

THE CHRISTADELPHIAN TIDINGS

of the Kingdom of God

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Editorial — Isolated — But Not by Distance	55
Exhortation — The Story of Naaman and Us, <i>Nathan Sleeper</i>	59
Bible Study:	
Leviticus and the Tabernacle (3), <i>Joe Hill</i>	62
The Glory in the Number of His Name (3), <i>Jim Dillingham</i>	71
“As it was in the days of Noah” (2)	
Whom do You Trust?, <i>Ryan Mutter</i>	76
The Joy of Sunday Schooling — What’s the Goal? (1), <i>Jim Harper</i>	79
First Principles — The Nature of Man, <i>Johnnie Abel</i>	82
Reflections:	
KJV 400th Anniversary, “If God Spare My Life...”, <i>Peter Wisniowski</i> ..	85
“Who are You?”, <i>Chris Tarry</i>	86
Bible Mission News — Jamaica — Short but Strengthening Visit;	
San Salvador — Ending the year with a new beginning;	
ThisisyourBible.com, 400th Anniversary of the King James	
Version Bible; ThisisyourBible.com on Facebook	88
News & Notices	95
Minute Meditation — The True Secret of Happiness, <i>Robert J. Lloyd</i>	100
Coming Events	102

The CHRISTADELPHIAN TIDINGS of the Kingdom of God

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"If the LORD delight in us, then..." (Numbers 14:8).

These are the outstanding words of the minority report. They reveal the difference in viewpoint between the minority and the majority. These men saw all the others saw, and more. They had clear apprehension of the goodness of the land; they were by no means blind to the formidable nature of the difficulties that stood between them and possession. But they saw God. They started with that vision, and saw everything else in its light. Therefore the enemies were "as bread" for them; their defenses were removed, if indeed the LORD were with them. Yet these men also saw that there was a condition and they named it in the words: "If the LORD delight in us..." In these words there was surely the recognition of a fact, and the statement of a responsibility. The fact was patent. The LORD did delight in them. He had ransomed them from slavery, brought them to Himself, provided for all their need, promised them this very land. What further proofs could they have of His delight in them? Nevertheless, they were in danger of placing themselves outside the benefits of that delight, by their rebellion and their unworthy fear. These things were surely written for our learning. Every call of God to His people is a call to those in whom He delights. Therefore they should know that no difficulties need daunt them. They are not called to meet them in their own strength. He will be with them in the path of obedience.

G. Campbell Morgan

Editorial

Isolated — But Not by Distance

Introduction

A few months ago, I wrote an editorial about the problems and challenges faced by those moving into physical isolation. Since then, there has been a follow-up article by a brother who, with his family, lives not only in a foreign land, but several hundred miles away from the only ecclesia in his country. There have also been several who have pointed out that it is quite possible to be in isolation, despite being members located geographically close to their Christadelphian ecclesia.

Most of Christendom attends churches, which are led by (usually) full time professional ministers. For many of the attenders of this type of congregations, their involvement is confined to a largely passive attendance of services on Sundays. Christadelphians, by their continuing use of a “lay ministry”, are commonly much more involved in their ecclesia. But this is not universal. There are at least two situations where isolation is common, despite being members of a local ecclesia:

- Sometimes the ecclesia is too large to involve any but a fairly small number of the members. This can result in a number of the ecclesia being only marginal members, by design or accident.
- Some ecclesias, although not particularly large, are so dominated by a few extended families that “outsiders” can feel isolated from the doings of these larger groups.

Large Ecclesias

These are not common in North America. Only about seven ecclesias have one hundred members or more, and none exceed about 150. This contrasts with the situation in both England and Australia, where there are a number of ecclesias numbering in the hundreds. For a time, I lived in Birmingham, England, and occasionally attended Birmingham Central, which at the time had about 1,500 members, with about 1,300 present most Sunday Memorials. This ecclesia has since closed, with most migrating to ecclesias in the suburbs, but it was then most impressive to look down from the balcony on the ranks of suited and hatted members — but knowing very few indeed. Nor was the welcome warm, so I soon joined a much smaller ecclesia. I did have several conversations with the recording brother, whose tasks and problems were quite unlike those of any other in that capacity that I have known. He acknowledged that regretfully many in the meeting were passive Sunday Morning attendees, whose absence could easily pass un-noticed, and whose attachment was minimal. Various attempts were made to overcome this problem, mainly by focusing on small geographic satellite Bible classes, etc. You can indirectly see the results of these efforts by the proliferation of other ecclesias in the surrounding areas. Although the Central Ecclesia closed in 2007, the total number of ecclesias in the metro area has changed little.

But this problem does exist on this continent, although not to the extent seen in the case of Birmingham Central in its heyday. Large ecclesias tend to develop factions, it being quite difficult to get to know everybody. We naturally tend to associate with those we know well, and the result is that newcomers, whether newly baptized or newly transferred, often find it difficult to “break in.” Thus their association with the ecclesia can be somewhat tangential, and thus full commitment is made more difficult, although not impossible.

I can recount myself somewhat disturbing episodes along these lines, both on this continent and in England. I have moved locations quite a few times, and on occasion have attended meetings with my family in areas remote from my home. I enter the meeting with my family, being clearly associated with the Christadelphians. (Who else have their wives with hats, carry Christadelphian hymn books, and carry large Bibles in leather cases?) And not only were we not asked which was our home ecclesia, but no-one, either before or after the meeting, talked to anyone in my family. It was also almost impossible for me to initiate conversation, because everyone was busily chatting with their friends. Thus are the ways of at least a few of the larger ecclesias. Not that this is common — I have been warmly welcomed in many other large ecclesias. But it has happened to me, so it probably has happened to others.

Family Dominated Ecclesias

Some ecclesias, by their very “DNA”, are hospitable. If a visitor comes, they are welcomed warmly, and commonly invited to lunch by any of a number of members. This tradition continues if they move into the area and join the ecclesia. Not just one or two members, but almost everyone is hospitable. And if an “outsider” is baptized, the same warm hospitable welcome is extended, and the new member soon feels part of the true extended family, that of the family of Christ.

Other ecclesias are much more inwardly focused. The extended families of the members have so much to discuss that, unintentionally, they tend to exclude anyone not in their family. And in some such ecclesias, the tendency is to scatter shortly after the end of meeting, with many going for lunch at their customary locations, leaving the strangers and non-family members to fend for themselves. In others, although many might linger, there are relatively few offers of hospitality. All these characteristics are quite innocent, and the members would be astonished if they were told their actions lacked the sort of hospitality expected by the New Testament injunctions to *“Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares”* (Heb 13:2). It is more a matter of innocent involvement with other matters, and the whole focus of the meeting being inward looking.

The Result

In both these two types of ecclesias, it is quite easy to be in effective isolation, even though you might be able to attend a “local” ecclesia. So what can be done to solve this problem? Perhaps, on this continent, there are few that create major problems by their very size. But on this matter of size, this problem does not ap-

pear to have been common in the first century. And the reason for this is probably simple: most early ecclesias met in homes, which by their very nature restricted their size. When Paul wrote *"To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints"* (Rom 1:7), it is clear from the salutations in Romans 16 that there were many "house churches (or ecclesias)" in that city. The situation might have been different in Corinth, for Paul, again in Romans, speaks of *"Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you"* (Rom 16:23). Gaius appears to have been the host of the whole church at Corinth: who knows, perhaps this means the very size of this ecclesia was one of the factors for the many problems in the Ecclesia at Corinth.

However, whatever the cause, there is no doubt isolation does occur. It is perhaps even more common for those who join ecclesias, not having been associated with the Christadelphians much before baptism. There is a whole set of cultural norms and expectations which are accepted in our ecclesias, but can be quite strange to those without a long term association. Few newcomers are aware of the way a typical ecclesia is organized, and they can be quite ignorant of the function of our serving (or arranging) brethren. The easy assumption that every male member is quite comfortable reading the Scriptures, offering public prayers, presiding, or speaking is, in at least some cases, quite incorrect.

As I have stressed, any such isolation is almost always quite unintentional. Any ecclesia would claim they are extremely warm and welcoming both to strangers, new members, and those who have transferred. Any perceived isolation or estrangement is not the way any ecclesia likes, expects, or intends to operate, but such situations do exist, perhaps more widely than many realize.

Solutions¹

In both types of ecclesias, the large or the family-dominated, it is possible to be in perceived isolation. So what can be done to ensure that these situations are minimized, or removed? These are a few suggestions: many more can be made.

- New members (whether newly baptized or newly transferred) should have a meeting member (or family) mentor them, unless such members are aware, by previous proximity or family connections, of the inner workings of the ecclesia. It is particularly important to ensure they are integrated into the social aspects of the ecclesia, as this is the way strong bonds are established.
- Newly baptized members, particularly those not brought up in a Christadelphian family, need special consideration. A serving (or arranging) brother should meet with them in an informal way to let them know how the meeting is organized, the function of the board, and any expectations of the meeting in the way of expected involvement, etc.
- For any brother who might be expected to preside or exhort, the expectations, requirements, and protocol to be followed should be explained. In many cases, brethren are put on the schedule almost casually, which can be quite frightening to the initiated. And public prayer is quite hard for many newly baptized. In former times, mutual improvement classes were the norm, which gives the opportunity for practicing such activities in a non-public and helpful format. These have almost totally disappeared, but the void needs to be

filled. And we should point out there is no problem about writing out public prayers ahead of time!

- Despite its acknowledged problems, the use of the Internet to enable contacts with others can form part of the methods of alleviating isolation. The knowledge that the community is much larger, and perhaps more diverse, than the local ecclesia is often helpful. It is unhelpful to exist in an isolated cocoon. As I have pointed out before, there is also a vast trove of useful Bible talks and exhortations available for free on many Christadelphian websites. New members should be encouraged to help in other ways: being a tutor at such sites as www.thisisyourbible.com is suggested.
- All members, especially newly baptized, should be encouraged to attend Bible Schools and like activities. These are essentially the glue that holds the fabric of our North American community together, especially among the young people. And if any are financially unable to afford them, every effort should be, and often is, made to ensure this is not a hindrance.

Conclusion

The sort of isolation I have described is one of the hidden problems of our community, especially on this vast continent. It is often not recognized as even possible by long time members of ecclesias where this occurs, content and comfortable as they are in their normal interactions. It requires a deliberate attempt to eliminate any possibility of this problem, and to ensure new members are rapidly and seamlessly integrated into the very fabric of an ecclesia, the body of Christ. True religion is not only to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, but also to prevent any feeling of isolation in any member.

Peter Hemingray

Notes:

1. I am indebted to Bro. Stephen DeMarco for some of these suggestions.

Special Invitation

For some years, unity discussions have been taking place with Churches of God of the Abrahamic Faith. In the interest of promoting friendship and mutual understanding between our respective communities, we print the following invitation:

*You, your family and friends are invited to the
36th annual Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith Gathering
at Denison University in Granville, Ohio, July 25-31, 2011.*

Main Speakers:

Bro. Ted Sleeper — "Meditations on Creation"

*Bro. Tim Galbraith — "The Tabernacle:
A Magic Mirror for Disciples"*

Bro. Ed Carpenter — "The Light of the Gospel"

Contact Bro. Brad Rek 330-609-6957 or lisarek8@cs.com

Visit our website <http://abrahamicfaithgathering.org>

Exhortation

The Story of Naaman and Us

Most are familiar with the story of Naaman. He was the proud commander of the armies of Syria. He was a man that we might truly fear. As the Bible tells us, Naaman was a great and honorable man, a man who needed nothing from God. His very name means “Pleasant”, which is an unusual name for a general of one of the enemies of Israel. And why are we told that, “*The Lord had given deliverance to Syria?*” (2Kgs 5:1). Perhaps he was not a leper until we meet him here in 2 Kings, and was being punished for his attitude during his victories over Israel. His story is well known: his leprosy caused consternation in his household, and one of the Israelitish maids of his wife wondered if “*The prophet in Samaria*” would be able to heal him. So Naaman caused great disquiet when he arrived at the court of Jehoram, King of Israel. Elisha the prophet heard of this, and sent to Jehoram to tell Naaman to come see him, Elisha.

Now Naaman was not poor, or weak, or anything we would consider as a man in need of God... yet he was. He was a leper. An outcast. A man whom the Jews, and all his contemporaries, would shun. Yet, out of the misery of his life there came hope. Perhaps his previous military victories acted as a salve on his sores. A temporary balm over the hurt he felt inside. But this inner hurt led him to a man, to Elisha, to the prophet of the Living God. Elisha was so certain of the power of God, that he did not come out of his house. Rather, he instructed his servant to tell this great and mighty general that God would not accept him unless he bathed in the River Jordan.

It is quite instructive to listen to Naaman. He says, “*Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?*” (2Kgs 5:12). He didn’t think the waters of the Jordan were worthy of bathing in so that he could be healed. He equated the purity and majesty of the rivers of Syria, his homeland, to healing, and despised the rivers of Israel.

He questioned the judgment, nay, the commandment, of God, and was angry about it. He wanted to go to the best and cleanest waters to be cleansed, waters that would reflect his high standing.

God told him “no” through his servant, but why?

Naaman is a lesson for us because he is us. Look at Noah, Hezekiah, David. Look at Jesus. Was obedience easy for any of these men of faith? Why would Naaman expect things to be different for him? Except he did. He was prideful, he was arrogant, he did not want to go God’s way.

Naaman wanted to come to God on his own terms. God showed him otherwise. It was His rules, His way, not Naaman’s. Naaman wanted physical purity. Naaman perhaps wanted his washing to be viewed by his countrymen, not a few passers-by

in a backwoods corner of the world. But God wanted inner purity. He wanted humility. The dirty Jordan into which Naaman bathed is a metaphor for us.

God, in the beginning, created the world; the world became evil, but God baptized Noah in the muddy waters which enveloped the world. Later on He enveloped Naaman, the Syrian, the man of pride, in waters he did not expect. And Naaman was saved.

We also seek to come to God

We too may approach God as Naaman, looking into that muddy water, thinking it should be cleaner. Maybe cringing like Naaman, that the water is so dirty and maybe idly wondering how we ended up in a muddy river. But faith, real trust in the Living God, will guide us through. That is the lesson of Naaman.

How often have we stared at the water? Not seeing the bottom, only thinking of our distaste for the task ahead. Jesus was right to warn that the way to the Kingdom was narrow, yet the path to destruction was broad. For indeed it is. We can like be like Naaman staring, thinking, that wow, this does not look like fun, why couldn't God have chosen a nicer looking place or an easier thing to do.

It is also instructive to look at the response of Elisha. We can see Naaman, we can walk in his shoes, we can think of times in our lives where God is asking us to have faith and we have walked where we may not have wanted to. (Conversely, at least for myself, I can also think of many times where I needed more faith, I needed to be a Naaman!)

But also, look at Elisha, for he provides an instructive example. A type of Jesus if you will, and a good example for us.

After Naaman is healed, Naaman does two things. He recognizes the supremacy of God, and he offers God's servant gifts. Mule loads of gifts. If you have ever seen a mule, they sure can pack a ton of stuff! Elisha's response is telling,

"But he said, As the LORD liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none. And he urged him to take it; but he refused" (2Kgs 5:16).

I think it is telling, because it is contrasted immediately afterwards with the behavior of Gehazi, Elisha's servant, who runs after Naaman to get those same gifts. The lesson is important because it illuminates James' discussion in the New Testament of good works. Good works are done not for gifts (whether they be Naaman's or God's or someone else's). Good works are done because of internal character and a desire to do what it is right by God. I think Elisha and his actions, in contrast to Gehazi's, preview the discourse James delivers. The lesson for us is stark in its clarity, simple in its outcome, but also difficult in its application.

In business school, I took a course in organizational behavior; one of the things it touched on was motivation. There are extrinsic and intrinsic motivating factors. Money, rewards, promotions can provide extrinsic motivation. It is the intrinsic motivation, though, which is more powerful, but it is also harder to manage because it comes from character. God, through Elisha, through Jesus, and through His good book is trying to instill that character in us.

The Lord's Comment

The character of Naaman, Elisha, and of His son: It is that son whom we come to remember, the son of man, who submitted to punishment, put away pride, and was hung up on the cross and died. He died full of faith that God would resurrect him, and through his faith, he has saved us all. He has bridged what was broken; he brought salvation and a conclusion to the baptism of the earth in the flood. Hear what he has to say about Naaman.

"Then he closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, 'Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing'... Then he said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country. But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land; but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian' " (Luke 4:20-27 NAS).

Many are called, but few heed the call. Many are in need of healing, but few find the healer. Indeed, many have no interest in the healer. That is Jesus' point.

As we direct our thoughts towards the table of our Lord, we think of Naaman's baptism in the muddy waters of the Jordan, and the powerful example he provides of faith and redemption. A great story of the character God is building in us. It is our choice, we see the broad path, we see the clean waters, but God has called us to the narrow path and the muddy waters — it is up to us to answer the call.

Nathan Sleeper (Glendale, AZ)

"It may seem strange and incredible that God would connect such a momentous change [covenant relationship, and forgiveness of sins] with a trivial and (as some regard it) ridiculous observance [baptism]. An earnest mind, however, will not stop to reason on the matter when once satisfied that it is the will of God, especially when he remembers that it is one of the characteristics of God's dealings with men that He selects 'weak things, things despised, yea, and things that are not' (1Cor 1:27,28), by which to accomplish important results — that it may be seen that the power is of God, and not in the means, and that true obedience may be secured in His servants.

It was not the eating of the fruit in itself — apart from the divine prohibition — that constituted Adam's offence. It was not the mere looking at the brazen serpent in the wilderness that cured the serpent bitten Israelites. It was not Naaman's mere immersion in Jordan in itself that cured him of his leprosy. It was the principle involved in each case that developed the results — the principle of obedience to the divine law, which is one prominent feature in all God's dealings with man" (Robert Roberts, Christendom Astray).

Bible Study

Leviticus and the Tabernacle (3)

We've seen that the Tabernacle was a portable continuation of the theophany on Mount Sinai. God would continue to be with His people, meeting with them in the Tabernacle just as He had met with them in the mount. In both cases, the people, priests, and place were sanctified: as God was Holy, so they must be Holy. In both, God manifested Himself, filling the mount and the Tabernacle with the cloud of His glory. In both, there were three zones of holiness and restricted access, the Outer Court corresponding to the foot of the mount, the Holy Place to the location on the mount short of the summit, and the Most Holy Place to the summit itself. God conversed with Moses in the Most Holy Place just as He had in the summit.

In these ways, the Lord's presence on the mount continued in the Tabernacle, His dwelling-place among the children of Israel. The tables of stone given to Moses on the mount were kept in the ark in the Most Holy Place, a physical reminder that the book of the covenant was the basis of their relationship with the Lord and the focus of their ongoing attention. In short, the Tabernacle was a living microcosm of the theophany on Mount Sinai.

The Tabernacle and Creation

In addition to these connections between the Tabernacle and Mount Sinai, the record of the Tabernacle is filled with allusions to the Creation in Genesis:

- 1) As the phrase "*And God **said** <559 'amar>...*" declared God's plan in the seven days of creation (Gen 1:1-2:3; cf. Psa 33:6, 9), so the phrase "*And the LORD spake unto Moses, **saying** <559>...*" occurs seven times (Exod 25:1; 30:11, 17, 22, 34; 31:1, 12) in the "thou shalt make" section (Exod 25-31), dictating God's pattern for the Tabernacle.
- 2) This parallel is confirmed by the seventh of these, in which keeping the Sabbath is explicitly based on God having rested on the seventh day: "*And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my **sabbaths** ye shall keep... for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he **rested**, and was refreshed*" (Exod 31:12-17; cf. Gen 2:1-3). The idea of Sabbath rest occurs seven times in this passage, which is no doubt significant (one of these seven, "the sabbath of rest", has the Hebrew root twice).
- 3) "*And this is the offering which ye shall take of them; **gold**... **onyx stone**...*" (Exod 25:3, 7; cf. 35:22, 27) recalls **the gold** and **onyx stone** of the land of Havilah (Gen 2:11-12).
- 4) The **cherubim** of the mercy seat (Exod 25:18-22; 37:7-9), in the linen curtains (26:1; 36:8), and in the veil (26:31; 36:35) reminds us of the **cherubim** that were placed east of the garden of Eden, "*to keep the way of the tree of life*" (Gen 3:24).
- 5) The **candlestick** — with its shaft, seven branches, and almond-like bowls,

knops, and flowers (Exod 25:31-40; 37:17-24) — is reminiscent of **the Tree of Life** (Gen 2:9; 3:22, 24), because almond trees typify life from the dead: Aaron's rod "was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds" (Num 17:8); as a prototypical example of life from the dead, Aaron's rod was stored in the Ark of the Covenant (Heb 9:4).

- 6) Bezaleel and Aholiab being filled with **the Spirit of God** so they could build the Tabernacle (Exod 31:1-6; 35:30-35) recalls "*And the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters*" (Gen 1:2b).
- 7) "*Thus was all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation finished* <3615 kalah> (Exod 39:32) parallels "*Thus the heavens and the earth were finished* <3615>, and all the host of them" (Gen 2:1).
- 8) "According to all that the LORD commanded Moses, **so** <3651 ken> the children of Israel made all the work... they had done it as the LORD had commanded, **even so** <3651> had they done it... Thus did Moses: according to all that the LORD commanded him, **so** <3651> did he" (Exod 39:42, 43; 40:16) follows the "And God said... And it was **so** <3651>" pattern in Genesis 1. In addition, the description of Moses setting up the Tabernacle is punctuated seven times by the reverberating refrain "*as the LORD commanded Moses*" (40:19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 32).
- 9) Moses inspecting and approving the Tabernacle, "*And Moses did look upon* <7200 ra'ah> **all** <3605 kowl> the work, and, **behold** <2009 hinneh>, **they had done** <6213 'asah> it as the LORD commanded" (Exod 39:43a), echoes God inspecting and approving creation, "And God **saw** <7200> **every thing** <3605> that **he had made** <6213>, and, **behold** <2009>, it was very good" (Gen 1:31); the Hebrew for these two passages is nearly identical.
- 10) "*And Moses blessed* <1288 barak> them" (Exod 39:43b) recalls "*And God blessed* <1288> them [the water creatures]... And God **blessed** <1288> them [the man and woman]... And God **blessed** <1288> the seventh day" (Gen 1:22, 28; 2:2).
- 11) "*And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, On the first day of the first month shalt thou set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation... And it came to pass in the first month of the second year, on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was reared up*" (Exod 40:1-2, 17) refers back to the Passover command "This shall be unto you **the beginning of months**: it shall be **the first month of the year** to you" (Exod 12:2). Together these bring to mind "**In the beginning** God created the heavens and the earth... And the evening and the morning were **the first day**" (Gen 1:1, 5; cf. 8:13). The setting up of the Tabernacle occurred on New Year's Day, and represented a new beginning, a new creation.
- 12) "*So Moses finished* <3615 kalah> **the work** <4399 mela'kah>" (Exod 40:33) parallels "*And on the seventh day God ended* <3615> **his work** <4399> which he had made" (Gen 2:2).
- 13) "*Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle*" (Exod 40:34, 35) reminds us of God's purpose with the earth: "As

surely as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD” (Num 14:21; cf. Psa 72:18, 19; Isa 11:9; 60:19; Hab 2:14; Rev 21:22, 23).

These allusions show that the Tabernacle was intended to be a microcosm of Creation! Just as God dwelt among the children of Israel (Exod 25:8), even so He will dwell among men (Rev 21:3; cf. John 1:14).

Overcoming Sin

Beyond these detailed parallels between the Tabernacle and Creation, there is a general “big picture” analogy between Genesis 1-9 and Exodus 19-40. The two records follow the same pattern of blessing/sin and cursing/restored blessing.

Genesis 1-9 follows this three-phase pattern (see Appendix 1):

- Phase 1. Creation is very good (Gen 1-2).
- Phase 2. Sin threatens creation; in particular, Adam and Eve sin and are driven out of the garden of Eden, Cain murders Abel, and God destroys all flesh by flood because mankind is evil, corrupt, and violent (Gen 3-7).
- Phase 3. God remembers Noah and his family, creation is restored, and God establishes his covenant with all living things (Gen 8-9).

Exodus 19-40 follows the same three-phase pattern (see Appendix 2):

- Phase 1. God establishes His covenant with Israel (Exod 19-24), and gives them the plan for the Tabernacle (Exod 25-31).
- Phase 2. The sin of the golden calf breaks the covenant, threatens the destruction of the nation, and forestalls the need for the Tabernacle (Exod 32:1-33:11).
- Phase 3. Moses intercedes for the nation, God repents and renews the covenant (Exod 32-34), and the Tabernacle is built and is filled with the glory of the Lord (Exod 35-40).

Both cases start with blessings from God (creation; covenant and tabernacle). In both cases, man’s sin endangers the blessing, because of God’s wrath. In both cases, God preserves His purpose through one man (Noah; Moses). In both cases, God confirms the original blessing and (re-)establishes His covenant (with all living things; with Israel). Neither mankind nor Israel changes – the imagination of their heart is still evil continually; and they are still stiff-necked – but God Himself guarantees His everlasting covenant nevertheless.

This final “big picture” structural parallel clinches the analogy between the Tabernacle and Creation: the Tabernacle is indeed a microcosm of Creation.

Appendix 1: The Three Phases in Genesis 1-9

Phase 1. Creation is very good

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep” (Gen 1:1-2): in other words, the earth was an uninhabitable wasteland (Deut 32:10; Isa 24:10; 45:18; Jer 4:23-27) and it was covered by darkness and by water. In Genesis 1, God prepares a dwelling place appropriate for his creatures. He does this by creating light, the

firmament above, the seas below, and the dry land; then He populates them. After inspection, He declares everything to be “very good”. Once finished, God rests from His work. The seven days follow a 3/3/1 pattern:

Day 1. Light	Day 4. Lights (sun, moon, stars)
Day 2. Water (above, below)	Day 5. Water (birds, fish)
Day 3. Earth (seas, dry land)	Day 6. Earth (land animals; man and woman)
Herbs and trees	Herbs and trees for food
Day 7. Rest	

Genesis 2 provides more details about the formation of man and his wife, and their placement in the Garden of Eden. They could eat of any tree except the tree of knowledge.

Phase 2. Sin endangers creation

- **The serpent contradicts God.** In promising “*Ye shall not surely die*”, the serpent contradicts God.
- **Eyes opened, but now ashamed.** After the eating of the fruit, Adam and Eve transitioned from being naked and unashamed to having their eyes opened and being shamed.
- **Return to the dust.** Created out of dust, after the fall Adam was told he would return to the dust.
- **Out of the garden of Eden.** God put him in the garden, but after the fall drives him out.
- **Sin escalates:** Cain murders Abel, and Lamech threatens violent revenge (Gen 4).
- **The wickedness of man causes God to repent.** The wickedness that caused God to send the flood (Gen 6:5-7) contrasts with the sense of accomplishment in Genesis 1-2.
- **God saw and behold.** God’s assessment of the earth, “*God saw and, behold, it was corrupt*” (Gen 6:12), directly contrasts his original assessment of creation, “*God saw... and, behold, it was very good*” (Gen 1:31).
- **Windows of heaven opened.** “*And the windows of heaven were opened*” (Gen 7:11) reverses the division of waters above and below on day two (Gen 1:6-8).
- **Fountains of the deep broken up.** The breaking up of the fountains in Genesis 7 reverses the gathering of waters and formation of dry land on the third day (Gen 1:9-10).
- **All flesh died.** The death of all flesh (Gen 7:21-22) reverses the creative acts of days five and six (Gen 1:20-31; cf. 2:7).

Phase 3. Creation restored and the covenant established

- **Windows of heaven stopped.** “*And the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained*” (Gen 8:2), reverses their opening to cause the flood (Gen 7:11) and reestablishes the division of waters from day two (Gen 1:6-8).
- **Fountains of the deep stopped.** “*The fountains also of the deep... were*

stopped..." (Gen 8:2-13) restores the dry land from the third day (ct. Gen 7:11, 18-20, 24; 8:9; cf. 1:9-10).

- **Animals to be fruitful and multiply.** *"Bring...every living thing... that they may breed abundantly in the earth"* (Gen 8:17) replays days five and six (esp. Gen 1:22).
- **No more curse.** *"And the LORD said... I will not again curse the ground"* (Gen 8:21b) reverses *"Cursed is the ground for thy sake"* (Gen 3:17).
- **No more smiting of all living things.** *"And the LORD said... neither will I again smite any more every living thing"* (Gen 8:21d) reverses *"And the LORD said, I will destroy... both man and beast"* (Gen 6:6-7).
- **Imagination of man's heart remains evil.** The reason God gives for these reversals, *"for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth"* (Gen 8:21), is exactly the same reason He gave for causing the flood, *"And God saw that... every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually"* (Gen 6:5). Man has not changed: it is by God's mercy that creation continues.
- **Seasons shall not cease.** *"While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest... and summer and winter... shall not cease"* (Gen 8:22) reestablishes the purpose of the sun, moon, and stars from day four, (Gen 1:14). This promise is applied to Israel (Jer 31:35-36; 33:19-21, 25-26), probably because the annual calendar of feasts was so essential to the nation's identity.
- **God renews His blessing to be fruitful and multiply.** *"And God... said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth"* (Gen 9:1; cf. 9:7) renews the original blessing of Adam and Eve, *"And God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth"* (Gen 1:28). God is starting over with Noah and his family.
- **Mankind has dominion over the rest of creation.** *"The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth"* (Gen 9:2) recalls *"Let them have dominion over the... earth... and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth"* (Gen 1:26, 28), but with the idea of "dread" indicating a need for further reform (see, for example, Psa 8:3-8 and Heb 2:5-9).
- **Mankind's diet extended.** *"I have given you all things"* (Gen 9:3) echoes *"I have given you every herb... and every tree... to you it shall be for meat"* (Gen 1:29; cf. Mark 7:15-19; Rom 14:6; 1Cor 10:25-31; 1Tim 4:3-5).
- **Murder is a capital offense because God made man in His image.** *"At the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man"* (Gen 9:5-6) recalls Cain's murdering of Abel (Gen 4:8, 10-11). The reason God gives, *"for in the image of God made he man"* (Gen 9:6), repeats *"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness"* (Gen 1:26).
- **God's covenant with Noah and all of creation.** When God announced His intention to destroy all flesh (Gen 6:5-7), He promised Noah, *"with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt **come into the ark**,"* (Gen 6:18; 7:1; cf. 6:8). God's directive to *"come into the ark"* indicates that God was in the ark already, implying that God was with Noah and his family in the ark. The details of this covenant are formalized after the flood,

"And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And I,

*behold, I establish my **covenant** with you, and with your seed after you; And with every living creature that is with you... neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth” (Gen 9:8-11).*

- **God remembers His covenant.** In the midst of the flood, “God **remembered** Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark” (Gen 8:1). This remembering of Noah points forward to the token of the perpetual covenant:

*“And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations. I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth...and I will look upon it, that I may **remember** the everlasting covenant” (Gen 9:12-17).*

Appendix 2: The Three Phases in Exodus 19-40

Phase 1. The Covenant and the Tabernacle

As we have seen in earlier articles in this series, Exodus 19-40 opens with the Covenant (Exod 19-24) and the plan for the Tabernacle (Exod 25-31).

The first of these sections begins with a reference to God’s covenant with Israel. “Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine” (Exod 19:5). This is followed by the theophany on Mount Sinai (Exod 19), the ten commandments (Exod 20), and the rest of the book of the covenant (Exod 21-23; cf. 24:7). Lastly, this first section concludes with the establishment of the covenant (Exod 24).

Once the covenant has been ratified by the shedding of blood (Exod 24:5-8), “Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights” (Exod 24:18) to receive the blueprints for the Tabernacle (Exodus 25-31). That the Tabernacle is part of the Covenant is confirmed by the seventh “*the LORD spake unto Moses*” saying, where we are told, “Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath... for a perpetual covenant” (Exod 31:16).

Phase 2. Sin endangers the Covenant and the Tabernacle

Tired of waiting for Moses to return from the mount, the people get Aaron to make a golden calf, which they worship, offering sacrifices to it, as if the calf was the god which delivered them out of Egypt (Exod 32:1-6, 21-24).

Furious, the LORD sends Moses down to deal with Moses’ people, which Moses had brought out of Egypt, who had corrupted themselves (Exod 32:7-8). “*And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people: Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation*” (Exod 32:9-10). God is threatening to destroy the people of Israel, so He can start over with Moses, just like He had done with Noah.

Moses intercedes, giving two reasons for the LORD to reconsider: first, God's reputation would be tarnished; and second, God should remember His faithful servants Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and the promises He had made to them. In response, the LORD repents of the evil He had intended to do to the people (Exod 32:11-14).

When Moses arrives at the camp, he sees the calf and the dancing, and he smashes the two tables of stone, reflecting that Israel had broken the covenant (Exod 32:15-16, 19; cf. Jer 31:32; Heb 8:9). Moses burns the calf, mixes it with water, and makes the people drink it (Exod 32:20). Responding to Moses' request, the Levites go through the camp killing those who were guilty, totally about 3,000 men (Exod 32:25-29).

Moses intercedes on behalf of the people, offering to be blotted out on their behalf:

"And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin --; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written." (Exod 32:31-32).

The Lord responds to Moses' plea, including a command for Moses to lead the people into the Promised Land, supported by an angel of the Lord:

"And the Lord said unto Moses... Therefore now go, lead the people... behold, mine Angel shall go before thee" (Exod 32:33-34).

God continues, explaining in more detail, especially that He would not be going up in the midst of the children of Israel, because He would consume them if He did:

*"And the LORD said unto Moses... I will send an angel before thee; and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite: Unto a land flowing with milk and honey: **for I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiffnecked people: lest I consume thee in the way...** For the LORD had said unto Moses, Say unto the children of Israel, **Ye are a stiffnecked people: I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee:**" (Exod 33:1-6).*

Israel was a stiff-necked people; if God were to stay in their midst, He would consume them. The threat was so imminent that Moses takes his tent outside the camp, away from the people, and sets it up as a temporary "tabernacle of meeting" (Exod 33:7-11). Further, if the LORD was not going to dwell among the people, then there would no longer be any need for the Tabernacle.

Phase 3. The Covenant renewed and the Tabernacle built

Moses understands the seriousness of the situation, and continues pleading with the Lord:

"Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people... And the Lord said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name" (Exod 33:12-17).

The issue is whether the LORD will continue to go up with the Israelites or not. Moses tries to understand how to approach God on this question. God indicates that His presence will be with Moses (Exod 33:14), to which Moses argues, *“If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?”* (Exod 33:15-16 TNIV). At last, God concedes, He will do as Moses has asked, that is, He will go with His people (Exod 33:17).

As a result, the Tabernacle is constructed and God fills it with the cloud of His glory (Exod 35-40). Exodus 35 picks up where Exodus 31 left off (the children of Israel must keep the Sabbath), as if the episode with the golden calf had never happened.

Exodus 34 contains the renewal of the covenant. It starts with God telling Moses to hew out two tables of stone to replace the two he had smashed (Exod 34:1-4). The LORD appears to Moses, proclaiming His name, *“The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin”* (Exod 34:6-7; cf. 33:19).

Moses immediately bows his head and worships, saying, *“If now I have found grace in thy sight, O LORD, let my LORD, I pray thee, go among us; for it is a stiffnecked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance”* (Exod 34:9). Moses is here referring to God’s agreement to go among them (cf. Exod 33:16-17). Moses acknowledges God’s repeated statement that the people are stiffnecked (Exod 32:9; 33:3, 5): the people have not changed, but God is merciful, so Moses pleads for forgiveness.

God responds by renewing the Covenant, *“Behold, I make a covenant... And the LORD said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel”* (Exod 34:10, 27-28).

The details of this Covenant show that it is a renewal of the Covenant described in Exodus 19-24:

- **Nations driven out before the Israelites.** *“Behold, I drive out before thee the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite... For I will cast out the nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders”* (Exod 34:11, 24a) recalls *“For mine Angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: and I will cut them off”* (Exod 23:23).
- **No covenant with the inhabitants of the land.** *“Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest”* (Exod 34:12, 15) echoes *“I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand; and thou shalt drive them out before thee. Thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor with their gods”* (Exod 23:31b-32).
- **A snare unto thee.** *“Lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee”* (Exod 34:12) recalls *“For if thou serve their gods, it shall surely be a snare unto thee”* (Exod 23:33).
- **Break down their images.** *“Ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves”* (Exod 34:13) echoes *“but thou shalt utterly overthrow*

them, and quite break down their images” (Exod 23:24).

- **Worship no other god.** “Thou shalt worship no other god” (Exod 34:14) reminds us of “Thou shalt not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do after their works” (Exod 23:13; cf. 20:3, 5). “Thou shalt make thee no molten gods” (Exod 34:17) is more specific and targets the Israelites’ particular sin (Exod 32:4, 8; cf. 20:4).
- **Sabbath rest.** “Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest: in earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest” (Exod 34:21) repeats “Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest” (Exod 23:12; cf. 20:8-11).
- **Three covenant feasts.** “The feast of unleavened bread shalt thou keep... And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year’s end. Thrice in the year shall all your men children appear before the Lord GOD, the God of Israel” (Exod 34:18, 22-23) echoes “Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year. Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread... And the feast of harvest... and the feast of ingathering... Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord God” (Exod 23:14-17; cf. 34:24b).
- **Firstfruits.** “The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring unto the house of the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother’s milk” (Exod 34:26; cf. 34:19-20) repeats “The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not seeth a kid in his mother’s milk” (Exod 23:19).

Joe Hill (Austin Leander, TX)

The Young Boy at the Tabernacle

“Hannah... said to her husband, ‘After the boy is weaned, I will take him and present him before the LORD, and he will live there always’... The boy Samuel ministered before the LORD under Eli” (1Sam 1:22; 3:1).

Samuel ministered unto the LORD at the tabernacle. How lovely a picture! The little child growing up in such a holy place, his first impressions of his surroundings a blend of reverence and delight. Before him was gradually opened, day by day, that “illustrated book” which was the Tabernacle. As idea after idea unfolded, God would appear in everything around him: the garments, the sacrifices, the lamps, the shewbread, the incense rising noiselessly toward the heavenly throne. With solemnity he would contemplate the veil which hid the holiest place, tracing on it the figures of the cherubim — the “living creatures” that mutely declared the unfailing purpose of the Almighty to fill the earth with His glory! All this Samuel saw, and more.

George Booker

Bible Study

The Glory in the Number of His Name (3)

The six Greek letters in the name of Jesus add up to 888. We have already witnessed an uninterrupted ray of the light extending from this observation as it continues laser-like through the shadows of Scripture and creation, the written and the spoken word of God. We will have to ascend our final platform of observation into the glory of the number of the name of our Messiah in two stages.

Progressions of Three

A very powerful pattern throughout Scripture is the countless threefold progressions. Bordering this understanding is that there are exactly two separate directions in these three stage progressions. One triple pattern direction leads to truth, righteousness and life. The other triple pattern leads to ignorance, wickedness and death. We begin with the negative triple patterns, submitting to the divine precedent of darkness before light (Gen 1:5).

- There are three categories of sin: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life (1John 2:16).
- There are three progressive steps to sin's full maturity:
 1. Temptation, which is the enticement of lust;
 2. Lust conceives sin; and
 3. Sin brings forth death (James 1:14-15).
- Although Jesus was tempted in all points like as we are, we see those unending temptations capsulized into the three wilderness temptations, matching the three categories of sin and the three stage failure in Eden.
- David was appropriately offered three possible judgments for his census related sin: 3 years of famine, 3 months of military defeats or 3 days of plague.
- There are exactly three categories of ritual uncleanness that physically distanced a believer from God during the first Kingdom Age: leprosy, bodily issues, and physical contact with the dead.
- Death appropriately had dominion over our Messiah for exactly three days and three nights, prophesying that creation would suffer the dominion of death for just three more divine days of 1,000 years each (Psa 90:4), when the third and final immortalization event is completed. At the end of the Restored Kingdom Age, 3,000 years from the death of Jesus, we see death and the grave being cast into the lake of fire which is defined as total elimination (the second death; Rev. 20:14). The three days and three nights of our Messiah's death is part of a very, very large Scriptural theme. Once again, the apostasy's delusion of a Friday afternoon death and a Sunday morning resurrection blacks out the glory being veiled by supposedly simple Scriptural expressions.

Positive Progressions of Three

Opposing the negative threefold progression pattern is the positive counterpart.

Jesus defines himself as the truth, the life and the way (John 14:6). This declaration is an extension of the three door-to-ones-home rituals of the First Kingdom Age.

- 1) Truth: Writing the first and greatest commandment on one's doorpost (Deut 6:4-9);
- 2) Life: Painting the Passover blood on the doorpost of one's home;
- 3) Way: Boring a hole in the ear of a voluntary lifelong Hebrew slave at the doorpost of their beloved master (Exod 21:6).

Paul declares the three great behavioral motivations: faith, hope and love (1Cor 13:13).

The ordination of the priesthood included a unique offering requiring blood to be dabbed on the right ear, the right thumb and the right large toe of each priest. This displays the positive progression of hearing the word of life with the right ear, choosing the truth about life with the grasping feature of the right thumb and walking in the way of life with the navigational feature of the large right toe.

This same pattern is similarly portrayed in the path of repentance and forgiveness projected in the sin offering. When a sin offering was for the High Priest or the nation, the blood of the bullock was applied twelve times at exactly three stations. The sacrificial blood was first spattered seven times on the veil (the flesh of Christ, Heb 10:19-20) and then smeared on the four horns of the incense altar (prayer or repentance) and then the remaining bulk of the sacrificial lifeblood was poured out at the base of the bronze altar (changing the behavior pattern in our lives). These three successive blood application stations indicate the three stage progression of true repentance:

- 1) Recognition,
- 2) Sorrowful repentance expressed through prayer
- 3) Repentant behavior of a changed lifestyle, pouring our lives out at the feet of Jesus Christ.

Waiting for the Kingdom is repeatedly defined in the terms of three stage progressions: the blade, ear and mature grain stages of fruit bearing plants (Mark 4:26-29); the leaven hidden in the three measures of dough (Matt 13:33).

Similarly we see three distinct priesthood ages leading up to the Kingdom: Patriarchal Priesthood, Levitical Priesthood and Ecclesial Priesthood. There has to be a law change when there is a priesthood change (Heb 7:12), just as there was a law and priesthood change at Sinai, and then at Jerusalem, and there will be a third law change when the Millennial Kingdom priesthood is established. A great deal of Kingdom Law will be restored when both mortal and immortal priests direct mankind in the principles and ways of the Creator.

The three divisions of the peace offering (thanksgiving, votive and freewill) parallel the three great love commandments.

- 1) Love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength;
- 2) Love our neighbors, but only as much as we love ourselves and

- 3) Love our brothers and sisters in Christ greater than we love ourselves (John 13:34; 15:12-13; Gal. 6:2, 10; Matt 25:40).

This relationship between the three peace offerings and the three love commandments is significant since the peace offering (Heb. Zebach) is fulfilled in merciful love. *“For I desired mercy* (Heb: chesed=merciful love), *and not sacrifice* (Heb: zebach=exclusively the peace offering); *and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings”* (Hos. 6:6).

Three Progressive Stages to God

Just as the serpent philosophy was pursued in those three progressive negative stages in Eden, so the reversal back to Godly righteousness is repeatedly presented in three positive stages. This is highly significant in our pursuit of the reason why the number of Jesus' name is expressed as **triple** eights. Let's progress to the next platform in our pursuit of the glory of divine light. The approach to our Heavenly Father is presented as a three stage progression in the divinely constructed sanctuary at the introduction of the first Kingdom of God at Sinai. There are specifically three entranceways, three portals, offering entrance into a progressively holier environment.

- 1) The first entrance was into the sanctuary courtyard, through the door with three curtains to the right as well as the left (Exod 27:14-16). This parallels the entrances in the temple design for the Restored Kingdom with three chambers to the left as well as the right of each gate (Ezek 40) as well as the golden lamp stand with the three branches for light to the right and three to the left of the primary lamp stand center shaft. All ritually clean Israelites could enter the courtyard. Appropriately there were three articles within the courtyard:
 1. The bronze altar of burnt offering;
 2. The bronze laver
 3. The Tabernacle.
- 2) The next portal was into the Holy Place of the Sanctuary. The priests were allowed to enter this holier environment but had to wash their hands and feet before entering... or die (Exod 30:19-21). Appropriately, there were three articles in the Holy Place:
 1. The golden table of showbread,
 2. The golden lampstand
 3. The golden incense altar.
- 3) The third and final portal offered a barred entrance into the Most Holy Place. Only the High Priest could enter here and only three times each year, on the Day of Atonement. There was only one item in the Most Holy. However the golden ark of the covenant received three progressive deposits: 1st an omer of incorruptible manna; 2nd the covenant stones with the ten commandments and 3rd the rod of resurrection with its buds and blossoms and ripe almonds.
- 4) Each of the three progressively holier stages highlight an inner three that serves to emphasize the significance of the pattern. Hopefully, the sheer volume and consistency of the pattern has allowed us to progress beyond any potential criticism of a 'contrived' pattern.

Entrances of the High Priest

The next understanding platform brings us to the three exclusive entrances of the High Priest into that third and holiest environment, where the divine glory rested above the mercy seat between the cherubim. These three entrances declare the three great immortalization events in the divine plan. This is what atonement is all about: immortalization. The principle of atonement is often dramatically minimalized as nothing more than forgiveness. The darkness of that limiting presumption would blind us to the glory of the rock solid relationship between atonement and inheriting the divine nature that is so powerfully displayed in the shadows of the Day of Atonement ritual.

- 1) The first entrance of the High Priest into the Most Holy on the Day of Atonement was to generate the incense cloud that would blend with the divine glory embracing the golden ark. This was reviewed in the previous commentary. This action saved the life of the High Priest... *“And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not”* (Lev 16:13). This conversion of the aromatic dust of the incense into the cloud that saves the life of the High Priest is a flawless representation of the first immortalization event. Our Messiah was raised from the cursed nature of *dust thou art and to dust thou shalt return* to the immortal spirit nature of his Father, represented throughout Scripture by clouds. After the High Priest saved his own life through this ritual he was free to spatter the blood of the bullock eastward as well as before the mercy seat for the atonement of the entire family of the High Priest.
- 2) The second immortalization event will be when our ultimate High Priest takes his bride, who is also expressed as his children and his brothers and sisters throughout Scripture. This second immortalization event is for the family of the High Priest. The third Day of Atonement activity in the Most Holy was when the High Priest spattered the blood of the goat eastward and before the mercy seat, for the atonement of the rest of the nation.
- 3) The third immortalization event in the divine plan, at the end of the Millennium Kingdom, is for the rest of the world. Everyone will either perish or inherit the divine nature. The three Most Holy Place activities on the Day of Atonement flawlessly project the three immortalizations in the divine plan. This observation is impossible to anyone who believes the serpent lie of not surely dying because of sin. The God-despising delusion of immortal human souls and immortal wicked beings represent the next evolutionary philosophy stage beyond the limitation of atonement to an understanding of simply forgiveness. Separating atonement from the covering of the divine nature immediately blocks our view of the veiled glories in the shadows of divine expressions.

Creation Confirmation

The spoken word of God (creation) always confirms the written word of God (The Bible). Just as there are three progressive stages to the eternal continuation of life in the ultimate divine plan, so there are exactly three progressively significant stages in the continuation of life under the current temporary order. Temporary

life requires each of the three categories of matter to continue life: gas, liquid and solids (oxygen, water, bread). If we are deprived of oxygen we will die in minutes. If we are deprived of only water we will die within two weeks. If we are deprived of only solids we may live for a couple months. Each of these three life extending necessities in the terms of creation (air, water and food) are presented as symbols of God's word or His Spirit in Scripture. This was the lesson in the manna. *"And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live"* (Deut 8:3). It is the word of our Creator that is the source of life, whether it is eternal life from the written word and the word made flesh or it is the spoken word that constructed the features of creation by which we are currently and temporarily sustained. Another creation shadow of these three stages — to the realization of total creational immortality — is the three specific trimesters in the conception to birth progression of a new human life. Creation constantly testifies divine truths to those with eyes to see and ears to hear.

The number of the name of Jesus had to have triple eights. He is our source of life. He is our oxygen, our water and our bread. He is the key component of each of the three immortalization events in the divine plan. He is the key to understanding the three divinely appointed feasts that were each identified with harvests (judgment) throughout the year, indicating the same three immortalization events. The glory in the number of his name is hidden in the shadows of Scripture and veiled in the features of creation for the exclusive witness of those who have circumcised their hearts, rejected the serpent philosophy and truly love our Creator and His principles.

Jim Dillingham (Granite State, NH)

Will you be ready?

Will you be ready for the king when he comes? Wise men will. The Master comes to reign on earth. He will give eternal life to all who have believed these good things and have been baptized, and are waiting faithfully for him:

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand. Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt 25:31-34).

Surely, this is worth believing. And it is true!

Harry Tennant

“As it was in the Days of Noah” (Part 2)

Whom do You Trust?

In the previous article, we discussed the “days of Noah” with a particular focus on Noah’s lineage. His father was from the line of Seth, which had produced men like Enoch, who had shown more affinity for the things of God than the descendants of Cain had. Unfortunately, however, many of the people of Enoch’s day stopped walking with God and took a different path. Genesis 6: 2 records that righteous men, many of whom were probably from the House of Seth, began to marry women of the world, many of whom were probably from the House of Cain: *“That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose”*. The title “sons of God” is used repeatedly in the Bible in reference to faithful people.¹ For example, John states that God’s love for us is shown by the fact that we are called *“the sons of God”* (1John 3:1).

However, in the time before the Flood, the sons of God went astray. Genesis 6:2 describes what happened. They looked on the daughters of men; they saw that they were beautiful, and they took them as wives.

It is remarkable the number of times that the Bible hints at the character of a person’s spouse. It does this because when a person has a choice of who they will marry, the decision that they make reveals a lot about who they are. And it is a consistent characteristic of the ungodly to select a marriage partner based on appearances and physical appeal alone. Consider Lamech, for example. The Scriptures make repeated references to his wives, Adah and Zillah. “Adah” means “ornament,” which certainly indicates beauty and a focus on appearance. The name “Zillah,” his other wife, means “shadow,” which brings to mind the woman of Proverbs 7, who waited in the shadows and seduced her lover with flattering words and sensual speech. Faithful Ruth, of course, was the exact opposite. She was commended for choosing a spouse based on his character and not focusing merely on physical attraction (Ruth 3:10). And God blessed her marriage to Boaz.

The marriages of the sons of God to the daughters of men did bring some material advantages for a time. The descendants of Lamech were very skilled in the ways of the world: *“And Adah bore Jubal. He was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock. His brother’s name was Jubal. He was the father of all those who play the harp and flute. And as for Zillah, she also bore Tubal-Cain, an instructor of every craftsman in bronze and iron. And the sister of Tubal-Cain was Naamah”* (Genesis 4:20-22 NKJV). Perhaps that is why the children of the unions between the sons of God and the daughters of men produced giants: *“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”* (Gen 6:4). Maybe the technology they had access to, and the high standard of living they enjoyed, allowed them to grow larger in stature, just as people from prosperous Western nations are often physically bigger than people from poorer countries.

Of course, the real reason that those unions produced giants was probably because

of the lesson it conveyed. Those marriages were just based on flesh. So, what did they produce? More flesh. Giant amounts of it.

And the end result was not happiness. The corruption of God's way led to lawlessness: *"The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time"* (Gen 6:5, NIV). It is not hard to imagine that the giants that came from the marriages of the sons of God to the daughters of men probably took advantage of their imposing size and contributed to the violence that prevailed in society.

There is a powerful lesson for us in the developments described in Genesis 6. We should never deceive ourselves into thinking that supposed "little" deviations from God's way, such as cultivating relationships based purely on physical attraction, are acceptable as long as we are "sons of God" in every other way. That is a temptation that our minds are prone to indulging in. It is so easy to think that we can have the best of both worlds by permitting ourselves to have "little" departures from divine standards. We can think that a few moral compromises will allow us to enjoy both the benefits of a relationship with God, as well as some pleasures of the flesh. But, as Genesis 6 shows, that never works. Indulging our own disobedience only leads to more departures from God's way. Notice how quickly the world progressed from being a place that had "sons of God" who strayed, to being a place completely given over to wickedness. Moreover, the departures from God's way that we permit in our lives have a way of creating new problems for us. That principle is illustrated vividly by the appearance of the giants. If the sons of God had not allowed themselves to be drawn away by the beauty of the daughters of men, the place would not have been overrun with giants. A lot of hardship and sorrow could have been averted if the sons of God had stuck to divine principles **in all aspects of their lives**. The same is true for us, particularly when it comes to whom we spend our time with, and especially whom we marry.

Trust in God when it comes to finding a marriage partner

Proverbs states: *"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths"* (Prov 3:5-6). The question of trust was a defining characteristic that distinguished the House of Seth from the House of Cain in the years before the Flood. Those who followed the principles of the House of Seth put their trust in God. But those who followed the principles of the House of Cain trusted in themselves.

So, do you trust God? It is an important question. The answer has a lot of implications for our actions. For example, much of what happens in our dating relationships and our choice of a marriage partner are reflections of how much trust we place in God to do what He has said.

So, what has God said that He will do? Well, He has promised that He will give us what we need to serve Him. The Apostle Paul writes: *"And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus"* (Phil 4:19 ESV). And if we need a Godly, loving spouse, God will meet that need: *"House and wealth are inherited from fathers, but a prudent wife is from the LORD"* (Prov 19:14 ESV).

But, if you are a single person, you may go through periods where you feel you have a need along those lines that is going unmet. You may want a relationship but have a hard time finding the right person or having things work out. You may even want to date someone for all of the right reasons and still find yourself alone.

If you find yourself in this situation, continue to trust that if marriage will be a happy and spiritually healthy state for you, God will provide you with a suitable partner. But make sure that you have your priorities straight. Look for someone who loves God more than anything else, including you: *“And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple”* (Luke 14:25-26). If someone loves God above all else, they will try to love you as God loves. They will be nurturing. They will be gracious. They will forgive. And they will do it even when you do not necessarily deserve it.

Look for someone who is incredibly supportive of you and your activities, even if he or she cannot fully participate in them. God ordained marriage so that two people could help each other: *“Then the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him”* (Gen 2:18 ESV). The person you marry should be your biggest fan and the best supporter of your activities, especially of your spiritual pursuits. So, observe the inclinations of the person you are dating. Do not stay with someone who is not particularly supportive of you and what you do. Do not stay with someone who you do not especially enjoy helping. That is not what relationships are supposed to be like.

And remember that your timeframe for dating and marriage, and God’s timeframe for you, may be different. One implication of that is that you and your friends may not get into serious relationships (and get married) at the same time. If you find yourself on a different timeline than your friends, do not panic and either get into a relationship, stay in a relationship, or marry a person who is not right for you just so that you can “keep up.” In other words, do not jeopardize your future happiness at 30, 35, 45, 55, 65, and beyond for the sake of being in the same place as your friends when you are 19, 22, or 25. Place your confidence in God. Trust that He will take care of you and will meet your needs when the time is right.

“Rest”

God provides. If you trust Him, He will provide in your life, just as He provided for the faithful remnant of the House of Shem. A boy was born to Lamech, the son of Methuselah. His father named him “Noah,” which means “rest” or “comfort”: *“And he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed”* (Gen 5:29). His father gave him that name because he hoped that the boy would bring rest and comfort to the world. In that way, and in many others, Noah prefigured the Lord Jesus Christ, who offers us hope of rest from the curse.

Ryan Mutter (Baltimore, MD)

Notes:

1. See Hosea 1: 10 and Romans 8: 14.

The Joy of Sunday Schooling

What's the Goal? (1)

God's truth is more than a set of doctrinal statements. It is a distinctive and compelling way of life. It sets us apart. In the days of the Reformation, practicing believers were singled out and persecuted by Catholics and Protestants alike because their excellent spirit and godly behavior gave them away!¹ There is no reason why an excellent spirit and godly behavior should not still give us away today. Belief *and* behavior identify the true follower of Christ.

"We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life" (Rom 6:4²).

"If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory" (Col 3:1-4).

If we agree with this Biblical description of discipleship, then it tells us something about the kinds of educational goals we need for our Sunday school programs.

Information and transformation goals

Our beliefs are based on revealed information. They are the direct result of knowing what God has told us about His plan and purpose in the pages of Scripture. Coming to a knowledge of what God has revealed starts a transformation process in us; it begins to change our minds. Or at least it should.

Information goals. Years ago, as a Sunday school teacher, I made a list of what I thought were the most important things Sunday school children need to know about. I have revisited and refined my list over the years, and today it looks like this: Bible contents, God, Christ, man, the ecclesia, doctrines, commandments.³

These are my **information goals** as a teacher. These are the subjects that I want to teach. But initially they are just subjects in the abstract. The information related to these subjects has to come alive in the learner. It has to transform the person in order to be of any value.

Acquiring a basic knowledge of these subjects is the first *transformation* that takes place in a would-be disciple. But it is only the first. It is what God would have us do with the knowledge — and what we allow Him to do in us — that takes transformation to its higher and more mature levels.

Transformation goals. I also tried to think through the kinds of things that need to change, the kinds of transformations that need to take place if a person is to grow as a disciple of Christ. Starting with the acquisition of revealed knowledge, the list I came up with looks like this:

Knowledge, attitudes, effective thinking, relationship with God and Christ, relationship with others, personal life practices.³

These are my transformation goals. All of these will get better as a disciple grows. The goals are challenging to say the least.

It is not as easy to define transformation goals as it is information goals. And it is even less easy to address them in our teaching. Almost certainly as a result of this, the transformation aspects of discipleship do not get as much planned emphasis in our Sunday schooling as they should. But who can dispute the importance of the goals?

There are other realities as well. A Sunday school teacher can only do so much to shape the attitudinal and behavioral side of a student's life. We are venturing into the realm of what must ultimately take place between the person and God. Still we cannot dismiss the high importance of these goals in our teaching. They need to be addressed.

Educational T R A N S F O R M A T I O N
Goals

**I
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		Knowledge	Attitudes	Effective thinking	Relationship to God, Christ	Relationship to others	Personal life practices
Bible contents							
God							
Christ							
Man							
The Ecclesia							
Doctrines							
Commandments							

The goals are interrelated

Information and transformation goals are interrelated. They impact on each other. What we know and the priorities we place on the things we know affect how we think and act. It is clearly intended to work this way when it comes to knowing what God has revealed to man.

“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work” (2Tim 3:16-17).

Scripture was given by God to change us. God expects the things He tells us to make us new and different people. Divine information is intended to drive godly transformation.

Visualizing this. At the same time that I made lists of information and transformation goals, some years ago, I felt compelled to try and represent the fact that the goals are interrelated. This led to the creation of what I called an educational goal grid. It is a visualization tool that places the two sets of goals against each other and invites us to contemplate how the goals relate to each other:

Every open space on the grid is a meeting place between an information goal and a transformation goal. Every meeting place invites a question: *How should this affect that?* For example, how should my knowledge of God; that is, how should my knowledge of what God has revealed to me about Himself, affect the way I think about ...? Or how should my knowledge of God affect the relationship that I have with ...? Or how should my knowledge of the commandments of Christ affect what I decide to do when ...?

We are projected into the realm of asking powerful questions, the kinds of questions that can serve our Sunday school programs very well. Try formulating a few questions of your own as you contemplate the goal grid. Try formulating one important question that will apply to the Sunday school lesson you plan to teach next week. The goal grid should give you plenty of room to stop and think.

Jim Harper (Meriden, CT)

Please contact Bro. Jim at 2harps4u@gmail.com

Notes:

1. This point is effectively developed by Leonard Verduin, *The Reformers and Their Stepchildren*, chapter 3, "Catharer" (meaning cleansed).
2. All references are from the ESV
3. Develop your own set of goals. You may also want to think about the order in which you sequence your goals.

What Are You Doing?

This story was told of the noted English architect Sir Christopher Wren. He was supervising the construction of a magnificent cathedral in London. A journalist thought it would be interesting to interview some of the workers, so he chose three and asked them this question, "What are you doing?"

The first replied, "I'm cutting stone for ten shillings a day."

The next answered, "I'm putting in ten hours a day on this job."

But the third said, "I'm helping Sir Christopher Wren construct one of London's greatest cathedrals."

First Principles

The Nature of Man

Responsibility for wrong doing is something that no one has ever wanted to accept. Thousands of years ago in the Garden of Eden, Adam ate of the fruit that was forbidden to him. When approached by God, he blamed Eve for giving it to him. When God confronted Eve, she claimed that the serpent deceived her into partaking of the fruit. So, who was to blame? Was the serpent really responsible for Adam and Eve? Is human nature naturally good, or, are we more inclined to evil? An incorrect understanding of our nature may lead us down the same path that Adam and Eve took. They tried to pass sin off on someone else! We, therefore, must turn to the Scriptures for instruction and clarification on the subject. What is God's explanation for what happened in the garden, and, how does it affect us?

Made from the Dust

It is essential to build the correct foundation for understanding the true nature of man, and that begins with looking at how man was created in Genesis. Genesis 1:27 reveals *"So God created man in His own image."*¹ In Genesis 2:7 the process is described *"the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being."* And in Genesis 1:31, *"God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good."* It is very clear from this account that man is nothing but dust without God. The key to man becoming a living being is the 'breath of life' that comes from God. Job reiterates this in chapter 33:4 *"The spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life."* The simple formula that is presented in Scripture is: Dust + Breath of Life = Living soul/being.

Life contingent on Obedience with a Nature inclined to disobey (sin)

God gave life to man freely, but made life contingent on obedience to His command that man should not eat of the Tree of Life, or the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. God's first test for man — the centerpiece of his creation — was for Adam and Eve to willingly obey Him. Unfortunately for Eve, obeying God required restraint and discipline. Even with more than enough food provided in the garden she was tempted by the beautiful fruit on the forbidden tree and was overcome. John Thomas expounds on this situation in Elpis Israel:

"The reasoning of the Serpent operated upon the woman by exciting the lust of her flesh, the lust of her eyes, and the pride of life. This appears from the testimony. An appetite, or longing for it, that she might eat it, was created within her. The fruit also was very beautiful. It hung upon the tree in a very attractive and inviting manner. 'She saw that it was good for food and that it was pleasant to the eyes'. But there was a greater inducement still than even this. The flesh and the eyes would soon be satisfied. Her pride of life had been aroused by the suggestion that by eating it their

eyes would be opened and that she would be ‘made wise’ as the glorious Elohim she had so often seen in the garden. To become ‘as the gods’; to know good and evil as they knew it — was a consideration too cogent to be resisted. She not only saw that it was good for food and pleasant to the eyes, but that it was a tree to be desired as making one wise ‘as the gods; therefore she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat’. Thus, as far as she was concerned, the transgression was complete.”

Just as Eve disobeyed God by eating the fruit, we are susceptible to the same cycle of sin she experienced. She saw the fruit, she inquired of the fruit, she partook of the fruit and, thus, sin was conceived along with separation from God. Eve was now aware that she was naked, she was ashamed and, therefore, looked for clothing to cover herself.

The Results of Disobedience.

The more we participate in this cycle and allow sin to infiltrate our lives, the more we separate ourselves from God. This is the consequence that God has set in place. As Adam and Eve were rejected and removed from the Garden because of their sin, we, similarly, become removed from our relationship with God. This separation process takes place in three different ways: Mental, Moral and Physical corruption. Mental corruption occurs as our natural desires (lust of eyes, lust of flesh, and pride of life) are aroused and fulfilled. The more these desires are satisfied the stronger they become and the shame that was experienced with the first sin begins to fade. As this cycle continues we become like the wild animal described in Jeremiah 2:24 *“A wild donkey used to the wilderness that sniffs the wind in her desire.”* Moral corruption will displace the Godly lifestyle we’ve established by the renewing of our minds through the Scriptures. Our lives become stained by fulfilling the desires and temptations that enter our hearts. The ultimate effect of sin is physical corruption. This is experienced by the limitations of mortality, decay of our body, and ultimately death. James 1:15 reads, *“...when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.”* The process of sin can be stated in a simple formula: Living Soul/being + Sin = Death.

Death — Returning to Dust

Death is the end result of sin, the effects of which we will all experience. Because we have sinned, we will perish and return to the dust again. God gave this sentence to Adam after he disobeyed the command and ate of the tree. By partaking of the fruit, man acquired the ability to know good and evil, so God needed to establish that to disobey is evil(sin) and the result of this sin is death. God condemns Adam in Genesis 3:19, *“In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread. Till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return.”* This sentence is passed down to all men and women that are the seed of Adam because all men sin as we see in Romans 5:12, *“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.”* Death is the cessation of life, an end to our existence on earth. Death occurs when the breath of life that God used to create us goes back to him and we return to the dust. Psalm 104:29 reads, *“Thou takest*

away their breath, they die and return to the dust.” Abraham knew this to be true as he declared his condition before God when negotiating for the city of Sodom in Genesis 18:27, *“I who am but dust and ashes.”* We can again extract a formula from Scripture: Living Soul\being – Breath of Life = Dust.

There is Hope

We all face the consequences of Adam’s sin and the nature we have inherited, but God has promised a way of escape, just as He did for the Israelites in the wilderness. In Numbers 21 God sent fiery serpents among the Israelites because they complained against Him, and many of them died. But when they recognized their sin and repented, God heard their cry. He commanded Moses to make a serpent out of brass and put it on a pole in front of Israel. He promised that whoever was bitten by a serpent could look up at the bronze serpent on the pole and recognize that sin (represented by the snake) needed to be put to death in their life. Once they understood this they would be saved from the bite of the serpent. Like Israel, we have been sentenced to death because of sin, but if we recognize our sin and put it to death, God will provide salvation for us, as John 3:14,15 says, *“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up. That whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.”*

What we must do

We must make the choice between good and evil in order to prevent the cycle of sin from repeating itself in our lives. Recognizing and putting sin to death must be a constant battle, but God has promised that he will be with us and assist us, if we follow his commands. We must ask God to help keep us from temptation, so that we might not fall into the trap as Eve did when she ‘saw’ the fruit. Even when we are tempted we must not give in to the desires of our flesh. God sent this message to Israel in Jeremiah 4:3,4, *“Break up your fallow ground, and do not sow among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to the LORD and take away the foreskins of your hearts.”* The analogy of circumcision is helpful in understanding how we must rid our lives of sin. The cutting off of the flesh (sinful desire) will be painful, but it is the only way to eradicate sin. We can be assisted in this battle with our nature by reading God’s word every day and letting it affect all aspects of our lives. Moses instructs in Deut 10:16-17, *“...lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and bind them as a sign to your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. And you shall write them on your doorposts of your house and on your gates.”*

The Reward

If we can understand our nature and use the tools God has given us to combat it, the reward is wonderful. In submitting to God’s word and laying it up in our hearts we can actually reverse the corruptive effects of sin. Mental regeneration is provided by an active belief in the gospel of Christ, as we no longer become slaves to our natural desires. Moral regeneration is brought on by baptism and the forgiveness of sins provided through the sacrifice of Christ and obedience

of God's commandments. Finally, we will, by God's grace, experience a physical regeneration and be given immortality if found worthy at the judgment seat of Christ. If we can overcome the desires of the flesh and the temptations of sin, we will be given a new heart and a new spirit by the grace of God and will no longer be prone to sin. Perhaps, then, the final formula we can commit to memory is: Resistance to sin + God's grace = Eternal life!

Johnnie Abel (Brantford, ON)

Notes:

1. All references are from the NKJV.

Reflections

KJV 400th Anniversary “If God Spare My Life...”

In early 1428 AD, the mortal remains of a former rector of a parish were exhumed from beneath the flagstones of church property in Lutterworth, a town in the English Midlands. An array of powerful men stood out from the crowd of locals. The vicinity's bishop, along with other ecclesiastical dignitaries, the High Sheriff and his officers, canons and lawyers, watched as gravediggers unearthed a coffin, raised it, opened it and exposed its contents to the curious onlookers. The remains of the man who had died 44 years earlier were then taken out, carried in a solemn procession along the streets of the town and down to a wooded hillside to a field of execution by a bridge on the River Swift. A Catholic ceremony thus began and under a decree from the Pope, the desecrated body was 'damned', unfrocked, chained to a stake and burned... the bones broken, ground to powder and the ashes deposited into the river. All visible trace of the one who was accused of "treason against God" was destroyed. The accusation? Heresy. His name? John Wycliffe. His crime? Attempting to bring the Word of God to the common man.

And so, here we are, 400 years after the Bible was put into the hands of English speaking people — blessed with possessing the Word of God as a result from dedicated men like Wycliffe, whose efforts brought its sacred message to us. Millions of faithful men and women the world over for centuries, have been richly blessed by their access to and subsequent acceptance of Scripture and in the witness of these glad tidings.

Yet, Wycliffe at least died of natural causes — not so with William Tyndale. Within a century, the Catholic influence was still seeking to burn 'heretics', but this time alive — if they could! It is a proven fact that the "arch-heretic", William Tyndale, is credited for writing no less than 80% of the King James Version Bible and, in turn, has been a bigger influence on the English language than William Shakespeare. His only crime? One of such passion that he had no other recourse than to leave his homeland for the continent — to continue his work of translating the Greek New Testament for the sake of the everyday man, that he might have

God's comfort revealed to him in his own tongue. The man who became known as "God's Outlaw" could readily identify what we in our own community are at times too fearful to examine (read the "Epistle Dedicatory" in your KJV and see their view as to the 'man of sin' being that 'Popish Person'). Tyndale spoke vehemently against indulgences, purgatory, Papal intercession, the immortality of souls, exaltation of saints, and prayers to saints. He knew all too well of the 'antichrist' system, condemning the 'priestcraft' as he called it, denouncing the 'Popes' bloody dogma, reviling the 'mitred monster'. He daily risked his life from Romish spies for the sake of printing and smuggling his Bible translations back into England. He taught himself Hebrew after arriving in Europe, so that he began to translate the Old Testament as well! His immortal words live on and are truer than ever. His response to a clergyman's statement was, "We were better off to be without God's laws than the Pope's." He also said, defying the Pope, "If God spare my life, 'ere many years, I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scripture than thou dost!" In the end, it was the love of his fellow man and God's Word which led to him being martyred in 1536, knowing that all who would enter into the reward would face persecution. We now have entered 2011 and plans are being readied to commemorate the 400th anniversary of his work...and so we ask, dear reader, what compels you to carry on The Work?

Peter Wisniewski (Toronto Church St, ON)

"Who are You?"

Many years ago, I was about to retire for the night at a rest house in the tropical rainforest of Guyana. Suddenly from the pitch darkness outside came a voice loud and clear: "Who are you?" I was obviously an intruder, but who was challenging my presence there? Again there came the insistent query: "Who are you?" This was no human voice; it turned out later that it was the typical call of the burrowing owl, busy about his nightly business. But the question had to be answered — who was I? It's a question we all have to answer sooner or later. Are we who we think we are, or have we perhaps a split personality? The matter is important because it could affect our standing at Christ's judgment seat. The Lord had some severe words to say about those who thought they were righteous and despised others (Luke 18:9-14).

When Moses looked upon the burdens of his fellow Israelites in Egypt and felt moved to correct injustice, one of those same Israelites challenged his authority: "Who made you ruler and judge over us?" (Exod 2:14) ¹. As we would put it, "Who do you think you are?" Moses fled to Midian and spent 40 years learning to be a shepherd, after which God did appoint him to be a ruler and judge. This time it was Moses who asked, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" (Exod 3:11), to which God replied, "I will be with you." It was a humbler Moses who, when confronted with the people's complaint about lack of food, said: "Who are we, that you should grumble against us? ... Who are we? You are not grumbling against us, but against the LORD" (Exod 16:7-8). It was God who had brought them out from slavery and it was God who would provide

for all their needs in the wilderness. Moses had learnt to trust God, “as seeing the invisible”, and he had no pretensions to greatness.

Later, when Miriam and Aaron criticized him, and accused him of high-handedness, God intervened and justified His servant. Significantly, the record adds, “*Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth*” (Num 12:1-3).

So the first rule of self-examination is: are we humble? How do we react to criticism? If it is unjust, do we take it personally, or are we sad that others have misunderstood us? And then are we patient enough to explain matters carefully to avoid that same criticism being repeated? If it is a valid comment, then can we take it and do something about it? A great deal of 2 Corinthians is taken up with Paul’s defense of his Christ-given authority, couched in terms that honor the Lord who called him but also sensitive to the criticism that he was exploiting the Corinthians for his own ends.

We are blessed with more examples in Scripture of those who have examined themselves and committed themselves wholeheartedly to God. Take David, the “man after God’s own heart”. After Nathan had revealed to him the wonderful covenant God was promising, David found it hard to believe that this was real. “*Who am I, O Sovereign LORD, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far?*” (2Sam 7:18) He was overwhelmed by God’s grace. He didn’t see this as some kind of reward for his faithfulness but recognized it as part of God’s unfolding purpose: “*For the sake of your word and according to your will, you have done this great thing...*” (v.21) He then launched into a great paean of praise and thanksgiving.

Let us ask ourselves the same question: who are we, that God should have made great and precious promises to us, sinful and erring as we are? Has time blunted the freshness and beauty of those promises? Or, are we still left breathless by God’s grace and rejoicing continuously in His mercy?

Chris Tarry (Walsall, U.K.)

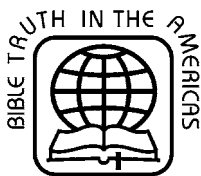
Notes:

1. All references are from the NIV.

Many of us spend countless hours dreaming about something we truly want in our lives. We spend our waking days thinking about it. We talk with others about our dreams. We feel convinced that we are fully committed to pursuing our dream. But we fail at ever bringing these dreams into reality because we hesitate to take the first step toward making them come true. We fail to take action.

Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote, “The great thing in this world is not so much where we are, but in what direction we are moving.” Are you moving in the direction of what you desire in life? Because if you don’t know where you are going, you will probably end up someplace else. Aristotle, the great philosopher, was asked one day by a young man, “How do you get to Mount Olympus?” To which Aristotle replied, “By ensuring that each step you take is in that direction.”

Monte Schumaker



Bible Mission News

Jamaica — Short but Strengthening Visit

Our visit to Jamaica (October 9 to 16, 2010) was a very successful and spiritually encouraging trip. We loved every moment of our stay in which we saw and experienced the beauty Jamaica has to offer. Both in the people we met and in the scenery of the Island.

We were greeted with love and open arms at our Brother Melvin and Sister Gerzel Gordon's home in May Pen. They were very hospitable and made us feel right at home. The Sunday was packed full of classes. We were pleasantly surprised to see some of the Sunday School kids come to the Gordon's house to make sure their teacher was coming! The day started with Sunday School for both adults and children, followed by a brother's and sister's class after memorial where we focused on prayer. It was amazing how short a time we spent with them and how much of a bond we shared in the discussion throughout our classes.



Jochem and sister Gerzel leafletting around the May Pen ecclesial hall.

Monday and Tuesday morning we went leafletting, together with a group of sisters, under the nice and hot Jamaican sun. In the afternoons we had fellowship with the Gordon's and Sister Iris Grant. Jochem prepared a class for the Tuesday night Bible-Seekers class on the pamphlets we distributed with the subject of "Life after Death". When we went leafletting everyone was very friendly and approachable. We were excited because we thought we had stirred a lot of interest in our billing efforts, only to our surprise there were far more children than adults that attended. After realizing how many children showed up Jochem changed

his class to gear it more towards them. This small ecclesia definitely had a spirit of Christ, and it was encouraging to see all of the children that came out and their excitement to be there. The energy that the brothers and sisters in May Pen put into their young ones is really admirable.

After three days we went to the Round Hill Ecclesia from Wednesday till Friday afternoon. Their Bible class was a great way to get everyone involved. Everyone



Above: The brothers and sisters at the Bible seekers class
Below: The children at the midweek Bible seekers class in May Pen



sat in a circle and had to present their thoughts on what Jesus Christ's death and resurrection meant to them. It was a really great format because it got everyone involved no matter how elaborate or simple their thoughts were.

On Thursday we visited two sisters, Sis. Sislyn Wilkie and Sis. Jannette Elliott. These sisters are unable to attend the meeting due to their physical condition. We tried to encourage them by reading with them a portion of the daily Bible readings, singing and prayer. On Thursday night there was a brother's class where we discussed God's Word for more than three hours which was definitely one of the

highlights of our trip. In this ecclesia with only three brothers they have some kind of class or ecclesial gathering every day!

It was really great to see the uplifting spirit for the Truth in Jamaica and to bond with our lovely brothers and sisters in our shared faith. The week seemed to fly by and we wish we could have stayed longer, but in what we thought would be a short visit to strengthen our brothers and sisters, we feel that we have been strengthened by them in many ways!

Jochem & Emily Hale
On behalf of the CBMA



**Visiting Sis. Sislyn
in Roundhill.**

**Bro. Leecroft, the record-
ing brother of Roundhill
Ecclesia.**



**Visiting Sis. Janette's
home with the young
people from Roundhill**

San Salvador

Ending the year with a new beginning



Bro. Melvin is on the left, being received into fellowship by Bro. Douglas Mate, both of the San Salvador (capital) Ecclesia.

On Sunday, December 19, 2010, the San Salvador ecclesias were privileged to carry out the baptism of Melvin Rodriguez, husband of Sis. Irasema Alvarado. Bro. Melvin is a school teacher and a dedicated Bible student and we pray that God will bless his new life in Christ and in the ecclesia.

As is the custom in El Salvador, the two satellite ecclesias (Sonsonate and Usulután), including friends and young people, bussed in to the capital city to help celebrate the event. This meant that the San Salvador hall was packed, with more

than 120 in attendance. The baptism was first on the agenda, followed by the breaking of bread with the receiving into fellowship and then the public lecture and Sunday school held simultaneously.

Since we traditionally put on a meal after a baptism, a team of sisters arrived at the hall at 7 am to start preparing chicken, vegetables, rice and salad in addition to making tortillas by hand from scratch. To economize we don't use disposable plates or cups, and so all the dishes had to be hand-washed after lunch, but many helpers pitched in and made short work of the job.

After lunch was over, conversations continued until late into the afternoon, when those from the satellite ecclesias had to get on the road to reach home before dark. It was a wonderful day of fellowship for the Christadelphian community of El Salvador and we are deeply grateful to our Heavenly Father for all the blessings he has bestowed upon us.

*Submitted by Jan Berneau
CBMA/CBMC Publicity*

"He who rebukes a man will in the end gain more favor than he who has a flattering tongue" (Prov 28:23).

There is the story about the monarch who dismissed his counselor. When the counselor asked why, the king replied, "For one of two reasons. Either you didn't notice my faults, which proves your ignorance. Or you chose not to rebuke me for them, which proves you were serving your own interests and not mine!"

ThisisyourBible.com

400th Anniversary of King James Version Bible

Visit Thisisyourbible.com to see some of the interesting things being done to advertise the 400th anniversary of the King James Version of the Bible.



400th Anniversary Of The first printing of the King James Bible



2011 is the 400th anniversary of the first printing of the King James Bible

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For those of you who are using Facebook, there is now a link to the Thisisyourbible.com website. It is intended for tutors, inactive and active students as well as anyone else who wants to become a friend. So if you are on Facebook a lot please check it out and see what is happening. I heard a statistic last night that **1 in every 14 people in the world** is on Facebook. For a fossil like me, that is hard to understand — but we constantly need to update our preaching methods and continue to preach the Word in every way we can.

*Submitted by Jan Berneau
CBMA/CBMC Publicity*

We are All Priests

We are priests of God (Exod 19:6; 1Pet 2:5; Rev 1:6; 5:10). The work of a priest involved blood, sweat and tears; smoke, dirty ashes, and much manual labor. The priest washed, but was never clean for very long, the work being messy. And the work of cleaning out the altar, the surrounding area, and the furnishings was never finished. The priest got his hands dirty, immersing them in filth, blood, and broken tissue continually. And his neighbors brought their diseases, their lesions, close to his face seeking compassion, seeking diagnosis, seeking healing. Lifting, cleaning, scouring, teaching, eating and fellowship — all in the presence of God. What a picture of effortful service. Is this not ecclesial life?

Dev Ramcharan

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.)

BRANTFORD, ON

On December 5th, we warmly welcomed, by way of transfer from the Detroit Royal Oak, MI, Bro. Peter and Sis. Karly Styles and their two daughters, Ella and Esther, to the Brantford Ecclesia. We thank our Heavenly Father for the blessing of their fellowship and pray that we might mutually edify one another as we await the return of our Master. On another joyous note, we rejoiced with the heavenly host to witness the baptisms of two more of our Sunday School scholars. On December 11th, SARAH WISNIEWSKI, the daughter of Bro. David and Sis. Nicole Wisniewski, and REBEKAH ROBERTSON, the daughter of Sis. Jennifer Robertson, after a sound confession of their faith put on the saving name of Christ. We give thanks to God for His mercy and abundant longsuffering in calling these young people to the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord in these last days.

In preparation for next year God willing, should our Master remain away, we are delighted to extend a warm invitation to young people near and far to attend two upcoming gatherings. The first, which is our Winter Gathering on February 12th, 2011, is for the Junior CYC and Little Disciples. Our Heavenly Father has blessed us with a tremendous new facility at Camp Trillium — Rainbow Lake near Waterford, ON. The topic for the day will be “Daniel” and the day itself is scheduled to start at 10 am. Three weeks later, our Bro. Dan Osborn from BC will be joining us to lead a series of studies for the Senior CYC. The main gathering on March 5th, 2011, which commences at 12:30 pm, will be on the theme of “Jehoshaphat — Lifted Up in the Ways of the Lord.” The day will finish with a hockey challenge. Other classes and activities for the young people will take place on the Friday and Sunday for those who can join us. Additional information about these events will be circulated in the coming weeks by the respective committees. We thank God for rich opportunities to care and up-build our precious young people in these challenging times.

Don Luff

CAMBRIDGE, ON

We are pleased to announce with the best wishes of the ecclesia the following weddings: Bro. Rob MacIver and Sis. Hannah Badger (daughter of Sis. Cathy and the late Bro. Colin Badger) on May 15, 2010. Bro. Dennis Culver (son of Sis. Susan Smidt) and Sis. Abigail Easton (daughter of Bro. Keith and Sis. Caroline Easton) on July 3, 2010. Bro. Jonathan Luff (son of Bro. David and Sis. Edith Luff) and Sis. Jennifer Baines (daughter of Bro. Phil and Sis. Janice Baines) on September 3, 2010.

We thank our heavenly Father for the following members who have transferred to our ecclesia. Bro. Andy and Sis. Sharon Caetano from the Book Road, ON Ecclesia. Sis. Verity Cotterell from the Shelburne, ON Ecclesia. Sis. Abigail Culver, Bro. Andy and

Sis Allison Glen, and Sis. Amy Hill from the Brantford, ON Ecclesia. Bro. Steve and Sis. Cheryl McKay from the Kitchener Waterloo, ON Ecclesia. Bro. Tom and Sis. Lynne Northcott from the Book Road, ON Ecclesia. Sis. Lacey Robinson from the Brampton, ON Ecclesia. Bro. Joel and Sis. Diane Siegler from the Ann Arbor, MI Ecclesia.

We are sorry to lose by way of transfer the following members. Bro. Caleb and Sis. Julia Lawrence and family to the Vancouver, BC Ecclesia. Bro. Jason and Sis. Amanda Longley and family to the Mississauga West, ON Ecclesia. Our brethren and sisters are missed but we are comforted knowing that they continue the work in the Lord's vineyard at other ecclesias.

We have accepted the resignation of Sis. Dorothy McKay. We pray for God's blessing to be upon her that she may return to us and seek the glorious hope of our Lord. We thank all those who have ministered to us in the past year. It is of great encouragement to be able to share in fellowship around God's word.

Andrew Pearse

ECHO LAKE, NJ

We thank our Bro. Eric Hall of the Manhattan, NY Ecclesia for his word of exhortation during the month and were also pleased to have the company of Sis. Bernice.

We report that Bro. Jeet and Sis. Gwen Ramjattan are no longer in fellowship. We pray that in these last days they might once again seek their Lord and Master before he returns.

We have 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: Eric and Bernice Hall, Manhattan NY; Margan Packie, Virginia Packie, Carolyn Antonaccio, David and Maryann Jorgensen, Union NJ; Ruthann Jorgensen, Rochester NY; Deborah Kellet, Atlanta North GA; and Tom and Sally Davies, Pomona CA.

Stewart Marsden

GLENDALE, AZ

In our previous correspondence we neglected to thank Bro. Ron Sprinkle for his many years of service to our ecclesia as Recording Brother. Bro. Ron has taken on the role of Sunday School Superintendent and continues to be an Arranging Brother.

We would like to thank Bro. Jonathan Bowen from the Brantford, ON Ecclesia for his talks at our Study weekend in December. His topic was "Islam in the Latter Day Prophecies" and left us wanting to hear more.

We have been blessed to have visiting with us for the winter months Sis. Yvonne Teel with her husband Wendell from the Vernon, BC Ecclesia. We were also happy to have had a visit from Bro. Eric and Sis. Peggy Hoult and their daughter Margaret from the Nanaimo, BC Ecclesia. We are looking forward to future visits from the Hoult's in mid-January and mid-February.

Matthew Smith

LARGO, FL

We report the falling asleep in the Lord Jesus Christ of our dear Sis. Viola Adams on November 23, 2010, after a short illness. You may remember our last submission related the celebration of her 100th birthday in 2009 and we had just celebrated her 101st birthday in August. She was baptized at the age of 26 in Boston, Massachusetts,

and was a member of the Worcester, MA Ecclesia. Viola and her husband moved to Florida in the 1970's where they became members of the Largo, FL Ecclesia. Sister Vi was a long and faithful worker in the Lord's truth and now awaits his coming in the hope of being called to that glorious Kingdom in Zion.

We also are sad to report the falling asleep in the Lord Jesus Christ of our dear Bro. Richard Profeta in September 2010. He, too, was a long and faithful servant of the Lord, keeping him ever in the forefront through trials and tribulations.

We welcome Bro. Troy and Sis. Annette Haltom to the Largo membership and pray their sojourn with us will be mutually rewarding. And we welcome back Sis. Ann Skofield from New Hampshire where she had lived for several years.

Walt Dodrill

PARIS AVENUE, OH

The members of the Paris Avenue, OH Ecclesia have enjoyed fellowship with brothers and sisters from many other ecclesias during the Fall Semester of 2010. Words of exhortation were given by two of these visitors: Bre. Henry Ternent of the Pittsburgh, PA Ecclesia and Larry Cooper of the Seattle, WA Ecclesia. Bre. Peter Hemingray of Detroit Royal Oak, MI and Duncan Movassaghi of Shirley (UK) exhorted to our Columbus OH group. Our September Study Weekend was led by Bro. Paul Billington of the Brantford, ON Ecclesia on the topic "The Christadelphians: Latter Day Witnesses." Bro. Ron Kidd of the London, ON Ecclesia visited in early September to give us some cottage classes along with a Sunday School class and an exhortation for the Memorial service. Bro. Kidd focused upon the topic of Bible Prophecy. The ecclesia enjoyed fellowship at the annual picnic at Snyder Lake with visitors attending from Ontario, Pittsburgh and Atwood Lake. In September we rejoiced in the marriage of our Sis. Amanda Scott to Bro. Ben Waite of the Seattle, WA Ecclesia.

Bro. Ernie and Sis. Abby Kash were blessed with the birth of son, Ernest Alexander Kash IV, in October. We lost several of our young people to distant ecclesias due to changes in work locations. Sis. Amanda Scott transferred to the Seattle, WA ecclesia, Bro. Pierce and Sis. Holly Prater have moved to Denver CO, and Bro. Aaron and Sis. Molly McDonald have moved to Simi Hills, CA. Sis. Vanessa (Flatley) Schwieger has transferred to the Pittsburgh, PA ecclesia.

This past summer the children and many adults were involved in our first ever Open House. The goal of the Open House was to get our name out in the community. We've recently moved into our new hall, and we wanted to introduce ourselves to our neighbors in the surrounding area. We arranged for a number of outside activities such as a petting zoo, games, crafts, and face painting. We also provided food and snacks. We had a large tent set up as a pavilion that provided a central gathering place. In addition, inside our hall we had a number of displays and information with which people could interact. The displays focused on Bible Prophecy, the Promises to Abraham, our various children's programs, and the ThisIsYourBible.com website. We also had a video running in the main hall that gave a brief 15-20 minute overview of our hope. We also had a large variety of literature available as take home pieces.

We advertised locally in the paper by using a flyer as an insert. It was held on a Saturday afternoon from 3:00-7:00. Most of the ecclesia were in attendance throughout, manning the booths and activities. It proved to be quite successful. We had nearly 150 people (including children) come out during the course of the day! We made a number of contacts. It is our hope that these new relationships will blossom into people responding

to class offerings, either to upcoming seminars, Bible classes or Sunday school. God willing, we hope to run the open house on an annual basis.

Currently there is a seminar on Prophecy and a Preaching Workshop taking place. The spring Study Weekend will be held, Lord willing, March 12-13 with Bro. Ryan Mutter of the Baltimore, MD Ecclesia leading us in a study on the life of Gideon. We are looking forward also to a series of cottage classes each day from February 23 through February 27 by Bro. Jim Cowie from Australia. The topic has not been yet decided upon. For further information on any of these events, contact Bro. Everett Muniz at 330-497-2811 or everettmuniz@gmail.com.

Jack Vogelgesang

SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CA

We have witnessed two baptisms, ALYSSA STEEBAR was baptised in the ocean on August 28, 2010. She has been faithfully attending our meeting for the past 10 years. Also, ISAIAH TUNNELL, son of Ethan and Shawna Tunnell was baptized December 12, 2010. May God bless them both and help us all to walk together toward the Kingdom of God. Sis. Rachel MacClellan has moved and transferred to the Simi Hills, CA Ecclesia. We welcome by way of transfer Bro. Drew Lawrence from Guelph, Ontario.

On September 14, 2010, Bro. Drew Lawrence and Sis. Kelley Vaughan were united in marriage. May the Lord guide them on their way to the Kingdom. Bro. Ben and Sis. Mallory Curtin were blessed with a healthy baby girl, Katelyn Joan, on October 24, 2010. Also, Bro. Robert Jefferson and his wife Carmen, welcomed a baby boy, Timothy Wyatt, on November 5, 2010.

On January 29, 2011, our ecclesia is having a study day with Bro Arne Roberts, of the Cardiff, Wales Ecclesia. His topic is "Looking Forward to Getting Dresses". The day will start at 9:30 a.m. with lunch provided. For more information email Bro. Kent Ellis, ellisk@san.rr.com.

For more information about our ecclesia and the San Diego CYC visit our websites: www.sdbible.com and www.easysite.com/sandiegocyc.

Nick Parrino

ALIVE & WELL CAMPAIGN 2011 THE 400TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION OF THE KING JAMES VERSION BIBLE

The Toronto area ecclesias are in the process of organizing a multi-media presentation commemorating the 400th anniversary of the King James Version. With both lecture and Bro. Paul Billington's (Brantford, ON) Bible Exhibit, we wish to present to all professing Christians the real spirit of the the "Protestant Reformation" and to encourage sincere and seeking church-goers to "come out of her". (Bro. Paul's "Bible Magazine" will soon have a special edition of the KJV produced just for this occasion!)

For the first time, the Five Greater Toronto Area ecclesias are jointly involved in a campaign to witness of the miraculous Book often sitting neglected in our homes. Dates, times and venue locations are yet to be determined but we hope to keep the brotherhood updated. It is our prayer that the community all over the continent rally around this significant anniversary and that each ecclesia sets a special time aside to inform their neighbours with lectures and seminars about the "Scriptures — able to make them wise unto salvation."

Please remember this effort in your prayers and by all means, go to the www.thebible4lifededication.org website to catch the great excitement of your brothers and sisters in the UK. Being united in zeal seems to conquer many of the other issues distracting us today. Brethren and sisters, won't you lend a hand?

Peter Wisniewski (Toronto Church St, ON)

CARING NETWORK OF CANADA SEMINAR

March 26, 2011: Please mark you calendar for this date. The Caring Network of Canada is planning a Seminar with Bro. Bill Link of Baltimore, God willing. The topic will be "Maintaining Balance in Times of Disagreement". Location: Clarkson Community Centre, Mississauga, ON. For more information or to register, please contact: seminar@caringnetwork.ca.

MID-ATLANTIC CHRISTADELPHIAN BIBLE SCHOOL, SHIPPENSBURG, PA — JULY 2 - JULY 10, 2011

God willing, the Mid-Atlantic Christadelphian Bible School will be held July 2-10, 2011, at Shippensburg University in Shippensburg, PA. The theme this year is "O Taste and See that the Lord is Good" — Psalm 34:8. The Youth Program theme will be "Occupations in Scripture". Bro. Garth Maier, East Texas Ecclesia, US, will speak on the subject "The Gospel in the Law and Prophets" to the adults and "The Truth Affirmed" to the teens. Bro. Simon O'Grady, Tawa Ecclesia, NZ, will speak on the subject "Knowing our Lord, Jesus Christ, His Name & Titles" to the adults and "Daniel and His Story" to the teens. Bro. Michael Owen, Seaton Ecclesia, UK, will speak on the subject "Christ-Centered Families in the 21st Century" to the adults and "Finding the Joy of the Truth" to the teens.

Rates for 2011 will be the same as they were in 2010: **Prior to May 1:** Adults: \$445, Teens (Ages 12-19): \$375, Ages 3-11: \$235, Ages 0-2: \$25. **May 1 or later:** Adults: \$465, Teens (Ages 12-19): \$395, Ages 3-11: \$255, Ages 0-2: \$25.

Registration forms and other information were mailed in January to previous attendees and recording brethren. This information is also available on the MACBS web site: <http://www.christadelphians.net/MACBS>

Proverbs embrace the wide sphere of human existence. They take all the colors of life. They are often exquisite strokes of genius. They delight by their airy sarcasm or their caustic satire, the luxuriance of their humor, the playfulness of their turn, and even by the elegance of their imagery, and the tenderness of their sentiment.

They give a deep insight into domestic life, and open for us the heart of man, in all the various states which he may occupy. A frequent review of proverbs should enter into our readings; and although they are no longer the ornaments of conversation, they have not ceased to be the treasures of thought.

Isaac Disraeli

Minute Meditation

The True Secret of Happiness

Back in 1905 the Christadelphian magazine printed the wise observation, “There are two freedoms: the false, where a man is free to do what he likes; the true, where a man is free to do what he ought.”¹

The surprising truth is that it actually is a false freedom to be free to do whatever we like. This capability has been our downfall since the beginning of time when Cain freely acted on his desire to kill his brother, and when his father and mother yielded to their desire for the forbidden fruit.

The true freedom, to do what we ought to do, may not be as appealing, but certainly it is the better way. Robert E. Lee, the Confederate general, advised, “Do your duty in all things. You cannot do more, you should never wish to do less.” We are thankful for the freedom we have to worship our God, which is what we ought to do, as Solomon tells us: “Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.”

However nowadays, the popular slogan going around advises, “If it feels good, do it.” Many people think they have the right to do whatever they feel like doing to make themselves happy; even the U.S. Constitution guarantees the right to pursue happiness. People seek happiness in alcohol, drugs, wealth, or zoning out in front of a TV, and yet many marriages end in divorce, parents and children are fighting, and prospects for the future look bleak. The pursuit of happiness does not guarantee happiness.

Following the true freedom, doing what we ought to do, is actually the road to happiness. James M. Barrie explains, “The secret of happiness is not in doing what one likes to do, but in liking what one has to do.” For us, serving the Lord should bring true happiness. David declares, “I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” Unfortunately the world has not learned this secret.

Paul is in agreement, but he also confesses that while his desire is to do God’s will, there is a conflict within him. He admits, “When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God’s law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God — through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God’s law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.”

We also, like Paul, have this conflict. Our natural instincts make us think that we want to follow the wrong freedom and do whatever we want to do, but because we love the Lord, we also want to choose to follow the true freedom and do what we ought to do and obey our Lord. The good news is we can overcome through Jesus Christ our Lord, just like Paul did. This path of righteousness will bring true

happiness, true contentment and true peace with God, giving us that promised peace from God that passes all understanding. We then, with Paul, can joyfully proclaim our thanks to God that through Jesus Christ our Lord we can serve God instead of ourselves.

Now we can understand what Paul told the young man Timothy: “godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ... I charge you to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

May we choose the true freedom, the path of godliness, and seek the eternal riches of life everlasting in the Kingdom when Christ returns, when we will have happiness and joy forevermore.

Robert J. Lloyd

Notes:

1. Quotation is actually by Charles Kingsley, a 19th Century English professor and clergyman.

The god on the wrist

It is said that Filipinos once called watches the little gods that people carry on their wrists. They are not far off the mark. Sometime our lives may be so dictated by this little god that incessantly counts the minutes, that we cannot find time to spend with a friend, or to play a game, or to go for a walk, or to tell a story to a child. The LORD speaks through the psalmist:

“Be still, and know that I am God... I will be exalted in the earth” (Psa 46:10).

And His Son, in the midst of a violent storm, rebuked the winds and said to the waves, “Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm (Mark 4:39). We must periodically cease from our business — or our ‘busy-ness’ — to realize what is merely pressing, and what is truly important. What are we chasing so urgently, that we cannot take a deep breath, or ten, look around and look up, and see the evidence of eternal truths all around us? “Be still. Realize that I am God.”

George Booker

Coming Events (Lord Willing)

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

FEBRUARY 2011

4-6 Camp Ladore Youth Camp. Waymart, Pennsylvania. Theme: "Watch and Pray Always".
Speaker: Bro. Ryan King. Contact Bro. Ryan Mutter themutterteam@cyccamp.org or register online at www.cyccamp.org

12 Brantford, ON Winter gathering for Jr. CYC and Little Disciples. Camp Trillium, Rainbow Lake near Waterford, ON. Topic: "Daniel"

20-21 Study Weekend. Rolling Hills, Alberta, Canada, near Calgary. Study begins at noon on the 20th. Speaker is Bro. David Lawrence. His topic is "Abraham". Contact information 403-964-2562 or email dana.kohlman@grasslands.ab.ca. Accommodation, in most cases, can be arranged in homes of local members.

27- March 4 Palm Springs Bible School. The speakers at this year's school will be Bro. Karam Ram (Birmingham, UK): "In the Image of God", and Bro. John Launchbury (Portland, OR): "Appreciating Job". 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

5 Brantford, ON Sr. CYC gathering. Theme: "Jehoshaphat — Lifted Up in the Ways of the Lord".

5 Victoria, BC Spring Study Weekend. Bro. John Hellawell, "David: Shepherd, Soldier, Sinner, Sovereign". Contact Bro. Clyde Snobelen csnobelen@csl.ca 250-652-3318

12-13 Paris Avenue, OH Spring Study Weekend with our speaker Bro. Ryan Mutter (Baltimore, MD). His topic is the life of Gideon. Contact coordinator Bro. Everett Muniz, everettmuniz@gmail.com or phone 330-497-2811

26 Caring Network of Canada Seminar. Location: Clarkson Community Centre, Mississauga, ON. Speaker: Bro. Bill Link (Baltimore, MD). The topic will be "Maintaining Balance in Times of Disagreement". For information or to register, please contact seminar@caringnetwork.ca

APRIL 2011

3 Boston, MA 20th Annual Spring Study Day. Boston Ecclesia, 48 Freeman Street, Stoughton, MA. Bro. John Pople (San Francisco Peninsula, CA). Registration 12:30pm, classes begin this year at 1pm. For more information contact Bro. Jim Sullivan at 781-837-8865 or jimsulliv@aol.com

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 David Lloyd davidrlloyd@earthlink.net 818-352-6486

- 21-24 Annual Pacific Northwest CYC Conference.** Shawnigan Lake, BC. For further information please contact Bro. Clyde Snobelen cyc@csll.ca 250-652-3318
- 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) will lead our study on Easter weekend. Topic: "Events at the Time of the End"
- 23 Oxford, MA** 3rd Annual New England Little Disciples Spring Gathering. Barton Center. The topic is "Samuel" for ages 3-11. Registration to open shortly. For more information contact Bro. Jim Boyko 508-399-5038 or see nelittledisciples.com
- 30 - May 1 Pittsburgh, PA** Study Day. Our speaker will be Bro. Richard Morgan (Hamilton Book Rd, ON). The subject will be "The Temptations of Christ" — a look at the three periods of great temptation in Christ's life with an extended look at the Transfiguration which helped strengthen him to overcome. Contact Bro. Bill Folkerts (724) 265-3272 or willfol@gmail.com or pghecclesia@gmail.com

MAY 2011

- 6-8 Vancouver, BC** Sister's weekend. Beach Acres Resort, near Parksville, BC. Sis. Jennifer Daniel: "Compassion Fatigue". Cost \$180. Deposit no later than March 1. Send registration to Sis. Yvonne Rosenau, 6277 Dover Road, Nanaimo, BC, V9V 1A8. For further information contact Sis. Shonna Malczewski at shonna.malczewski@gmail.com
- 21-22 Prince George, BC** Fraternal Gathering. Speaker: Bro Ted Sleeper. Theme: "Meditations on Creation". Contact: Bro Rod Massey 1masseyrd@gmail.com

JUNE 2011

- 3-5 Meriden, CT** Spring Study Weekend. Bro. Cliff Baines (Sussex, NB). Theme: "Practical Principles in Peter". Contact Bro. Stephen Harper 203-440-0504, sharper.rn.ocn@att.net.
- 19-25 California Christadelphian Kids Camp** for children ages 9-16. Held at our same location as in year's past in Ojai, CA. Speakers this year will be brethren Ken Styles and David Wisniewski and they will be leading us in a study of Elijah. Contact Bro. Tom Graham at tom@bigbrand.com
- 19-25 Rocky Mountain Bible School.** Glenwood Springs, CO. Speakers Bro. Mark Vincent: "The Quest for Meaning in Ecclesiastes"; Bro. Dennis Paggi: "The Miracles, Wonders, and Signs of Jesus Christ"; Bro. Simon O'Grady: "Knowing our Lord Jesus Christ, His Name and Titles". Contact information provided at www.denverchristadelphians.org or contact Bro. Josh Livermore at 303-288-3966

JULY 2011

- 2-10 Mid-Atlantic Christadelphian Bible School.** Shippensburg, PA. The theme this year is "O Taste and See that the Lord is Good" – Psalm 34:8. The Youth Program theme will be "Occupations in Scripture". The speakers are Bro. Garth Maier (East Texas, TX): "The Gospel in the Law and Prophets" to the adults and "The Truth Affirmed" to the teens; Bro. Simon O'Grady (Tawa, NZ): "Knowing our Lord, Jesus Christ, His Name & Titles" to the adults and "Daniel and His Story" to the teens; Bro. Michael Owen (Seaton, UK): "Christ-Centered Families in the 21st Century" to the adults and "Finding the Joy of the Truth" to the teens. Registration forms on website <http://www.christadelphians.net/MACBS>

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10-16 Southwest Bible School will be held at Schreiner University, Kerrville, TX. Speakers are Bro. Mark O'Grady (Tawa, NZ): "Revelation — Exhortations from the Apocalypse", Teen class: "Encounters with a Risen Lord"; Bro. Stephen Palmer (Cardiff, Wales): "Ezra and Nehemiah"; Teen class: "David and Solomon"; Bro. David Lloyd (Simi Hills, CA): "Spiritual Muscle for the Five Big Mistakes", Teen class: "Lessons from Daniel". Registration information at www.swcbs.org or by contacting Bro. John Clubb at (940) 636-0412; jclubb4081@aol.com; 1612 Douglas, Iowa Park, TX 76367

16-24 Eastern Bible School. Connecticut College, New London, CT. Theme: "Set Your Minds on Things Above". Bro. Roger Lewis (Christchurch, NZ): "The Four Faces of Christ in the Gospels"; Bro. Chris Sales (Shelburne, ON): "Idolatry in the 21st Century"; Bro. Jay Mayock (Hamilton Book Road, ON): "The Re-Creation of Zion". For registration information contact Sis. Cindy Nevers, P.O. Box 296, Auburn, MA 01501, or cindy.nevers@tecbs.org or visit our website www.tecbs.org.

AUGUST 2011

20-26 Winfield Bible School Theme: "That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in You." Bro. Stan Isbell (USA): "The House of Prayer for All Nations"; Bro. Shane Kirkwood (Australia): "Philippians: Shine as Lights"; Bro. Jim Styles (USA): "Hebrews: The Power of Faith in Jesus Christ". Registration: Bro. Don Zantingh 250-545-5988 donzantingh@hotmail.com Accommodation: Bro. Harold Cawston 250-478-0343 h_jcawston@shaw.ca

27-2 Sept Vancouver Island Bible Camp. Camp Pringle, 2520 West Shawnigan Lake Road, Shawnigan, BC. Our speakers are Bro. Shane Kirkwood: "Encounters with the Master"; Bro. Stan Isbell: "Godly Mariners and Ships on the Sea – Lessons from the Bible of men, their ships and the sea"; Bro. Bill Link: "The Lord Shall Yet Comfort Zion – God's steadfast purpose in Zehariah". Contact information www.vibiblecamp.com or Sharon Enns ennsranch@telus.net or 1-250-338-4812.

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**.