

Clifton News

278 July - September 2017

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News

The Lord blessed the Easter Holiday Club in April with 63 different children attending. The numbers were consistent during the four days of meetings with 46, 54, 50, 46 each day. Around 19 parents were present to hear the gospel during the prize giving on the Thursday evening.



Alastair and Rebecca were blessed with a baby girl born on the 8th of May whom they have named Zillah Frances Ivy Rodger. We give God thanks for a safe delivery. Pray for the little children of the believers in the assembly, Rhea, Noah, Sara and Zillah.



Prayers were answered when we were given a place at the South Norwood festival due to a charity dropping out. It turned out to be a lovely day with plenty of sunshine and many thousands of visitors. All the children's packs were given out advertising the children's work. Many took literature and some stopped to chat. Some of the friends from the assembly at Woodside were also present to help. We pray that we shall see souls come to Christ as a result of this outreach.



We will also be at the Thornton Heath Festival on Sunday 3rd September and we value prayer for that outreach also.

Meetings

Lord's Day

Breaking of Bread	11.00 am
Family Service	4.00 pm

Monday

Prayer and Bible Teaching	7.45 pm
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Wednesday

Seekers	6.30 pm
(Term time only for under 10s)	

Friday

Friday Club	7.30 pm
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SUNDAY AFTERNOON FAMILY SERVICE

July

2	South Norwood Festival
9	Nitish Patel
16	Alf Taylor
23	Andrew Hall
30	Norman Gibbons

August

6	Richard Catchpole
13	Richard Catchpole
20	Nitish Patel
27	Alastair Rodger

September

- 3 Thornton Heath Festival
- 10 Ferranti Wong
- 17 Richard Catchpole
- 24 Alastair Rodger

MONDAY PRAYER AND BIBLE TEACHING

July

- 3 Nitish Patel
- 10 Nitish Patel
- 17 Roy Aitkin
- 24 No Meeting
- 31 No Meeting

August

- 7 Martin Hayward
- 14 Robert Bennett
- 21 Ken Wilkins
- 28 No meeting (Bank holiday)

September

- 4 Richard Catchpole
- 11 Richard Catchpole
- 18 Alastair Rodger
- 25 Alastair Rodger

Question Box

Answers to questions asked by the young people in Friday club.

“If God destroyed all the sinners during Noah’s flood, how come there is still sin in the world today?”



This is a very good question for it helps us understand clearly the problem with the human race and why we all need to be saved.

We read in Genesis 6:5, “And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”

The Bible states that the problem with mankind was in the heart (not the physical heart but the spiritual heart of man). Man’s problem comes from a sinful nature inherited from Adam and Eve when they sinned in the Garden of Eden.

Jesus said, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” (John 3:6). He is saying that we are all born with a sinful nature called the “flesh”. We are born sinners because our parents were born sinners, and their parents before them going all the way back to Noah and all the way back to Adam and Eve whose sin caused this to happen. The Bible says, “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” (Romans 5:12)

The only exception is the Lord Jesus who was sinless because He was born of a virgin. John says of Him, “And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.” (1 John 3:5)

Noah and his family were sinners like everyone else for we read that

after the flood that Noah became drunk (Genesis 9:21). The simple answer to the question is that though the flood destroyed sinners, it did not destroy the sinful nature which was in Noah and his family. The sin nature passed onto the human race through Noah's three sons and their wives. This is why there is still sin in the world.

God sent the flood because people did not want to be saved from their sin. There was no repentance. "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence." (Genesis 6:11)

Peter tells us that God patiently waited while Noah built the Ark which took 120 years and preached to them: "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water." (1 Peter 3:20)

Peter tells us that God is a longsuffering, loving and gracious God. He tells us that He gave His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to die for our sins: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God ..." (1 Peter 3:18)

We learn that Noah and his family were saved because "Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD." (Genesis 6:8). Hebrews 11:7 tells us that Noah had faith in God and responded with fear and built the Ark to save his family. We are not saved by our good works or religion but by the grace of God when we put faith completely in the Lord Jesus to be our Saviour.

Only God can change the heart and save us from sin. Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3). It is vitally important that we acknowledge that we are sinners before God and trust Christ to be saved otherwise we will face God's judgment in hell and the Lake of fire as the people of Noah's day did.

Nitish Patel

Bible Teaching

Elisha Prophet of Water (Part 17)

By the late Charles Wigg (Tasmania)

JEHU ANOINTED

Now that God's time had come, events began to unfold swiftly, and in chapter nine one of the sons of the prophets was despatched to do the third thing that God had commanded Elijah.

God's timing was perfect! Hazael had begun to do what Elisha had said he would do, Israel's king had been wounded, he had returned to Jezreel to be healed of his wounds, and had left his army with the generals to protect Ramoth Gilead from being re-captured by the Syrians.

Elisha did not anoint Jehu himself, but gave the task to one of the children of the prophets. The fact that this young man is described as one of 'the children' of the prophets may indicate that he was a humble person. The older prophet instructed him in detail, as to what he was to do. Because he obeyed the directions of the older prophet, and delivered the message faithfully, he qualified to become a prophet himself, as it says, "The young man, the prophet". All that would aspire to deliver the message of God, may learn from this young man. He did not remain to receive any glory for himself, but delivered the message, then opened the door and fled. He did the job entrusted to him, then left the results in the hands of God. This is what every servant of God should do, but sadly, many fail to do so, they want to remain in the picture. They want to receive any glory that



may be bestowed upon them because of their service. Let us deliver the message, and leave the results with God.

God had borne very patiently for many years with the house of Ahab, and the wicked Jezebel, but now His time had come to fulfil His promise of judgment, and it happened so swiftly. Jehu was quickly accepted by his fellow captains. He was exalted by them, and proclaimed to be king of Israel. He would allow none to escape from the city to bring news to Jezreel of the coup. He set out immediately on his errand of judgment. Thus he drove with his characteristic fury to that city, and took Jezebel and her son completely by surprise. Ahaziah the king of Judah had come to Jezreel to visit his uncle, and God used Jehu to put a violent end to both of their lives. Thus, He put an end to the unholy alliance that had grown up between the descendants of the royal house of David, and the house of Ahab, and the children of the wicked Jezebel.

THE SLAUGHTER OF JEZEBEL

Once Israel's king had been slain, and his body dumped unceremoniously on the very plot of faithful Naboth, then the executioners attention was turned to dealing with that most wicked woman Jezebel. She remained defiant until the last, and even applied her cosmetics, so that she might look at her evil best. She



taunted Jehu, and reminded him of the fate of another, that had aspired to overthrow his master. As she looked out of the window, and hurled her abuse, two or three eunuchs looked out also. Jehu challenged them as to where they stood, and to declare where their loyalties were, by throwing the wicked woman down. No doubt they had suffered much under her tyranny, and were only too glad to be rid of her domination. Thus they cast her down from her lofty vantage

point. She fell down striking part of her body on the wall as she fell, so that her blood was sprinkled there. She was then trodden to death beneath the hooves of Jehu's chariot horses. Jehu then went up into the royal palace to celebrate his successes. However he gave command that she should be given an honourable burial, because she was a king's daughter. But when his servants came to bury her, they found only her skull, her feet, and the palms of her hands. The street dogs had eaten Jezebel, and there was none to bury her. She was to have no grave, and no memorial, but her name has stood as synonymous with evil, down through the ages.

THE CONTRAST BETWEEN JEHU AND JEHONADAB

Though not strictly a part of the story of Elisha, yet it may be of value to draw attention to the contrast between these two men. As Jehu proceeded on his mission of judgment, he met Jehonadab the son of Rechab, who was a Kenite, (a descendant of Moses' father in-law). First he challenged him as to whether his heart was with Jehu in his mission of murder. It seems that Jehonadab



was a man of perfect heart, and though he would have no part in the slaughter of others, yet he realised that the judgment of God must be done. God is not mocked, and whatever men sow, they must reap.

It would be difficult to find two men more unlike each other. Jehu was a proud and cruel man, who boasted in his zeal for the Lord. However subsequent events prove that he had zeal for the Lord, only in as far as it suited him. Really he was seeking a place, and power for himself. He was establishing his own dynasty, which continued only for four generations. While it is true that God used him to bring judgment on both the house of Ahab, and the descendants of Jehoshaphat, yet the actions of Jehu brought God no pleasure. Though

he overturned the worship of Baal, and destroyed its priests, its altars, its temple, and all who followed that false god, yet for his own benefit, he clung to the sins of Jereboam who made Israel to sin.

Jehonadab the son of Rechab, was a simple man, one who had learned to spurn this world's luxuries. Though he had no claim on any inheritance with the children of Israel, yet he and his descendants lived in, and enjoyed that inheritance. He learned to hate evil, and taught his children to do so too. (See the prayer of Jabez in 1Chron, 4:10). He taught his descendants to refuse to build houses, but as if pilgrims, to live in tents. They were never to plant crops for profit, thus to spurn all commerce, and never to drink wine. They continued to live in the Land, long after Jehu and his dynasty had perished, and continued there at least until the fall of Jerusalem to the armies of Nebuchadnezzar, perhaps even afterwards. While the one sought power and glory, the other instead concentrated on teaching his family what was right, and inspiring them to obedience. May it please God to give us more men like Jehonadab!

ELISHA'S LAST MINISTRY

During those years of judgment, when violence and bloodshed were common, Elisha remained out of sight. However he was there to give counsel and teaching to those that sought it. He lived to see the third generation of Jehu's descendants sit on Israel's throne. It seems that he was held in great respect, and when the news of his final illness reached the ears of the young king Joash went to meet him, and wept over him. The prophet used his last strength to instruct the young king, and to rebuke him for his lack of faith and thoroughness.

ELISHA CONTINUED TO GIVE LIFE EVEN AFTER HIS DEATH

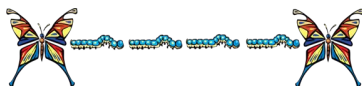
Thus ended his long and beautiful life, but he continued to be a blessing even after his death. When in the act of burying a man, a funeral party spied a band of Moabites. Hastily they let the dead man's body down into Elisha's tomb but when that dead body

touched the bones of Elisha, the dead man revived and stood upon his feet.

The challenge thus comes to you and I, what will be the effect of our ministry, life and witness after we, are called home to glory? What kind of a memory will we leave behind? Will our words, our writings, or our testimony continue to be a channel of life and blessing to others? May it be so! May it be said of you and I, as was said of Abel, that “He being dead, yet speaketh!”, Heb. 11:4.

May it please our wonderful God, to bless these few thoughts, that we have gleaned from the life of Elisha, to all who may read them. May His great and holy name be glorified!

Concluded



Charles Wigg was known to the editor as a frequent visitor to India and the Middle East from his native Tasmania and was well loved and respected amongst the assemblies there. He had once visited the UK and Clifton Hall for ministry in 1992. In 2001, due to declining health he was unable to travel overseas but maintained contact via email. On 25th March 2011, he was called home to be with the Lord in Burnie, Tasmania. We hope that you have enjoyed his ministry over the past few years in the Clifton Hall magazine.

In the next editions, Lord willing, we will be publishing a series of articles sent by John Wallace who lives in Sunderland.



Plan for the future

Near a nameless lake in a nameless valley 225 miles northeast of Fairbanks, a tale of despair and death was found graphically recorded in the diary of adventurer and wildlife photographer Carl McCunn when state troopers found his wasted body in a tent.

He had flown out to Alaska in March 1981 to photograph wildlife with 500 rolls of film, photography equipment, 1400 lbs of provisions, and firearms. He had planned to stay till mid August but had not clearly told the pilot when to be picked up and had told his father not to worry if he stayed longer than planned. After no aircraft arrived in August, his food began to run out and he was reduced to scavenging the half eaten prey of foxes. He was an abandoned soul crippled by frostbite says the Associated Press.

He wrote in his diary, "I think I should have used more foresight about arranging my departure," he wrote. "I'll soon find out."

Even though friends had asked state troopers to check on him and

sent a plane to fly overhead, state trooper David Hamilton did not think he was in trouble because waved a red bag in a casual manner and calmly walked back into his tent on the third pass of the plane. McCunn realised he had given the wrong signal to the plane but it was too late, the plane flew back.

As snow fell and the cold descended, his desperation grew. Finally, he wrote, "I can't take much more of this. Can't stop thinking about using the bullet." His last words included the lines, "Dear God in Heaven, please forgive me my weakness and my sins. Please look over my family" and then he shot himself in the head.

Carl McCunn's tragic end came about because he had prepared for everything except the future. Everything had been planned except most importantly, his provision for being flown out before winter.

Like McCunn, many in this world make provision for everything in life whether it is for education or work or a place to live or family or life insurance but regarding the most important matter of all, their soul's salvation they have made no preparation at all. The rich man in Jesus parable did the same and said, "And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry. But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" (Luke 12:19-20).

The Bible tells us that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming back to take to heaven those who belong to Him. They will be "flown out" before the winter of God's judgment descends upon this earth (1 Thessalonians 4:17). Reader, you can be saved now and prepared by believing God sent His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to die on the cross for your sins and believing in your heart God raised Him from the dead (Romans 10:9). We urge you to consider where you will spend eternity.



By Nitish Patel

There are over 200 species of woodpecker worldwide and the great spotted woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*) is the most widespread in the UK. They are famous for drilling holes in trees pneumatic drill style by rapidly hammering their chisel like beak into the tree. They make holes for a variety of reasons. They eat the wood boring insects inside trees or enjoy the sweet sap of the tree or make a nest in the hole. They also eat berries, nuts and seeds. Some have recently been filmed drilling into the heads of baby dove chicks to eat their brains! They nest usually in old trees and line the hole with wood chips. After mating, they lay 4-7 eggs in a single brood which they incubate for 10-13 days and the chicks fledge after 18 days. The Great Spotted Woodpecker can live up to 10 years.

The woodpecker's head

Woodpeckers peck at trees up to 20 times per second with speeds up to 7m/s and undergoing deceleration impacts up to 1200 times the force of gravity. A boxers punch can generate a 50g force to the head. A force of 300 g can cause serious brain injury in humans.

Woodpeckers do not suffer brain injury because firstly, they have an elastic beak and secondly, their skull consists of compressible sponge like bone which is thickest at the forehead and at the back of the skull. The hyoid bone (to which the tongue is anchored in humans) is unusual in woodpeckers and loops around the skull to act as a safety belt. Their brain is longer top to bottom than front to back so the force is spread over a larger brain area. There is little cerebrospinal fluid and the brain is more tightly packed to prevent movement inside. Strong muscles hold the neck straight while hammering.



The woodpecker's eyes

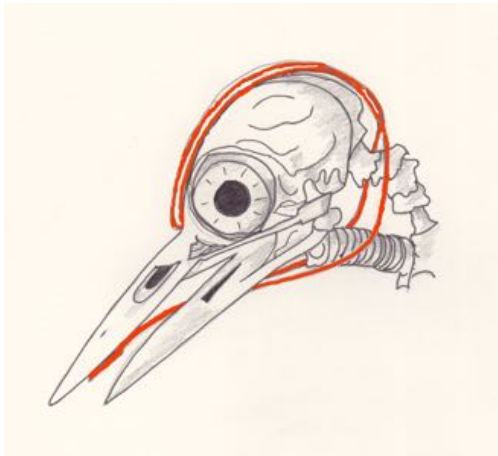
The British Journal of Ophthalmology (2002) reported that high speed photography revealed that in a millisecond before the head strikes the tree, thickened nictitans (third eyelid) closes over the eye of the woodpecker to protect it from flying debris and chips. Also it acts as a “seat belt” to restrain the eyes from quite literally “popping out of its head.”



The woodpecker's tongue

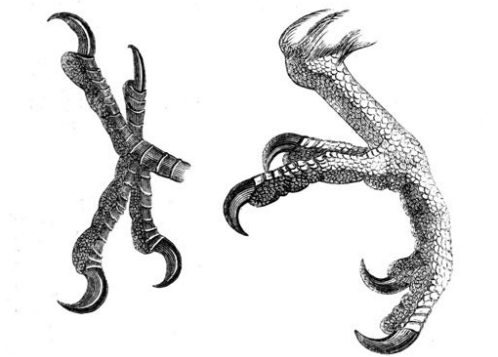
Having drilled a hole in the tree, the woodpecker would not be able to get at its insect prey without its very long 10" tongue which is rooted in the right nostril and wraps up to the top of the skull and right around the back in order

to fit inside the head. Not only does this design mean that the woodpecker can catch insects but it also serves a shock absorber to the brain when drilling. Just having a long tongue is not enough to catch insects. The tongue is sticky and also has sharp spikes to spear the insects. Once the insect is glued, a solvent in the mouth releases the glue so it can be swallowed.



The woodpecker's feet

Woodpeckers are very good at climbing trees. Their feet are zygodactyls which means they have two backward facing claws and two forward facing claws. The woodpecker starts at the bottom of the tree and climbs upwards in a spiral motion searching for insects. If it had feet like other birds with three toes in front and one behind then it would not be able to hold itself tightly to the tree while drilling and would fall off.



The woodpecker's tail

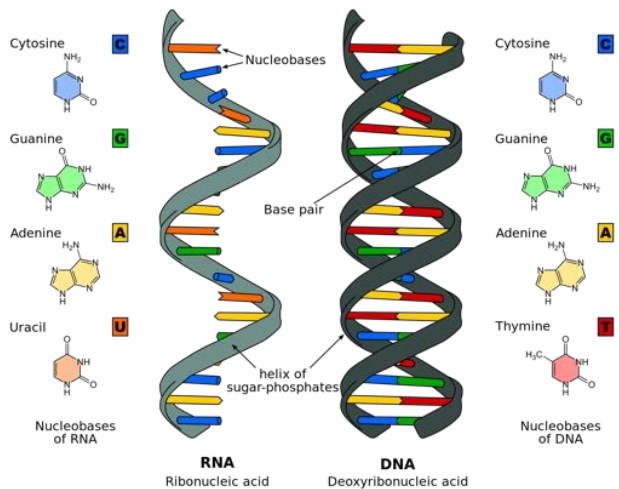
The tail of the woodpecker is not like other birds either. The tail is very stiff so that it can act as a brace. The tail feathers bend and spread to form an effective tripod when the bird is about to drill.



We can see that without every one of these design features in place, woodpeckers could not survive if the evolutionary theories of man were true. It would be impossible for this to evolve in a stage by stage manner by mere chance and no evidence has been found for this.

The information for all these mechanisms has to be coded into its DNA and where did this information come from? Information requires an intelligent Designer.

The Bible declares that with one word, God created the fowls of the air on the fifth day with all their colour, variety and function in Creation (Genesis 1:21).



“But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee: Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee. Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the LORD hath wrought this?” (Job 12:7-9)

Brazilian White Woodpeckers (*Melanerpes candidus*)





Wailing wall, Jerusalem