

Clifton News

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www.cliftongospelhall.com



Sunday school outing to Littlehampton (July)



Gospel campaign (September)

News

Around 4000 invitations were distributed in the area for this year's gospel campaign. The gospel was preached using a large colour chart to show God's plan for the ages. We are grateful for the support shown by various assemblies especially the believers from Lewisham and Mitcham.

Though in this day and age response is poor, we did see a number of unbelievers come who responded to the leaflet or were brought along. One man showed much interest and came most nights. We are praying for his salvation.

We look back over the past year and raise our "Ebenezer" and say like Samuel, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us" (1 Samuel 7:12)

Meetings during Christmas

Carol Service

Sunday 19th December at 6:30 pm

Followed by tea and mince pies

Christmas Day

at 10:30 am

Watch Night Gospel Meeting

Friday 31st at 11 pm

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

October

3	Graham Cole (Family Service)
10	Roy Aitkin
17	Local brother
24	Philip Briercliff
31	Raymond Reed

November

7	Graham Cole (Family Service)
14	Ferranti Wong
21	Local brother
28	Local brother

December

- 5 Nitish Patel (Family Service)
- 12 Local brother
- 19 Carol service
- 26 No meeting

Tuesday Bible Reading

Studying the book of Proverbs

- 5 October Proverbs 16
- 2 November Proverbs 16
- 7 December Proverbs 17

Thursday Prayer & Ministry

October

- 7 Colin Roberts
- 14 Kevin Oh
- 21 Kevin Oh
- 28 Craig Spence

November

- 4 Ian Roberts
- 11 Ian Roberts
- 18 Fred Epps
- 25 Fred Epps

December

- 2 Nitish Patel
- 9 Nitish Patel
- 16 Nitish Patel
- 23 Martin Baker – Report meeting
- 30 Richard Catchpole

Questions

Answered by Richard Catchpole

Where will the Marriage Supper of the Lamb take place, in heaven or on earth?

The marriage relationship was instituted by God, as recorded in Genesis 2.22-24, and referred to by the Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 19.4-6. The apostle Paul refers to Gen.2.24 as he describes the relationship of the church to Christ, Ephesians 5.31, that relationship being developed by the apostle as setting the pattern for New Testament marriage, Ephesians 5.22-33.

The 'marriage supper of the Lamb' is mentioned in Revelation 19. At verse 7 reference is made to the 'marriage of the Lamb' then in verse 9 we read 'Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb'. Broadly speaking the chapter divides into three sections verses 1-10 focus on events in heaven, while verses 17-21 concern events on earth, and in between we have the manifestation of the Lord from Heaven, His revelation in glory and power. From that basic division of the chapter many commentators have assumed the marriage supper will take place in heaven, but that leaves open questions regarding those 'called' to the marriage supper, 'Who are they' and 'How do they come to be present on that occasion? In considering the initial question it is necessary to distinguish between the 'marriage' and 'the marriage supper' and to view the two things against the background of a traditional Near Eastern marriage.

The marriage of the Lamb is the time when the Lord will present the Church to Himself 'a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing ... holy and without blemish' as recorded in Ephesians 5.27, something that will take place in heaven. In the order of prophetic events it is evident this presentation takes place after The Judgement Seat of Christ.

In Revelation 19 following the reference to the marriage of the lamb John says 'his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints'. The word 'righteousness' is not a reference to the 'imputed righteousness' spoken of in Romans 4.11, 22-24, but to 'righteousness deeds' or works. J.N. Darby in his New Translation reads 'righteousnesses of the saints' while others have 'righteous acts', cf. Romans 6.13, 19; 2 Corinthians 9.10; Philippians 1.11; Titus 2.12; 1 Peter 2.24. These works have been assessed at the Judgement Seat of Christ, rewards have been given, and in symbol the bride is seen 'arrayed' and having 'made herself ready'. J. Allen succinctly says 'The preparation of this glorious bridal garment has involved every member of the church, from Pentecost to the rapture. It is the preparation of these years that is recognised in the emphasis on her personal action 'made herself ready', the robe she wears is the result of her own actions on earth which, as other Scriptures show, are the result of the operations of divine grace ⁽¹⁾'.

While the 'marriage' relates to the time when Christ presents the Church to Himself, the 'marriage supper' concerns the subsequent celebration. A number of authorities assert that an Eastern marriage was in three stages,

First the betrothal period embracing the selection of the bride and the paying of a dowry, an example of this stage is in Matthew 1.18.

Secondly there was the actual marriage, the presentation of the bride to the groom, as suggested in Eph. 5.27.

The third stage was the celebration, the bride was taken by the bridegroom to the home they were to share together and there the celebration took place, festivities that could continue for a number of days, an example of which is in John 2.1-11.

In determining when the 'marriage supper' takes place we need, as suggested, to give attention to the identity of those 'called'. A pointer as to who they are is found in the words of John the Baptist, who in describing his relationship to the Lord Jesus took up the illustration of a 'bridegroom'

and 'the friend of a bridegroom' identifying himself as akin to the latter, equally the teaching of the Saviour helps to identify those 'called' as tribulation saints, cf. Matt. 22.1-13; 25.1-13; Luke 12.35-37. We conclude that the guests who are invited embrace Old Testament saints and tribulation saints. Since these saints are not raised until the commencement of the millennial period, Revelation 11.18; 20.4, 6, it seems evident that the marriage supper of the Lamb takes place on earth and not in heaven. It has been already observed that the celebration of a traditional eastern wedding could last a number of days, and some have suggested that the marriage supper 'is parabolic of the entire millennial age' ⁽²⁾.

(1) 'Revelation' J. Allen – 'What the Bible teaches'.

(2) 'Things to come' J.D. Pentecost – 'A study in Bible Eschatology'.

Bible Teaching

A SONG OF THE BELOVED (Part 1)

Psalm 45

by Charles Wigg (Tasmania)

Psalm 45 in its heading is said to be "A song of loves", or the Beloved. It is one of the most beautiful, poetic descriptions of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the Old Testament. It is the desire of the writer, that as we behold, "As in a glass", (or mirror), the glory of the Lord, we may come to love Him more, and be transformed into His image. (2 Cor. 3:18).

The Psalmist begins by describing the inward joy and response that filled his heart, and found its expression in the beautiful composition that follows. It is possible that David was thinking of Solomon, his own son, and Jehovah's beloved. However the Holy Spirit who inspired David to write

these words, was thinking of the Greater than Solomon, great David's greater Son.

How precious it would be, if our hearts like that of David were constantly inditing, welling forth, with good matter. The occupation of our thoughts and affections with the Person of Christ will produce such a state.

Thou art fairer than the children of men:

How true is this statement! There is a personal beauty that belongs to Jesus Christ that can be seen in no other. He is absolutely unique; there is not one man in the history of this world, who can compare with Him. Many have appeared on the stage of time, some with beautiful characteristics, but all pales into insignificance when compared with our blessed Lord Jesus.

Grace is poured into thy lips:

This was true during the earthly life of our Lord Jesus; it is true of Him still. The very first time He preached in the synagogue at Nazareth, (where He was brought up), the eyes of all were fixed upon Him, and they marveled at the words of grace that were coming out of His mouth. Those lips still pour out words of grace to His beloved, but suffering and sometimes discouraged people.

He speaks to us through His word. He makes it to live to us; He applies it to our circumstances, whatever they may be. My dear suffering or discouraged brother or sister, listen to His sweet voice, as He draws near to you. He will pour the abundance of His grace into your troubled soul. Hear Him say to you now, "Lo I am with you", I will never leave you or forsake you"

The grace that poured from His lips, completely disarmed those sent to "take Him ", and they returned to those who sent them saying, "Never man spoke like this man!" (John. 7;46)

Therefore God hath blessed thee forever:

These are beautiful words, spoken of the Lord Jesus as man. Much that He said during His life on this earth is recorded, but all that He said is treasured up in the heart of God. The Hebrew word used here, is very

interesting, it is the word “Barak”, which means ‘to kneel’. It is the command given to the camel, to make it kneel so that the rider can alight. It is very beautiful to think that though the words of grace that came from the lips of the Lord Jesus brought comfort and blessing to others, (and they still do), yet now He is rewarded and blessed for all that He did and said. He is blessed forever; that is eternal blessing is His. He is blessed by God the Father. The One whose name person and nature He declared revealed and glorified here on the earth.

The mighty conqueror:

Verses three to five bring before us another aspect of His glory, an aspect that we do not often consider. He is told to gird His sword upon His thigh. Prophetically this passage refers to the coming day of judgment, when He will come with a great host of His angels, what Jude describes as “His holy myriads”, (Darby translation). Then He will put down and destroy all evil, prior to His coming in glory to set up His kingdom.

But it has a present application, the sword that He uses today is the ‘sword of the Spirit’ It does not inflict physical pain or suffering, but it does trouble the heart and the conscience. (Heb. 4:12-13) That sword also heals, and gives comfort to the heart and conscience of the one who responds to it.

It is the characteristic of human conquerors that they conquer by cruelty, inflicting physical and emotional suffering, and death upon those conquered. But the Lord Jesus conquers by kindness. He pursues those upon whom He sets His love, until like Saul of Tarsus, they fall under His sharp arrows of conviction, and overcome by the glory of His majesty, and by the power of His wondrous grace they cry, “Lord what wilt thou have me to do?”

Saul was warned by this Conqueror, “It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks”. How Paul knew it! Those pricks had been troubling his guilty conscience ever since he had seen the face of Stephen glow with heavenly light. Ever since he had listened to Stephens faithful address, as he spoke with a wisdom and spirit that they could not resist, or deny. Ever since he had as official witness beheld the brutal suffering meted out to him. Ever since he had heard that wonderful prayer, “Lord lay not this sin to their

charge". The 'pricks', continued to pierce his hardened heart. (The sharp arrows of conviction), every time he saw the suffering of those innocent believers who he caused to suffer. Hailing them to prison, compelling them to blaspheme. Until at the height of his mad career, he was struck down by that glorious light, outside the walls of Damascus city.

As he heard that voice that he was never to forget, calling into question what he was doing, asking for a reason. "Why dost thou persecute me?". There those sharp arrows really entered his heart. He was conquered. Thereafter he became the most loving and loyal servant of the King of Kings.

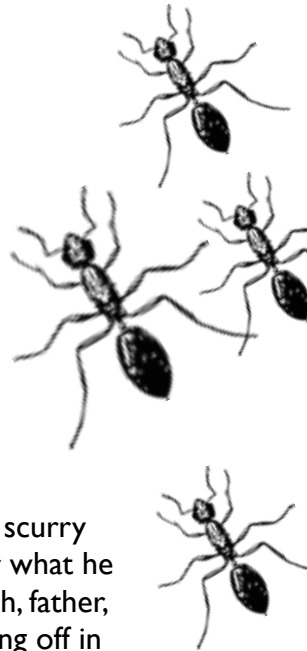
Still the mighty Conqueror rides prosperously. May His holy name be glorified!

to be continued....

Good News

Becoming an ant

Handley Bird, for many years a missionary in India, used to illustrate the incarnation of our Lord by the following story. A father, walking-stick in hand, took his young son for a walk. The lad asked his father to let him have the stick for a little while and, when his father acceded to his request, he began to use the stick to play golf with the stones and to swipe the shrubs growing by the roadside. By and by he poked it into a nest of ants which, hurt, disturbed and terrified, began to scurry off in all directions. The lad, tender-hearted, was sorry for what he had done and, looking up into his father's face, he said, 'Oh, father, I'm sorry these poor ants have been hurt and are scurrying off in



terror. I love them and am sorry for them Oh father, won't you tell them how sorry I am for them and how I love them.' The father, looking at his son with an amused smile, said, 'I am glad you have such a tender, compassionate heart toward these little creatures. I would gladly give them your message and tell them how you feel toward them, but I can't. In order to be able to do so, I should have to be born an ant and speak to them in their language, for they cannot understand our language.'

If we want to know what God is like, we need only to look at Jesus who is God's beloved Son and is called "the Word of God". Someone has described the meaning of this as, "God speaking in a language men can understand." He could say to Philip, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9)

The Bible tells us that the Lord Jesus became lower than an ant when He came into this world to reveal the love of God by paying the price of our sin on the cross. When upon the cross, surrounded by the mocking crowd, He could say, "But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people." (Psalm 22:6). The Lord came from heaven's glory to the cross of shame to save you. He rose again from the dead. Will you not come to Him now and trust Him as Saviour and Lord?

*Angelic hosts to men the mystery tell—
Th' Almighty deigns on earth with men to dwell
As Man, the virgin's son, Immanuel,
God here with us.*

*'His own received Him not;' Rejected, He
Sin's bonds to break and Satan's slaves to free,
Endures the curse and hangs upon a tree;
Christ died for us.*

*Rising, He conquers Death, the monster hoary,
Bids His redeemed proclaim on earth His story,
Enters and fills our hearts with hopes of glory;
Christ lives in us.*

*Formed in a virgin's womb, Eternal Son!
Thou becam'st dead, Thou true life-giving One!
Live now Thy life through lives Thy death has won—
Christ formed in us.*

*Soon shall the Savior to our longing eyes
Appear. The dead in Christ shall rise:
With them caught up, we'll meet Him in the skies—
Christ come for us.—A.N.*

(John 1. 14; 1 Tim. 3. 15; Gal. 2. 20)

Church History

William Knibb

Missionary to Jamaica

by Mark Beardall

William Knibb was not only a great preacher but he also played a great part in the abolition of slavery. In fact in 1988, on the 150th anniversary of the abolition of slavery he was posthumously awarded the Order of Merit by the Jamaican government.

On 7th September 1803 William

Knibb and his twin sister Anne were

born in Kettering, Northamptonshire. His parents Thomas and Mary, had eight children altogether, and William was the their third son. William's father Thomas was a tailor who had no interest in the things of God. He



was often drunk and was declared insolvent in 1810. His mother Mary was a teacher and a member of the Independent Church in Kettering.

William was educated at Kettering Grammar School. He was good at maths but otherwise he was not a particularly outstanding pupil. He was better known for his skill at playing marbles and for defending his friends in fights than for any academic achievements. William left school when he was twelve years old and started work as an apprentice for a local printer called J.G Fuller. J.G. Fuller was the son of Andrew Fuller, a Baptist pastor in Kettering and founder of the Baptist Missionary Society.

In 1816 J.G Fuller moved his business to Bristol. William and his older brother Thomas moved with the business. William and Thomas started to attend Broadmead Baptist Church in Bristol. After some time William began to teach in the Sunday school. Mr. Fuller was the head of the Sunday School. One day Mr. Fuller spoke to the children on Jeremiah 3:4, "Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father thou art the guide of my youth." William realised he needed the message as much as the children did. He was teaching children about the Saviour but he himself was not saved. He was overcome with a strong sense of shame and grief over his sins. He wrote of the experience, "On leaving the school I went alone and yielded to my feelings. I wept bitterly and prayed earnestly, more earnestly than I had ever prayed before. I turned the text itself into prayer and cried fervently to God, "My Father wilt thou from this time be the guide of my youth?" The Lord heard me and enabled me to give him my heart; and now it is my earnest desire to yield to his guidance as long as I live."

William was baptised at Berrymeads Baptist Church on 7th March 1822. He was given the verse, "Thou, therefore, endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." He soon started work for the Lord by witnessing to his family as well as teaching in the Sunday school. He also helped out in a mission hall connected to the Berrymeads church. In one year the attendance increased from twelve people to sixty people. He also went to the poorer parts of the city to preach the gospel in the street.

William's brother, Thomas Knibb was accepted by the Baptist Missionary Society to become a teacher in Jamaica. Thomas arrived in Jamaica in 1823 but died of fever three months later. William offered to replace his brother as schoolmaster and after a short period of training was commissioned to go to Jamaica. William married Mary Watkins on 5th October 1824 and sailed to Jamaica with her on 5th November 1824.

Knibb landed at Morant Bay, Jamaica on 12th February 1825 and was warmly received. He soon started to work as a schoolmaster in the Baptist Missionary School in Kingston. The school grew to over 200 children through the work of Knibb. He also started a Sunday school for adults and children.

When Knibb arrived in Jamaica, slavery was still legal. The slave trade had been abolished in 1807, through the work of William Wilberforce but this did not outlaw slavery itself. Knibb was disgusted with the way that masters treated their slaves. Slaves were flogged for the most minor of offences. They were also forced to work on treadmills and were flogged if they were not fast enough. William wrote a letter home



describing the conditions, "The cursed blast of slavery has, like a pestilence, withered almost every moral bloom. I know not how any person can feel a union with such a monster, such a child of hell. I feel a burning hatred against it and look upon it as one of the most odious monsters that ever disgraced the earth. The iron hand of oppression daily endeavours to keep the slaves in the ignorance to which it has reduced them.

After a short time in Kingston, Knibb move to Port Royal due to poor health. He later moved to Savannah-la-Mar in 1828. A slave called Sam Swiney was a deacon at the church in Savannah-la-Mar. Swiney organised

prayer meetings when Knibb was sick. The colonial magistrates heard of this and sentenced him to twenty lashes for preaching without a license. He was also sentenced to work the road for two weeks, despite there being three witnesses that could testify that he prayed but didn't preach. Knibb attended the flogging and also walked some of the way beside Swiney as he worked the road in chains, to show his support. He considered Swiney to be a persecuted Christian. Knibb was so horrified by this injustice, that he published an account of the event in one of the Jamaican newspapers. He also sent reports to England. As a result, a church in Camberwell bought Sam Swiney's freedom and the Baptist Missionary Society sent a letter to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, which was passed on to the Governor of Jamaica. On reading the report the Governor sacked the two magistrates who had given the sentence for gross abuse of power.

In 1830 Knibb became pastor of Falmouth Baptist Church, which had a congregation of 600 people. In December 1831 Sam Sharpe, a slave and Baptist deacon, mistakenly heard that slavery had been abolished, so he organised a strike in which slaves refused to work without wages. Sharpe only wanted a peaceful protest but others burned the cane fields. This event is known as the Christmas rebellion or the Baptist War. The army put down the rebellion. Knibb was arrested on suspicion of complicity. He was later released, as he had no knowledge about the rebellion. Sam Sharpe was hung at the gallows in 1832.

An Anglican clergyman called Bridges started a group called the Colonial Church Union. They set about to persecute all Christians who were not members of the Anglican Church. This union burned down a dozen Baptist Chapels, including Falmouth and forced missionaries to leave Jamaica. Knibb refused to go even though his life was at risk.

In 1832 Knibb was sent to England by the Baptist churches to plead their cause. He travelled throughout England and Scotland reporting on the work of the Gospel and the treatment of the slaves. He convinced the Baptist Missionary Society to officially speak out against slavery and also gained much support for his cause. In 1832 Knibb was summoned to

appear before committees from the Houses of Parliament who were investigating the state of the colonies. Knibb's evidence convinced the committees that slavery must be abolished.

On 28th of August 1833, a Bill was passed for the Abolition of Slavery in the Colonies. This law came into force on 1st August 1834. However, slavery was replaced by the apprenticeship where slaves were required to work a further six years for their masters before they would be completely free. The planters abused this scheme and treated the apprentices very badly. Through Knibb's campaigning the apprenticeship scheme was reduced from six years to four years. Parliament abolished the apprenticeship scheme on 1st August 1838. On 31 July 1838 Knibb threw some shackles and chains into a coffin and buried them. A sign was written above the grave saying, "Colonial slavery died 31 July 1838, Age 276 years." Knibb returned to Jamaica in 1834. He was warmly welcomed by the slaves. He also had secured funds to rebuild the chapels. Knibb also started a Free Village scheme, in which he bought large areas of land to build villages for free slaves. One of these villages is called Kettering after his birthplace. When the apprenticeship scheme had ended in 1838, many slaves who were before prevented from going to church were free to attend. The churches were full and many people were converted. One day Knibb wrote, "Today, I have baptised 75 persons and 1300 sat down to the Lord's Supper. It was one of the happiest days of my life. This was the beginning of the Jamaican Awakening. Knibb claimed that 22,000 people were baptised on their profession of faith, through the work of about twenty missionaries between the years of 1838-1845. The church at Falmouth had grown from 650 to 1280 members in the space of ten years. During that time Knibb had baptised 3000 people but he had sent away 2050 people to form six new churches. William Knibb was responsible for founding 35 churches, 24 missions and 16 schools.

Knibb died of yellow fever in Jamaica on 15th November 1845. About 8000 people attended his funeral

Visit to India - August 2010

Nitish & Ellen Patel

The highlight of this year's visit was to a tribal area close to the border of Gujarat where thousands have come to the Lord. There are many different tribes who live in remote inhospitable areas of India in jungles and mountains. They are generally called "Adivasis". Most are primitive and illiterate living in isolated communities from the rest of Indian society. We visited an area called Bandapada where a new assembly has been established recently.

We witnessed the baptism of 31 men and women (pictured) in a river. Baptisms in this area are only possible in the monsoon when the rivers are full of water. Back in their village we went to a large house where some 225 were gathered together. As the Lord's Supper was celebrated many were in tears and crying as they remembered what the Lord did for them on the cross. We found the believers to be very loving and hospitable and showed prompt obedience to the Word of God.

The monsoon rains were very heavy this year and some meetings could not be held but we were able to visit a number of assemblies for Bible teaching conferences where Christians gathered for a full day of teaching.

The radio ministry is going on well and we are told that there are around 70 regular listeners to the gospel radio program in one area of Gujarat called Rajkot. A Christian who lives there contacted the radio station to tell the brethren that he is making the program widely known in the surrounding villages.

Lord willing, when I visit India again in November we hope to have special meetings in that area.

The gospel work in the Borivili slum in Bombay continues to encourage. Vijay and Jyoti who were saved a couple of years ago have asked for baptism. We are praying that their Hindu family will not object.



Wednesday night gospel meeting in slum



Conference in new gospel hall in Nalasopara



Baptism of 31 tribal believers and meeting in Bandapada

