

Clifton News

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News

Happy New Year 2017



We would like to wish all our readers a very happy new year and would like to thank you all for praying for us. This year marks the 120th year of the building of Clifton Hall and we give God thanks for maintaining the testimony in this hall for so many years.

Over the Christmas period we held three meetings to reach out in the area. We had a Carol Service, Christmas morning service and a Watch night gospel meeting. Numbers of visitors were much lower this year but still we were encouraged that a few did attend to listen to the gospel faithfully proclaimed.

Prayer is valued for the outreach of the assembly this year as we hope to have another Easter holiday club and a presence at the South Norwood and Thornton Heath festivals.

Pray for the three young children in the assembly Noah, Rhea and Sara all aged 4. Alastair and Rebecca are expecting their second child this May and prayer is valued for a safe delivery.

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Meetings

THE WEEK AT CLIFTON

Lord's Day	
Breaking of Bread	11.00 am
Family Service	4.00 am
Monday Prayer and Bible Teaching	7.45 pm
Wednesday Seekers Club	6.30 pm
(Term time only for under 10s)	
Friday Club	7.30 pm
(Term time only for ages 10+)	

SUNDAY AFTERNOON FAMILY SERVICE

January

1	Nitish Patel
8	Richard Catchpole
15	Mike Surry
22	Alf Taylor
29	Nitish Patel

February

5	Richard Collins
12	Norman Gibbons
19	Ferranti Wong
26	Alastair Rodger

March

- 5 Nitish Patel
- 12 Alastair Rodger
- 19 Norman Gibbons
- 26 Richard Catchpole

MONDAY PRAYER AND BIBLE TEACHING

January

- 2 Bank Holiday
- 9 Paul Miller
- 16 Alastair Rodger
- 23 Alastair Rodger
- 30 Richard Catchpole

February

- 6 Richard Collings
- 13 Colin Roberts
- 20 Timothy Miller
- 27 Timothy Miller

March

- 6 Nitish Patel
- 13 Jonathan Black
- 20 Jonathan Black
- 27 Nitish Patel

SATURDAY MINISTRY MEETINGS AT 7.30 PM

- 7th January Kevin Oh (Uxbridge)
- 4th February Richard Collins (Caerphilly)

Questions

Questions about resurrection

During a recent Bible talk at Friday Club we touched on the news story about a terminally ill 14 year old girl who had won the right to be cryogenically frozen following her death. She hoped that in the future a cure for her cancer would be found and that she could be “woken up”. She hoped to come back from the dead, but was relying on someone finding both the cure for her cancer and the ability to bring the dead to life again. This led us to think about resurrection and the young people had several questions to ask, so we’ll look at a selection of questions to do with resurrection.



What is resurrection?

As we’ve already indicated resurrection means to return from death to life. Death does not mean that we stop existing; it also doesn’t mean that we will exist only as spirits. Resurrection is bodily, those resurrected have physical bodies as Jesus did when He rose from the dead (Luke 24:39).

Why was Jesus resurrected? Jesus’ resurrection demonstrated many things, it showed that Jesus:

- Was God (Acts 2:36, Romans 1:4)
- Had defeated death and Satan (Hebrews 2:14, 2 Corinthians 15:50-57)
- Had done as He had promised, fulfilling the prophecies about Him (Psalm 16:10, Mark 8:31)
- Will judge the world in righteousness (Acts 16:31)

Who can resurrect?

Resurrection is something only God can do, Jesus says in John 5:25-26 “Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son also to have life in Himself.”

All three persons of the Godhead, the Father, the Son and the Spirit (Romans 8:11) have the power to resurrect.

Who will be resurrected?

Jesus continues in John 5:28 “an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out”. So everyone who is in the tombs will be resurrected. That means everyone who is dead will be raised.

There will be two resurrections “those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgement” (John 5:29). We will either be part of the resurrection of judgement, after which we will face the lake of fire (Revelation 20:11-15) or be part of the resurrection of life.

How can I be part of the resurrection of life?

Jesus said in John 11:25 “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die.” The promise Jesus give is that whoever believes in Him will live, they will be part of the resurrection of life. Jesus is the resurrection and the life. He is the source of resurrection and life, they are only found in Him.

When will those who’ve believed in Jesus be resurrected?

Those who’ve believed in Jesus and subsequently died will be resurrected when He comes again. Paul explains this in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17: “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.”

Resurrection is the hope of the Christian, since Christ their Saviour has risen, they will rise too. For further reading about resurrection and the believer, look at 1 Corinthians Chapter 15.

Alastair Rodger

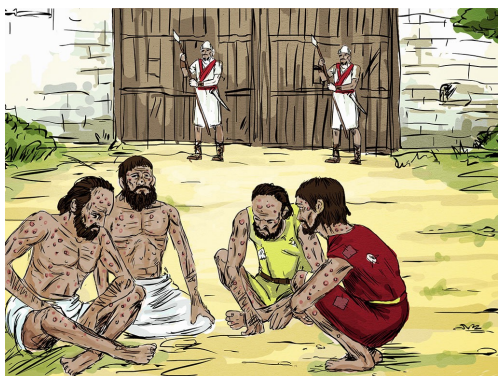
Bible Teaching

ELISHA PROPHET OF WATER (Part 15)

by the late Charles Wigg (Tasmania)

Next they concluded that if they entered into the city, there was famine in the city, and they would die there. Those within the city were probably better dressed than they. The city dwellers had comfortable homes to live in, (or to die in), but they faced the same fate as the poor leprous beggars. Just as today, there are respectable sinners, even religious sinners. Some are even clergymen of different denominations, yet they are lost sinners on their way to hell.

Finally they realised that their only hope was in mercy. They would fall away to the host of the Syrians, hoping that they might extend mercy to them, but if they failed to do so, then they would only die. There is a lesson for lost men in this, because their only hope is in trusting themselves to the mercy of our loving God. He delights in mercy, and has said, "I will have mercy and not



sacrifice" (Matthew 9:13). It has been said that mercy sees that we do not get what we do deserve, whereas grace sees that we do get what we do not deserve. God is said to be rich in mercy, and those that repent of their sins, put their faith and trust in the Lord Jesus, and cast themselves upon His mercy, they honour Him. The poor publican prayed, "God be merciful to me a sinner" and he went down to his house, justified.

Trembling thus, they approached the Syrian camp, only to find much more than they had hoped for. God had indeed saved them.

They found food in abundance, riches, and raiment, far more than they could have hoped for, or even thought possible. (Ephesians 3:20-21).

What a beautiful picture this is of the salvation that God offers freely to doomed and lost sinners, through faith in Christ. First there is forgiveness of sins; the profound relief that comes when we are washed from our sins in the precious blood of Christ. Cleansed away by the precious blood that He freely shed on that cross. Removed forever from us when He was buried and removed forever from before a Holy God. The realisation that we will never have to face an angry God, nor have to give an account of our sins. All of our sins are gone, righteously judged and punished, in the vicarious sufferings that the Lord Jesus bore on the cross, during those three hours of darkness.

But this is not all. Because He has removed from us the filthy rags of our own self-righteousness, and has clothed us in the very righteousness of Christ; the 'Best Robe'! (Luke 15:22). As well He has given us food for our hungry souls. 'The bread of life' (John 6:48) and all the royal dainties of heaven (John 6:57). And whereas before, we were spiritual paupers; bankrupt sinners who owed a great debt to God, yet had nothing to pay the debt with. Yet now we have become joint heirs to the unsearchable riches of Christ.

The poor leprous beggars did not need any persuasion to avail themselves of the salvation that God had provided freely for them. They ate all that they could, but took and hid what they could not appropriate. They went into other tents and did the same. They were making sure that they had provision for the future.



However the wonderful thing about God's salvation is that it is eternal. The life that we have received is eternal life, yet like them we tend to be selfish, and to keep to the wonderful news of God's wonderful salvation, when there is abundance for all. God desires that all men might be saved, and come to a knowledge of the truth.

One of the beggars began to think of the masses that were starving within Samaria, while they were rejoicing in the abundance of God's provision. They quickly realized the wrong of their selfish actions. They said to each other, "This is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace!" They realized that to delay sharing the good news with others would perhaps bring disaster upon them. They feared the approach of the 'morning light', and so determined to "tell the King's household". I recall an old evangelist telling us that even if the lost would not come to hear the good news, then "Tell it to the King's Household". Those that are saved still love to hear the gospel. Let us not fail to tell others the good news.

The morning light is about to dawn on this dark and sinful world. Soon we must stand before the judgment seat of Christ, and there we shall give an account of the things done, (or not done), in the body. Let us be awake and active in spreading the good news! Let us not be put to shame before Him at His coming!

At first their message was not believed it seemed too good to be true. Once it reached the ears of the King he dismissed it as a trick. However faith and reason prevailed, messengers were sent out on horseback, and they returned with the news that it was indeed true. So it is with the gospel. Not one that has ever put it to the test, by repenting of their sins, and trusting the Lord Jesus to save them, have ever been disappointed.



Scoffers have been there from the very beginning, and they will be there until the end, but those who “Taste and see”, find that the Lord is good, and those who trust in Him are truly blessed. Psalm 34:8.

THE PEOPLE RESPOND

The good news spread through the city like a forest fire. They were saved, and food was available, and they wanted it, and rushed to the gate of the city to avail themselves of it. Oh that it was so today. In Australia people will flock in thousands to attend a football match, or some other entertainment. They will come in thousands to Sydney for the ‘Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gra’. Thus to publicly support the purveyors of wickedness, that are destroying our society, yet it is almost impossible to get one person to attend a gospel meeting.

The king appointed the executioner, who had scoffed at the prophet’s message of faith, to try to bring some order out of the confusion caused by the surging crowds. But he was trodden to death beneath the feet of the crowds that were hungry to receive the salvation that God had provided for them.

Thus the word of God came to be fulfilled. With his own eyes he saw others receive the blessing provided by God’s salvation, but he did not partake of it himself, but died right there, and probably suffers still in the torments of Hell, because he refused to believe the message of God. Let us be warned, lest something like this should happen to any that read these words.



... to be continued

Good News

Couple pick ‘wrong’ Birmingham



Last April, the news media reported the story of a woman named Richella Heekin who had saved for two years for a surprise £1,200 holiday for her boyfriend Ben Marlow's 30th birthday. She booked a dream holiday to Las Vegas leaving from Birmingham airport.

When the excited couple arrived at the airport they found the American Airlines check in desk closed and staff confirmed that the BHM airport code on their tickets meant Birmingham Alabama, not the UK's second city whose airport code is BHX. She had mistakenly booked to fly from the wrong Birmingham when booking on the lastminute.com website.

Richella was devastated and in tears and her boyfriend said he was 'gutted' when they realised they were not going to Las Vegas. They contacted Lastminute.com when at the airport, but the company said

there was nothing that could be done. Frustrated and with time booked off work, the couple used a new credit card to buy two late flights to Amsterdam instead.

Lastminute.com said although it was not its error, the firm tried to find them alternative flights and contacted the airline and hotel for a refund, but one could not be provided resulting in a very costly mistake.

It is easy to become confused when there are places with the same names around the world but thankfully in the spiritual realm, when sinners seek to be saved and go to heaven, God has not left us in any doubt or confusion as to the ONE NAME we need to start with to get there. Peter said, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12).

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6)

Paul could say, "For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." (1 Corinthians 8:5-6)

*Jesus! the Name high over all,
In hell or earth or sky;
Angels and men before it fall,
And devils fear and fly.*

*Jesus! the Name to sinners dear,
The Name to sinners giv'n;
It scatters all their guilty fear,
It turns their hell to Heav'n.
(Charles Wesley)*

Design in Creation

By Nitish Patel

The Giraffe

“O LORD, how manifold are thy works!
in wisdom hast thou made them all: the
earth is full of thy riches.” (Psalm
102.24)

Giraffes are native to southern and central Africa and an iconic animal in photos of Africa seen striding across a sunset in the savanna.

They are the tallest land animals in the world after the elephant standing around 18 feet high (5.5m) and weighing over 1000 kg (2200 lbs). They can run as fast as 35 miles per hour and have few predators because of their size. Their back legs can kick with such force that they can break the back of a lion. Their offspring are often targeted by predators and only a quarter make it to adulthood.

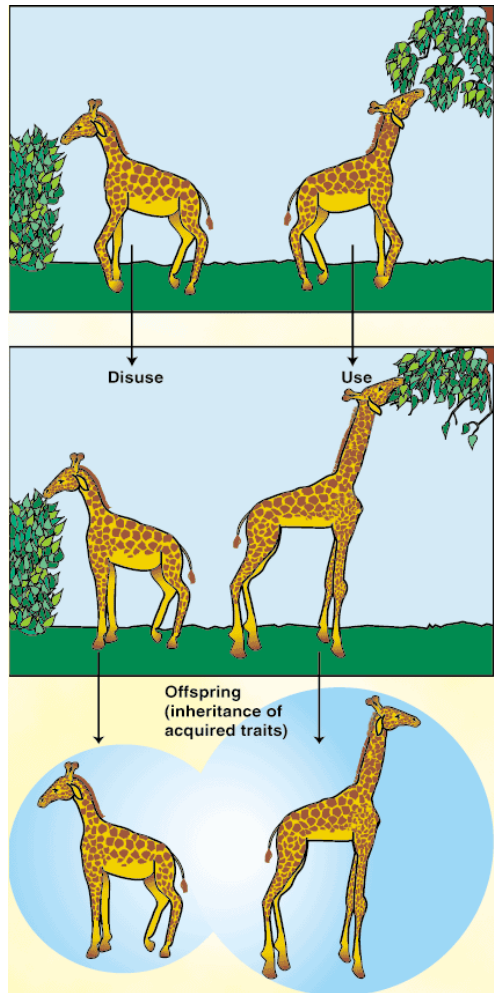


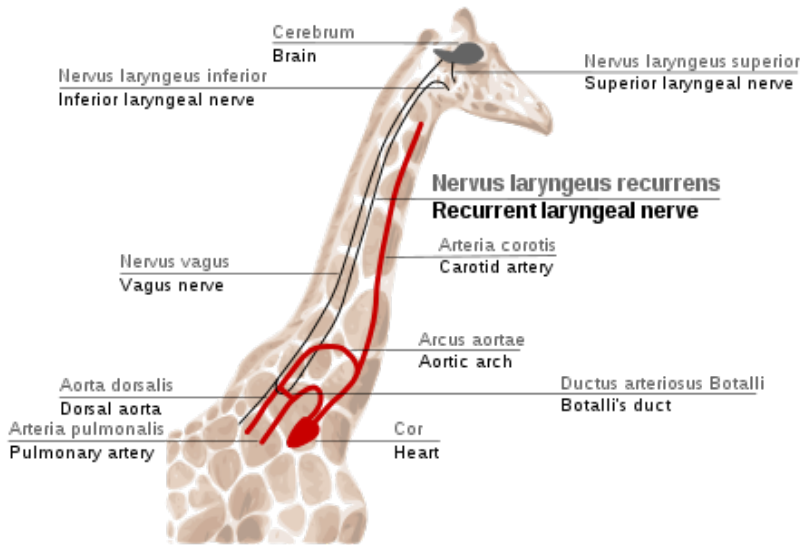
Back in my school days in biology class, the giraffe was used as a perfect example of evolution. The text book showed diagrams of two hypothetical ancient giraffe ancestors, one born a bit taller than the other. The taller one could reach the highest leaves of the tree but the shorter one went hungry. According to natural selection the taller one will have a better chance of survival. The way it was presented seemed so obvious that given million of years any born in each generation with an even longer neck would survive better resulting in the modern giraffe.

Prior to Darwin many scientists accepted the views of French naturalist Jean-Baptiste Lamarck (1744-1829) who taught in 1809 that animals changed through the use and disuse of their organs. According to his theory, if a giraffe stretched its neck to reach leaves higher up then this improvement would be passed down its offspring making their necks longer and longer. Organs which were not used would shrink, so animals who lived in dark caves would lose their sight. Lamarck's ideas were abandoned by scientists who embraced Darwin's theory of evolution because it sounded more plausible.

However, the discovery of DNA and understanding of genetics made both these theories false, because we now know that inherited features come from the information stored in the genes.

So Evolutionists have modified their beliefs again, and now believe that random mutations in the genes create variations such as a giraffe ancestor born with a slightly longer neck which has a better chance of survival and passes on these genes to its offspring which in turn have more beneficial accidents happening to them over millions of years.





To get blood up such a long neck (1.8m, 6ft), the giraffe's heart which is around 2 feet long and weighs 11kg (25lb) can pump 16 gallons per minute at over twice the pressure of a human heart (A giraffe's normal blood pressure is around 240/180, which is the highest of all animals). This kind of blood pressure is extremely dangerous in humans and to giraffes also if they did not have a protective mechanism in place.

When the giraffe bends down to drink water, the force of blood to its head would literally rupture its veins and blow its brains out while suddenly lifting up its head within a second to run away from a lion would rush its blood so fast down the neck it would faint and become a lion's dinner.

The giraffe is perfectly designed by God with extra thick walls on its blood vessels and a system of valves along its artery and a signalling mechanism to open and close them so that the blood does not rush down. Also under the brain there is a system of elastic tightly packed blood vessels known as the rete mirabile which soaks up the blood like a sponge so that the giraffe has blood supply to its brain when it raises itself up quickly.

Veins don't normally have muscles but the giraffe has also an unusual one in its jugular which adds pressure to the blood when it lifts itself up.

If evolution were true then how many giraffe's blew their brains out before accidentally and simultaneously evolving some valves, larger hearts, signalling mechanisms, a vein muscle, a rete mirabile and many other supporting organs? The fossil record does not show evidence of this slow evolution and it is a scientific fact that random mutations do not add information to the DNA to create newly designed organs.

"We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done." (Psalm 78:40)

Giraffe Facts

Giraffes live 20- 25 years in the wild.

The giraffe brought from Alexandria by Julius Caesar in 46 BC was the first to be seen in Europe. An extraordinary creature, it appeared to the Romans to be part camel and part leopard, and was named after both: camelopardalis or camel-leopard so the name scientific name *Giraffa camelopardalis* stuck.

Although a giraffe's neck is 6ft (1.8m), it contains seven vertebrae, the same as a human neck but are much larger. Each has an individual joint making the neck very flexible.

The tallest recorded giraffe was a Masai giraffe known as George who was sent from Kenya to Chester Zoo, Lancashire, England in 1959 and lived to July 22, 1969. When he was just 9 years old, his horns almost touched the roof of the 20 foot (6.2m) giraffe house.

The male giraffe is taller and heavier than the female and its horns known as ossicones are bald on top whereas the females have a tuft of hair.

Giraffes are ruminants like cows and chew the cud. They have four chambers in its stomach.

Giraffes are sociable animals travelling around in groups known as towers led by an adult male followed by females and young males. To see who is stronger the male bulls fight by butting their long necks against each other called 'necking'. They rarely hurt each other and the loser walks away.

The pattern on the giraffe is unique to each one just like a human fingerprint. It helps with camouflage among them harder to see.

Giraffe tongues are very long up to 20 inches. It is powerful and prehensile. It is specially designed to allow giraffes to forage on thorny acacia trees or mimosa trees which are their favourite food. They constantly eat and consume over 45kg (100 lb) of leaves and twigs a day. However, they don't drink much as they get their liquid from the leaves. They only need to drink once every few days.

Giraffes spend most of their lives standing up; they even sleep and give birth standing up. The young can run within 30 minutes of birth. Giraffes only spend between 10 minutes and two hours asleep per day. They have one of the shortest sleep requirements of any mammal.





The pool of Siloam where Jesus healed the blind man (John 9:7)