

THE CRISTADELPHIAN
TIDINGS
of the Kingdom of God

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The CHRISTADELPHIAN TIDINGS of the Kingdom of God

Peter Hemingray, Editor • George Booker, Associate Editor

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Betrayed with a Kiss

Why was it necessary that the Son of Man be betrayed with a kiss (Matt 26:48,49)? There is, of course, the obvious symbolism: it represents the deceitful treachery of a familiar friend. But, on close examination, there would appear also to be a practical reason for Judas to suggest a kiss. The time set for Jesus' arrest was late in the evening, and the place a rather secluded garden. The Jews who were determined to capture Jesus must have realized that, in the confusion of an arrest, he could slip out of their hands quite easily. The trick would be to single him out from his followers while they were still at some distance, so that the soldiers would know which of the shadowy figures to pursue and lay hands on. (Under normal visibility there would have been no problem identifying Jesus, but this was the middle of the night.)

This explains the clever idea of having Judas precede the multitude, for only a member of the inner circle (so they would suppose) could get close enough to single out the leader from his followers.

George Booker

Editorial

2011 versus 1848

And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; (Luke 21:25).

Introduction

As I thought about the current chaos in the Middle East and Northern Africa, I went back to my old history lessons on Modern European History. It was the events of 1848 that seemed most similar to the turmoil we see. It was indeed the European events in that year which formed the backdrop to the early success of John Thomas in the UK in 1848. So it was with some interest that I noticed an article¹ in *Time* magazine with the above title. In it, Kurt Anderson compared many aspects of the similarity of the events of the two years.

- The countries involved were and are ruled by Monarchies or Crypto-monarchies
- Feeble Parliaments, brutal police, limited suffrage, limited freedom of expression all are common factors.
- The news was spread rapidly in 1848 by the new technologies of telegraph, and steam powered railways and newspapers, and in 2011 by cell phones, internet and cable television.
- Both eras suffered economic woes, which impoverished most people, but not the rich.
- In France in 1848 it only took 3 days of riots to topple the King, whereas in Tunisia and Egypt earlier this year, a few weeks of protest caused the current presidents to resign.

In 1848, the Austrian Empire, Prussia, Bavaria and particularly France were all affected. In 2011, the protests are even more widespread, from Morocco on the West Coast of Africa to Oman on the East end of the Arabian Peninsula. Of particular interest are the protests in the countries surrounding Israel: Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Syria and Egypt have all seen protests of one sort or another.

The great earthquake and subsequent Tsunami in Japan on March 11th only serve to remind us also that we are largely powerless against the “forces of nature” — or should I say the forces that can be unleashed by God. Despite the best efforts of a country which is certainly the best prepared of any in the world, the Japanese were totally overwhelmed by an earthquake. This, although the strongest the Japan has experienced, was much less strong than the one that impacted Alaska in 1964, but which resulted in only 125 deaths.

Preaching in 1848

In that year, John Thomas began his well know attempt to deliver his unique message to the British Isles. To quote from a contemporary Newspaper²

“On Wednesday and yesterday evening, J. Thomas M.D., a gentleman from America, wearing a black beard, lectured at the city assembly rooms on the Destiny of Nations. The theory of this gentleman, which he supports by taking isolated passages from Scripture, seems to be that God is the sole sovereign ruler, that he made man free to stand or free to fall, and that Adam having fallen, the different races of his descendants have arrogated the right of governing themselves, and in creating monarchies, republics etc., have cast off the sovereignty of the Almighty; and that ultimately all monarchies etc. shall give place to the Almighty sovereignty, God again becoming universal king of the earth, which shall be inhabited by a race of beings as immortal and sinless as the angels, the destiny of the human race being to advance from their present condition till sin and death shall be no more.”

Behind the polemics of the writer, the message is clear: the Almighty is in charge of the events of all, and we are to strive to attain a place in that kingdom: that the current turmoil is to be expected before the return of Christ. Of course, John Thomas expected that return to happen very shortly: he anticipated 1864 at the time. But large audiences welcomed his message over the next few months, and so the real beginnings of the great spread of his message took place. It was built largely upon the interest in the general populace in the Biblical significance of the current events of the time.

Preaching in 2011

Elsewhere in this article is an advance note of the availability of the special Issue of *The Tidings* on “Preaching in North America.” The effort to initiate this work took place many months ago, so it is quite unrelated to the current events in Africa and the Middle East. But it should remind us that we ought to be taking every opportunity to spread the gospel, including discussing the current events from a Biblical perspective. There are some opinions being expressed on the prophetic meanings of the current events in the Middle East, but there does not appear to be any consensus in Christadelphian circles. We can, however, be certain that the current events in that region are part of God’s plan.

It is also certain we cannot neglect this or any other opportunity to witness. As is described in the special issue, there are many ways we can preach, and many opportunities come our way in the normal course of events. Again, the disaster in Japan is serves to remind us of the mighty hand of God, whether it is simply the outcome of natural forces caused by the drift of tectonic plates, or part of a larger set of disasters causing “*upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring.*”

The focus of the world on events in Israel might have shifted, but the volatile state of the nations surrounding the land is surely a precursor to many other significant events. Although we cannot perhaps predict the outcome of these events, nor should we in public, we can ponder individually on the different possibilities, and engage in debate at least internally on these matters. I am fully aware of the dangers of being too overconfident in these matters: our literature is unfortunately

littered with failed predictions about what would happen and when it would take place. So now is not a time of certainty, but of an increased level of watchfulness and interest. Not perhaps since the stirring days of 1976, when the whole Middle East was involved in one form or another, have we seen such excitement, turmoil, and rapidly changing events. Perhaps, by the time my readers see this (for I am writing at the end of March), all will be calm again in that region of the world — although what passes for calm there seems a strange term.

Conclusions

As we consider the world in 2011, we must recognize that if we were to heavily advertise a public lecture on the Biblical basis of the current events in the Middle East, we are unlikely to get a large number of attendees. As one who has given such addresses during previous Middle East crises, the response has been muted to say the least. Perhaps this lack of response is indeed a prophetic sign, for we read

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;”
(2Tim 4:3).

We are all aware of the widespread popular form of what passes for religion these days. There is the idea of the gospel of prosperity: if you only believe, God will add all your material needs (and wants) as well. Or the idea that you only have to say “Jesus is my Savior” and you will be certain of Eternal Life. With such sort of false ideas being widely promulgated, is it any wonder that the true message is little heard?

We are not thereby absolved from our obligation to spread the gospel. As Jesus said to his disciples, and indirectly to ourselves:

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy [Spirit]: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world” (Matt 28:19-20).

Indeed, we can cite the example of Paul, who when preaching in Athens used as his basis the inscription on an idol, which was obviously of interest to his listeners. So if we use the chaos in the Middle East as an introduction to discussing the Bible with our friends, we are following the advice of Jesus — and the examples of Paul. We can also remember John Thomas who, so many years ago preached the Gospel against a similar state of world turmoil.

Peter Hemingray

Notes:

1. Time magazine, March 21 2011, p 32
2. The Lincoln Rutland and Stamford Mercury, Friday, 25 August 1848

Letters to the editor can be sent to letterseditor@tidings.org. Please include your name, address, email, and phone. Submissions under 300 words are encouraged — the magazine reserves the right to edit all submissions for length and clarity.

Exhortation

Have We Confessed?

Our focus will be on the upper room as well as the words of the Psalmist, “*Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered*” (Psa 32:1).

Jesus said “*Do this in remembrance of me*” to the apostles in the upper room. Therefore later, when the Lord had risen and an apostle brought that evening to mind, what was it that would be forefront in his recollection? Would it be the taste of the bread or the taste of the wine? Would it be the likeness of the plate or the cup that held these things? Would he remember the furnishings of the upper room where the events took place?

No — he would remember the feelings of the moment: the impact of the words and actions of Jesus through the evening and the faces of his fellow disciples as they took in what their Master said to them. The last supper was not a content, ritual meal after Jesus had cleaned everyone’s feet. It was a Passover of surpassing emotion, of tense moments, of deep feelings.

What of us when we remember him? Is it simply a time of ritual, a time to pass quickly with little thought, or is it a time of heartfelt contrition? Indeed, if we are to enter into the spirit of Jesus’ command, “*Do this in remembrance of me*”, we would do well to sit with the apostles in the upper room and feel what they felt and listen to the words of Jesus as if they were spoken to us and not only to them. We ask ourselves, then, what did those men feel?

They first felt guilty that their master did the slave’s job. Peter gave voice to their feelings when he said, “*You will never wash my feet!*” Peter did not volunteer to wash the rest of the disciples’ feet; none of them did. Earlier, they had argued about which of them was the greatest; Jesus had told them they must humble themselves like a little child. Still, not one was willing to take the slave’s place and it was Jesus who washed their feet. One by one along the line they waited in embarrassed silence for the Rabbi to wash their feet, perhaps hoping someone else would volunteer to take his place.

Later, the apostles felt still more guilty. “*One of you will betray me,*” said the Lord. What an atmosphere! Can we imagine the lump in their throats and the sickness in their stomachs? They didn’t immediately point the finger to one disciple and say, “it’s him,” but each of them began to say, “is it I?” They each felt guilty.

Can we identify with them? If we think of our weaknesses and our sins in contrast to the perfect life of Jesus, we will. At this moment we wish there was a way to escape from sin, but there it lies: we’ve done things hidden in darkness.

But Jesus did more than point the finger; he also spoke of forgiveness; of the new covenant and of the remission of sins — of forgiveness. We again remember the words of the Psalmist, “*Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is*

covered” (Psa 32:1). Why did Jesus speak of the betrayer in the upper room? He spoke because his betrayal wasn’t only in the past but in the future. It’s natural to feel guilty for what we’ve done in the past, but compounding that sin is to purpose evil in our hearts even as we sit at the Lord’s Table, and still go and carry it out.

Our sin is individual. We don’t come to the door on a Sunday morning, and have the doorkeeper greet us by saying, “And what sins have you committed this week?” We usually worship as a group, as a community, but our sins are individual. Because our sins are hidden from the group does not mean we have no obligation to confess; we do have such a duty. This is no ritualistic confession but a pouring out of our soul. It is not ours to confess some of our sins and to keep other hidden, to leave some things unsaid, even to God. Remember again the words of the Psalmist again: “*Blessed is the man ... in whose spirit there is no deceit*” (Psa 32:2, NKJV).

What does deceit have to do with forgiveness? David deceived himself when he didn’t open his heart to God, when his bones grew old through lack of confession. Not only so, but Judas did not renounce his sin when Jesus called him out as the betrayer. His weakness for money was so strong that he went out into the night.

We also could come before the table of the Lord week after week and only half confess, because we don’t really plan on renouncing our sins — truly giving up what we desire. True confession involves not only telling what we have done, but confessing our underlying weakness. It is as hard to truly confess our sins as it is to say, “I need help,” because such an admission shows our powerlessness, and it is humiliating. We fool ourselves if we think we are confessing but are not asking for and taking steps to get the help we need to really renounce sin and change our life. What does it mean to really change?

Well, let’s say there was a brother, and every year he cheated on his taxes, and every year he said, “God, forgive me for cheating on my taxes,” but every year, he did it again and pocketed the money. Was he forgiven?

Forgiven is when we come out of the shadows, from under our shell, or down from our tree and ask for forgiveness like Zacchaeus, who came down from his tree and Jesus dined at his house. This man didn’t just say, “forgive me.” He acknowledged his sin. “*Half my goods I’m giving to the poor,*” he said, “*and if I’ve taken anything by false accusation I’ll give back four times as much*” (Luke 19:8, paraphrased). It’s such a short passage of scripture that we may forget how humiliating this must have been for Zacchaeus. Nevertheless Jesus said to him, “*Today salvation has come to this house.*”

Returning to Psalm 32 — David said that when he remained silent his bones got old and he felt like he was wasting away. That’s the thing about evil acts — they seem enticing but over time they are stressful. Sometimes there are real consequences, like the prodigal son whose sin forced him eventually to feed pigs, and he hardly had enough to eat. Sometimes our bodies really do waste away because we abuse alcohol or drugs. We may waste away by stress because we feel as if it’s too complicated to set things right — because we fear the consequences of sin. We fear the humiliation.

True confession is humiliating. That's what it comes down to, doesn't it? We want to preserve our ego, and it's too much to confess that we are a sinner and be seen to be a sinner — too much to have our sins brought into the light. We may even think that once this happens we can never do anything for God again because we are a "sinner", just as the Jews grumbled to Jesus because he ate in the house of Zacchaeus, "a sinner".

It is scary to confess our sins and have to do something about them, but we owe it to ourselves. We owe it to ourselves because hiding our sins and creating the illusion to others that we're perfect isn't true. It's the deceit that the Psalmist spoke about. We owe it to ourselves because we need to be converted, to become like little children and say, "I need your help." We owe it to ourselves, because sin is killing us, not only because the wages of sin is death, but because sin really does cause our bodies to wither away.

More than any of these, we owe it to Jesus. Not confessing is like saying, "I don't really care." He died for our sins: for your sins and for mine. Are we going to leave, to walk out into the night and betray him again? Or are we going to ask for help to really change?

Confessing our sins is humbling because we have to make changes that people will see. Sometimes such changes are huge. Paul went from being a Pharisee to being a member of a despised sect, The Way. His sins were great — he had cast his vote against those who were put to death, and he had dragged off believers to prison, probably to terrible conditions. But confessing his sin didn't stop him from working for God. It started him.

Abraham lied about Sarah being his wife because he was afraid. God knew, and that lie was recorded in scripture. Abraham was a deceiver, but he changed. No doubt he was just as afraid for Isaac's life as he had been for Sarah's, but he believed God's word that Isaac was the chosen son, and thus believed in the resurrection. It doesn't matter what we need to confess or how evil it is. We need to change our ways, to turn around. Remember what God says through the apostle John: "*If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness*" (1John 1:9 NRSV).

We are united in weakness but we are also united in hope. We remember Jesus in the upper room and also on the cross. Even if we are humiliated, will we endure shame like his? Jesus did no sin, but humbled himself even to the death of the cross, although he was the greatest man who ever lived, and could claim the greatest crown of men.

Confessing doesn't make us sinless, but God, in His amazing mercy, has said that if we have faith in Jesus, He will impute righteousness to us. He will make us sinless. To return to our Psalmist: "*Many sorrows shall be to the wicked; but he who trusts in the LORD, mercy shall surround him. Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you righteous; and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!*" (Psa 32:10-11 NKJV).

This is the time when confession is welcome, when forgiveness is possible. There is a time coming when, despite tears and gnashing of teeth, the moment will be

gone. God is not looking for the perfect to appear before Him. Jesus did not come to save the righteous, but to bring sinners to repentance. “When we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly . . . God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Let not that death, let not God’s love, be in vain. Let us not remain silent, but confess our sins and our powerlessness, and trust in the power of God to save us.

Mike Bull (Vancouver, BC)

SPECIAL ISSUE

Preaching in North America

For the August issue of the *Tidings*, we intend to deliver a special issue on “Preaching in North America” packed with articles from a wide number of contributors, covering a range of topics related to this overall message. All are designed to help us focus on the imperative we all have in delivering the Unique Hope we all possess.

As per the notice published in the December *Tidings*, this issue will be mailed to all our regular subscribers. In addition, we hope to make it available for wider distribution. We would encourage and hope that each ecclesia will make it available to all their members, in view of the vital message it embodies.

The issue is to be designed as a resource for all those who are interested in preaching — which should be all of us.

We would like to thank all the brethren and sisters who have agreed to help. These represent truly a cross section of our community, from many areas of this continent and with many differing experiences in spreading the gospel. An outline of the areas we hope to cover (God Willing) is listed below,

- First century and early Christadelphian preaching precedents;
- Preaching by campaigns, radio, television, Internet, seminars, Sunday school, etc.;
- Individual preaching initiatives and collaborative preaching initiatives;
- Domestic missionary programs and overseas mission programs;
- Preaching: past, present, and a glimpse into the future.

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David Jennings, Jim Harper
Special issue editors

Bible Study

Leviticus and the Tabernacle (5)

The last article introduced the idea that the layout of the Tabernacle provides a spatial mnemonic for the book of Leviticus. It showed that Leviticus 1-17, with the descriptions of the altar offerings, the consecration of the priests, and the laws of purity, provides a circle of lessons appropriate for the Outer Court.

This article continues into the Holy Place and Most Holy Place sections of Leviticus. Figure 4 locates the chapters of Leviticus 18-27 on the floor plan of the tent of the Tabernacle, showing that Leviticus 18-24 corresponds to the Holy Place and Leviticus 25-27 to the Most Holy Place.

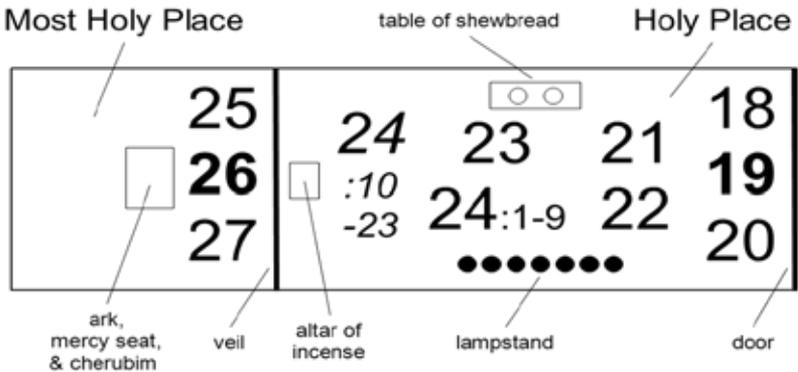


Figure 4. Leviticus 18-27 placed on the floor plan of the tent of the Tabernacle, showing the alignment of Leviticus 18-24 to the Holy Place, and Leviticus 25-27 to the Most Holy Place.

The Holy Place (Lev 18-24)

We should envision Leviticus 18-24 being recited in the Holy Place.

Leviticus 18-20 forms a “doorway composition”, a sequence of three chapters where the first (Lev 18) and third (Lev 20) discuss the same topic, thus providing a frame that focuses attention on the second (Lev 19). The framing chapters are like pillars for the door in the middle; compare them with Jachin and Boaz, the pillars in the porch of the temple (1Kgs 7:21).

In this case, the framing chapters (Lev 18; 20) contain laws concerning the sins of worshipping Molech and of having inappropriate sexual relations with near of kin. The word “Molech” (0, 5, 0)¹ occurs five times in Leviticus, and all five are in these two chapters:

*“And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to **Molech**, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD” (Lev 18:21).*

*“Again, thou shalt say to the children of Israel, Whosoever he be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that giveth any of his seed unto **Molech**; he shall surely be put to death: the people of the land shall stone him with stones. And I will set my face against that man, and will cut him off from among his people; because he hath given of his seed unto **Molech**, to defile my sanctuary, and to profane my holy name. And if the people of the land do any ways hide their eyes from the man, when he giveth of his seed unto **Molech**, and kill him not: Then I will set my face against that man, and against his family, and will cut him off, and all that go a whoring after him, to commit whoredom with **Molech**, from among their people” (Lev 20:2-5).*

The words “uncover” (0, 24, 0) and “nakedness” (0, 32, 0) occur throughout these two chapters, and nowhere else in Leviticus:

	Leviticus 18	Leviticus 20
“uncover” <1540 galah> (0, 24, 0)	18:6, 7, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 15, 16, 17, 17, 18, 19	20:11, 17, 18, 18, 19, 20, 21
“nakedness” <6172 ʻervah> (0, 32, 0)	18:6, 7, 7, 7, 8, 8, 9, 9, 10, 10, 10, 11, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 15, 16, 16, 17, 17, 18, 19	20:11, 17, 17, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21
<6168 ʻarah> (0, 2, 0)		20:18 “discover”, 19 “uncover”

The lists of “the near of kin” with whom sex is forbidden are essentially identical, with Leviticus 18 listing the sins and Leviticus 20 defining the punishments.

“near of kin”	Leviticus 18	Leviticus 20
near of kin	18:6	
father: mother, father’s wife: father	18:7-8	20:11
sister, daughter of father, daughter of mother	18:9	20:17
[granddaughter], son’s daughter, daughter’s daughter	18:10	
[half-sister], father’s wife’s daughter, of thy father	18:11	
[aunt], father’s sister, mother’s sister, father’s brother: his wife, uncle’s wife: uncle	18:12-14	20:19-20
daughter-in-law, son’s wife	18:15	20:12
[sister-in-law] brother’s wife: brother	18:16	20:21
woman and her daughter, or her [granddaughter], her son’s daughter or her daughter’s daughter	18:17	20:14
wife and her sister	18:18	

woman during her uncleanness/sickness	18:19	20:18
neighbor's wife	18:20	20:10
[homosexuality] lie with mankind as with womankind	18:22	20:13
[bestiality] lie with any beast	18:23	20:15-16

These two chapters are also connected by their references to these sins as “wickedness”, “abomination”, and “confusion”:

*“Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter, neither shalt thou take her son’s daughter, or her daughter’s daughter, to uncover her nakedness; for they are her near kinswomen: it is **wickedness**... Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is **abomination** [cf. vv. 26, 27, 29]... Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is **confusion**” (Lev 18:17, 22, 23).*

*“And if a man lie with his daughter in law, both of them shall surely be put to death: they have wrought **confusion**; their blood shall be upon them. If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an **abomination**: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them. And if a man take a wife and her mother, it is **wickedness**: they shall be burnt with fire, both he and they; that there be no wickedness among you” (Lev 20:12-14).*

These detailed connections between Leviticus 18 and 20 show that they are a frame, centering attention on the middle chapter, Leviticus 19. The importance of **Leviticus 19** is obvious.

First, this chapter includes the second greatest commandment: “*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself*” (Lev 19:18; cf. Matt 22:39; Mark 12:31; Luke 10:27). This by itself makes the chapter worth highlighting.

Second, Leviticus 19 reiterates the Ten Commandments:

Exodus 20:1-17; Deuteronomy 5:6-21	Leviticus 19
I. I am the LORD thy God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt; no other gods besides me	<i>“I am the LORD your God” (19:2, 3, 4, 25, 31, 34, 36; cf. 12, 14, 16, 18, 28, 30, 32). “which brought you out of the land of Egypt” (19:36).</i>
II. No graven images	<i>“Turn ye not unto idols, nor make to yourselves molten gods” (19:4).</i>
III. No taking the LORD thy God’s name in vain	<i>“Ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God” (19:12).</i>
IV. Keep the sabbath	<i>“Ye shall... keep my sabbaths” (19:3, 30).</i>

V. Honor thy father and mother	<i>“Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father” (19:3).</i>
VI. No murder	<i>“Neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour” (19:16); “Do not do anything that endangers your neighbor’s life” (NIV).</i>
VII. No adultery	<i>“And whosoever lieth carnally with a woman, that is a bondmaid, betrothed to a husband, and not at all redeemed, nor freedom given her... Do not prostitute thy daughter, to cause her to be a whore” (19:20, 29).</i>
VIII. No stealing	<i>“Ye shall not steal... Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, neither rob him” (19:11, 13).</i>
IX. No false witness	<i>“Neither deal falsely, nor lie one to another... Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people” (19:11, 16).</i>
X. No coveting thy neighbour’s possessions	<i>“Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour” (19:13; cf. 19:15, 16, 17, 18).</i>

Finally, Leviticus 19, like several other chapters in Leviticus, includes the command to be holy because God is holy: *“Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy” (Lev 19:2; cf. 11:44-45; 20:7, 26; 21:6, 7, 8; 1Pet 1:15-16).*

Leviticus 21-22 contains laws specific to priests, making these chapters appropriate to be read in the Holy Place, which was restricted to the priests.

Leviticus 23 is the Calendar of Holy Convocations, the Feasts of the LORD. These days were full of activity for the priests; these Bible-School-like holidays for Israel were times of double duty or more for the priests.

Leviticus 24:1-9 describes the daily lighting of the lamps and the weekly replenishment of the table of shewbread, both of which were housed in the Holy Place. The people of Israel would mentally have their eyes on these pieces of furniture as Moses recited the laws about them.

Finally, **Leviticus 24:10-23** is the narrative of the man stoned for blasphemy; as the previous article showed, these verses would be appropriate for reading before the veil.

The Most Holy Place (Lev 25-27)

Leviticus 25-27 is another doorway composition: Leviticus 25 and 27 frame Leviticus 26. In the book of Leviticus the words “jubilee”, “redeem”, “sell”, and “wax poor” occur only in chapters 25 and 27; and the words “possession”, “buy”, and “servant” are used almost exclusively in these two chapters:

	Leviticus 25	Leviticus 27
“(the year of) jubilee” <3104 yowbel> (0, 0, 20)	25:10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 28, 28, 30, 31, 33, 40, 50, 52, 54	27:17, 18, 18, 21, 23, 24
“redeem” <1350 ga'al> (0, 0, 21)	25:25, 25, 26, 30, 33, 48, 49, 49, 49, 54	27:13, 13, 15, 19, 19, 20, 20, 27, 28, 31, 33
“redemption” <1353 geullah> (0, 0, 9)	25:24, 26, 29, 29, 31, 32, 48, 51, 52	
“possession” <272 achuzzah> (2, 0, 8)	25:10, 13, 24, 25, 27, 28, 32, 33, 33, 34, 41, 45, 46; cf.	27:16, 21, 22, 24, 28; (14:34, 34)
“sell” <4376 makar> (0, 0, 16)	25:14, 15, 16, 23, 25, 27, 29, 34, 39, 42, 47, 48, 50	27:20, 27, 28
“sale” <4465 mimkar> (0, 0, 7)	25:14, 25, 27, 28, 29, 33, 50	
“sold” <4466 mimkereth> (0, 0, 1)	25:42	
“price/bought” <4736 miqnah> (0, 0, 4)	25:16, 16, 51	27:22
“buy” <7069 qanah> (0, 1, 8)	25:14, 15, 28, 30, 44, 45, 50; cf.	27:24; (22:11)
“wax poor” <4134 muwk> (0, 0, 5)	25:25, 35, 39, 47	27:8
“servant” <5650 'ebed> (0, 0, 9)	25:6, 39, 42, 42, 44, 44, 55, 55	(26:13)

These topics are appropriate for the Most Holy Place. For example, in the year of Jubilee, liberty was to be proclaimed throughout the land (Lev 25:10): this command is associated with the covenant (Jer 34:8-22) and the kingdom age (Isa 61:1; Ezek 46:17).

These two framing chapters (Lev 25; 27) focus attention on **Leviticus 26**, which rehearses the stipulations of the covenant between God and His people Israel. The word “covenant” <1285 beryith> (1, 1, 8) occurs eight times in this chapter, reminding us of the tables of the covenant in the ark of the covenant in the Most Holy Place:

*“For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my **covenant** with you” (Lev 26:9).*

*“And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my **covenant**” (Lev 26:15).*

*“And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my **covenant**: and when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy” (Lev 26:25).*

*“Then will I remember my **covenant** with Jacob, and also my **covenant** with Isaac, and also my **covenant** with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land... And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my **covenant** with them: for I am the LORD their God. But I will for their sakes remember the **covenant** of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the LORD” (Lev 26:42, 44-45).*

Leviticus 26:11-12 summarizes the very essence of the Tabernacle and Most Holy Place:

“And I will set my tabernacle among you: and my soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people” (Lev 26:11-12; cf. Exod 25:8, 21-22; 29:45-46; Num 7:89; Psa 80:1; 99:1; Rev 21:3).

The following concepts related to the provisions of God’s covenant with Israel occur in Leviticus only in chapter 26: “enemy” <341 *oyed*> (26:7, 8, 16, 17, 25, 32, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 41, 44), “remember” <2142 *zakar*> (26:42, 42, 45), “sword” <2719 *chereb*> (26:6, 7, 8, 25, 33, 36, 37), “punish/reform/chastise” <3256 *yacar*> (26:18, 23, 28), “despise” <3988 *ma’ac*> (26:15, 43, 44), “abhor” <1602 *ga’al*> (26:11, 15, 30, 43, 44), and “contrary” <7147 *qeriy*> (26:21, 23, 24, 27, 28, 40, 41).

Finally, Leviticus 25-27 has three explicit reminders that these are the words the LORD spoke to Moses in Mount Sinai:

*“And the LORD spake unto Moses in **mount Sinai**... These are the statutes and judgments and laws, which the LORD made between him and the children of Israel in **mount Sinai** by the hand of Moses... These are the commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses for the children of Israel in **mount Sinai**” (Lev 25:1; 26:46; 27:34).*

Joe Hill (Austin Leander, TX)

Notes:

1. As defined in the last article, the notation (x, y, z) indicates that a word or phrase occurs x times in Leviticus 1-17, y times in Leviticus 18-24, and z times in Leviticus 25-27.

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 communities, we print this 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>

Bible Study

“As it was in the days of Noah” (4) “Grace in the eyes of the Lord”

Warning and Grace

Genesis 6: 3 records a warning that was given to the antediluvians: “*And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.*” Another warning follows in verse 7: “*And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.*”

It appears that the warnings of Genesis 6: 3 and 7 were not given to any person in particular but were announced generally. But afterwards, God began to communicate specifically to Noah and to the world through Noah since “*Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD*” (Gen 6: 8).

So, how did Noah find grace in the eyes of God? The answer is indicated by: “*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God*” (Eph 2: 8). It had something to do with faith. But before we talk more about that, notice that Ephesians 2: 8 is directed to the ecclesia. It is about us. So, the example of Noah provides a pattern of the means by which we find grace in God’s sight. Now consider the context in which the statement about Noah finding grace in the sight of God is made. It occurs in Genesis 6:8. The preceding verses consist of warnings from God about events that were coming on the earth. Most of the antediluvians disregarded them. But it is evident that Noah believed what God had said. And his example is extremely important for believers of all generations. That is why Peter makes so many references to Noah in his words about coming judgments. Peter wanted the people of his day — and his message applies to our time as well — to earnestly believe what God had revealed about events that were going to take place on the earth, especially as apathy towards spiritual things increased:

“knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, ‘Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.’ For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water (2Pet 3:3-6, NKJV).

Noah stood out in his time by believing God. That is the reason that he found grace in God’s sight.

Noah’s beliefs pleased God in the same way that Abraham’s did. Abraham believed the things that God said, and that belief was counted unto him for righteousness:

“For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness” (Rom 4:3).

The same is true for us. When we believe the things that God has stated concerning the Lord Jesus Christ and are baptized on the basis of that belief, righteousness is imputed to us: *“Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead” (Rom 4:23-24).* It is also critical that we believe the things that God has said about the return of Christ and the events that will take place afterwards. Belief in them will help keep us from getting caught up in the cares of this life since we will know that the things of this world will pass away.

Our beliefs are essential to our salvation, and they should drive our actions. Noah's beliefs motivated him, and he acted on them. Genesis gives a summary of his character: *“These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God” (Gen 6:9).*

The Hebrew word translated “just” in the verse is tsad-deek. It means “righteous.” Noah was counted as righteous by God because of his belief in what God had said. The Hebrew word rendered “perfect” means “complete” or “whole.” Noah was complete in his service to God. He both avoided the evil that was around him and actively sought to do good. Although he did not participate in the ungodly activities of his contemporaries, he still engaged them and tried to get them to turn to God. Preaching was a major component of his service.

Noah is commended because he was able to save others by the influence of his example. Ezekiel 14 mentions three outstanding men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, who had the common characteristic that others were saved because of them. The friends of Daniel, the friends of Job, and the family of Noah were all preserved because of the influence of those godly men. Ezekiel 14 describes how things had gotten quite bad in Israel. God was going to send severe judgments against the people. He said that even if Noah, Daniel, and Job were in the land, they would not have been able to save others by their righteousness (Ezek 14: 14, 16, 18, 20). The implication is that under other circumstances they would have been able to do so: *“Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD” (Ezekiel 14:14).* The invocation of Noah's name in this context indicates just how exemplary his character was. It also reminds us that a good example can have a powerful, life-altering impact on others.

Noah was faithful even though there were bad examples all around him. Genesis 6: 12 states that people had “corrupted” God's way on the earth. Therefore, God stated his intention to “destroy” in verse 13. There is a play on words in the original Hebrew. A very similar word, shaw-khath, is used for “corrupted” and “destroy” in both verses. The idea is that because people had “destroyed” God's way on the earth, He was going to destroy them. It is a turn of phrase that is echoed in a number of times in the New Testament, including a verse about the judgment that is coming on our world: *“And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy*

servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth” (Rev 11:18).

Revelation 11 is one of many examples of the principle that God tells His servants about events that are coming on the earth. *“Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7).* God told Noah that a Flood was coming. And He instructed him to prepare for it by building an ark.

“Make thee an ark”

The ark is described in Genesis 6: 14-16. Not too much detail is given. We would be hard pressed to reconstruct an exact replica of the ark using the information that the Bible gives us. But we do not need to know how to rebuild the ark. That is not the point of the record. Instead, we need to replicate the lessons of the ark in our lives.

The Hebrew word translated “ark” is *tebah*. It is not the same word that is used for the Ark of the Covenant.¹ In fact, the only other use of the word in the Bible is the basket in which Moses was placed as a baby (Exodus 2: 3, 5). It was basically a box designed to float and to preserve the lives of those inside.

It is interesting to note that there is no steering mechanism described for the ark. There was no rudder, and there were no oars. God was completely in charge of directing it and deciding where it should go. So, those who entered it had to place their trust in Him to guide them. Therefore, the ark is a fitting symbol for salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. When we come to him, we forsake the direction in which our natural inclinations would take us. We look to God to steer us, and we place our lives in His care.

The ark was to be constructed of “gopher wood” according to Genesis 6: 14. We do not know, however, what sort of tree, if any, produces “gopher wood”. (There was once a hoax where a man claimed to have found the ark protruding from a glacier in Turkey. He said that he knew that it was the ark because it was made of gopher wood. That was a pretty strong clue that he was lying.²) The Hebrew word used in the passage is rendered “gopher” in the English because the translators were not quite sure what to make of it. So, they just wrote down what it sounded like. That is called “transliteration.” Since the Hebrew word sounds like “gopher” when it is pronounced, that is how the translators rendered it.³

Some commentators believe that the Hebrew word used is a variant of the verb *kaphar*, which means “to cover;” *kaphar* actually appearing later in the verse. It is the first word translated “pitch” in the King James Version. It is used to mean “to cover with sap.” Noah was supposed to cover the boards of the ark with sap to make them watertight. The second word translated “pitch” in Genesis 6: 14 is a noun derived from the verb *kaphar*. It could mean “tree sap” in this context, although usually translated “ransom”.

So, if “gopher wood” implies wood that has a lot of sap, like pine, then the verse would read something like this: “Make thee an ark of wood that yields sap. Make rooms in it. And seal it on the inside and the outside with sap.”

Think about the process of building the ark for a moment. Noah had to cut trees down. That meant that he had to kill them. He would have taken sap from cuts and punctures in the trees. And he made the ark safe for everyone inside by completely covering it with that sap. Using sap on the inside of the ship might have seemed like overkill. In fact, it might have made it a bit sticky to walk around, but that sap would be a compelling reminder that the ship was safe.

It also made the ark an incredible visual representation of salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. For the ark to offer salvation to Noah and his family, trees had to die. The process of cutting down the trees might remind us that death had to occur for salvation to be possible. The sap from those trees would have issued forth like blood from the slices, holes, and wounds in the trees. And that sap provided a covering that saved Noah and his family. It might make us think of the blood of Christ, which John says “cleanseth us from all sin” (1John 1: 7) and “hast redeemed us to God” (Rev 5: 9).

The other uses of the word kaphar in the Bible encourage us along this line of thinking. That word is translated “atonement,” “purge,” “reconciliation,” “reconcile,” “forgive,” and “pardon” 91 times in the Bible. It is used in passages such as “*And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the LORD; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin*” (Exod 32:30).

The ark, therefore, is yet another foreshadowing of the Lord Jesus Christ and a reminder of his importance. The description of the ark, like so many sections in the Bible, teaches that Christ is the means by which we can be saved. Yes, Noah labored hard. But he and his family had to be inside the ark, or they would have been lost. The same is true for us. We must be baptized into the Lord Jesus. Good deeds alone cannot save us and are not enough to make us pleasing to God. The Lord Jesus Christ is so important. And our minds are so inclined to forsake his way and focus on this world instead. Therefore, we need to call him and his example to mind often. We need to contemplate his offering and its implications throughout the day, just as Noah and his family would have thought about the protective covering on the inside of the ark — that sticky sap — as they went about doing their daily tasks while inside of it. We will continue our consideration of the ark and the lessons that we can learn from it in our next article in the series.

Ryan Mutter (Baltimore, MD)

Notes:

1. In the New Testament, however, the words are the same (cf. Hebrews 9: 4 and 11: 7).
2. P. H. Adams. “Noah’s Ark Discovered?” *The Testimony*. 1947, p 171.
3. For more information, see <http://biblelexicon.org/genesis/6-14.htm>. Accessed November 29, 2009.

“By perseverance the snail reached the ark” (Charles H. Spurgeon).

“Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us” (Heb 12:1).

Youth Speaks

How Do I Study the Bible?

The title of this article contains such a key question: how exactly do we go about meditating on God's Word? In our last article (*Tidings*, March-April 2011) we examined how bible meditation is crucial for forsaking our naturally fleshly minds and raising our thoughts higher to Godly thoughts. We saw that meditating on the Scriptures is critical if we want to truly become children of the Father. While last time we looked at the purpose of Bible study, in this article we will examine how we do Bible study. We will take a look at the two main types of meditation, and then discuss a couple Bible study tools.

Siyach and Nabat

Let's take a look at Psalm 119, the longest chapter of the Bible. This psalm contains a variety of good points about Bible meditation, but for now we are going to zero in on one verse. Take a look at Psalm 119 verse 15:

"I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways" (Psa 119:15).

The word for "meditate" here in the Hebrew is "siyach" (pronounced "see-yock")¹. It means both "to ponder" and "to converse with oneself." Therefore, the idea conveyed by "siyach" is that we are to sit down and simply think about God's principles. I especially like the idea of "conversing with oneself." We can literally discuss God's Word with ourselves in our own minds. We might ponder, "Why did God make a law like that in the Law of Moses? Perhaps for this reason... maybe this reason..." You get the basic idea. We do the same sort of thinking all the time with personal problems, about whether we made a right or wrong decision, about solving a puzzle from school or work, and a myriad of other things. So the nice thing about this is that it really isn't a new idea to us; we just have to take it and apply it to the Scripture!

Now let's take a look at a phrase from this verse, "have respect unto." The Hebrew is "nabat" (pronounced "naw-bat"). "Nabat" means "to scan" or "to look intently at." This is the usual Bible study idea of sitting down and pouring over the pages of Scripture. Therefore, we see that it isn't just about pondering God's Word, but it's also about diligently scanning the pages as well. Sitting down with the Word of God is a huge part of our meditation, and we can't neglect it. It can be difficult, because this part of bible meditation is the one of which everyone is scared. I know that sounds funny, but it's true. We don't like sitting down to look intently at the pages of Scripture because we feel like we don't know how. When I was first baptized I hardly read my Bible because I felt like I wasn't good enough or smart enough to find anything worthwhile. That type of thinking is dead wrong. God designed His Word so that — as we have said before — everyone could find His principles there. Let's take a quick look at another verse from Psalm 119.

"The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the

simple” (Psa 119:130).

God assures us that even if we think of ourselves as the simplest of people, His Word can still be a shining light to us. So if you feel like you aren't smart enough to find the gems of wisdom in God's word, think again, because you can!

Powerful Bible Meditation Tools

So we just looked at how there are two main types of Bible meditation: we can indirectly meditate on the Scripture when we don't have a Bible with us, and we can directly scan the pages when we do have one with us. Keep in mind that often Bible meditation will be a mix of these two things, and not just one or the other. The tools we will be looking at will usually be useful for both types of meditation. So let's begin! Our first Bible meditation tool is...

Asking Questions. Wow, I cannot stress this enough. Asking questions is an incredibly powerful tool for searching the Scriptures! When we ask questions it does a few different things. Firstly, it shows us what we don't know. Secondly, it gives a focus for study: instead of meandering around the pages and picking up general points, a question makes us focus on finding a specific answer. In other words, it gives us a goal that we can work towards. Thirdly, questions force us to get our mental turbines revved up to start thinking about or searching for what the answer could be.

Jesus gives us great examples of this. Let's turn up one so that we can see the power of a question in action.

“While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions” (Matt 22:41-46).

Again and again in the Gospels we read about how Jesus is the son of God, yet the religious leaders refuse to accept that the Messiah could be God's son. In fact, they outright called it blasphemy! In this passage from Matthew, Jesus forced the religious leaders to think about their understanding of the Scriptures by posing two questions. The second one he asked was, *“If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?”* See, a son was lower than his father and therefore could call him “lord,” but never the other way around! Sons are always subservient to the father. The implied answer is that even though the Messiah is a descendent of David, he is also the son of God, and therefore, David could call him Lord. When the Pharisees were forced to stop and think about the question they slowly began to realize the answer...and they didn't like it one bit. In fact, they were afraid to talk to him anymore!

So we see that Jesus used questions about the Scripture as an impressively effective teaching device. In the same way, instead of assuming we already know the answers like the Pharisees, we can learn from the Word by asking questions.

The Three C's.

Like questions, the “Three C's” is a simple concept and easy to remember. They are: **Context**, **Cross-references**, and **Common Sense**. Let's begin with Context.

Context is basically just looking at where a single verse, passage, chapter, book, or group of books fits into the surrounding verses, passages, chapters, book, or books. Verses may appear to say one thing until we take the time to look at the context...after that we will realize they were saying something quite different! A good example of this is in Corinthians.

“But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him” (1Cor 2:9).

This verse is commonly interpreted to indicate that the Kingdom will be so good that we haven't seen, heard, or even imagined how good it will be. It certainly seems to say that doesn't it? Let's take a look at the verse in its context by including the verse before it.

“Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory” (1Cor 2:8).

In this chapter Paul described how the “princes of this world” did not understand the wisdom of the Scripture, and because they did not understand, they ended up crucifying Jesus! Paul supported this with the verse, “Eye hath not seen...”² This verse describes how men ignored the Word of God and because of that, ended up murdering their Messiah! Clearly, this is not a reference to the Kingdom.

The next “C”, **cross-references**, are pretty simple and self-explanatory, but all too often overlooked. If you aren't too sure about a verse, or you simply want to find more information, check your cross-reference column and look up those verses! You'd be amazed at how much you can learn just by looking up another passage.

Finally, **common sense** is describing how we need to think about what we are reading. From this we can learn obvious details from the divine Word that aren't explicitly stated. For example, think about the “woman with a flow of blood” described in Matt 9, Mark 5, and Luke 8. Here is a quick quote from Luke's account.

“But as he went the people thronged him. And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any, came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanch'd” (Luke 8:42-44).

It seems like just a simple little story at first doesn't it? However, if we apply “common sense” then we'll see some details come to life. It isn't explicitly stated in the gospels, but the woman was “unclean” by the Law of Moses (Lev 15:19, 25). Anyone and everything she touched would also be made unclean. Imagine how this woman would have been shunned by society! She also went to many physicians, but none of them could do a thing. She was feeling shamed, weak, and hopeless by this point. We read in the gospel accounts that crowds of people were packed around Jesus; perhaps hundreds or thousands of them. This poor, sick woman

has been losing blood for twelve years; think of how difficult it would have been for her to reach him! She was desperate, and it took every last ounce of strength she had to just barely reach out and touch the fringe of his garment. Ever think about that? Why did she touch the fringe of his garment? Perhaps because she didn't have the strength to get any closer than that!

Now take a step back and look at all we put together just by using a bit of common sense! These were all details that, though they were not stated, seem true when we take a moment to think about the story. The story really came to life, and this was only with a quick look!

Conclusions

You may feel that even equipped with these tools that you still won't be as great at Bible study as John Thomas, or Robert Roberts, or some other student. The good news is...you don't have to be! God doesn't expect us all to be at the same level in terms of what we can find in His Word. What God does expect of us is that we put our whole hearts into the effort of meditating on His Word that we might think and act like Him.

God, in his wisdom, has also designed the Bible so that there is something for everyone: little children can learn from a bible story like Noah's Ark, but then a seasoned bible student can come along and learn different lessons from the same exact story! As long as we put in our best efforts then we will, indeed, reap spiritual benefits.

I hope that this two part meditation has been useful to you in understanding the importance of knowing the mind of the Father. May He bless you and keep you until our Lord Jesus returns.

With much love in our Master's name,

Jeff Lange (Norfolk, VA)

Notes:

1. By far the easiest way to look at the original Hebrew and Greek is to use a free computer Bible such as the Online Bible or E-Sword.
2. Reinforced by the OT passage cited, Isa 64:4 (NIV)

The Joy of Sunday Schooling

Sunday School Prize Giving

How is this for a list of prizes to give to your Sunday school children?

Bible, Hymn Book, Elpis Israel, Twelve Lectures, Bible Atlas, Josephus, Hallam's Middle Ages of Europe, Throne of David, Pillar of Fire, St. Paul at Rome, From Egypt to Sinai, The Land and the Book, The Judgments of Jerusalem, Stories from the History of Rome, The Treasures of the Deep, Natural History of the Bible, Stories of the Reformation, The Ocean and its Wonders, The Exodus, Egypt, Prince of the House of David, Treasury of the Animal World, The Kings of Israel, Narratives from the Old Testament, Manners and Customs of the World, Threads of Knowledge, Bible

*Jewels, Daily Texts, Bible Pictures, History of Solomon, The Book of Books, Ruth, The Prodigal Son, Ark Alphabets, Sketches of Jewish Life, Hebrew Heroes, Natural History, Bonar's Days and Nights in Eastern Lands, Thompson's Scripture Characters, Nimmo's Young Men of the Bible, Cruden's Concordance, Ruined Cities of Bible Lands, Bible Dictionary (Beeton), Traditions of Palestine, History of Crusades, Lost Cities brought to Light, Jerusalem, Pictorial and Descriptive, Jordan and its Valleys, Tables of Stone, Story Pictures from the Bible, Thompson's In the Holy Land, Scripture Manners, Kitto's Palestine, Eastern Manners, Wanderings over Bible Lands and Seas, Browne's Tabernacle, Reformation D'Aubigne, Travels in Many Lands, History of the Saracens, Jerusalem and its Environs, History of Joseph, Moses, &c., Naomi, Jesus Christ and Him Crucified.*¹

This list appeared in *The Christadelphian* magazine, December, 1879, and was supplied by Sis. Mary Turney, Sunday School Superintendent and occasional music director of the Birmingham Ecclesia in England. It was described as “a list of books that have been used as prizes in the Birmingham Sunday School.”

If nothing else, the compilation and publication of such an extensive list tells us that Sis. Turney took Sunday school superintending very seriously. I am not sure what the list tells us about the reading habits of young people back then, but at least the expectations that were set for them were very high, and it is safe to say that they had far fewer distractions than young people have today.

The tradition of Sunday school prize giving continues amongst us more than 130 years later. We still give our children some of the same books: Bibles, the Hymn Book, Bible Atlas, Concordance² and Bible Dictionary. But it is always a challenge to find other good, spiritually helpful books that are likely to be read and valued by our children.

Two new books

Let me start with a couple recommendations. Beyond these, I invite *Tidings* readers to send me additional recommendations. With your help, it may be possible to compile and publish a list of current titles, suitable for prize giving, that begins to measure up to Sis. Turney's impressive list of 1879!

In Sydney, Australia, recently, some of the “seniors” (ages 15 to 25) knew exactly what Sunday school prize they wanted. They asked their Sunday school teachers for copies of Bro. Ron Hicks' new book, *My Journey in Faith*. Anyone who has read Bro. Ron's book (2010) will know what a good choice these young people made. In many respects, this is a book about life choices founded on enlightened faith. What more could any Sunday school teacher want his or her students to contemplate and pursue? Copies of *My Journey in Faith* can be obtained for \$10 (U.S.) through the *Tidings*. Details are given below.

Test Case for Canada '3314545', by Bro. E. R. Evans, is not a new book. It was first published in 1972. The book relates the experiences of Bro. John Evans, a Christadelphian conscientious objector in World War I. What is new about this book is the fact that it has been republished (2009) by the Christadelphian Scripture Study Service in South Australia and now comes with a DVD. The DVD is a

portrayal of Bro. Evans' life, very effectively enacted by the Christadelphian young people of Adelaide.

It is important for us to keep before our young people the issue of conscientious objection to participation in war. In the current era of all-volunteer armies, at least in western countries, it is easy to forget that military conscription puts the consciences of all Christadelphians to a stiff test. The republication of Bro. John Evans' story is a timely reminder of this fact. The book and DVD can be obtained for \$14.50 (U.S.) from Bro. Tom Graham at The Thousand Oaks Christadelphian Library. Go to www.christadelphianlibrary.com and click on Newest Publications.

Some other suggestions

In this day and age, the prizes we give to our Sunday school children do not always have to be books. If sales at our Bible school bookstores are any indication, the young people very much enjoy the music CDs that other Christadelphian young people have produced. Selected DVDs can also make good Sunday school prizes. If the young people in your ecclesia have never seen the *God's Family Around the World* series of DVDs, these will greatly enrich their appreciation of the worldwide nature of our brotherhood. The series is a set of professionally produced documentaries on the brothers, sisters and children of Jamaica, Ireland, El Salvador, Russia, India, and Nigeria. For more information go to new.wcfoundation.org and click on WCF Online Store, Video (DVD).

And how would you like to give the serious young Bible students in your Sunday school a prize like this one: 30 English versions of the Bible, 10 ancient language versions (including the Interlinear Greek New Testament, the Septuagint, and two Hebrew texts), three lexicons, 20 Bible dictionaries, and a wide range of commentaries — all rolled into one, at a cost that is no more than the price of a single printed Bible? I am referring to a Bible software package called the *Online Bible*. (While you can go online and download a free starter version of this software, the name *Online Bible* refers to the software, not the way the material is accessed.)

The *Online Bible* comes on a DVD and can be loaded onto the hard drive of any computer. It comes in Windows and Macintosh versions. It is a Bible software package that students can grow with. The *Online Bible* can be used for tasks as basic as doing the daily Bible readings in any version you like. Cross referencing³ is quick and easy. Word searches⁴ can be instantly carried out in any version of the Bible or in any of the Bible commentaries that are included. OLB also supports tasks as sophisticated as searching the Septuagint for the use of a Greek word, or carrying out logic searches⁵ that go well beyond the routine concordance search, or studying the parsing⁶ of Greek and Hebrew verbs.

In my estimation, the *Online Bible* is one of the most versatile Bible software packages for the price, and it is easy to use. A single copy of the Windows version costs \$39.95 (U.S.). Purchasing multiple copies for prize giving reduces the price considerably: the price for five copies is \$24 each, and the price for ten copies is \$20 each. If you think this prize-giving idea is an interesting one, go to www.online-bible.com and find out more about it.

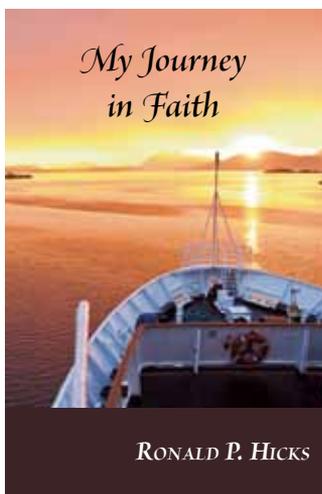
Your recommendations invited

With this, I again extend the invitation to you to send me additional recommendations for Sunday school prize giving. Prize suggestions for younger children are just as important as those for older ones. Please tell me about your top picks. If I get a good response to this request, I will do my best, God willing, to compile a 21st century list of suitable prizes and publish it for any Sunday school superintendent, teacher, or thoughtful gift-giver to use.

Jim Harper (Meriden, CT): 2harps4u@gmail.com

Notes:

1. The Christadelphian, 1879, p.618.
2. Note that the KJV concordance given to Birmingham Sunday School children in 1879 was Cruden's Concordance. Robert Young's Analytical Concordance had only just been published that year, and James Strong's Exhaustive Concordance would not be published until 1894.
3. The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge is one of the best cross-referencing systems available.
4. Word searches can be carried out in original languages as well as English. They can also be carried out using Strong's Numbers in the versions where these apply.
5. Online Bible supports AND (&), OR (!), and NOT AND (~) searches. For example, the AND search can be used to show that the words soul & heaven do not occur together in any verse in the New Testament.
6. Verb characteristics such as tense, voice, and mood.



Now Available *My Journey in Faith*

Bro. Ron Hicks shares his life journey, from his early days in a very large, established ecclesia, to his later years, including his final career posting in a country where there had been no Christadelphians at all. Through his travels he has discovered the many faces of Christadelphia around the world – and the joy of mission work in developing countries with diverse cultures and challenging social conditions. This is the story of a life guided by faith in Christ, written by a brother with much experience and spiritual insight to share.

Order at www.tidings.org – click Books.

Reflections

Earthquake: 9.0

Thoughts on watching news coverage after the earthquake in Japan

We are Christadelphians.

What do we value above all else?

“We are Japanese.

You do not understand our culture.

*We value order and civility above all else.
When disaster comes we accept it without complaint.
We extend a helping hand to one another.
We wait patiently for our turn.
If there is not enough, we see that
the elderly and children have and we do without.”*

*What can we learn?
We are Christ’s brethren.
We are the light of the world among whom we shine,
holding fast the word of life.
We fight, we rebuke, we defame, we demean, we demand...
How can this be? Who are we?
There but for the grace of God go we.*

Dolores Sleeper (San Francisco Peninsula, CA)

Gaman

Gaman. It’s a Japanese word we’ve heard several times recently, a quality which Japanese people traditionally cherish. It has no single English equivalent, but may be summarized in a phrase: patience, acceptance, civility, courtesy and quietness... in the face of great suffering.

The poet D.H. Lawrence wrote some simple words which seem to capture the Japanese concept of gaman:

*“I never saw a wild thing sorry for itself.
A small bird will drop frozen dead from a bough
without ever having felt sorry for itself.”*

Recent events have reminded us of what, as Christadelphians, we should already know: We live in a world of uncertainty. We draw breath each day by the grace and mercy of Almighty God. Nothing in this life should be taken for granted. At any day, and at any time, without warning, the “book” which is my life, or yours, may be closed, after which we will be required to give account of ourselves. Who are we, indeed? What is important to us? What do we hold as most sacred, most meaningful, most valuable?

Somewhere, underneath us or nearby, the earth itself, on which we stand this moment, may be preparing to rumble, and move, and shake.

George Booker (Austin Leander, TX)



Letters

To the Editor:

In your judgment, what new understanding, what clarification, does the NASU document bring to the BASF?

This is THE key question regarding the need for and the legitimacy of any NASU-based unity effort. This question has been repeatedly asked of many UA08 committee and signatory ecclesial leaders, and this enquiry is now going on three years without a response.

If there is not a single brother in the Amended UA08 community that can answer this question and show how the NASU modifies the BASF, how can they realistically expect other Amended ecclesias to join them, or even understand them?

If the NASU document clarifies the BASF, surely someone can simply explain how! If the NASU does not clarify the BASF then why is the NASU document needed?

Let us simply use the BASF and invite everyone to join us on that basis alone. Such an approach to true unity is clear, consistent and honest with the Brotherhood worldwide.

Dan McDonald (Paris Avenue, OH)

Dear Brother McDonald,

Thank you very much for your enquiry — we will attempt to shed some light on the questions you have raised, bearing in mind that these answers are strictly on behalf on the Tidings Publishing Committee and do not necessarily represent the views of the signatories of the UA08 document.

You ask what legitimacy the NASU document has for current Unity efforts. Virtually all other Unity efforts that were successful had supplemental documents to clarify long-standing issues that had separated brethren. In Australia there was the so-called Carter-Cooper Addendum and a much longer Unity Book (see <http://www.christadelphianbooks.org/accsc/index.html>) that clarified the issues involved in that continent. In the United Kingdom a document known as the English Final Statement was an integral part of the Unity agreement. A little over 100 years has passed since the Birmingham Statement of Faith was Amended to exclude the extreme restrictive view that only those in covenant relationship (be it baptism or circumcision) are subject to the judgment seat of Christ. In view of lessons learned in other Unity efforts just cited it seems perfectly reasonable to implement a Unity agreement in North America with a supplemental document, which expansively clarifies the issue while at the same time not replacing the BASF in any way; hence, the apparent justification for NASU.

The question yet remains — does the NASU indeed clarify the issues between the Amended and Unamended — or at least that part of the Unamended community that seeks fellowship with us. Please note the following:

- A preponderant majority of Amended Ecclesias have endorsed the NASU doctrinal clarification. In contrast, the NASU document has been rejected by a faction of the Unamended Community. This group, we can unfortunately say, still adheres to the J. J. Andrew position on resurrection responsibility. This was demonstrated by a recent *Christadelphian Advocate* Magazine article repudiating those Unamended Ecclesias who have signed on to the UA08. Clearly then the NASU has done a good job of identifying those Ecclesias in both the Amended and Unamended Ecclesias in North America that share

the same doctrinal position on the issues that have long separated us.

- The NASU document is valuable for the Unamended in that it addresses the nature of Christ in such a way as to exclude the “Clean Flesh” views that some in the Amended community are said to hold.
- It is also valuable to the Amended community in that it excludes the Andrewite views on the nature of Christ, which are said to be common in the Unamended community.

It should be noted that the last two issues mentioned above are doctrinal errors that have cropped up over the years, but are not specifically excluded by the BASF — hence the need for clarification on these points.

In summary, the NASU appears to play a role similar to clarification documents used in other successful reunion efforts, and if it were coupled with a clear cut fellowship implementation policy could go a long way towards ending the painful separation that has been so hurtful to the Christadelphian Community in North America.

Tidings Publishing Committee

Letter to the Editor

I am writing concerning the article “The Nature of Man” by Bro. Johnnie Abel (*Tidings*, Feb 2011).

Most of this article was on target but there were a few concerns with the following phrases: “Life is contingent on obedience”, “obeying God required restraint and discipline”, “but God has promised that He will be with us and assist us IF we follow His commands”, and “cutting off of the flesh (sinful desire)...is the only way to eradicate sin”

I think the emphasis does not reflect the full breath of scripture and while it is perhaps traditional, it is not particularly helpful in our struggle against sin. The implication is that if we exercised restraint and discipline and applied ourselves to eradicating sin so we could obey God’s command, then God would help us out and we could in the end be given a new heart and spirit. It’s really up to us. The contrast is I think more scripturally sound. It is because we trust and believe God that we can be considered righteous (Rom 4) (not because we have won our battle against sin) and despite our failures and weaknesses (while we were yet sinners) we are forgiven. Like Israel, we deserve none of this and have earned none of it. We certainly must not continue in sin that grace may abound but it is in God’s mercy that we trust, not in our valiant efforts. When we look in the mirror each morning and see a person who struggles each day with sin and each day fails in some way big or small, we do not lose heart, we look to Jesus, the author and finisher of our salvation. In him we see a man beset by our same weaknesses and yet without sin. We see him crucified and we know it is each of us that should be there. But for the grace of God, we are not. When we are led to believe that this is what God requires of us, we either become discouraged with our failures and give

up, or we become arrogant and prone to search out the splinter in one another's eye. We need to daily remind ourselves that we live by faith. Life, eternal life, is contingent on faith, our absolute trust in God, not on obedience.

I am writing this to broaden the emphasis and help us to in reverence and awe understand the privileged relationship we have to approach unto the throne of grace in time of need.

Dolores Sleeper (San Francisco Peninsula, CA)

In response to the 'Letter to the Editor'

Sister Delores is right that we are reliant on God's grace not our own efforts, but we cannot disregard the relationship between faith and obedience. Her statement "Life, eternal life, is contingent on faith, our absolute trust in God, not on obedience" does not make this relationship apparent.

While we are justified by faith, it is misleading to say that eternal life is contingent on faith and not obedience. As the article on the nature of man discussed, obedience to God (resistance to sin) must be present in our lives. Galatians 5:16-21, "*I say then: Walk in the Spirit and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh... Now the works of the flesh are evident... That those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*" The message here is clear — what we 'do,' especially in response to our inherent nature, will directly affect our opportunity for eternal life.

The example for us is set by our Lord Jesus Christ as described in Hebrews 5, "*And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;*" Christ is the author of salvation because his faith in God's plan was perfected by his complete obedience to the law. Does this mean by our obedience alone we can be saved? Of course not! We all sin and, therefore, deserve the consequence of sin, death. So why is our obedience important?

James in his letter (Ch 2) writes, "*I will show you my faith by my works.*" Abraham had his belief accounted to him for righteousness because by faith he obeyed God's command to offer up his promised son. We see then how our obedience is evidence of our Faith. Baptism is an example of this. Believers are baptized (obeying a command of God) and put on Christ (Gal 3) because of faith in God's promise to forgive sins and grant eternal life through Christ. Baptism is not only an act of our faith, but obedience to God's command. Claiming to be faithful but refusing baptism would be similar to confessing that faith only is required for salvation.

Faith, then, motivates us to exercise restraint and discipline in our lives with the knowledge that through Christ's sacrifice God counts our acts of faith (obedience, resisting sin) as righteousness. By contrast, continual disobedience results in the hope of eternal life exchanged for God's wrath (Rom 2:7).

Life, eternal life, is contingent on faith, shown by our resistance to sin and obedience to God's commands.

Johnnie Abel (Cambridge, ON)



Bible Mission News

Guadalajara Visit – January 2011

The visit here was once again a very pleasurable experience, renewing acquaintance with the brothers and sisters. I was invited to do the Bible Class study on Thursday night, two studies on Saturday, the exhortation and a further study Sunday afternoon. All the studies were based on the first epistle of John.

It was nice to be able to meet Sis. Malú Farías who was visiting from Campeche, Yucatan and planned to stay until January 24, God willing.

My stay this time in a small hotel near the “Centro Biblico” proved to be very convenient and economical.

I was also pleased to meet briefly with Bro. Michael Connor who was on business in Guadalajara. Bro. Michael exhorted on the Sunday just prior to my arrival. The ecclesia is looking forward to the visits of the Rawsons in February and Bro. Dennis Paggi in April.

During my stay the ecclesia was able to secure a different meeting place nearer to the city centre at considerably less cost than they are currently paying. This new venue will have more walk-by traffic and the brethren were impressed with the improved state of the premises over their current location. Some work will be required to install an interior screen wall at the front, but there is nothing too extensive anticipated. The change in location has become necessary due to the gay bar beside the Bible Centre being granted a lease for the upstairs over the hall which would create even more noise from loud music than what they are currently experiencing. All things considered this move at this time is no doubt a blessing being granted by God at the right time. The brethren expect to be in the new premises for March 1, 2011, God willing.

During my stay, I was able to experience first-hand the amount of activity that takes place at the Bible Centre. Sis. Cynthia opens at 9 a.m. and closes at 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday, in addition to the time that it is open on Sundays. Some of the brothers help out when they have the time to do so. In addition to the daily reading session at 3 p.m. when there were at least four present each day during the week that I was there, there are the ongoing discussions with people who drop in. With the anticipated increased exposure in the new location the new “Centro Biblico” will be a busy place indeed!

With the relatively close proximity to the US it would be hoped that ongoing support for this ecclesia on a regular basis should be possible. I feel that there is

a good solid base with the leading brothers and with the considerable amount of preaching effort being undertaken let us hope and pray that we can continue to support the work in Guadalajara .

Submitted by Bro. Gordon Dangerfield



**Bible Study class in
Guadalajara**

Costa Rica Bible School Dec 29, 2010 – Jan 4, 2011

The Annual Gathering in Costa Rica is held at a Retreat facility in La Garita, approximately half an hour by bus from the ecclesial hall in Santa Barbara. A total of 60 attended including two from El Salvador, two from USA and two from Canada.

Bro. Dennis Paggi and I presented the adult studies and Bro. Jeff Hibbs led the youth studies.

This was the second time the gathering was held at this facility and again was well organised by the brothers and sisters in Costa Rica. It was a welcome surprise to see Sisters Guiselle and Damaris from Guadalupe (former San Jose ecclesia) who have become more involved with the ecclesia in Santa Barbara over the last year due to the efforts of some of the brothers in making the trip to Guadalupe on a biweekly basis to get the sisters to the meeting in Santa Barbara. The sisters are very appreciative of the brothers' efforts and are enjoying a renewed enthusiasm as they enjoy the fellowship that they have not had for many years.

Sis. Veronica Porterfield (Washington DC Ecclesia) attended the gathering with her ten year-old daughter Zoe and greatly enjoyed getting to know the brothers and sisters and was able to communicate fluently in Spanish, being of Colombian descent.

One of the features of the gathering is the Saturday night presentation of "Teatro Negro" (Black Theatre) and this year a dramatic presentation of four parables involving young and old impressed the audience with a variety of action and art work illuminated with black lights and dramatized with music. This work involves almost all of the Sunday School scholars and young people who work on the pre-

sentation for most of the year. There is a notably improved cohesion of the young people and adults as a result of this very involved activity.



Costa Rica Bible School

We were very pleased to learn of the engagement immediately after the gathering of Sis. Zuelen Arias of Costa Rica to Bro. Neftali Espinosa of El Salvador. With the increased interaction between the Central American ecclesias it is encouraging to see the friendships blossoming between the young people, giving them an increased sense of belonging to a larger community and not being confined to the limited number of friends that they have in their own areas.

*Submitted by Bro. Gordon Dangerfield
Linkman – Costa Rica*

Trip to Panama

The original plan for my stay (after the Costa Rica Bible School) was that I would spend some of the time at the condominium in Panama City owned by the Sobers, however on arrival in Panama we discovered that most of Panama City was without water due to the heavy flooding. This strange paradox of no potable water was due to the heavy silting of the water supply resulting in the failure of some of the equipment used for purification and pumping of the water into the city supply system. We were thankful that Colon was not affected and so my accommodation plans were changed and I stayed at the Sobers for the duration of my time in Panama.

It was a pleasure getting to know Bro. Ian and Sis. Nishla Neblitt and their one year old daughter Nylayah. They have settled in nicely in Panama and the Sobers (Nishla's parents, Bro. Luis and Sis. Vanessa) are having an addition built onto their house for them to live in. Ian and Nishla have bought a catering business in Colon and this appears to be doing quite well for them. The previous owner has been very helpful in getting them adjusted to the business and helps them with the bigger events.



At this time Bro. Ian has indicated his willingness to assist with the Panama City meeting on a once a month basis. This help will no doubt be appreciated by the small group at Juan Diaz and also help in keeping contact between the two ecclesias.

Submitted by Bro. Gordon Dangerfield

Sis. Nishla, Bro. Ian and Nylayah Neblitt, our missionaries in Panama

Visiting Jamaica Fellowship in the One Faith — January 2011

What a contrast! Leaving Toronto on Tuesday, January 18th in blowing snow at -5C and arriving four hours later in Montego Bay in 30C sunshine gave my six days in Jamaica a warm start. Rather than returning home to Vancouver following a commitment in the Midwest, I joined Bro. Ray Arthurs at his home in Negril, three days in advance of the CBMJ board and delegates meetings scheduled for January 21st and 22nd. While three days of sunshine and early morning walks on the beautiful beach across the highway from Ray's added a bonus to my visit, the real joy came from quiet conversation and daily readings with Bro. Ray. Ray's energy and breadth of experience are evident from discussions that ranged widely, revealing his love of the Truth and concern for the brethren and ecclesias in Jamaica, while tempered with his recognition that his advancing years and less than robust health will soon necessitate taking up a quieter life closer to his home ecclesia in Broughton. Wednesday Bible reading class at the Broughton ecclesia hall was a special blessing. Sisters, whom I had met at their Sister's class in May 2010, braved the showery evening as we shared discussion around the daily Bible readings. What a rewarding experience! With a common faith and a warmth of fellowship, together we shared the message of Scripture. We truly have a precious gift, one in faith and hope through our Lord Jesus.

Friday soon came and with the arrival of Bro. Matthew Williams from the Harvey River Ecclesia, we made the three hour journey to May Pen for the meetings. On Friday night brethren Ray, Matthew and I stayed at the Hotel Versailles where we held the CBMJ/CBMC board meeting and enjoyed a late supper. Our two mission organizations enjoy strong bonds in the service of the brotherhood in Jamaica. Our common interests go beyond direct CBMC funding of CBMJ activities. During our meeting we explored both issues and opportunities; building on CBMC support for member welfare needs, for the supply of used eyeglasses, used books, pamphlets, Sunday school learning supplies (Christadelphian Save the Children Fund supplies), and for speakers to assist in the countrywide calendar of events for 2011. In common with our community worldwide, Jamaican brothers and sisters

experience challenges in both ecclesial and secular life: lack of employment opportunities, emigration of key members from small ecclesias, incessant bombardment of worldliness by the media and uncertainties in fellowship relationships. CBMJ also recognizes the need to involve younger members to serve on CBMJ, with the inevitable retirements of long serving board members.

Saturday took us to the May Pen hall and the CBMJ delegates meeting which commenced at 12:30pm. Brothers and sisters meet four times annually to discuss the business of the brotherhood in Jamaica. Much is on the agenda. These are extended meetings, with spirited discussion on many agenda items. CBMJ sponsored events on the all island calendar are varied — fraternal days, Bible schools, youth weekends, preaching campaigns, sister’s days and brother’s mutual improvement days — and are approved at this meeting. CBMC provides assistance in arranging visiting speakers for several of the programs. Before saying goodbyes a meal was enjoyed as delegates returned to their home towns.



May Pen Ecclesia following Bible class

The Sunday program at May Pen began with Sunday school lead by Sis. Gerzel Gordon followed by the Memorial meeting and Bible Class; my exhortation followed the theme “crowns”, from the crown of thorns worn willingly by Christ to the crown of glory that does not fade away and the Bible class reviewed the life of Barnabas and his contributions to the early ecclesia in Jerusalem and the ministry of the apostle Paul.

A highlight of my time in Jamaica came in the quietness of both Saturday and Sunday evenings, around the dining room table at Bro. Melvin and Sis. Gerzel Gordon’s. We enjoyed a late night snack and a cool drink and they shared with me their insights into their early days in the Faith and their fond memories of spreading the Truth across the island; times of both great joy and adversity. It was humbling and uplifting to share this time with “a mother in Israel” and a “shepherd of the flock of God”. And we prayed together for the blessing of our God on the ecclesias in Jamaica.

Monday arrived all too soon! Bro. Patrick Johnson combined business stops with a trip to the Kingston airport where he dropped me in good time for my two flights back to Vancouver.

Phil Snobelen, for CBMC

Encouraging Developments in St. Lucia

There is nothing like preaching and facing challenging questions about first principles to stimulate deeper consideration of the elements of the faith!

Working in the Caribbean is very good in the sense that many people have a respect for the Word of God which is rare in developed countries. In those islands it is not difficult to have conversations with people about the Bible.

During the time that Bro. Arne and Sis. Emma Roberts (home ecclesia, Cardiff Museum Place) were in St. Lucia much preaching was done. Among other things, they started a newsletter that was mailed to about 150 contacts. The newsletters included articles about Bible topics, current events and a quiz. Those who submit answers received a Bible leaflet. During our visit to St. Lucia in January and February (2011) this good work was continued. Two editions of the newsletter were prepared and mailed and we were pleased to have some responses in relation to the quizzes

Another important result of Bro. Arne and Sis. Emma's 10-month stay in St. Lucia was the rental of a hall, a "large upper room" that is bright and cheery. The acoustics are excellent for singing and the 'joyful noise' that the small ecclesia makes to the Lord sounds lovely. The keyboard that Arne and Emma left behind when they returned home is a great asset to the singing.

One of the highlights of our stay was when Bro. Eddie Anthony brought to the hall six of his colleagues (Bro. Eddie works at the Central Library) for a lunch-time Bible class. We took some sandwiches and juice and on the first occasion after an opening prayer we asked the group what they would like to talk about. Their choice was 'the Sabbath'. We began in Genesis 2:3 and went from there. The focus was on the principles associated with the Sabbath. We had two classes with the group and to our surprise at the second class two others came who had heard of the class but did not work at the Library. There were plenty of questions, so in the course of two 45-minute discussions we covered only about half of the topic!

Seven lectures were given on a variety of topics. On each evening we began the meeting with a hymn that the visitors knew. One topic that brought comments as we handed out leaflets was "Is May 21 Judgement Day". In October 2010 a group of people from the USA came to the Caribbean islands and handed out thousands of leaflets which stated that May 21, 2011 is judgement day and that on October 21, 2011 the earth will be burned up! This was something new to us, as in Canada we had not heard of this organisation and their preaching. We did a search in Google on 'May 21, 2011' and yes; this 'judgement day' was the first item in the results listing. These dates regarding judgement and the earth being burnt up had caught the imagination of people in St. Lucia. In the lecture of course, Bro. Andre George pointed out that the coming of Christ is not something that can be known in advance. He gave a good presentation of the gospel with strong encouragement for people attending to put themselves among those who are heirs of the promises.

Bro. Eddie Anthony gave a good lecture on 'Lucifer and Satan'. He pointed out that the prophecy of Isaiah 14 is something that could not have occurred before

creation! Rather it was related to the downfall of the king of Babylon. Eddie's further exposition about 'Satan' clearly demonstrated the true Biblical teaching on this topic. After each lecture there was a time for questions and sometimes there were so many that we had to cut them off because of time!

An increasing number of people in St. Lucia have access to the internet; therefore many 'thisisyourbible.com' business cards were left in places and handed to people. Newspaper advertisements were taken out for the website.

Bro. Andre George has written two good books. The first is 'The Devil and Satan Exposed and Unmasked' and the second is 'The Trinity — Myth or Mystery'. Many copies of these books have been handed to contacts and friends of Bro. Andre and the 'Devil and Satan...' book has had a second edition. Bro. Andre has had a mixed reaction from his friends. Some express support and agree with the Biblical exposition but others express astonishment that he should have departed from the faith of his childhood. Andre was brought up as a devout Roman Catholic and learned the truth over a period of several years from brothers and sisters who did preaching work in St. Lucia. He was baptised nearly six years ago and is devoted to serving his new Master. Since his baptism he taught his mother the truth who was baptised on the day following her 90th birthday! She is now asleep in Christ.

Copies of Bro. Andre's two books are available for wider use in the preaching work of the brotherhood. Any brother or sister interested, please contact the undersigned.

The brothers and sisters of the St. Lucia Ecclesia greatly appreciate the support of overseas visitors. Assistance with exhortations and preaching is very encouraging. Brothers and sisters who are able and willing to contribute to the work of pastoral support and preaching in St. Lucia and other Caribbean locations please contact the undersigned at mjwebster@vif.com. Let us remember, visits to the mission field are typically very stimulating to our own faith and to the faith of others!

*Martin J Webster,
CBMC Linkman,
St. Lucia*



**The St. Lucia
Ecclesia and
contact**

Addresses for Bequests and Donations

Christadelphian Bible Mission of the Americas (CBMA) supports preaching work throughout the Americas, Truth Corps, etc. Visit www.cbma.net for current activities as well as to make US dollar donations. Donations by check should be sent c/o Jeff Gelineau, 567 Astorian Dr., Simi Valley, CA 93065-5941, or contact jeffandkellie@gelineau.org

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 or via website www.agapeinaction.com
Email: agapeinaction@rogers.com

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

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

Christadelphian Heritage College c/o Brantford Ecclesia, 442 Dunsdon St., Brantford, ON, Canada, N3P 2B1

Christadelphian Indian Children's Homes (CICH) donations in US dollars can be sent to CICH, c/o David & Connie Stiles, 3 Blue Acre Rd., Middletown, CT 06457-5012

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

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

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

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

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

News & Notices

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

AUSTIN-LEANDER, TX

We rejoice and are pleased to report the baptism of JANET BARTLESON, on January 23, 2010. She was initially studying with Bro. Fred Brinkerhoff in Denver before moving to this area. We rejoice, and welcome back into fellowship Sis. Ouida Henry, after a long absence from the household of faith. We are sorry that Sis. Stacy-Sue Wagner had to return to Oregon due to employment, but she remains an associate member.

In November we had our annual fall fraternal gathering at the HEB camp. Bro. Ron Stewart led classes on, "The Portrait of a Saint". We thank him for his classes and were pleased that Sis. Shirley was able to join him. We had a successful Youth Weekend March 11-13, 2010, and wish to thank Bro. Chris Matthiesen for his classes.

We have welcomed the following brothers and sisters from other states or countries: Robert and Alexa McAllister (Yagoona, Sydney, Aust.); Dean and Andrea Bailey (Cambridge, ON); Charles and Ethel Archard (Ottawa, ON); Rose Madge (Milford Road, MI); Dennis and Tiffany Bevans, and Chris and Tina Hall (Reseda, CA); Jim and Katie Glover (Thousand Oaks, CA); Dan and Janet McDonald (Paris Ave., OH); Greg Erickson, Sandra Maggard, Fred and Ellen Brinkerhoff, and Larry and Vinca Goodridge (Denver, CO); Sharee Grazda (South Austin, TX); Mary Cheetham (Morristown, NJ); Scott Nevers (Wachussetts, MA); Ed Hawthorne (Los Angeles, CA); and Michael and Vanessa Floyd (Port Elizabeth, South Africa).

We wish to thank Bre. Dean Bailey, Scott Nevers, Fred Brinkerhoff, Michael Floyd and Dennis Bevans for their words of exhortation, and Robert McAllister for his class.

The new Recording Brother is Bro. George Brown. His address is 1201 Cherry Lane, Cedar Park, Texas 78613; and phone number is 512-986-8867. Any future correspondence should be sent to him. His email address is gwbrown8@mail.com.

George Brown

BRANTFORD, ON

On February 5, 2011, Bro. Trevor Salisbury and Sis. Heather Jennings, eldest daughter of Bro. Jim and Sis. Shirley Ann Jennings, became heirs together of the grace of life. May our heavenly Father bless their new household as they submit to one another in love, in the fear of our God.

In the loving spirit of training up our children in the way of the Lord, the Brantford Ecclesia was thankful to be able to operate two gatherings for the young people in our region during the first quarter of 2011. The Junior CYC and Little Disciple gathering held on February 12, 2011, at a wonderful new location, provided a day long spiritual environment for nearly one hundred twenty children, and almost as many brothers and sisters who supported the event. The day's focus was, "The Life of Samuel".

On March 4-5, 2011, Bro. Dan Osborn led our annual Senior CYC gathering on the theme of, "Jehoshaphat—Life Up in the Ways of the Lord". Nearly 150 young people enjoyed the weekend, which was rounded out with a floor hockey challenge.

In between these two events, on February 19, 2011, our ecclesia was blessed with the baptism of another of our Sunday school scholars. CHLOE PENNY, daughter of Bro. Brent and Sis. Jennifer Penny, after a good confession of her faith, chose to be buried with Christ in baptism and to be raised to walk in newness of life. We pray that God may bless our new sister as she becomes a servant of righteousness in His household, both now and in the age to come by His mercy.

On March 16, 2011, we let our lamp shine organizing a special public lecture on the timely topic of, "Egypt, Libya and the Middle East in the Bible". The event, which was hosted at the Best Western hotel in Brantford, attracted 12 visitors. Several stayed after the presentation, which gave many in the ecclesia a further chance to serve as evangelists. We thank our heavenly Father for the opportunity to witness in these last days, excited to testify to the nearness of our Lord's return, trusting that God will call those whom he has predestined. A further public proclamation effort is being planned for later in the year, at which time a Bible exhibition will be erected at another public venue. The aim of the exhibit will be to promote the 400th anniversary of the printing of the King James Bible, and will feature such things as: an old King James Version New Testament, a Gutenberg press model, and many other interesting artifacts and manuscripts. Look for more details about this event in future intelligence.

Mike Moore

CRANSTON, RI

The Cranston Ecclesia has been richly blessed once again with the baptism, into the saving name of the Lord Jesus Christ, of GLENN HAUGHTON, son of Bro. Donald Haughton on September 11, 2010.

We thank the following brothers who presented public Bible talks in our Fall series on the theme, "The Bible Speaks Today" including Jim Sullivan (Boston, MA), Jason Cicero (Meriden, CT), Jim Burns (Westerly, RI), and our own lecturing brothers.

Our CYC held a very successful fund raiser dinner and program on December 11, 2010, to benefit a particular CYC need in the brotherhood. The Evening Program was a presentation on their preaching experiences in South Africa by Sis. Katie Schlageter (Westerly, RI), Sis. Alyssa Tuck (Meriden, CT,) and Bro. Brandon Entwistle (Cranston, RI).

We rejoiced together as a family in Christ Jesus as we witnessed the marriage of our Sis. Danielle Matteson, daughter of Bro. Ricky and Sis. Nancy Matteson to Bro. Aaron King, son of Bro. David and Sis. Kathy King (Richmond Petersburg, VA) on December 18, 2010. May their life together as one in Christ be richly blessed on their journey to the kingdom. Sis. Danielle King's membership was transferred, with our love, to the love and care of the James River, VA Ecclesia where she and Bro. Aaron will make their home in the area.

Our New Year's Bible Study Weekend was led by Bro. Ryan King (Richmond Petersburg, VA) on the theme, "Psalms of Refuge".

Our "Learn to Read the Bible Effectively" seminar continues in conjunction with the Westerly Ecclesia. Though the numbers dropped off dramatically into the program, the lessons continue with the two ladies we last reported. The studies are now held in the home of one of the ladies and the good news is that two or three of their friends have joined the study.

Paul Haughton

ECHO LAKE, NJ

We thank our Bro. John Bilello for his words of exhortation and adult Bible class during the month. The ecclesia was happy to see Sis. Mary with him. We are pleased to report that having finished our current series of Learn to Read the Bible Seminars, we have begun a new series in early April "The Life Of Christ". We pray for the Lord's blessing on this new endeavor. Our fall study weekend is to take place Oct 8-9, 2011. The Theme is "Making use of the sense we are born with" and our speaker is Bro. John Parry UK.

We are pleased to welcome by transfer from the Georgetown ecclesia in Guyana our Bro. Keon Charles, who has been commended to us by the ecclesia there. We are pleased to have one more join our numbers and look forward to his help and fellowship. We have been pleased and privileged to have the company of a number of visiting brethren and sisters and we have welcomed them around the table of the Lord: Margan Packie, Virginia Packie, Carolyn Antonaccio, David and Mary Anne Jorgensen (Union, NJ); Gaby Kilburn (South Ozone Park, NY); Paul and Dorothy Zawadski (Boston, MA); Sandy and Janice Piskura (Washington, DC); Tom and Sally Davies (Pomona, CA); Keon Charles (Georgetown, Guyana); John and Mary Bilello (Ann Arbor, MI); RuthAnn Jorgensen (Rochester, NY); Patty Robinson (Hamilton Book Road, ON).

Please note that our telephone number in the ALS diary is incorrect, it should be 973-402-4329 and not 973-402-4392.

Stewart Marsden

HAMILTON GREENAWAY, ON

We are pleased to welcome as members of the Hamilton Greenaway Ecclesia, Sis. Marilyn Creer, Bro. Ivan and Sis. Marsha Stonell, and Sis. Mary Bishop who come to us from the Hamilton Book Road Ecclesia, and Bro. Scott and Sis. Anita Lausch who are transferring their membership from the London, ON Ecclesia. We look forward to their company and help in proclaiming the gospel of salvation to a perishing world. We thank our heavenly Father for all His tender mercies!

Tom Thorp

KAMLOOPS, BC

We have been very blessed this past year with ministrations from visiting brethren and God has blessed our gospel proclamation efforts in our Sunday school campaign. Each September and January for the past two years we have distributed leaflets inviting children in the area of our meeting hall to attend our Sunday school. God has blessed us with five students from five to twelve years old. Three have started attending other ecclesial activities and youth programs in BC. We pray that Yahweh will continue to bless them as they continue to learn of His Word.

We thank the many brethren from near and far who have joined us in fellowship this past year and particularly Bro. Stephen Bartholomew who lead our spring fraternal on, "They Shall Be My People and I Shall Be Their God". We would also like to thank Bre. Nathan Bartholomew (North Battleford, SK); Jim Cowie (Winston, QL, Aust.); Don Zanting, Ben Cawston, and David Drysdale, (Vernon, BC); Rod Massey, and Jonathan Lawrence (Prince George, BC); Adam Jones, Graeme Osborn and Skip Bartholomew (Vernon Okanagan, BC); and Mike LeDuke (Kitchener-Waterloo, ON) for their ministrations to us in 2010.

In November we hosted our second Inter-ecclesial Gospel Proclamation Workshop. It was exciting, encouraging and spiritually uplifting to share gospel proclamation ideas,

suggestions, efforts, and experiences with ecclesial representatives from ecclesias in Washington, Alberta, British Columbia, and Saskatchewan.

We are very pleased to have our Sis. Claira Young move to our meeting from Vernon. She is a bright light and a cheerful smile at every meeting. Her enthusiasm to help in any way she is an example for us all. Bro. Chris and Sis. Naomi Winter spent nearly two years in the Victoria meeting and we are very pleased to have them back with us. They have come back with an addition to their family, thus helping us build up our Sunday school with their two boys, Marcus and Micah. We know that they will be a support to our ecclesia and all its activities adding their abilities to our ecclesial resources.

Jon Fletcher

KITCHENER WATERLOO, ON

We would like to thank the many brothers and sisters who have visited the Kitchener Waterloo Ecclesia during 2010, and those brothers who have served us in exhortations, Bible classes and lectures.

During recent years Bro. Paul Brokaw has served the ecclesia in the duty of Recording Brother and we thank him for his labour in this capacity. This task has now passed to Bro. Jack Robinson. Bro. Jack's phone number is 519-448-1696; and his email is jcrobins@worldchat.com.

Our ecclesial mailing address remains: 486 Albert Street, Box 28084, Waterloo, ON, N2L 6J8, Canada.

Martin J. Webster

LONDON, ON

Bro. Nathan and Sis. Melissa Meaker have moved to Saskatchewan and have requested a transfer to the North Battleford, SK Ecclesia. Bro. Nathan has been in our ecclesia since birth and we will certainly miss this young vibrant couple and pray that their new ecclesia shall benefit from their spiritual labours and enthusiasm. Also, Bro. Scott and Sis. Anita Lausch have requested a transfer to the Hamilton Greenaway Ecclesia along with their two children. We shall miss them and pray that they all may gain spiritual benefits from their new ecclesial surroundings.

With gladness, we receive into our ecclesia, Sis. Linda Ikle who transfers from the Edmonton, AB Ecclesia. We look forward to sharing fellowship and labours of love with our sister.

Dave Birchall

ORLANDO, FL

Beginning April 3, 2011, the Orlando Ecclesia will move to a new location. Meeting will be held at the BETA Center, 4680 Lake Underhill Road, Orlando, FL 32807. For directions and meeting times, please call Randy Davenport at 407-719-0956.

The Orlando, FL Ecclesia has welcomed the following visiting brothers and sisters: Ted and Karen Hodge and their children, Melanie and Jacob, Alan Markwith, and Allan and Sandra Walker (ON); Wilson and Betty Ross (Miami, FL); Brian and Sharon Adams and their children, Jacob, Abigail and Caleb, and Bob and Norley Kling (Washington DC); Jenny Nicholson, Julian Baseley, Sandra Baseley, Alan and Chris Mills, and Hilary Knight (UK); Philip and Laurie Sweeny (NJ); Lisa Duncan (Guyana); Len and Julie Budney and son, Joshua (Pittsburgh, PA); Mark Patterson (Los Angeles, CA); and

Grahame Grieve (Melbourne, Aust.). We would like to extend a sincere thank you to all those who graciously exhorted.

Randy Davenport

SARASOTA, FL

We are pleased to welcome, by way of transfer from the Washington DC Ecclesia, Sis. Elaine David, sister in the flesh to our Bro. Ron Badlu.

James L. Wilkinson

THOUSAND OAKS, CA

During the past few months we have been pleased to welcome many brothers and sisters from our neighboring California ecclesias. In addition, we welcomed from afar: Bro. Andrew and Sis. Pam Wallace (Boronia, Aust.); Bro. Henry and Sis. Sharon Wisniewski (Rogue Valley, OR); Bro. Dean and Sis. Jenny Brumby, and Bro. Norm and Sis. Barb Wigzel (Aberfoyle Park, Aust.); Sis. Christie Haltom (Detroit Royal Oak, MI); Bro. Jack and Sis. Shirley Robinson (Kitchener Waterloo, ON); Bro. Aaron and Sis. Molly McDonald (Paris Ave., OH), Bro. Jim Cowie (Wilston, Aust.); and Bro. Davey Morgan (Heathmont, Aust.).

Our thanks go out to Bro. John McConville and Bro. Tom Pavone (Reseda, CA), Bro. Michael Jennings (Pomona, CA), and Bro. Gordon Hensley (Simi Hills, CA) for their exhortations and afternoon classes. We also thank our Bro. Gary Schmidt for his exhortation. We really appreciate our brothers speaking for us when they visit.

Our special thanks go out to Bro. Jim Cowie for leading us in our weekend around the word with studies based on the epistle of Jude.

We had transfer to our meeting during this period, Bro. Aaron and Sis. Molly McDonald. They were formerly of the Paris Ave., OH Ecclesia and we certainly welcome them both to our ecclesia and look forward to working with them as we journey together to the kingdom.

We were blessed with three baptisms in the past few months. TORRIE VETKOS, daughter of our Bro. Jimmy and Sis. Jennie Vetkos was baptized into Christ on Oct. 7, 2010. JASON ROBINSON, son of Bro. Greg and Sis. Michele Robinson put on Christ on Oct. 19, 2010. Then, SETH ROBINSON, second son of Bro. Greg and Sis. Michelle, entered the waters of baptism on Jan. 7, 2011. We are very encouraged by the acceptance of the call from our heavenly Father of these three young people. We see clearly, that God is still calling out a people for His name and we look forward to their contributions to our ecclesia as we run the race to the kingdom together.

Tom Graham

WASHINGTON DC

The Washington DC Ecclesia has enjoyed the visits of many brothers and sisters over the last several months. We thank the following brothers for their words of exhortation while visiting the DC ecclesia: Bro. Paul Gaitanis (Petersburg, VA); Bro. Ryan Mutter, Bro. David Levin, and Bro. Bill Link Jr. (Baltimore, MD); and Bro. Jim Harper (Meriden, CT). The Camp Hashawha family Bible study weekend was held on November 26–28, 2010. The Washington DC Ecclesia would like to thank Bro. Ron Leadbetter (Hamilton Book Road, ON) for his informative and uplifting studies on David.

It is with great sadness we report that on July 30, 2010 Sis. Rebecca Thomas, wife of Bro. Clarence Thomas, fell asleep in Lord. The ecclesia has suffered greatly in the loss of such a faithful servant in the Lord. Sis. Beckie will be missed by all. We look forward to the day when we will be reunited with our sister in the kingdom of God here on earth.

We also report that Sis. Elaine David has moved and transferred her membership to the Sarasota, FL Ecclesia. We shall miss Sis. Elaine and we pray that she will continue to grow in the Lord in her new ecclesia.

Our heavenly Father has blessed us with more future additions to our Sunday school. On December 10, 2010, Gunner Nikolas Kling was born to Bro. Eric and Sis. Dawn Kling. On January 27, 2011, Owen Santiago Lara was born to Bro. Roberto and Sis. Megan Lara.

We also rejoice in the long awaited arrival of Bro. Omar Arjune's family from Guyana. Bro. Omar has been patiently waiting here three years for the immigration process of his wife and children to be completed. We share in our brother's happiness for their safe arrival and welcome them to the Washington DC Ecclesia. The following have transferred their membership from the Georgetown, Guyana Ecclesia: Sis. Colleen Arjune (Bro. Omar's wife), Sis. Volda Bailey (Sis. Colleen's mother), Bro. Jamaul Husbands, and Jonathan and Joshua Arjune (sons of Bro. Omar and Sis. Colleen).

Lord willing, the bi-annual Baltimore/Washington Gathering weekend will be held on April 16-17, 2011. Bro. Jim Dillingham (Granite State, NH) will be giving the classes for the weekend on, "Speaking the Language of God". The location of the classes and memorial service for the weekend will be at the DC hall.

Cory Crabill

WICHITA FALLS, TX

Since last reporting our ecclesial news we have welcomed around the table of our absent Lord and Saviour the following visitors: Sis. Sarah Newton (Los Angeles, CA); Bro. David Ishman (Austin Leander, TX); Sis. Jeanna McLaughlin (Dallas, TX); Bro. David and Sis. Erin Clubb (Simi Hills, CA); Bro. Lyn and Sis. Pat Tunnell (Denver, CO); Sis. Wendy Hicks (Abilene, TX); and Bro. Max and Sis. Linda Wickham (San Diego County, CA). We thank Bre. David and Max for their words of exhortation.

In February of this year Bro. Max Wickham lead a study weekend on "The Man Daniel". We were encouraged by the God fearing example of Daniel who lived amidst the confusion of Gentile rule. Our brother emphasized Daniel's refusal to compromise in his worship of the one true God although put through tests beyond imagination. It was a very timely message and we thank our brother for his efforts on our behalf.

We are saddened to report that our Sis. Jeannette Davis fell asleep in Christ on March 12, 2011. Our beloved sister struggled the last few months of her life but now she rests peacefully, awaiting the Lord's call to life at His return. Jeannette put on Christ's saving name over 58 years ago and diligently served in his body especially edifying the members of the Wichita Falls Ecclesia. She taught the things of the kingdom to her six children and to everyone else around her who would listen. She also lived what she taught and was a wonderful example of "agape," following the "command of Christ to "love one another as I have loved you." Our Sister will be sorely missed and we continue to pray earnestly for that glorious resurrection morn! We certainly thank all the brothers and sisters who supported us at our time of sorrow.

On March 26, 2011, we rejoiced as Bro. Ben Beutel (Wichita Falls, TX) and Sis. Sarah Newton (Los Angeles, CA) were united as one in service to our heavenly Father. We thank our heavenly Father for providing Bro. Ben a wonderful help in the truth and we pray for God's blessing on their walk together toward His kingdom. May our Savior return soon to take his bride!

John A Clubb

WORCESTER, MA

Our beloved Bro. Thomas and Sis. Linda Reding have transferred to the Mount Pleasant Balaclava, Jamaica Ecclesia, where they are working diligently in the Lord's vineyard. May God be with them until we meet again. They served in many offices over the years and were always active in the Lord's work. They will be sorely missed.

Our dear Sis. Ruth Jorgensen has transferred to the Rochester, NY Ecclesia, which is closer to her work and new residence. We will miss her loving smile and helping hands. Our dear Bro. Jason Millard has moved to Joplin, MO to be with his parents. We will miss him as he grew up here in the truth and was very active serving in many capacities.

We are also pleased to announce the marriage in the Lord of Bro. Matthew Fulmer and Sis. Chantel Rivard on January 1, 2011. They met at a summer Bible school and Sis. Chantel recently transferred to our ecclesia from the Niagara, ON Ecclesia. May the Lord bless them as they walk together toward the kingdom.

Mark Fulmer

BIBLE CAMPAIGN IN GUADALAJARA MEXICO

From July 31, 2011, to Aug 6, 2011, there will be an old fashioned Bible campaign in Guadalajara, Mexico. There will be many preaching activities, fellowship, devotionals, hymn sings, a Bible school class each night, etc. Learn a little Spanish during the week and meet and work with your brethren in a growing Hispanic ecclesia. There is no Spanish required but you need to be 18+ for this preaching effort that is sponsored by the CBMA. For more information, contact David Lloyd by phone at 818-352-6486; or by email davidrlloyd@earthlink.net.

David Lloyd

CHRISTADELPHIAN FIRST PRINCIPLE DVD'S AVAILABLE

A series of Cable TV programs have been taped over the past several years in Toronto, discussing a variety of subjects in half hour formats. These DVD programs are virtually free to anyone that wishes to have copies for passing on to interested friends, for home use, or to use in a variety of other preaching efforts. Anyone interested in obtaining copies, please contact: Bro. Peter Wisniowski, ASK Secretary (Great Lakes) by email at petersa@hotmail.com.

Peter Wisniowski

CHRISTCHURCH CHRISTADELPHIAN RELIEF FUND

A Relief Fund has been established by the ecclesias in Christchurch, New Zealand, which has been severely affected by a 6.3 magnitude earthquake, that occurred on February 22, 2011. There are four ecclesias in the city with 230 members in total, and in the mercy of God, every single member has been accounted for and is safe. A number of brethren have serious damage to their properties, and many are still without either power or water. Some properties have been condemned and will need to be rebuilt. Though, the damage to property is significant, the economic consequences are likely to

be even more serious. The Central Business District where many work, is likely to be closed for several months, and it has been estimated that possibly up to fifty percent of CBD buildings may have to be demolished. This will create a major disruption to the local economy, and the livelihoods of many brethren may be affected as a consequence.

A special relief fund has been established under the Christchurch North Christadelphian Ecclesia (CNCE), which already operates as a registered charitable trust. This specific relief fund however, will be jointly administered by representatives of all elected arranging brethren of the Christchurch ecclesias, and will help to provide assistance for any brother, sister or ecclesial family in the greater Christchurch area who are in need of support as the situation unfolds.

We are deeply thankful for the many expressions of love and support that have poured in from all parts of the worldwide community, and for offers of assistance that have been made.

We are seeking to coordinate collections via the network of Christadelphian Bible Missions, and who have kindly offered to assist. If you would like to make a donation toward this relief fund, the address for checks is below. Please contact the Bible Missions for bank account information:

FOR DONATIONS IN NORTH AMERICA (VIA CBMA):

Christadelphian Bible Mission

Checks payable to CBMA to 567 Astorian Drive, Simi Valley, CA 93065

Please indicate that your donation is for the Christchurch, NZ Relief Fund.

In the event there are unused funds, they will be allocated to other approved Christadelphian charities or funds within New Zealand. On this basis the funds will remain strictly within our community, and under properly constituted financial structures. May our Lord soon come, to vindicate his Father's name and render all such need for assistance unnecessary.

Roger Lewis

NEW NORTHERN VIRGINIA ECCLESIA

Dear Brothers and Sisters in North America and Worldwide,

The Washington DC ecclesia would like to announce that on April 3, 2011 a new Central (amended) ecclesia in Northern Virginia will have been established. Several members of the Washington DC ecclesia who live in the Virginia suburbs west of Washington DC, have for some time desired to preach the Gospel message in an area currently in darkness.

The formation of the Northern Virginia Christadelphian Ecclesia results from no turmoil or dissatisfaction with the Washington DC ecclesia. Many of these brothers and sisters have been pillars of strength in our ecclesia for many years. Though their presence with us shall be greatly missed by all remaining members of the Washington DC ecclesia, our love and fondness toward them all will continue. We thank our Heavenly Father for their many years of dedicated service in His Name. We pray God's blessing on their joyful duty of establishing a bright and shining light-stand in a new place.

The Washington DC ecclesia commends and recognizes the following brothers and sisters and their attendant families, as transfers to the Northern Virginia Christadelphian Ecclesia: Bro. David & Sis. Holly Fertig, Bro. Lee & Sis. Chris Huff;

Bro. Mike & Sis. Melissa Kemp; Bro. Jayson & Sis. Valerie Bright; Bro. Michael & Sis. Veronica Porterfield; and Sis. Monica Ferguson.

*In our Lord's saving Name,
Bro. Cory Crabill .Recording Brother, Washington DC Ecclesia*

Brethren,

In order to better provide for the spiritual needs of brothers and sisters of the Central Christadelphian Fellowship living in Northern Virginia in the USA, and to help proclaim the message of the Kingdom of God and the Name Jesus Christ, several brothers and sisters have organized into a new ecclesia which we have named "The Northern Virginia Christadelphian Ecclesia". Lord willing, the Northern Virginia Christadelphian Ecclesia will begin meeting on April 3, 2011, and everyone wishing to visit with us is encouraged to contact the undersigned.

Our initial ecclesial members have been long time members of the Washington DC ecclesia and we wish to express our love and gratitude to the brothers and sisters of the Washington DC ecclesia for their years of care and love shed upon us all. We continue to look forward to the loving relationship we have shared with our brothers and sisters in Washington DC and look forward to visitations both to and from our ecclesias.

We seek the support of our brothers and sisters worldwide as together we strive to overcome in this sinful world and to follow after the example of our Lord Jesus Christ as we await his return. Please pray for us.

On behalf of the brothers and sisters of the Northern Virginia Ecclesia,

*Bro. David Fertig, Recording Brother, Northern Virginia Christadelphian Ecclesia
9703 Schmidt Drive, Burke, VA 22015, 703-644-6311,
NVA.Ecclesia@gmail.com*

"Occupy till I come" (Luke 19:13)

In the days before Connecticut became a state, an incident occurred there that has become known as "the dark day". Suddenly thick darkness, probably the result of some abnormal atmospheric condition, blotted out the sunlight. The legislature was in session at the time, and some of its members concluded that the day of judgment had come. The cry went forth, "It is the day of judgment! Let us go home and get ready!"

However, an old church elder who was in the legislature stood up and said, "Brothers, it may be the day of judgment -- I do not know. The Lord may come. But when he does, I want him to find me at my post, doing my duty up to the very last moment. Mr. Speaker, I move that candles be brought in and that we get on with our business."

Minute Meditation

What is Your Vision?

Helen Keller, who was both blind and deaf, was asked, "What would you say is worse than being blind?" She replied, "Having sight without vision."

Solomon says, "Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he." Helen Keller and Solomon both recognize that we all need to have vision. What kind of vision do we have?

Is it possible to see and not recognize what we are seeing? Many of those who saw our Lord and heard his words did not realize that they were witnessing the Word of God in action right in front of their eyes. Jesus comments, "Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."

It is possible to have the wrong kind of vision. The people Jesus speaks about may have thought their eyes were open, but they so lacked understanding that it was as if their eyes were shut. Isaiah describes those whose vision was wrong when he says, "They err in vision, they stumble in judgment." We all need vision that is true and right, and it is important that our vision is in tune with the Lord and not with the world.

Paul explains how to get the right kind of vision and what leads to the wrong kind: "Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile toward God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God."

People nowadays see the evidence but do not acknowledge God. They observe the complexities and beauty of galaxies in space, the inner workings of molecules, but they have no perception of the divine hand that created it all. Their mind is controlled by their sinful nature and they will perish. They have the wrong vision.

Most of the people who listened to the words of Jesus and saw his miracles were those who rejected him and crucified him. Their vision was wrong. They lost their opportunity to be converted and healed. We are horrified by their actions and assure ourselves that we would have reacted differently, but would we? Are our eyes open? Right now the world is in turmoil, the Middle East erupting, financial systems in dire straits, and do we perceive the hand of God preparing for the return

of his Son? Are we searching the Scriptures to remind ourselves of the prophecies being fulfilled? Are we preaching to our friends and neighbors about the coming kingdom? Or are we so involved in our personal lives and looking out for our well-being that we do not see the divine plan coming to pass?

To truly see the hand of God we need to know the Bible and keep its vision ever before us. We don't want to be dull of hearing God's Word or blind to His hand working in our lives and in our world. We want to be among those that are converted and healed by our Lord.

It is obvious that most of those living in our world are not thinking right. If they have vision, then it is vision set on what sinful nature desires. God describes the conditions on the earth at the time of Noah: "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."

Jesus warns us that, just prior to his return, things will be like they were in the days of Noah: "As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man."

We need only to open the daily paper or listen to the radio or watch TV or attend a movie to see that the thoughts of the people living in our world are only evil continually.

Since we are surrounded by the evil influences of the world all around us, we must make sure that our thoughts and visions are centered on God and His purpose with us in these last days. The Phillips translation in Romans 12 gives a graphic rendition of the advice Paul gives us, "Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its mold but let God remold your minds from within." If we follow this wise advice we will gain godly vision that will transform our minds, as Paul explains to those living in Corinth, "Incredible as it may sound, we who are spiritual have the very thoughts of Christ."

Let us then voice the prayer of the Psalmist when he says, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer."

Robert J. Lloyd

Coming Events (Lord Willing)

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

MAY 2011

6-8 Vancouver, BC Sisters' 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

20-22 Sussex, NB Youth Spring Camp. Speaker: Bro. Jay Mayock (Hamilton Book Road, ON). Topic: "Landscape Parables of the Bible". For ages 12 and over. Registration: Sis. Marie Baines 506- 433-5254 sussexspringcamp@live.ca

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.rrn.ocn@att.net.

4-5 NY Fraternal at the Ozone Park Ecclesial Hall. Bro. Mark Vincent: "The Books of Wisdom". Contact Bro. Ben Drepaal at yerubbaal@yahoo.com

10-12 New York Sister's Retreat. Split Rock Resort and Golf Club, PA. Speaker Sis. Letisha Blair-Lamour (Mt. Pleasant, Jamaica). Topic "Being Born of the Spirit" on Christian Living. Cost of weekend is \$286.50 per person. Please make checks payable to "NY Metropolitan Sisters' Retreat". Mail to Sis. Averil Ferguson, 814A Tilden Street#5B, Bronx, New York, 10467. For information, contact Sis Averil Ferguson 718-881-8705 or averilpsm23@juno.com

19-25 California Christadelphian Kids Camp for ages 9-16. Ojai, CA. Speakers Bro. Ken Styles and Bro. David Wisniewski on 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

30-July 5 Calaveras Family Bible Camp Calaveras Big Trees State Park, Arnold, CA. Bro. Jason Hensley on the topic "The One Who Made Israel to Sin". For more information, contact Bro. Brian McDonald at 626-335-3787 or bmcDonald@mcdonald-printing.com

JULY 2011

1-4 North Battleford, SK Shekinah Study Weekend. Bro. Dev Ramcharan will be speaking on the First Epistle of John. Contact Sis. Laura Jackson at t.jackson@sasktel.net.

2-10 Mid-Atlantic 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, New Zealand): "Knowing our Lord, Jesus Christ, His Name and 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>

9-16 Fifth annual Manitoulin Family Bible Camp on Manitoulin Island. The speakers are Bro. Neville Clark (Adelaide, AUS): "Moses — The Man of God" and Bro. Ryan Mutter (Baltimore, MD): "Walk Worthy of the Calling with which You are Called." Contact www.manitoulinfamilycamp.com or Bro. Rick Sales ersales@xplornet.com or 519-925-6847

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 North, 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

23-30 Christadelphian Bible Camp, Manitoulin Island. Theme is "Looking unto Jesus". Speakers will be Bro. Matt Norton (Lismore, NSW, AUS): "Impressions of Christ" and Bro. Mark O'Grady (Tawa, NZ): "Joseph — God did send me before you to preserve life". More details on website www.christadelphianbiblecamp.ca. For registration, contact Bro. Alex Browning at jabrowning@rogers.com or phone 1-416-284-0290

23-31 Midwest Bible School. Hanover College, Hanover, IN. Speakers and their topics are Bro. Ed Binch (Avon, IN): "Jehoshaphat: Being Saved by God's Grace"; Bro. Jim Styles (Simi Hills, CA): "The Angels of God"; Bro. Roger Lewis (Christchurch North, N.Z.): "The Current Work and Role of Christ". Contact Bro. Mike Livermore, 24970 Woodridge Drive, Apt. 108, Farmington Hills, MI 48335, 248-462-5740, mike.live@gmail.com or visit www.midwestbibleschool.com

31 - Aug 6 CBMA Old fashioned Bible Campaign in Guadalajara, Mexico. Many preaching activities, fellowship, devotionals/hymn sings, a Bible School class each night etc. Learn a little Spanish during the week and meet and work with your brethren in a growing Hispanic ecclesia. No Spanish required. Ages 18 and up in this preaching effort. Contact Bro. David Lloyd at 818-352-6486 or davidrlloyd@earthlink.net

31- Aug 6 Rogue River Bible School. Speakers are Bro. Frank Abel (Hamilton Book Road, ON): "Waiting for the Lord", Bro. Graeme Osborn (Vernon Okanagan, BC): "Weapons of our Warfare" and Bro. Steven Hornhardt (Salisbury, Adelaide): "Come & See — Witnessing for Christ". rogueriverbibleschool@gmail.com or Bro. Rob Posey at 541-474-6963

AUGUST 2011

20-26 Winfield Bible School Theme: "That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in You." Bro. Stan Isbell (Houston North, TX): "The House of Prayer for All Nations"; Bro. Shane Kirkwood (Australia): "Philippians: Shine as Lights"; Bro. Jim Styles (Simi Hills, CA): "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 September 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 Zechariah". Contact information www.vibiblecamp.com.

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SEPTEMBER 2011

3 Moorestown, NJ Labor Day Study Day. Bro. Richard Palmer (UK): "Reflections on Science and the Bible". Contact Dan Langston for more information; dklangston@gmail.com

11-16 Adult Study Week, Daily Interactive Bible Study on "The Life of David", at Wildwood Manor, Ballinafad, ON. For information about the workbook, or to register please contact Bro. Jack and Sis. Shirley Robinson jrobins@worldchat.com 519-448-1696 or Bro. Peter and Sis. Margaret Stonell thestonells@hotmail.com 905-627-9428

OCTOBER 2011

8 Brantford, ON Thanksgiving gathering. Copetown Community Centre. Speaker will be Bro. Roger Long (Coventry, UK)

8-9 Echo Lake, NJ Fall study weekend. Theme is "Making use of the sense we are born with" and our speaker is Bro. John Parry (UK).

21-23 Women At The Well Retreat. Miracle Hot Springs Resort in Palm Desert. Sis. Nancy Brinkerhoff (Denver, CO) will be delivering the classes on "Hannah's Prayer." To register please contact Sis. Bonnie Sommerville kenandbonnie@simihills.org or send a non-refundable \$50 check made out to the **Simi Hills Ecclesia** to Sis. Bonnie Sommerville, 19111 Kinzie St., Northridge, CA 91324. Phone: (818) 341-3932.

NOVEMBER 2011

12-13 Sarasota, Largo and Orlando, FL Study weekend. Bro. Phil Prater (Paris Ave., OH) will lead a study in "The Seven Abominations" based on Proverbs 6:16-19. Contact Bro. James Wilkinson at 239-849-3301 jameslwilkinson@hotmail.com

DECEMBER 2011

24-30 Third Ontario Winter Bible School at the Best Western Highland Inn, Midland, ON, Canada. Theme: "The Faith that Works by Love". Speakers and subjects: Bro. Carl Parry (Salisbury, Adelaide, AUS): "Jehoshaphat - The King who sought Yahweh with all his heart" (adults) and "The Spirit of the Law" (teens); Bro. Stephen Whitehouse (Rugby, UK): "The Message of Nehemiah: Faith in the Face of Adversity" (adults) and "Building on the Walls with Nehemiah" (teens); Bro. Jay Mayock, (Hamilton Book Rd, ON): "Loving our Neighbour: A Study of the Second Great Commandment" (adults) and "Reasons to Believe" (teens). Contact Sis. Barbara or Bro. Ron Kidd at Apt.510, 110 Belmont Drive, London, ON, Canada N6J 4W3 (Tel: 519-690-0391; e-mail: rbkidd@rogers.com; or visit our website: www.ontariowinterbibleschool.com