

Clifton News

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Market place in ancient Ephesus where Paul preached Christ & below the Celsus library in Ephesus (built 135 AD)



NEWS

We would like to wish all our readers a very happy new year.



“O sing unto the LORD a new song; for He hath done marvellous things.” (Psalm 98:1)

The **Carol Service** went well though smaller numbers were present than the previous year but we were glad to see 9 children and a few adults present to listen to the gospel.

This years late night **Watchnight gospel meeting** saw about 23 outsiders were present including children. Many new faces were seen we were pleased that the large banner outside the hall attracted some in. All listened attentively to the gospel message and some promised to come again. “And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God.” (Acts 16:25)

This year in the will of the Lord we shall be having another **Easter Holiday Club** from 14th - 17th April.

Pray for **Judith Catchpole** who will be undergoing major heart surgery on the 29th of January. Prayer is valued for a successful surgery and a quick return to health and strength.

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MEETINGS

THE WEEK AT CLIFTON

Lord's Day

Breaking of Bread 11.00 am

Family Service 4:00 pm

Monday

Prayer & Ministry 7:45 pm

Tuesday

First Tuesday of month - Bible Reading 8.00 pm

(Please note that from April onwards, the Bible readings will be held on the first Mondays of the month at 7:45 pm)

Wednesday

Seekers Club 6:30 pm (Term time only for under 10s)

Friday

Friday Club (Term time only for 10+) 7:30 pm

SUNDAY AFTERNOON FAMILY SERVICE

January

5 Alastair Rodger

12 Nitish Patel

19 Richard Catchpole

26 Phil Briercliffe

February

2 Alastair Rodger

9 Norman Gibbons

16 Richard Catchpole

23 John Aston

March

- 2 Norman Gibbons
- 9 Nathan Taylor
- 16 Richard Catchpole
- 23 Nitish Patel
- 30 Nitish Patel

MONDAY PRAYER & MINISTRY

January

- 6 Bible Reading (Romans 8:1-11)
- 13 Nitish Patel
- 20 Archie Carew
- 27 Archie Carew

February

- 3 Philip Briercliffe
- 10 Jonathan Black
- 17 Jonathan Black
- 24 Alastair Rodger

March

- 3 Timothy Miller
- 10 Timothy Miller
- 17 Alastair Rodger Ezra 1
- 24 Norman Gibbons Ezra 2
- 31 Richard Catchpole Ezra 3

TUESDAY BIBLE READING

- February Romans 8:12-17
- March Romans 8:18-30

QUESTION BOX



At the Friday Club, we have a question box into which the young people put questions they want answered. We re-print here the answers from the Bible we have given them.

Why does God allow the devil to persuade you to sin?

As we start, it's it would be good to have a basic definition of sin. Sin is disobeying God through our thoughts, words or actions. Romans 3:23 tells us that all of us are sinners.

But what is it that leads all of us to sin? What causes us to disobey God.

We all have a sinful nature. King David could write: Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. - Psalm 51:5

The prophet Jeremiah could write: The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it? – Jeremiah 17:9
Can Satan work upon this sinful nature of ours and tempt us to sin? – Yes (1 Chronicles 21:1, 1 Corinthians 7:5)

So does that make us blameless for our sinful actions if the devil or someone else has tempted us? – No, James tells us: Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. 14 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. 15 Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death. – James 1:13-15

The saying goes “It takes two to tango” and so it is with temptation. If the devil tempts us to sin, it is our own sinful desires that he is luring and enticing us with. We're still to blame for our sin.

So then, having considered what it is that causes us to sin, why does God allow the devil to tempt us in this way? Is God powerless to stop Satan? No, Satan 's activity is limited by God and we know that ultimately he will be thrown into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:10)

Let's look at the first time the devil tempted mankind to sin. He tempted Eve in the garden to eat of the fruit of the tree that she and Adam has been forbidden to eat from. She ate and Adam ate with here, causing the fall of mankind and eventually resulting in all of us, as descendants of Adam, being born with a sinful nature. Why did God allow mankind to fall?

In everything that happens, God has a purpose. He is the creator of all things and sovereign over all things, nothing is outside His control and plan. For instance, the fall of mankind has allowed us to see and appreciate more of God and His attributes. If there was no sin, we would not be able to appreciate God's mercy when we don't receive the condemnation we fully deserve. If there was no sin we would all be innocent and have not His mercy.

The fall of mankind also meant that God was able to demonstrate His love and grace, He did this by sending the Lord Jesus Christ to be our Saviour (Romans 5:8). While in the wilderness, Satan tempted the Lord Jesus to sin (Matthew 4:1-11). But unlike us there was no sinful nature in Him that would respond to temptation. He is able to sympathise with us as our great high priest and we may draw near in our time of need to receive mercy and find grace to help (Hebrews 4:14-16).

As we conclude, we see that God has a purpose in allowing the devil to tempt us, but we won't necessarily appreciate what that purpose was until much later on. But in the middle of temptation we can look and see that the Lord Jesus, our sinless Saviour, is also now our great high priest who we can draw near to for mercy and grace.

Alastair Rodger

BIBLE TEACHING

Elisha Prophet of Water (Part 3)

By the late Charles Wigg (Tasmania)



THE SONS OF THE PROPHETS

Different Bible teachers regard these men differently. Many of these regard them as students who were attending a kind of Bible School, where they were training to be prophets. I consider that this view is not supported by the context. The fact that they are called 'the sons of the prophets,' seems to indicate that they were the sons of those prophets that were slain by the wicked Jezebel.

However it seems that they were not prophets themselves, but were living on their father's reputation. They were the children of faithful men, but were not renowned for their discernment, or (what would

be called today), spirituality. It seems that they had knowledge but not discernment. Here they were living at Gilgal, & knew that Elijah was about to be taken away, but it did not affect them in the least.

They seemed to pride themselves in their knowledge, and almost taunted Elisha with that knowledge. But though Elisha knew what they were boasting in, yet it was breaking his heart. He roughly told them to be silent. Elijah was his master, but not theirs, and the thought of losing him brought great grief to his heart.

BETHEL

Bethel was the next stage in that final journey, so we must learn its significance. Its name means 'The house of God'. If we would serve God, then we too must learn the importance of the House of God, in all our labours. For us the 'House of God' is the local Church, or Assembly. Not the building, but the people that gather to the Lord's name there (1Tim. 3:15, Heb. 3:6). It forms the centre of all God's activities today. We learn this from its mentions in Genesis. It was the highest point of Abraham's pilgrimage in the land that God gave to his descendants. When he left that place, it was only to go down.

His foray into Egypt was an example. He got into trouble there, and when restored, found the way difficult, it was upward all the way, until he reached Bethel again. There Lot separated from him, and after that God told him to look northward, southward, eastward and westward, promising to give all the land that he saw to him and his seed forever.

This means that Bethel was the very centre of God's thoughts and plans for Abraham (Gen. 13:14-17). He also said something similar to Jacob when he was at that same place (Gen. 28:12-17), which compels us to the same conclusion. The place where Jacob lay was Bethel, the place of contact between earth and heaven. A dreadful place, a place of holiness, and where God communicates with His servants. It was from that position that Jacob was to spread abroad to the west the east, and to the north and the south (verse 14).

Thus the true servant of God is to learn the importance of the local Church the house of God. They are to make it the priority centre of all their activities. The sons of the prophets were there also, and brought the same grief to Elisha's heart.

JERICHO

Though Bethel was such a wonderful and important place in the plan of God, yet there were further tests to be undertaken. Once more Elijah tested his successor's determination. He asked him to stay at that place, though God had sent him to Jericho. However also, once more Elisha manifested the same determination, as previously, he would let nothing separate him from his master.

Jericho represents the world. Not in its sordid, or presumptuous character, not in its religious orthodoxy, and hypocrisy. But the more pleasing aspects, the refined aspects, of the world. The elders later said of Jericho, that the situation of the city was pleasant. Yet it was Jericho that shut up and barred, stood like a sentry, to defy the children of Israel, and forbid them entrance into the inheritance that God had given them. It represents the world in its more cunning aspects. We would reject the world in its more sordid and evil aspects, but the Jericho aspect is more readily accepted.

Thus the question is often asked, 'why, what harm is there in it?' It seems to be of particular danger to young people, because in passing the sentence of judgment Joshua warned that the person who rose up to rebuild Jericho, would sacrifice the lives of his sons, Josh. 6:26. This actually happened in the days of Ahab, when Hiel the Bethelite built Jericho. When he laid its foundation his eldest son died, and when he set up its gates, his youngest son died. This is a solemn warning to us all. The servant of God must have a judgment of the world in all of its aspects.

Its stout walls were brought down by faith and simple obedience to the word of God, though what He commanded seemed so foolish.

Heb. 11:30. John asks the question, Who is it that overcomes the world? But then gives the answer, "He that believeth". We have already seen that Elisha was a man of faith, and when challenged by his master to remain at Jericho, to settle down there and to enjoy its pleasures, he was equal to the test, he would go the whole way. He would not let anything part him from his master, and when tested by Elijah, he resolutely refused to remain at Jericho. However the sons of the prophets were content to live there, and they added to Elisha's sorrow, by vaunting their knowledge, but were rebuked by him.

.... to be continued

THE MAKER OF THE UNIVERSE

By F. W. Pitt

The Maker of the universe ... as Man, for man was made a curse.
The claims of Law which He had made, unto the uttermost He paid.
His holy fingers made the bough, which grew the thorns that crowned His brow;
The nails that pierced His hand were mined, in secret places He designed.
He made the forest from whence there sprung the tree on which His body hung;
He died upon a cross of wood, yet made the hill on which it stood.
The sky that darkened o'er His head, by Him above the earth was spread.
The sun that hid from Him its face, by His decree was poised in space.
The spear which spilled His precious blood was tempered in the fires of God.
The grave in which His form was laid was hewn in rocks His hands had made.
The throne on which He now appears was His from everlasting years;
But a new glory crowns His brow, and every knee to Him shall bow.



GOOD NEWS

ALL 25000 students fail exam

Last year nearly 25,000 school leavers failed the test for admission to the University of Liberia, one of two state-run universities. Liberia's education minister said she found it hard to believe that not a single candidate passed last year's university admission exam. It meant that the overcrowded university did not have any new first-year students when it reopened for the academic year.



Students told the BBC news reporter that the result was unbelievable and their dreams had been shattered. A university official told the news that the students lacked enthusiasm and did not have a basic grasp of English.

President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, a Nobel peace laureate, recently acknowledged that the education system was still "in a mess", and much needed to be done to improve it.

They could not lower the standards to let a few in for who would trust a doctor who failed his exams or a pilot who failed his flying test. Standards are there for a good reason.

God as a standard which cannot be lowered for God is holy. We cannot enter heaven for the Bible declares that not just 25000 of us but ALL of us have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). We ALL need a Saviour and the angel declared to the shepherds ... "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:11)

If you want to be in heaven after you die, Jesus is the only Saviour and the only way to heaven. Reader, where will you spend eternity?

Kenya Survivor Smears Herself In Blood

Last year on 23 September, Islamist Al Shabab terrorists from Somalia attacked the Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi, Kenya. Evil and ruthless men mowed down innocent men, women and children who were out shopping. 61 shoppers and 6 Kenyan soldiers were killed and over 200 people were wounded.



A survivor of the shopping centre massacre in Kenya's capital says she owes her life to the blood of a teenage boy who died beside her. Radio presenter Sneha Mashru said that the boy was shot and was lying next to her bleeding to death. She switched off his phone so any ringing would not alert the terrorists and when she realised he was now dead, she took a lot of his blood and put it on herself. She covered her arm, her face with along her hair to pretend that she was dead or badly injured. She said she wanted to know more about this boy whose blood saved her life.

Those who are saved from sin and hell can say they owe their life to the blood of another. Not an unwilling victim like the boy in the story but to God's Son, the Lord Jesus, who willingly in wondrous love shed His precious blood for the remission of sins at Calvary and rose again.

The Bible says, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Colossians 1:14)

*He breaks the power of canceled sin
He sets the prisoner free;
His blood can make the foulest clean
His blood availed for me.*

CHURCH HISTORY

THE FIVE MARTYRS OF ECUADOR

By Nitish Patel



**Roger
Youderian**

**Pete
Fleming**

**Jim
Elliot**

**Nate
Saint**

**Ed
McCully**

God called five courageous men to preach the love of God to the Waorani people, a tribe so fierce that the Quichua people near them called them the “Auca” which means savages in their language. They attacked all who came near and killed so many of each other that there were only 500 of them left. The Aucas lived in the jungles of Ecuador and few had ever made contact with them.

The five missionaries from the United State had been brought together with a burden to reach the Indians of Ecuador. All were married men and fathers except for Pete. Their families knew that contact with these savages could mean death but the love of God in their heart for these people overcame their fear. When Jim discussed the danger he was facing with his wife Elisabeth, he told her calmly, “Well, if that’s the way God wants it to be, I’m ready to die for the salvation of the Aucas.”

They prayed and planned how to reach these people who hated all outsiders. It was decided to give them presents to make contact. Nate was a skilled pilot and would fly a small Piper plane in a tight circle over their village. He would open the door and lower a nylon rope with a bucket with gifts inside.

On October 6th, 1955, Nate circled over the Auca village and lowered a bucket with 20 brightly coloured buttons, a kettle and a bag of rock salt onto a beach near their huts. It was on November 12th, 1955, that they finally got a response. The Aucas sent up a gift. A beautiful headband of feathers was put into the bucket as a gift for them. Other gifts were exchanged with each flight.

A girl named Dayuma who had fled the Auca village when her father was killed and was staying with Nate's sister, Rachel. Rachel along with other Wycliffe Bible translators learned a few words of their language known as Wao. Jim Elliot travelled to see them to learn these words and teach them to his colleagues.

By January 5th 1956, they believed that the Aucas were now friendly to them and a face to face contact could be made. They took off from a Shell Oil company outpost which had a good airstrip but had been abandoned after several workers were killed by the Aucas. They landed 15 minutes later at the sand bank of the River Curaray code named "Palm Beach" by the five.

On Tuesday January 3rd, they contacted Nate's wife at 7 am, had breakfast and sang the hymn

*"We rest on Thee, our Shield and our Defender,
Thine is the battle, Thine shall be the praise
When passing through the gates of pearly splendour
Victors, we rest with Thee through endless days."*

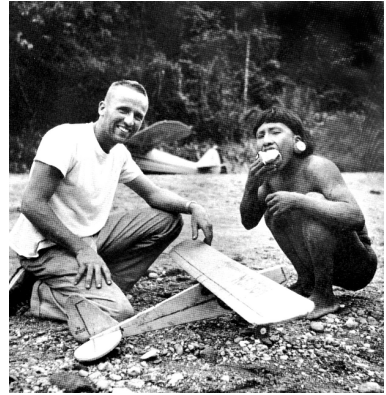
After the initial flight by Nate to test the landing strip, he made five more flights that day with the rest of the missionaries and a plane full of various gifts. Jim, Ed and Roger were left on the beach to make a hut above ground while Nate flew back and shouted through a loud hailer to the people in the Wao language to come to the river the next day.

Contact was made on the fourth day with three Auca who approached

them, of whom one was Dayuma's sister. They gave gifts to them and tried to speak as best as they could in the Wao language.

One named Naenkiwi was even given a ride in the plane which soared above his village as he looked down in amazement.

On the sixth day, Sunday January 8th, there was movement as Nate flew over the village and saw only women and children there. He spotted a group of ten men headed towards the landing strip. Nate radioed back in excitement and said, "Looks like they'll be here for the early afternoon service. Pray for us. This is the day! Will contact you next at four-thirty."



At 4:30 there was only static on the radio. The five missionaries had been murdered and their speared bodies cast downstream in the river. They had gone through the "Gates of Pearly Splendor" into the presence of their Saviour.

Their bodies were found by search teams of the Ecuadorian airforce and US army. They were buried awaiting that day of resurrection and reward.

It seemed such a tragedy and a waste of young lives, but God was at work and later many Indians turned to Christ including the Auca men who murdered the missionaries. Their story of courage became an inspiration for many young people to go into the mission field around the world. Jim Elliot's wife and daughter worked amongst the Quichua Indians and finally lived amongst the Auca Indians. Elisabeth Elliot published two books, *Shadow of the Almighty : The Life and Testament of Jim Elliot* and *Through Gates of Splendor*, which describe the life and death of her husband.

Jim Elliot words still challenge us ... "He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."

REPORTS

Report of visit to India by Nitish & Ellen Patel

In November last year we visited an assembly perched on the top of a hill in a slum area in Bombay known as Banduph. This assembly is like a city set on a hill whose light cannot be hid (Matthew 5:14). We were here a number of years ago just after 64 Hindus were saved, baptised and this new assembly was formed. It was a joy to renew fellowship and see their new hall after their old one got washed away in the rains. Most are very poor and survive doing menial work such as sweeping. Despite their poverty, the joy of the Lord is seen in their happy faces. We met Evangelist Shaji Samuel who planted this assembly and several others.

We flew to Gujarat to meet up with evangelist Sanjay Parmar and the assembly in Anand. Sanjay took us to a village where a the lady was saved some years ago and to another village where he has started a new work. He is hoping that eventually a new assembly work might commence there. He also arranged a gospel meeting outside a believer's home in a Christian area of Anand where good numbers sat outside and listened.

A conference was held over two days in the city of Pune where good numbers gathered for the ministry of God's Word.

Work amongst Hindus in Wembley

Since beginning a children's work in February, numbers coming have exceeded what our little faith expected. Well over 60 attend most Saturdays now and total numbers of different children is over 110.

Most are Gujarati children from Hindu families. A couple of Moslem children and some we think are from a Buddhist background. We are pleased that the parents of one boy come regularly to listen and to help their son with the activity sheets we give out. We pray that as they listen week after week, the Lord will work in their hearts.

The children were taken on their first outing to Paradise Park in Hertfordshire and at the ending of the year a prize giving and Christmas party was held when around 62 children came.

We are grateful to Ken Buckeridge, Kevin and Lynda Oh from the assembly at Uxbridge and Michael Warner from the Grove Hall who have been of much help in this work.

With numbers increasing week by week, we are faced with a good problem as to how we can accommodate the growing numbers. We have now decided to conduct two meetings every Saturday with older ones coming in the afternoon. Do pray for the Lord of the harvest to send more labourers (Luke 10:2) and to give much wisdom and to be preserved from the wiles and devices of the Devil who will seek at all costs to stop this work (Ephesians 6:11, 2 Corinthians 2:11).

The assembly at Wembley is very small yet we are reminded of the words of the Lord Jesus to the assembly in Philadelphia ... "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength." (Revelation 3:8)

Further blessing was seen during the gospel outreach and meetings held in Wembley during June and July. We were approached by a young man named Vipul Patel from Gujarat who asked us to baptise him. He had a clear testimony of how he was saved through reading the Scriptures given to him by a Romanian believer named Olga. We had the joy of baptising him in October and now he and Olga are in happy fellowship in assembly there.

The day after we were approached a by Sikh man named Navjot Singh who said he had been saved through reading the Scriptures. He was looking for a church where he can hear the Word of God in Hindi but lives very far from the hall. We encouraged him and told him to keep in touch and visit us. We have yet to see him again but brethren in Coventry who speak his language have been in touch with him.



Assembly in Banduph & gospel meeting in Anand (below)





Children's Christmas party & prize giving. Below Vipul Patel's baptism

