

Clifton News

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News



On the 7th of February we had the joy of baptizing Peter Trump and receiving him into fellowship at Clifton Hall. Peter has always been keen in serving the Lord since his salvation and we value prayer for him that he may be used for the Lord's glory in the days to come. The baptism was fairly well attended with a number of the Sunday school children present.



Easter Holiday Bible Club

6 - 9 April

10 am - 12 pm

Prize giving Friday 9th at 7 pm

**REPORT OF THE LORD'S WORK IN
BURMA & INDONESIA**

BY KURIAN KURIAN (SINGAPORE)

22ND APRIL AT 7:45 PM

Advance notice of

Special Gospel Meetings

5th - 9th & 12th - 16th

September 2010

**Conducted by Richard Catchpole & Nitish Patel
(using prophetic chart)**

Meetings

The Week at Clifton

Lord's Day

Breaking of Bread	11 a.m.
Sunday School	3 p.m.
Gospel Meeting	6:30 p.m.

Tuesday

Bible Reading (First Tuesday of the month only) 8 p.m.

Wednesday Seekers Club (Term time only for under 11s) 6 p.m.

Thursday Prayer and Ministry 7:45 p.m.

Friday C3 Club (Term time only for 11+) 7:30 p.m.

Sunday Evening Gospel Meeting

April

4	Nitish Patel (Family Service)
11	Archie Carew
18	Gareth Roderick
25	Kevin Oh

May

2	Alf Taylor (Family Service)
9	Mike Surry
16	Roy Aitkin
23	Len Bass
30	Peter Hamm

June

6	Richard Catchpole (Family Service)
13	Glyn Davies
20	Mark Beardall
27	Gareth Roderick

Tuesday Bible Reading

Studying the book of Proverbs

6th April	Proverbs 16	Local brother
4th May	Proverbs 16	Local brother
1st June	Proverbs 17	Glyn Davies

Thursday Prayer & Ministry

April

1	Colin Roberts
8	Colin Roberts
15	Philip Briercliffe
22	Kurien Kurian (Report of Burma & Indonesia)
29	Philip Briercliffe

May

6	Nitish Patel
13	John Aston
20	Kevin Oh
27	Norman Gibbons

June

3	Nitish Patel
10	Richard Catchpole
17	Andrew Dawkins
24	Richard Catchpole

Questions

Answered by Richard Catchpole

Where do infants who die stand in relation to their eternal destiny?

We might well wish that in regard to such a question there was a verse in Scripture to which we could turn for a clear and succinct answer but, as with many other questions that can arise in believers minds, such verses are not always to be found. In such a case we must search the Scriptures for a solution and consider the query in light of basic principles indicated in God's Word. However we must acknowledge that after the study of God's Word not a few believers have come to different conclusions regarding this issue, some asserting that such infants are eternally lost while others adopt the very opposite view. In light of such radically different conclusions we might feel that all we can do is to acknowledge the limitation of our knowledge and by faith confess with Abraham, Genesis 18.25 'Shall not the Judge of all the earth, do right?' But is that all we can say?

The Scriptures leaves us in no doubt that infants, like all men, are sinners. Indeed the fact of death is testimony to that, see Romans 5.12. David in Psalm 51.5 confessed 'Behold I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me'. In saying that David was certainly not blaming his mother for his sin, it is a psalm in which he confesses his own sin, but in so doing he acknowledged that he had not only done sinful things v.3 but also from the very moment of his conception he was a sinner in heart and nature. While man was created in the image and likeness of God Genesis 1.26 following the Fall when Adam begat children the Scripture significantly says, 'Adam ...begat a son in his own likeness' Genesis 5.3. In consequence of the Fall all born by natural generation have inherited from Adam a sinful

nature, with a propensity towards evil. But while all are thus seen to be sinners it is evident that God nevertheless makes a distinction between those who have attained to a condition of responsibility before Him and those who have not. In Deuteronomy 1.39 Moses recalling Israel's failure to enter into the land of Canaan for fear of the nations dwelling there says, 'Moreover your little ones which ye said should be a prey and your children. Which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it'. A generation fell in the wilderness under divine judgement but the little ones who had not attained what we have termed a condition of responsibility before God would be preserved to enter into the Promised Land, cf. Jonah 4.11.

But while God clearly makes that distinction still we are left with the question 'Where do infants who die stand in relation to their eternal destiny'? Two similar but contrasting statements made by the Lord Jesus seem to give help regarding that, the first in Matthew 18.11 the second in Luke 19.10. In the first the Lord Jesus 'called a little child unto him' saying, 'Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of God' vv.2-3. In v.10 the Lord says, 'Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones' three reasons are then given (a) 'for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my father which is in heaven' v.10; (b) 'For the Son of Man is come to save that which was lost' v.11; 'it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish v.14. We might observe that in Acts 12.15 the word 'angel' is used in connection with the spirit of Peter whom the believers assumed had been slain by Herod, is the Lord speaking in v.10 of the spirits of those who have died in infancy? Notice carefully that v.11 says, 'For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost'. In Luke 19.10 the Lord is speaking in connection with Zacchaeus and says, 'For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost'. In the verse from Matthew 18 the Lord omits the words 'to seek and', why when evidently it was necessary to add them when speaking to Zacchaeus? The answer is surely that a child has not yet learnt the difference between right and wrong so the Lord simply says, 'The Son of Man is come to SAVE that which is lost'. But when He spoke with

regard to a responsible adult the language is 'The Son of Man is come to SEEK and to SAVE that which is lost'.

Added to the above we should remember that those who appear at the Great White Throne, ultimately to be cast into the Lake of Fire, will be judged according to their works and not simply because they have a sinful nature, something that of themselves they were not responsible for, Revelation 20.11-15. The Lord was asked in John 6.28 'What shall we do that we might work the works of God'? The Lord answered 'This is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent'. Later in John 8.24 He said, 'Ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins'. Verses that indicate the 'supreme' work that will bring men into eternal judgement is unbelief cf. John 3.36 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life: but the wrath of God abideth on him'.

The late W. Fraser Naismith answering this same question in the 'Believers Question Box' of the Believers Magazine July 1970 concluded with these words "It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish. If those who are of tender years are called away from this scene then we can rightly adduce that such will never perish: and since that is so they must find a place in the company of the Lord and the society of the redeemed throughout eternity'.

Bible Teaching

Thoughts about the book of Esther (part 4)

Charles E. Wigg (Tasmania)

Mordecai Exalted

The King had taken his ring from the lifeless hand of the Jews' enemy. He removed from him all the insignias of office, and gave them to Mordecai. The house of Haman and his sons were also given over to Mordecai to execute justice and judgment upon them.

However the Law of the Medes and the Persians could not be altered, and the letters authorizing the destruction of the nation had gone out to all 127 provinces. These letters were sealed with the King's ring, and could not be withdrawn. They refused the Jews the right to defend themselves, and handed their possessions to their murderers.

So Esther requested that other letters be sent, authorizing the Jews to stand up and fight for their survival. These were granted by the King, and this gave the Jews almost nine months to prepare for the great day of conflict. This was to their advantage, because up to this point of time, they had been engaged in business, and were not a war-like people at all.



A lesson for us

There is a lesson here for all believers. We too are not to be aggressive, or to be continually verbally attacking people. However we are told in the New Testament that the "Sword" of the Spirit is the word of God. It is rather sad

that in these days when materialism is so prominent, so many of God's people have made materialism their priority. They have neglected the reading of the word of God. They do not know how to wield the sword of the Spirit. We need to wake up, and to arm ourselves with that sword. Thus the Jews now had time to arm themselves, and to learn how to use those swords. It also had the effect of causing the Jews to come together. We too need to judge and to forsake those petty things that have brought in such division amongst us. As we return to the word of God, as we get a grip on it, and learn to apply it; the result will be unity, based on holiness of life.

The Good News Spreads

The spreading of the good news made the people of God to rejoice. They had light, gladness, joy and honour. They gathered together for feasting, and enjoyment. It would be wonderful to see this happen again amongst the Assemblies in Western countries. Once it was the custom for believers to come together for fellowship, and for conferences, when the word of God would be ministered with power, and for profit. Such conferences are now largely extinct, because the believers are more taken up with material things. They are more interested in relaxation, sport and entertainment.

Mordecai, the one that had humbled himself was now exalted. He wore royal apparel and a crown of gold upon his head. For the moment he rises to be a type of Christ. Because, when Christ is exalted and given His rightful place then the saints rejoice. See Phil. 2:5-11.

When the fateful day came, the Jews stood together as one to face and to destroy those that hated them. They were not interested in material gain, because though they were permitted to do so, by the King's command, yet it says three times that "On the prey they laid not their hand". The Lord Jesus told us that we are not to marvel if the world hates us. It hated Him before it hated us. We should not expect any different treatment than what He received.

This singular victory is still celebrated by the Jews today. The feast of Purim is held each year to commemorate it. It must give them great hope in their present situation, when it seems that most of the world is against them.

Our Feast of Remembrance

Each Lord's Day, (the first day of the week) it is the practice of believers all over the world to gather together, to remember the Lord Jesus, and the great victory that He has won for us at the place called 'Golgotha'. The victory of Christ is the real ground for the rejoicing of believers all over the world.

Those Jews not only had a day of feasting, fellowship and a good day, but they also sent gifts or portions to the poor. (Those for whom nothing was prepared. J.N.D trans.) May the Lord help us also, to share with others the riches with which He has endowed us! The truths that He has revealed to us are not just for us, but are the property of the whole Church.

Thus the scene closes with the King supreme seated on his throne, and Mordecai the one that had brought him great gain, given his rightful place of prominence. He was truly great amongst the Jews, accepted by the multitude of his brethren, and speaking peace to all his seed.

Here we see a dim picture of the wonder of the Millennial reign of Christ. God will be glorified, and will again find His good pleasure in men. Christ will be exalted and crowned as the King of the universe. His seed (the Church), will experience the wonder of His peace. Israel, (His brethren), will then accept Him as their Messiah, and the Gentile nations will also be wonderfully blessed. What a glorious prospect we have in view? But before that wonderful day, Israel must pass through the Great Tribulation, (the day of Jacob's trouble).

These are but a few of the important lessons that we believers in Christ can learn from this remarkable book of Esther. May God's holy name be glorified!

... Concluded ...

Good News

The Eruption of Mount Pelée

At the beginning of the 20th century, the French island of Martinique was a prosperous colony in the Caribbean and was known as the Paris of the West Indies. The capital St. Pierre had a population of some 30,000 and lay at the foot of Mount Pelée, an old dormant volcano. During 1902, boiling water and steam were seen erupting from the crater and on April 25th, a scientific expedition was sent up to investigate. The island's newspaper, "Les Colonies" published the findings and told the inhabitants that there was no reason to be afraid.

However, some individuals began to get worried but were mocked by various editorials of the newspaper.

Day by day, life became unbearable on the island. A hideous odour of sulphur filled the air and birds dropped out of the air asphyxiated by the ash and sulphur.



By May 3rd businessmen and prudent individuals moved to the Southern part of the Island. However, the newspaper continued to mock, and on May 7th it published an interview with Professor M. Landes which read, "Mont Pelee presents no more danger to the inhabitants of St. Pierre than does Vesuvius to those of Naples." The Newspaper added "We confess we cannot understand this panic. Where could one be better off than in St. Pierre?"

On the morning of May 8th, at 7:52 AM exactly, the Volcano erupted and exploded. There was no warning as the side of the mountain ripped out. Super heated steam at a temperature of 1000 degrees Centigrade blasted out at hurricane speed obliterating the whole town and incinerating 30,000 people. Only two men survived the destruction, a prisoner, who was in the town dungeon and a cobbler who hid in his cellar.

How like many in the world today who treat God like an extinct volcano. They consider that science had proven God to be a myth and that any thought of judgement to come is all medieval nonsense. Many now openly mock at the Bible, and continue in their sinful ways, all the while neglecting the salvation of their souls.

Yet God in His love continues with much long suffering to send forth preachers of the gospel to tell men of His love for them.

The Bible teaches that there is a "Judgment to come" (Acts 24:25) but it also tells us the good news that Jesus, God's beloved Son, died for our sins at Calvary's cross. He died a sacrifice and shed His holy and sinless blood that we might be saved from the wrath to come (Romans 5:9; I Thessalonians 1:10).

We need to turn from our sin and ask Him to save us. He is alive today and a living Saviour but He will be returning to be Judge. Reader, how will you meet Him, as Saviour or Judge?

Report of visit to Sri Lanka by Nitish Patel

19 - 29 March 2009

This was my second visit to Sri Lanka (Ceylon). After a weekend in Columbo the capital with meetings at Bethesda Gospel Hall, we headed north into the former war zone.

We visited the city of Vavuniya with ministry meetings held at the gospel hall and gospel meetings in two villages.

Going through Kilinochi the former capital of the Tigers terrorist group we saw the city marked on the map but there was no city to be seen passing through. The scene was like the devastation of Nagasaki Japan after the Americans dropped a nuclear bomb on it.

We headed to the Jaffna peninsula crossing the famous Elephant Pass, the scene of several bloody battles between the now defeated Tamil Tigers and the government. The city of Jaffna is returning slowly back to normality and the believers were very encouraged by visitors after so many years of isolation.

The authorities were not allowing visitors with a foreign passport into the area but we were let through for when the Lord opens a door no man can shut it. I was told that I was the first assembly missionary from the West to visit in 50 years. During the last thirty years of civil war no one could visit. It was an emotional to see first hand the suffering the Tamil believers have gone through. I was introduced to a young man with shrapnel buried in his brain from an artillery shell. His mother was wounded with a bullet in the leg. There were those whose loved ones were kidnapped by paramilitaries and never seen again. I met a young brother named Antony who survived the 2004 Tsunami but was badly wounded and lost his memory. He lost his mother, two sisters and a brother. He told us the Lord spared him and he wanted to go full time preaching the gospel in Mullativu his home town. Despite all this suffering, the Lord has saved many Hindus and it was so encouraging to visit a number of villages to see the interest in the gospel.

Back to Columbo, we spoke to the many children to come to the hall for the young people's meetings. This work is growing and bringing glory to the Lord.



Baptism at Bethesda Gospel Hall



Antony who survived the tsunami



Gospel meeting in village near Jaffna



Listening carefully to the Word



Young people at Bethesda Colombo



Jaffna city