

Clifton News

284 January - March 2019

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News

The **Carol Service** timing was changed to give time for folks to finish their Christmas shopping and attend in the evening. Though we did not see anyone new, nevertheless we were encouraged that around 30 attended in total and some unsaved were present.

The **Watchnight Service** went well with 27 present and around 8 outsiders, some who had come for the first time. One man who lived close to the hall said that he was seeking to get right with God. We encouraged him to attend the Sunday family services.

With an increase in numbers of young people, we have now commenced a Sunday afternoon **young people's Bible class**. Do pray for the spiritual progress of the young people and children of believers in the assembly.

Numbers at the **Friday club** have increased mainly due to those in Wednesday club growing older and moving up. **Seekers** has around a dozen children attending and prayer valued for new younger ones to join.

We welcomed a new addition to Clifton Hall. We were pleased that **Dan Gerrad** asked for fellowship and was received in October. We welcome him to the assembly.

Dates for 2019

EASTER HOLIDAY CLUB

Monday 15th to Thursday 19th April at 10 am to 12 pm
Prize giving Thursday evening at 7 pm

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Meetings

Lord's Day

Breaking of Bread	11.00 am
Young people's Bible class	12.00 pm
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

January

6	Nitish Patel
13	Andrew Hall
20	Alastair Rodger
27	Nitish Patel

February

3	John Aston
10	Vincent Khushal
17	Alf Taylor
24	Ferranti Wong

March

3 Vincent Khushal
10 Nitish Patel
17 Alastair Rodger
24 Nitish Patel
31 Thomas Taylor

MONDAY PRAYER AND BIBLE TEACHING

January

7 George Rassovsky
14 George Rassovsky
21 Colin Roberts
28 David Penfold – Report of visit to Romania

February

4 Colin Roberts
11 Nitish Patel
18 David Willis
25 Nitish Patel

March

4 Paul Miller
11 Paul Miller
18 Paul Miller
25 Richard Catchpole

Question Box

Presently we are answering questions and objections often raised by Bible critics.

Where did Cain get his wife?

This is one of the oldest arguments skeptics have come up with thinking they have found a contradiction in the Bible.

The Bible tells us that Adam and Eve had two sons, Cain and Abel. Cain murdered Abel and then we read that Eve gave birth to Seth (Genesis 4:25).

After the murder of his brother, Cain went to live in the land of Nod and we read, "And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch." (Genesis 4:17). The question arises about where did this wife come from if Adam and Eve were the only humans God created?

The Scriptures confirms that there were not other humans created, "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." (Acts 17:26)

So where did Cain get his wife? The answer is found in Genesis chapter 5.

"And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters: And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died." (Genesis 5:4-5).

We are told that Adam lived 930 years and he and Eve had sons and



daughters. With such a long life span they would have had many children. The answer is that Cain married one of his many sisters or possibly a niece for that was the only way the human race could begin.

This raises another objection from the skeptic that incest is forbidden by God in Leviticus 18:6., "None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to him, to uncover their nakedness: I am the LORD."

This law was given by God to Moses thousands of years later when the human race was established. At the beginning, Adam and Eve's many children married each other. Later, we learn that Abraham was married to Sarah who was his half sister, "And yet indeed she is my sister; she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife." (Genesis 20:8)

Many of the marriages in the Old Testament were that of cousins such as Isaac and Rebekah (Genesis 24:23) and that of Jacob to Leah and Rachel (Genesis 29:12).

There were no genetic imperfections for God had created Adam perfect (Genesis 1:27). Genetic defects came into this world along with death because of man's sin. We can see this in the long ages men lived. Genesis 5 records Methuselah lived to 969 years which is not possible today. Defects progressed over time and if any married their cousins today there is the high risk of genetic deformities as is the case in some cultures that practise this. This was not the case when this was needed to start the human race.

Nitish Patel

Bible Teaching

THE SHAME OF THE CROSS

(Part 1)

By John Wallace, Hartlepool



“He endured the cross, despising the shame” (Hebrews 12.2)

One of the wonderful things about the Lord Jesus is that He never had anything to be ashamed of. He never thought a thought, did a deed, spoke a word the He needed to be ashamed of.

The first consequence of Adam’s sin was shame. Prior to Adams sin, we are told they were not ashamed but the first thing they did after Adam sinned, was they made themselves aprons to cover their nakedness. This has been the common experience of men. Ezra prayed I am ashamed and blush to lift my face to thee (Ezra 9.5).

The Lord Jesus is a different kind of man. Never a blush touched His cheeks. We ask, why then the shame. The Psalmist writing prophetically could say, “shame hath covered my face ... The reproaches of them that reproached thee have fallen upon me” (Psalm 69:7, 9). It was the shame men heaped upon him.

The hymn writer has put it so beautifully when he wrote,

*All the shame men heaped upon Thee,
Thou didst patiently endure;
Not the pains of death too bitter,
Our redemption to procure:
Wondrous Thy humiliation
To accomplish our salvation:
Thousand, thousand praises be,
Precious Saviour unto Thee!*

It was the shame of what men made to appear to be true of Him.

The shame of apparent guilt

The Jewish leaders sought desperately for witnesses to make Him appear to be guilty (Mark 14:55). When the witnesses could not agree the high priest in desperation asked, "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" And when He replied "I am", immediately the high priest cried "blasphemy", "no more witnesses", the unanimous verdict is guilty (Mark 14:60-64).

Blasphemy was not a charge that would have stood up with the Romans and so when they bring Him to Pilate and he asks them the charge they say, "If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee." (John 18.30). Put to death as a common malefactor between two real malefactors, the Lord Jesus has to bear the shame of apparent guilt.

Luke is very careful in his record of events when he says that there were two other (comma) malefactors (comma) crucified with him. He

uses such a delicate way of making it clear that the Lord Jesus was not a malefactor. An empty grave at the foot of the cross bore testimony to the fact that He was not a malefactor.

The shame of apparent failure

So many wonderful things were said about the Lord Jesus at His birth. He is Christ the Lord, He is the Saviour, He shall be great, the Lord God shall give unto him the throne, He shall reign. All these things gave great expectations of Him and what He would do; so many had high hopes of Him. But see now He is hanging on a cross between two malefactors.

The multitude of people had listened enraptured to His words; had brought their sick to Him to be healed; He had called them to come to Him; to follow Him; He has made so many claims as to who He is; He had made so many promises to those who would come to Him but suddenly they are crying "let him be crucified".

How come it is all ending like this? It all bore the marks of failure. He is brought to Herod and Herod and his soldiers set him at nought, they treated Him with the utmost contempt. When the wise men saw the king they worshipped; when Herod saw the king he ridiculed. They were saying effectively you are not a king you are a nobody and they mocked and ridiculed Him.

Finally Pilate wrote a title and put it over the cross; Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews. A king, not as He should be on a throne, but on a cross.

The shame of apparent weakness

Psalm 22.7 says, “all they that see me laugh me to scorn”. To see a person in distress and ridicule them is the lowest of human conduct and yet this is what the Lord Jesus had to endure.

Psalm 22.17 says, “They look and stare upon me”. When someone is in distress in a public place very often a crowd soon gather round; they aren’t there to help they just stand and stare. The people stood beholding (Luke 23.35).

They mocked his apparent weakness, “Come down from the cross and we will believe you”.

They mocked his apparent helplessness, He can’t save himself. “Come down and we will believe you”. He had come to His own only to be despised and rejected by them. The issue now in hand is not whether they would believe Him but to finish the work His Father had given Him to do.

“He cannot save himself”. In the very beginning, at his birth, the angel had said He shall save His people from their sins. He has come to save others and in order that He might do that He cannot save Himself. It was in order to fulfil His purpose that He endured the apparent weakness of the cross.

... to be continued

Good News

THE CHRISTMAS PRESENT TEARING FAMILIES APART



With the advent of quick DNA testing and analysis, more and more folks are giving the Christmas present of a test which tells you what your ethnic ancestry is. All it takes is a swab of cheek cells or some spit into a test tube which is sent off to a laboratory and the results come back 6-8 weeks later by email. The test not only shows one's genetic ancestry but can also reveal from a database of others in the world who have done the test whether they are related to the person such as distant cousins whom they knew nothing about. One person who thought he was 100% British found that he was actually 40% British, 25% German and 35% Greek!

However, some have found out more than they expected as one woman in the United States did whose name was Jenny, a free lanced writer from Connecticut. Her test revealed nothing exotic, she said. Her ancestry was largely British including Scottish and with a smattering of Scandinavian genes. However, a year later she did a test with another genetic company and persuaded her brother to do a test

with her. The results were a shock for it showed him as a half sibling. She was sure something was not done right so she asked her father's first cousin to do a DNA which revealed she shared no DNA with her whatsoever.

Further tests of her remaining brother and sisters and mother showed she was the odd one out. She approached her frail mother of 86 years to get an answer. The mother revealed that she had had an affair with another man and she was the result of it. Her husband never knew and the woman's real father had died 10 years before. She wanted to take the fifty year old secret to her grave but her sin had found her out.

The Word of God reveals the unpalatable truth about our past, it reveals who we are, where we have come from and also reveals that we are born in sin with the sentence of death upon us.

The Bible says that Eve is the mother of all living (Genesis 3:20). The whole human race is descended from one couple, Adam and Eve. They were our first parents.

Not only so, the Bible also reveals that we have inherited their sin nature and sentence of death, "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). This teaches that when Adam sinned, we all sinned and received his sentence of death. This guilt and judgment cannot be removed by our own efforts or religion.

It took the love of God to prepare a Saviour before man was even created and fell into sin. God's Son became the Son of Man born at Bethlehem and died on the cross at the place called Calvary. He, the sinless One, died the death we all deserve for our sins and rose again from the dead. He is the One you need to trust in for salvation. The Bible says, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

Design in Creation



BATS

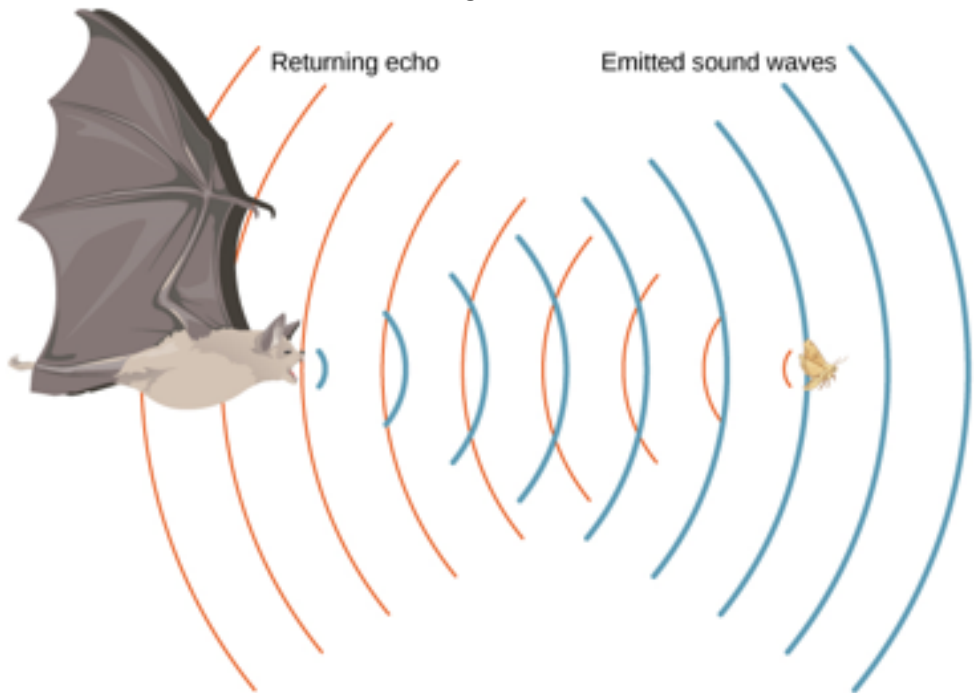
(of the order of Chiroptera, meaning 'hand wing')

By Nitish Patel

Bats are found throughout the world except in the cold Arctic and Antarctic regions. There are over 1200 different species with more discovered every year. They make up a quarter of all mammal species in the UK. It is the only mammal that can truly fly rather than just glide. They are divided broadly into two groups, the megabats, bigger ones like the fox bats which have wingspans of 2 metres and weigh 1.2 kg and the microbats of which the smallest is the bumblebee bat, the world's smallest mammal weighing only 2 grams. It is the smaller

bats which use the unique feature of finding insects by sonar or echolocation.

Different species of bats eat different things. The famous vampire bat drinks blood! Some eat fruit, a few eat fish but most bats, three quarters of all species, eat insects. Contrary to the popular myth, bats are not blind! They can use their eyes but in the dark the smaller bats use echolocation to hunt insects. So efficient is this detection system and the bat's manoeuvrability that a bat can detect a fly up to 100 feet away and can catch as many as four in just one second! They can eat their body weight in mosquitos in one night. The 20 million bats in the Bracken Cave of Texas eat over 200 tons of insects every night. The millions of bats flying around that famous cave all making an enormous amount of ultrasound noise yet each bat knows its own sound and is not confused hearing the countless noises of other bats!



How does the bat's sonar work? As they fly, they make a high pitched sound up to 212 kHz in their larynx at a very loud 137 decibels. It's big ears listen to the returning echoes bouncing off insects and other

objects. The higher pitch means that the sounds waves are much closer together and enables the bat to distinguish objects as thin as a human hair.

The bat was obviously created with this sonar system built in along with the information processing system written by God into its DNA so that it knows how to interpret the echoes it hears. So perfectly designed it is that scientists have studied it to improve man's sonar systems.

This alone proves the impossibility of it having arisen by gradual evolution over millions of years. How long did bats have to wait till blind chance fitted them with bigger ears and knowledge to process they echoes they were hearing to tell them it is an insect to eat and not a bit of leaf flying in the wind? It's echolocation has to work first time with all the functioning parts present otherwise accidents would eliminate the bats very quickly.

Even the oldest bat fossils according to evolutionary thinking to be over 50 million years old look fully formed like modern bats. One had a skull whose features indicate it could echolocate. There was no evolution then and neither is there now.

The Bible speaks of bats in caves and says,

"And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth. In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats." (Isaiah 2:19-20)

The theory of evolution likewise an idol today for many replacing God. It needs to be thrown to the moles and bats and sinners need to acknowledge Jesus Christ as their Creator and Saviour.





Fox bat



Bracken Cave bats, Texas

Report of visit to India

(18 November - 3 December 2018)

By Nitish & Ellen Patel

Every year we visit India but this visit was special as we were present for the baptism of Ellen's brother Timothy for whom we had prayed for many years. Most assemblies do not have a baptistry and have to use a swimming pool or go to the river. This baptism took place in the swimming pool of a resort by the sea. The believers enjoyed the day out with the singing of hymns, Bible teaching food, and having fellowship together. There was also a Hindu lad who had been saved and was due to be baptised but at the last moment his father did not allow him and said he can wait.

We flew to Gujarat to be with the assembly in Anand again which continues to grow year by year. We had a Bible study in a home and two Bible teaching meetings on the Lord's Day. There was good interest in the Word of God. The assembly does not get many visitors. It was encouraging to meet a couple who had been saved from a Roman Catholic background earlier in the year who had been baptised. It was good to see the brother take part in the morning meeting. Evangelist Sanjay Christian has now a car which enables him to travel further to many more villages with the gospel.

Our home assembly there in Borivali, Bombay has seen encouragement with a children's work in a nearby slum. This outreach has been going on for a number of years and many have been reached. They were planning to have a VBS, vacation Bible school with them (a sort of holiday club).

We were unable this year to visit the slum of Banduph where there is an assembly of very poor believers. We are told that they are doing well. The believers are very poor with some widows and some with children and struggling to survive. They are in constant need of help and the Lord graciously provides. Do continue to remember the work in India in your prayers.



The valley of Elah where David fought with Goliath (1 Samuel 17)

