Berlin, Germany)



I am Abigail (Part 2)

The Wedding to Nabal

Several days passed and then a man came to our home; it was Nabal's head servant. He had come to speak to my father, and his business remained locked inside him until he and my father could talk in private. My mother and I were terribly curious, but the younger children were as noisy as ever, so we could hear nothing from behind the closed door. Then I felt it returning, that strange uneasy feeling.

After what seemed like hours, my father and the servant appeared in the doorway. The servant paused, glanced at me, and then left our home. I could see worry in my father's face as he turned to look at my mother. Now I was sent outside while my parents talked. The quiet whispered conversation grew louder at times; I could hear my name. Then I heard my mother weeping softly. What was happening? Why was I outside the room if my name were being spoken inside?

Finally the door opened and my father called for me. I moved awkwardly, on command, but my heart did not wish to go into that room. I heard... and yet I did not hear... it was as though my body had shut out some dreadful reality. Indeed, it was a dreadful thing... but I only know that in its fullness now, years later. Nabal wished to marry me... me, Abigail... and my father had consented. I never was told by my parents the details of the arrangements. Indeed, if they had explained it to me, I don't think my mind would have heard. I felt lost, as though I were floating in a terrible dark emptiness and dread.

The usual betrothal period followed... hours, days, weeks and months of concern for me. How I longed to remain in my parents' home, poor as it was, with our own customs, with my brothers and sisters, with all that was familiar. This was no dreamy state of eager, happy new love. It was more like a nightmare, one that did not go away when I awoke in the morning.

Lavish wedding preparations were being made. How could my parents afford all this, I wondered? The whole village eagerly anticipated the spectacular event. My mother and father seemed distant from me; there was none of the joy of betrothal

times. At night I often heard my parents arguing... followed by my mother's soft weeping. I cried too.

The few times Nabal visited he was accompanied by his servants, and he spoke mainly to my father. To me he paid little attention — a glance, a word... that was all.

The wedding day arrived. It was filled with people, confusion, activity, and awkward attempts at outward joy. I will never forget the dread I felt as the cry went forth in the evening air: "Here's the bridegroom. Come out to meet him." Then I was whisked off to Nabal's enormous house... for I was now Abigail, wife of Nabal of Carmel. Many in our village must have thought my parents had secured a splendid marriage for me. I would have a life of ease and luxury; the best of food and clothes; menservants, maidservants, and all riches. Somehow my village neighbors conveniently forgot the harsh things we had always heard about Nabal. For them it didn't matter, but for me it would be a bitter reality that seemed as though it would never end. The uneasy feeling I first felt in my village settled down over me like a cloud.

The Marriage to Nabal

I was trapped. I now knew the fear of a wild creature ensnared, with no possibility of escape. Days and weeks continued in a hopeless procession. How had this happened to me? Hear my prayers, O Lord God. Was not my heavenly Father aware of my grief and misery? I knew that He alone could save me from such an existence, and so I tearfully sought Him morning, noon, and night, day after day. My refuge was in His Word, in the echoes of my father's stories. How often I recalled Joseph's life, of the betrayal he experienced from his brothers, of slavery, of an unjust imprisonment... and my heart felt a kinship I had never known before. I, too, must endure and not lose faith in my heavenly Father, the One who sees all, hears all, and knows all.

I remember it all now as though it was but yesterday... and the remembering of it makes me shudder once again.

My husband never showed any affection towards me, and I never really learned much about him. Nabal was distant and uncaring by day. By night he was even worse. He and his friends would drink until the dawn of a new day; then, half sick, they would fall asleep where they sat. At other times he drank alone, and he would become loud and abusive to his servants. These were the nights I feared the most, because I knew that when he was finished cursing the servants he would seek me out. He would stumble from room to room searching and calling my name. At first I hid from him, and prayed for an escape. But I did not always escape. Later, as the fear diminished I would confront him... but this only added to his anger. So, in the end, just like his other servants, I left him alone to his foolish ways. Wine indeed is a mocker, and whoever is led astray by such is not wise.

During this time, I constantly thought of my parents... of our simple home, of the discipline of our lifestyle, of my brothers and sisters, of the happy marriages I knew. And I would wonder why, oh why, was I trapped in this... this existence? Where were my parents and family when I so desperately needed them? My messages

to them were never answered. It seemed that all I knew and loved had vanished. My only friends were my servants, my fellow-sufferers in this grand but heartless house. They, alone, knew something of the misery of this pitiful marriage.

It was during one of his drunken rages that I learned another bitter fact, the real reason behind our marriage. Nabal took great delight one night in telling me that I was his: he had bought me out of poverty. Apparently, my father was in debt to other villagers. Times had been hard. But what do the young know of such things? Somehow Nabal had learned of this and cleared my father's debts.

However, I was the "repayment" — Nabal had bought me. He had paid for the betrothal feast, the wedding garments, and the wedding feast. Then, as the shock of it all settled over me, Nabal laughed as he told me the worst. If, he said, I had ever wondered why my family never visited me, the answer was that he, Nabal, had also made it a part of my "contract"... no family ties allowed.

So, at last, I knew the whole truth in its ugliness... and I was crushed. Now I understood my mother's tears, and my father's silent shame. My parents were bound up with us in this agony of life.

Added to the daily misery was the lack of all things spiritual. There were no evening and morning prayers, no joy of feast days in this house, no reciting of Israel's history, and no desire for the Word or the ways of God. Indeed, the fool does say in his heart... as well as in his deeds: "There is no God."

Nabal was, however, not lazy. He worked tirelessly at his accounts. He also wanted — indeed, he was determined to have! — larger flocks and herds, bigger and better vineyards, more barns, better crops. His lands were overworked, as were his animals and servants. Many times a new servant would come to me to see if I would hear a case and intervene on his or her behalf with the master of the household. Little did they know that Nabal cared for me no more than he cared for them; I was just one more of his "possessions", to use as he pleased. He lived in his own world, while I existed only on the fringes of that world.

Strange as it may seem, however, my world was a busy, useful life. As mistress of a large house and grounds, I had much to oversee and I enjoyed the challenge. My mother had taught me well, although my tasks were not quite the same as they had been back in our village. I tried to treat my servants fairly, and they responded with respect. Yes, my days came to be filled with productive tasks... while the nights continued to seem like endless dark passages, punctuated by Nabal's drunken revelries of cursing and abuse. During those nights, I especially felt hopeless and empty, and the uneasiness would eat away at me.

To be continued...

"God is working out His purpose, every day and everywhere. While we worry, He reigns. When we 'decide' — whether wisely or foolishly — He reigns. Whatever we do, or don't do, He still reigns: the Alpha and Omega; He who was, who is, and who is to come. To believe this is to go unafraid into the future" (Author unknown).

Wonders of the Bible

As I pondered the request to write a series of short articles on the wonders of the Bible, I thought where should I start? Then ‘eureka’, I found it; the very existence of the Bible translated in the vernacular is a wonder in itself!

Brave men

Early translations from the Greek, Hebrew and Latin were the property of the established Roman Catholic Church and available only to designated priests and monks.

Protestant reformers like John Wycliff (1320-1384) and William Tyndale (1494-1536) were passionate in their belief that the Scriptures should be available to everyone in their native language. John Wycliff, who produced an admirable English translation from the Latin, was promptly condemned as a heretic and excommunicated.

A hundred and ten years later, William Tyndale a brilliant linguistic scholar, educated at Cambridge University, shared the same aspirations as John Wycliff.

He proclaimed: “I defy the Pope and all his laws. If God spare my life ere many years, I will cause the boy that drives the plow to know more of the Scriptures than you.” Tyndale, aware that the Church of Rome claimed to be the only authority of Scriptural interpretation, knew that if he persisted in his stated objective his life would be in great danger. Nevertheless, this courageous man continued to translate original Hebrew and Greek manuscripts into English. In addition, he added marginal notes challenging accepted church doctrines. The wrath of the powerful and influential Cardinal Wolsely was aroused. Tyndale was excommunicated from the church and hunted as a branded heretic. Miraculously he managed to escape over to Belgium and went into hiding; from where he worked tirelessly at translating.

Providentially it was the age of the new printing press. Bibles were rapidly printed and loyal friends of Tyndale smuggled hundreds of Bibles into England. Even though the penalty of owning a Bible was death, people clamored to buy one. Bookstores and private homes were raided by the authorities, resulting in huge bonfires of Bibles burning across the country. The paranoia raged, due to fear that the common people would read the Scriptures and develop their own belief systems contrary to accepted church doctrine.

Betrayal

Sadly William Tyndale was betrayed and executed just outside Antwerp in 1536. As he was being tied to the stake prior to being strangled and burnt, his last words resonated loudly “Lord, open the eyes of the King of England” (The king being the notorious Henry the Eighth).

It would appear that the prayer was answered, because only four years after the martyr’s death, no less than four translations, heavily based upon Tyndale’s work were published in England. One was The Myles Coverdale, or Great Bible as it is sometimes called. Amazingly, Thomas Cranwell, secretary to King Henry, had

commissioned it on behalf of the monarch. The clergy were ordered to chain a Coverdale Bible in every church in the land: "Set up in some convenient place within the said church, that ye have care of, whereas your parishioners may commodiously resort to the same and read it"

Taking his cue from his forerunner on the English throne, King James first requested 54 independent scholars to produce a new English Bible. Once again, the work of Tyndale was the basis. These men completed the task in 1611 and the world was introduced to an outstandingly beautiful literary masterpiece; known as the Authorized or King James Version, it is still admired and beloved today.

The fact that the Bible is on the all-time best sellers list, attests to the desire of people to own one. But whether it is read is a very different matter. Many consider it only as a good luck talisman.

Yes, the survival of the Bible, despite concentrated attempts to destroy it, is indeed a wonder. How well blessed we are to be able to read it without fear of persecution.

Have you read your Bible today?

Patricia Bartle, Picton(ON)

Even Angels Like Chocolates

It was another quiet Halloween night this year with only a few trick or treaters having shown up at the door. The neighborhood has been fairly quite recently, since most of the local children have grown up and moved away. And just as we were about to turn off the lights, a knock came at the door. Who could that be, now that it was almost 8pm? I opened the door quite expecting this to be another round of older kids hitting the streets, but much to my surprise, it was two young girls with no costume. They had instead a little shopping cart, the kind you collapse and put into the trunk of your car. One look at their eyes and I knew they weren't looking for candy. Their eyes were filled with purity, and their disposition was of a very humble nature, quite unlike the other young teens roaming the streets that night. They kindly asked if we had any extra cans of food, since they were collecting for a local food bank. I was instantly moved and ran to check with my wife as to what we had in the house that we could give to these girls. And as my wife went searching for the cans, I had a little chat with the young girls, quite moved by their loving spirit and care for others. It transpired that this had been the third year that they had done this on Halloween night, and I commended them for their lovely spirit. It's not often that you see this unselfish nature in the characters of young people today, and I wondered to myself after they left if we perhaps had entertained angels unawares.

What does it mean in Hebrews 13:1-2, that, "*Some have entertained angels unawares?*" There are two things that we should understand when searching for the truth of this verse. Number one, the word "angel" here is a Greek word which simply means "a messenger", and is the exact same word translated "messenger" in Luke 7:24, where it speaks about people, not angelic beings. Number two, the word translated "entertain strangers" is the Greek word meaning to be friendly to

those who you don't know. It's taken from the root words [philos] meaning friend, and [xenos] which here means someone with whom you are not acquainted.

So what we learn from this verse is that we must always be hospitable or "friendly to those who we do not know" because thereby some have entertained messengers of God unawares. All believers are God's messengers, and the hospitality which we, as the family of God, show to all people should be the Love of God working in our lives. We never know which role we may be in at any time. Whether a guest, or a host, or a stranger ourselves, in any role we find ourselves we should be neighborly and charitable.

Every day, we could be entertaining angels unaware! We should try to embrace each day as if it was going to be our last. You never know when you might be entertaining angels unaware. Planting seeds for the kingdom and not even realizing what we have done will be quite a blessing at our Lord's return. *"And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me"* (Matt 25:40).

As these two young girls were about to leave, I offered them some chocolates, which they were very happy to receive. I guess even angels like chocolates!

Peter Dulis (Toronto West, ON)

A Lesson from a Mental Hospital

Darrel

It was in 1957 and I had been working at Byberry (Philadelphia State Mental Hospital) for a year or so when I got a phone call from building E-2. This was to come over and see what the new attendant, Jack Field (who had replaced me on that building) had been doing with Darrel Smith, one of the patients. They said I was going to be amazed. I had worked on E-2 for a while and was very familiar with Darrel. He was about 40 years old, in good shape, but he was quite crazy. My ward had the patients who not only had mental problems, but were also crippled and/or incontinent. There are all kinds of mental illness and all kinds of degrees of severity which can affect people. Some patients could go for long periods of time functioning quite well. But most of my patients were pretty consistently impaired.

You couldn't get Darrel dressed very easily. You could get some clothes on him in the morning but they wouldn't stay on long. So for the most part I didn't try. Wednesday and Sunday were visiting days and I would have to keep him dressed but it was a hassle that I did not look forward to and I wouldn't bother on the rest of the days. For the most part he would spend his days standing in the middle of the day room looking up to the ceiling in the clothes he was born in talking away in some stuttering, incomprehensible gibberish and answering natures' calls on the first ring whenever they came to him. While the other patients would have different "life styles", quite a few shared that last habit. And they all shared the same future. After their early diagnosis, and perhaps some bouts with shock therapy, it was determined that about all that could be done for them was to house them, and give them some drugs to calm them down if they became a problem.

From my perspective there was nothing that could be done for them and I certainly didn't have any good ideas. There wasn't any way that I was going to change the prognosis for 45 mental patients during my 8 hour shift, so I walked them through the tunnels to the mess hall for their meals, made sure the "worker" patients got the mopping up done and the beds cleaned up and made, and in general just coped with meeting the minimum required to make it through the day.

So you can understand my astonishment when I went over to E-2 and down to my old ward. There was Jack, in the little cage office we had in one corner of the large room in which the patients slept, talking with Darrel. Jack and I were at different ends of the age spectrum. I was 18 when I started at Byberry and Jack was around 50. He had been a medic in the navy during WW2 and had three neat little wounds in one leg from a Japanese .30 caliber machine gun that he received while helping the Marines in one of their landings. We became good friends and fishing buddies over the next couple of years.

Shortly after Jack took over my ward he started a pattern of taking Darrel out of the day room and, once the morning chores were in hand, bringing him into the cage office and just talking to him. He kept telling Darrel that he knew that Darrel could understand him, and that he could talk sensibly if he wanted to. Jack would do this every day for a period of time. Finally there was a break through. Darrel started coming out of his own world and began responding to Jack. He spoke in short bursts, and there was still pronounced stuttering, but now it was a direct, reasonable response to questions. Jack said: "Darrel, you remember Ken from when he worked here last year don't you?" He looked right at me and said he remembered me. We talked for a little bit. I don't remember what we said but I clearly remember that Darrel was now capable of communicating. And Jack and others were now going to be able to communicate with him.

Over the years the lesson from that experience took form as I reflected on the contrast between Jack's approach to the job and my own. As I clearly could not cure the 45 patients, there did not seem to be much sense in trying, so I did nothing but cope with meeting the minimum requirements.

Jack did what he could

He could not do what he did for Darrel with all 45 patients, but he did not let that discourage him from doing what he could do for Darrel. He looked for what he could do to make a difference. And he did it.

The discouragement that we all experience in our lives at some times with some problems can cause us to consciously despair of things ever getting better. This can close off possible avenues that could bring hope, because we give up investing time and effort in thinking positively about what we might be able to do that could bring about change. Instead of looking for what we can do, we give up and do nothing.

Mary of Bethany must have felt overwhelmed by the discouraging events that were overtaking everything and everyone associated with Jesus. The organized religious establishment, the scribes, the Pharisees and the priests, were all uniting in one common purpose, to execute Jesus. She was a woman. What could she do? She

did not have the ear of the leadership. And even if she did, events were moving with an irreversible momentum. Pilate's wife had Pilate's ear but that did not help.

But Mary turned her thoughts to what she could do. It was in her power to take the treasure she had in the alabaster box of spikenard ointment and put it to a far better use than any such treasure had ever been used before. The account in Mark 14:1-9 no doubt conjures slightly different pictures in the imaginations of us all. I see a woman coming in to a dinner and disrupting it completely resulting in what must have been a range of reactions, including the murmuring about the waste of the ointment that could have been used to raise cash for the poor. Doing something often brings murmuring. The murmurs can range from the legitimate questions by those who do not understand, to the defensive postures sometimes taken by those made uncomfortable about their own lack of actions. And then there can be those who act from seriously wrong motives, like Judas who really wanted to get his hands on the money.

Jesus answered the murmurers. He tells them to leave her alone. He puts the humanitarian concerns in perspective less they overshadow spiritual matters. And he says: *"She hath done what she could..."*

What Jack did for Darrel, and what we are likely to do, will not be in the same league as what Mary did. As long as we do what we can we will have acquitted ourselves well. After all, that is all that is expected of us. We will not be faulted for failing to effect changes we believe will be beneficial. We are only responsible for doing what we can.

Jesus' concluding words were *"Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken off for a memorial of her"* (Mark 14:9). We do still talk about it. I just did. And I still think about what Jack did. Sometimes it is the little things that really stand out.

Ken Sommerville (Simi Hills, CA)

*"We're all travelers in this world.
From the sweet grass to the packing house,
From birth to death,
We travel between the eternities."*

This is a line recited several times, in the movie "Broken Trails", by Robert Duvall's character, an old cowboy with a poetic bent. The words are spoken at the grave-side. They are a comment on the brevity of life, set alongside the eternal sweep of God's world and God's time, by a man who has evidently considered the words of the Preacher: "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity" (Eccl 1:2).

"When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?" (Psa 8:3,4). "All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field. The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the LORD blows on them. Surely the people are grass. The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever" (Isa 40:6-8).

George Booker

Book Review

“My Journey in Faith” by Ron Hicks

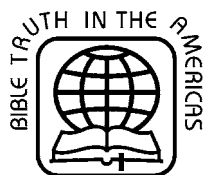
The writer Ralph Waldo Emerson once wrote “There is properly no history; only biography.” As a history student, this quote came alive for me while reading Bro. Ron’s autobiography. Bro. Ron has watched the world change over the last 50 years from a spiritual perspective. The remarkable amount of experiences our brother has had through his life in both the secular and spiritual world makes this book a very compelling read. I found “My Journey in Faith” to be a valuable journey into the personal faith of our brother, an interesting historical account, and a helpful example for my own walk in the Lord.

Bro. Ron bravely opens himself up to his readers concerning his faithful walk in the Lord. He himself says that writing an autobiography at first seems to be “rather immodest”. However he goes on to ponder “how helpful it would be if some of my brothers and sisters in Christ would write about their lives, for the spiritual benefit of others.” His life transfers well to book form because of his tireless activity in international and local mission work, as well as his career path in the International Monetary Fund. His example of continually trusting the direction of his life to the Lord God is a lesson that is cemented over and over through “My Journey in Faith.” Bro. Ron candidly admits many times that when he was unsure of his next actions he prayerfully trusted in the Lord, eventually finding the providential guidance he needed. He provides a balanced view of many of the issues we allow ourselves, as a community, to be divided over. Through his life’s example, he stresses the importance of constantly serving the Lord and thinking outside of oneself, an attitude which often washes away the vanities of life. His passion for fellowship with the Christadelphian community all over the world is a constant theme; he includes many details of conferences he attended and brothers and sisters he fostered relationships with. His refreshing openness makes this an autobiographical work worth of reading.

“My Journey in Faith” provides an excellent commentary and recounting of recent world history. Bro. Ron spent 30 years working for the IMF and his career drew him to countries all over the world and to many unusual situations. He often remarks on how much of a blessing this position was for him, as it allowed so much work in the truth, and developed within him a fascinating world-view.

My Journey in Faith” was an amazingly timely read in my own life. My wife and I are currently spending four months in Hyderabad India, and Bro. Ron’s insights into overseas mission work are especially pertinent to me. The many spiritual lessons he brings out are applicable to believers of all ages and circumstances. I had no trouble reading the book in merely a few days as Bro. Ron’s writing style was enjoyable and easy to follow. I would suggest this book whole-heartedly as it is thoroughly encouraging and uplifting.

Levi Gelineau (Hyderabad, India)



Bible Mission News

Los Angeles Hispanic Ecclesia, October 6, 2010

With great joy we witnessed the baptism of José Carlos Leiva on September 18, 2010, in the pool at the home of Bro. Manny and Sis. Celina Cervantes. Bro. José Carlos (originally from El Salvador) began receiving the Bible correspondence course about three years ago and started attending the meeting a year ago. It was a pleasure to share the happiness of the day with several Spanish-speaking brethren and sisters from other ecclesias in the area. After the baptism the children went swimming, then we had a lovely dinner and lots of good fellowship. May God bless and keep our new brother in His care until the return of Jesus and the kingdom



Los Angeles Hispanic Ecclesia

Thank you, Miss Vera!!

The members, young people and friends of the LA Hispanic Ecclesia would like to say a special “thank you” to Sis. Vera Ifill for her unfailing love and support since the meeting was established 12 years ago.

In 1998, when the work to found a Spanish-language meeting in downtown Los Angeles was begun, Vera was a constant encouragement, both with her words and her presence. Even though she understood no Spanish, every Sunday afternoon she would sit through our breaking of bread (after having already attended the

memorial meeting and SS in her own ecclesia). Then afterwards she would teach our Junior Sunday school scholars (in English), to whom she was known as “Miss Vera.” Sunday school is held during the public lecture so that the visitors can bring their children. Vera was 84 yrs. old at the time and always lamented that she was not 10 years younger so that she could help out more! She continued her support for the first several years of our ecclesia’s existence, until we changed to a Sunday morning format.

Now we are once again enjoying Vera’s presence at our breaking of bread. At the age of 96 she finds the longer drive to her own meeting (Los Angeles Ecclesia) too much for her, while our hall is only 10 minutes from her house. Vera has always been an example of dedication and enthusiasm for preaching the Truth of the Bible — she is never without a leaflet to hand to someone, she never has a conversation that doesn’t include a reference to Israel, world events and prophecy. So again, “Thank you, Miss Vera!!”

*Submitted by
Jim and Jean Hunter*

St. Lucia In Praise of Preaching!

The importance of preaching

Ever since the days of the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth, preaching the gospel and building up the body of Christ has been an important work. Since the establishment of the Christadelphian community about one hundred and fifty years ago, direct preaching either spoken or written has been how the body of Christ has grown and developed. To this end about 1950 the CBM was established, first in the UK and then in other countries to facilitate preaching in areas where the truth was not established. As a result of the work of brothers and sisters under the auspices of the CBM many thousands of people have heard the gospel who would otherwise have remained in the darkness of the world!

For those who have worked in the mission field there is a certain thrill about presenting the gospel and seeing its understanding develop in the heart of a listener! Sometimes the conversion is accomplished in a few months, sometimes it takes years. But the result is the same; a person has been brought “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” and one more saint has had his or her name written in the book of life.

The Jewel of the Caribbean

Saint Lucia (to give the island its official full name) is perhaps the most scenic of the Caribbean archipelago. Magnificent beaches, seascapes, rain forest and very few flat spots are its claim to fame. Having an area of 620 km² and only 160,000 citizens the island is not over populated. During the course of the European wars, St. Lucia was fought over by the British and French, and finally became confirmed as a British colony in 1814. There is today a strong French influence in the names

of towns, and the French based patois spoken by many of its citizens. This is particularly noticeable in the markets where farming people come to sell their produce. English is the language of education and is dominant.

“How beautiful are the feet of them...”

Preaching began in St. Lucia in the early 1990's and today an ecclesia of twelve members meets in an “upper room” in Castries, the capital of the country.

During those nearly twenty years many brothers and sisters have come to stay and help in the preaching. Some came in groups, some came by themselves; some came for many months and some for a few weeks, as each could manage. Some have come for a holiday, and two couples have spent their honeymoon here! The result of all their labours has been steady progress and growth for the children of God in this place.



**St. Lucia
Ecclesia**

The most recent missionaries who were here for an extended stay were Arne and Emma Roberts (Cardiff Museum Place) who stayed for nearly ten months, with their two young children. The benefit to the local brothers and sisters in the ecclesia has been significant and now that their time in St. Lucia has concluded they will be missed. Through Arne and Emma's support, Bro. Andre George wrote and published his book “The Trinity — Myth or Mystery?” Monthly newsletters were produced, several series of lectures were held with good attendance of a core group of interested friends. Under Arne's guidance, some of the brethren have made great progress in their understanding of the truth and are better able to communicate the gospel to others. They feel better able to answer those who enquire of “the reason of the hope” that is in them. During those ten months, a number of family members and friends from the UK came to visit Arne and Emma and while they were here contributed to the work of preaching and supporting the local brothers and sisters.

Challenges!

Like so many areas of the world, preaching and ecclesial support in St. Lucia has its challenges! The climate for most of the year is hot and humid; which is something hard to get used to for visitors from cooler climes. Air conditioning is becoming much more available with many offices and shops air conditioned. Some homes are air conditioned, at least in the bedrooms which makes for pleasant sleeping. There is the rainy season when doing much out-door activity is very difficult and in contrast, there are periods when the sun shines for several weeks at a time.

The circumstances of the members of the ecclesia in St. Lucia do not make it easy for them to offer hospitality to visitors; hence the initiative for informal gatherings rests with missionaries. Some members have challenges in their personal lives and a missionary might be drawn into helping resolve a personal difficulty.

Having young children does limit the time that can be spent “away from home” and having children of school age may create a cultural strain when attending school.

Come over to “Macedonia” and help us

Probably those most able to come to a place like St. Lucia are a couple who is willing to dedicate time and effort to support the young ecclesia here. Historically those who have come have been retired or taken extended leave from their employment. In the case of Arne and Emma Roberts, Bro. Arne’s redundancy was seen as a God-given opening for mission work. However, there are employment opportunities in St. Lucia which means that brothers and sisters who are in the “career phase” of life could perhaps consider mission work as an adjunct of their employment. The employment opportunities appear to be particularly good in the medical and hospitality fields. Teacher exchanges for one or two years is another possibility. If such a situation did arise, CBM Canada would certainly do all that is possible to facilitate its success for both the missionaries and the ecclesial members.

As indicated above, there is a core group of about fifteen interested friends, who if they were to accept the truth would double the size of the ecclesia. These friends need nurturing and regular personal contact would greatly help them to develop a deeper understanding of the truth.

It is not hard to have a conversation with somebody here about the Bible. One brother doing missionary work here routinely carried a small Bible with him when travelling on the bus or walking along the street. Quite often people would see this and ask him about his faith.

Special Appeal

It does seem that the Lord has “much people” in St. Lucia. If your personal circumstances will permit, please do consider the opportunities for working in this “Jewel of the Caribbean”. Without doubt, it is a labour of love, but as the apostle Paul tells us “you know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

For discussion or further information please contact Brother Don Luff: luffs@sympatico.ca

Martin Webster

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.cmdfa.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.)

ECHO LAKE, NJ

We are sorry and pray that our Sis. Marge Shivkumar may be strengthened at this time as we report the recent loss of both of her in-laws who were not in the Truth.

We were encouraged and uplifted at our study weekend and thank our Bro. Roger Long (Coventry, UK) for his diligent work and ministrations. 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: Margan Packie, Virginia Packie, Carolyn Antonaccio, David and Maryann Jorgensen (Union NJ); Kamice Bailey (Georgetown Guyana); Kurian Varghese (Isolation in India); Alan Eyre (Jamaica); Bill Kennedy (Isolation, Florida), Bill and Pamela Lam, Nancy Bennett, Sue Cheetham, and Bob and Bobby Faust (Moorestown, NJ); David and Louise Birchall (London, ON); Ruth Ann Jorgensen (Rochester, NY); and Steve and Mary DeMarco, (Honesdale, PA).

Stewart Marsden

LONDON, ON

It is with tremendous joy that we announce the baptism of VERITY LAWTON, daughter of Bro. Terry Lawton of the Barrie Ecclesia on Sunday August 8, 2010. Many ecclesial and family members came great distances to witness this special occasion and we pray that we will be a strength to each other in our walk to the Kingdom until our Lord's return. We thank Bro. Jim and Sis. Esther Harper from Meriden, CT, who spent the week together with the ecclesia with Bro. Jim giving talks from Wednesday September 15 to September 19 including our study day on the Saturday on the theme "Beatitudes". We gained great strength and encouragement.

Dave Birchall

NEW WESTMINSTER, BC

Bro. Don Pearce (Rugby) is scheduled to lead our Fraternal Gathering on Easter weekend, April 23-24, 2010. Topic: "Events at the Time of the End".

Art Bull

PITTSBURGH, PA

On July 3, 2010 our Bro. Tim Pommer and Sis. Holly Lavia were united in marriage. May the Lord guide and bless them on their way to the Kingdom.

We welcomed Bro. Joel Ifill who was transferred from the Los Angeles Ecclesia and Sis. Vanessa Schwieger who was transferred from the Paris Avenue Ecclesia. We look forward to serving the Lord together with them.

We were happy to have visiting us Sis. Sarah Telles (Norfolk, VA), Bro. Andrew, Sisters Cindy and Shannon Auger (North Bay, ON), Bro. Craig and Sis. Amy Craver, Bro. Greg Misko, Jr. and Bro. Kyle Misko, Bro. Roger and Sis. Joy Snyder, and Bro. Derek Elder (all from Paris Ave., OH). We thank Bro. Greg Misko, Jr. for his words of exhortation.

Bill Folkerts

SUSSEX, NB

We were delighted to have the company of 37 visiting Brothers, Sisters and children for our study weekend in October 2010, when Bro. Ken Curry (Toronto, ON) uplifted us with his talks on “Stewardship”. Visitors were from Derby, UK; Meriden, CT; Boston, MA; Hamilton, ON; and Bedford, NS.

Our next study weekend will be April 9th-10th, 2011, Lord willing, when Bro. John Perks will be speaking on “Lessons from First Thessalonians”.

Cliff Baines

WORCESTER ECCLESIA, MA

We sadly announce that our beloved Sis. Jennifer Robideau fell asleep in Christ on October 25th after a long battle with cancer. She is survived by her husband Bro. Tom Robideau; two sons, Dustin and Bro. Jeremy, and her daughter Sis. Kayla; as well as her mother, Sis. Pat Sabeau and her sister and brother. Jennifer was a devoted Sister in the Truth nurturing many of our young Sunday school scholars and serving in many capacities right up to the end. We pray to see her again soon when our Lord returns.

Happily, we report the baptism of our newest sister. KAYLA ROBIDEAU into the saving grace of Jesus. Sis. Kayla is a marvelous Bible scholar and laborer in the vineyard just like her mother. The Lord blessed Kayla as her mother, Sis. Jennifer, was able to witness the baptism before falling asleep. May God bless Sis. Kayla and help us all to walk together toward that great Kingdom of God.

We also commend the transfer of our dear Sis. Ashley Therien to the Boston, Stoughton MA Ecclesia which is closer to her new residence. We are sure she will be as great a blessing to them as she has been to us over the years.

Mark Fulmer

NOTICE: “PREACHING THE TRUTH IN THE AMERICAS” (PROPOSED 2011 SPECIAL ISSUE OF THE TIDINGS MAGAZINE)

The apostles of Jesus were sent to preach the gospel of salvation to a dying world. As Christadelphians we understand that it is still our responsibility to do this in these last days.

John Thomas rediscovered the saving truth after coming to America in the 1830's. This truth, he found, was preserved in the Bible, the revealed word of God, waiting for people of responsive hearts to read and believe. Bro. Thomas set a standard that we continue to follow of preaching Scriptural truth to everyone who will listen.

“Preaching the Truth in the Americas” is the proposed theme for next year's Special Issue of *The Tidings Magazine*, planned for publication in August, 2011, God willing. Working with the Editor and the Tidings Committee, Bre. Jim Harper (CT) and David Jennings (CA) have agreed to serve as coordinators for the Special Issue.

From the earliest days of public lectures and debates, through the advent of Bible campaigns and radio and television broadcasts, into the dedicated work of the Bible Missions and, more recently, the widespread use of Bible seminars; on into the era of the Internet and mobile communication devices, we, as Christadelphians, have and will organize preaching efforts that broadcast saving truth to a dying world. At the same time, all of us have and continue to be missionaries at the personal level, sharing the truth with our friends, neighbors, coworkers, and families.

The 2011 Special Issue will, look at past and present aspects of our preaching work in the Americas, and it will endeavor to project a glimpse of the future, in terms of emerging opportunities and methods for preaching. Our hope is that the issue will be a resource and an encouragement for brothers and sisters and ecclesias to use in their own preaching work.

Copies of the 2011 Special Issue will be sent to all regular Tidings subscribers in August 2011. Individual copies of the Special Issue will also be available for purchase by anyone who is not a subscriber or who would like extra copies. Details of purchase will be published later.

Brothers and sisters with information or suggestions to share on preaching work in the Americas – past, present, and future – are invited to contact either of the Special Issue coordinators.

Jim Harper, 2harps4u@gmail.com
David Jennings, djennings@cox.net

THE BIBLE COMPANION AS AN E-SWORD READING PLAN

The Coachella Valley Christadelphian Ecclesia is pleased to announce the availability of the Bible Companion as an e-Sword Bible Reading Plan. It is available as a free download from our website at <http://www.cvbible.org>. Once at the main page, click on Resources and then Study Tools and finally the link for Daily Bible Reading Planner for e-Sword. Or, just use this URL: http://cvbible.org/cvce_e-sword_reading_plan.html. We invite and encourage other ecclesias to link to our website for this or any other resources that are located there.

A Good Name

"A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold" (Prov 22:1).

There are those who affect indifference to what a malicious world may think or say of them. They say that avoiding censure is impossible. It is true that sometimes innocent and prudent persons may fall under very cruel imputations; but they rarely continue under them. Professing to despise the ill opinion of mankind creates a shrewd suspicion that we have deserved it. Innocent persons must distinguish themselves by a constant, though unaffected, attention to their reputation. A good name is what a bad person cannot secure. And therefore you who can should on no account fail to do so. Persons who care not what they are thought of are very likely not to care what they do. Contempt of reputation is contrary even to our worldly interests. An eminently fair character engages friendly treatment, begets trust and confidence, gives credit and weight. Such persons are always sought after and employed. The feeling of being esteemed is one of the most joyful feelings in the heart of man.

William Secker, Biblical Illustrator

Minute Meditation

We Make the Answer Now

Abigail Adams, who lived from 1744 to 1818, once said, “We have too many high sounding words, and too few actions that correspond with them.” The way we would say it now is, “Talk is cheap.”

There are many examples in Scripture where someone said the right words but did the wrong thing. When Samuel went to see King Saul after a battle with the Amalekites, Saul greeted him by saying,

“The Lord bless you! I have carried out the Lord’s instructions.” But Samuel said, “What then is this bleating of sheep in my ears? What is this lowing of cattle that I hear?”

Saul answered, “The soldiers brought them from the Amalekites; they spared the best of the sheep and cattle to sacrifice to the Lord your God, but we totally destroyed the rest.”

“Stop!” Samuel said to Saul. “Let me tell you what the Lord said to me last night.” “Tell me,” Saul replied. Samuel said, “Although you were once small in your own eyes, did you not become the head of the tribes of Israel? The Lord anointed you king over Israel. And he sent you on a mission, saying, ‘Go and completely destroy those wicked people, the Amalekites; make war on them until you have wiped them out.’ Why did you not obey the Lord? Why did you pounce on the plunder and do evil in the eyes of the Lord?”

“But I did obey the Lord,” Saul said. “I went on the mission the Lord assigned me. I completely destroyed the Amalekites and brought back Agag their king. The soldiers took sheep and cattle from the plunder, the best of what was devoted to God, in order to sacrifice them to the Lord your God at Gilgal.”

But Samuel replied: “Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has rejected you as king.”

We can be like King Saul. We may be doing what we think is the right thing, but it may not be right in the eyes of the Lord, for, as Solomon said, Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the Lord pondereth the hearts.” It is not good to feel confident that we are correct, because Solomon also warns us, “The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.” Can we be so sure that what we think is right that we will not listen to the counsel of others? Not seeking the counsel of the Almighty was the downfall of the Children of Israel over and over again in the book of Judges, and their decision-making method is summarized when it says that “Every man did that which was right

in his own eyes.” Disaster was the end result for those who relied on their own judgment during the time of the judges, as it was for the kings who claimed that they were doing the will of God when they were not.

We need to learn lessons from the mistakes of others, for, as Paul said, “For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” God wants us to live in harmony with one another, but to do so we need to be walking together. As Amos asked, “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” We may talk the talk, but to walk the walk in harmony together, we need to believe the same things and walk with others who also believe the same things. We certainly cannot be yoked together with Christ if we are trying to go in a different direction than he is going. Many who heard Christ speak in his day gave him lip service but did not do what he said. We need to do the commands of our Lord. We want to join together with others who also seek to obey our Lord and who carefully search the Scriptures so that their decisions are aligned with the Word of God. Only if we are united in our beliefs and obedience to our Lord can we in harmony and with one voice glorify our God.

Christ knows who are his, and soon we will all be standing before him to receive his verdict concerning us. There is no middle ground, we are either going to hear “Well done.” Or “depart from me.” As we sing in one of our hymns, “We make the answer now.”

Robert J. Lloyd

Coming Events (Lord Willing)

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

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

JANUARY 2011

29 San Diego, CA Study Day. Ecclesial Hall. Our speaker will be Bro. Arne Roberts (Cardiff, Wales). The study day begins at 9:30am and lunch will be provided. Contact Bro. Kent Ellis, ellisk@san.rr.com or (858) 674-5645

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

MARCH 2011

12-13 Paris Avenue, OH Spring Study Weekend with our speaker being Bro. Ryan Mutter (Baltimore, MD). The subject of the weekend will be announced later. Anyone having questions is asked to contact Coordinator Bro. Everett Muniz, everettmuniz@gmail.com or phone 330-497-2811

APRIL 2011

9-10 Sussex, NB Study day. Our speaker will be Bro. John Perks (Ottawa, ON). His theme will be, "Lessons from First Thessalonians".

15-17 Men in the Truth Campout. Lake Cachuma, CA. A Godly Workout — Beefing Up Your Spirituality. Contact Information: David Lloyd davidrlloyd@earthlink.net 818-352-6486

22-24 Wichita Falls, TX Spring Gathering. T4C Camp, Freestone, Texas. Speaker Bro. Jim Cowie (Wilston, Brisbane, AU) Topic will be "The King's Manifesto For Life — Matthew 5-7". Contact Bro. John A Clubb jclubb4081@aol.com

23-24 New Westminster, BC Fraternal Gathering. Bro. Don Pearce (Rugby) is will lead our study on Easter weekend. Topic: "Events at the Time of the End".

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**.

"Between Thee and Him Alone" (Matthew 18:15)

Nothing tends more to the keeping or the restoring of peace than the observance of this law; and no law is more constantly broken. The universal impulse, when anything is supposed to be wrong, is to tell the matter to third persons. From them it spreads, with the results of causing much bad feeling which, perhaps, the original cause does not warrant and would not have produced if the aggrieved person had taken the course prescribed by Christ, and told the fault "between thee and him alone". If good men, or those who consider themselves such, would adopt the rule of refusing to listen to an evil report privately conveyed, until it had been dealt with to the last stage according to the rule prescribed by Christ, much evil would be prevented.

Robert Roberts

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