



Trumpet's Sound

51th year, Australia
MAY - JUNE 2020



"Trumpet's Sound" is a bi-monthly publication of the Armenian Evangelical Brethren Church in Sydney, Australia.

Editor - Pastor Harry Hratsh Kiujuan

Contact Address:

ACM AUSTRALIA
PO BOX 1593,
CHATSWOOD NSW 2057
EMAIL: hkiujuan@acmaust.org
URL: www.acmaust.org



In this issue...

You shall have no other gods before me. 3
Pastor Harry Kiujuan

Psalms 2 4
Don Stormer

Matthew 8:1-13 6
Raffi Chaparian

The God of hope 9
Neil Buckman

Worshipping God and idols at Bethel (1) 11
George Hawke

Be encouraged because God provides 13
Dr. Czeslaw Bassara

Armenian Christian Mission . . . 15
Pastor Harry Kiujuan

Cover photo: Selected

Praise/Prayer points

- Thank the Lord because in all things He is good
- Pray for the quick distribution of goods from the container from USA
- Pray for container 19 on its way to Armenia
- Pray for our sick who are in need of financial support
- Pray for our co-workers as they keep in touch with all our needy families
- Pray for all those in Armenia who are suffering from COVID-19

The costs of the publication are covered by the gifts of believers, who donate out of the generosity of their hearts.

You shall have no other gods before me

The first commandment is “You shall have no other gods before Me”.

Yes, we are saved, and we do not live by the old commandments. But Jesus Himself did not break any of the commandments. They are God’s commands given to us so that we may know what a life pleasing to Him is like. They are commands to keep us safe from the world and evil.

As humans we create many gods for ourselves. A god is something that we like and cannot live without, something that occupies our minds and keeps us away from other things, something that we look forward to all the time.

Does God have the first place in your life? Or are you occupied and busy with other things and never have time for godly things? “Unless He is Lord of all He is not Lord at all.” Does He have first place in your life as you meditate, read the Bible, pray, and enjoy fellowship, Bible studies, and church meetings? If you have no time for these things, it is because there are other things that take priority in your life.

Train yourself in godliness (1 Timothy 4:8). To have God first in our lives we need to train ourselves, we need to plan our day, and take a closer look at the things that occupy us: rest, leisure, hobbies, and work. If we are too occupied with these things, we must be careful not to become their slaves and turn our backs on godly things.

A verse that has helped me in my life is “**Set your minds on things above**” (Colossians 3:2). Keep yourself occupied with godly things, ask the Lord to burden you with the ministry, ask your elders or pastors to help you become active in the church with just simple duties: cleaning, transporting people, gardening, and ushering. You will be surprised how God can take a simple life, and use it for His glory.

“You shall have no other gods before Me.” If He is your God then serve Him in the best way you can, serve Him without expecting any rewards; your rewards are treasured in heaven.

HK

Psalm 2

Some psalms are called *Messianic Psalms*. They have a definite reference to the Lord Jesus and are quoted in the New Testament in connection with Him. Psalm 2 is very definitely messianic, being quoted in both Acts and Hebrews and applied to the Lord Jesus. He is named as the begotten Son who is established as King on the holy hill of Zion.

The psalmist pictures the nations in rebellion against the Lord God and His Christ. In their folly they think they can defeat the Messiah; they are actually walking in the counsel of the wicked. The rulers of the nations confer together and take their stand against the Lord and His Christ; these kings stand in the way of sinners. They are like scoffers who think they can break the bands by which they have been controlled and cast off the cords that bind them.

The nations have always imagined they can ignore God or refuse to obey His commands. Pharaoh, in the time of Moses refused to obey the Lord until God showed the great strength of His hand in judgment. For nine plagues Pharaoh refused to obey, but God humbled him and punished him severely with the tenth of the plagues. Nebuchadnezzar thought he had acquired greatness by his own strength but he had to be taught by God that the God in heaven is the one who raises up whom He will and puts them down when they do not acknowledge Him.

The response of the Almighty is to laugh at those who oppose Him. Why should puny man think that he can resist the will of God? God in heaven looks down on the affairs of man and may rightly treat him with contempt. But God does not merely laugh at man's attempts to make himself supreme. He takes strong action against those who will

not acknowledge Him and His Messiah. He will speak to them in His anger and terrify them in His wrath. In a coming day when the anti-christ tries to establish himself as supreme over the world, God will act in judgment and then Christ will reign in righteousness over this world.

God states as an undeniable fact that He has set His King on His holy hill of Zion. There is no question that one day the Lord Jesus will return to the earth and establish His millennial kingdom over all the world.

Of our Lord Jesus, God has said "You are my Son. Today I have begotten you". The Lord Jesus became man, lived a perfect life and died an atoning death. Now God has promised Him an inheritance. "Ask of Me, and I will give the nations for your inheritance, the uttermost parts of the earth for Your possession." When He takes up His inheritance, He will overthrow His enemies completely. "You shall break them with a rod of iron. You shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

What is the psalmist's advice? The kings and the judges of this world are advised to be wise and instructed. It is wisdom to serve the Lord with fear and to rejoice before Him in reverential fear. True homage is to be paid to the Son; we must acknowledge His authority, serving and worshipping Him sincerely.

There is good reason to give sincere homage to the Son. Those who do not render homage will face His anger, and will perish when His wrath is kindled. But there is blessing for all who take refuge in Him. They do not face His wrath but experience His unfailing goodness.

It is not just the kings of the earth who need to listen to this message. Far too many people think they can ignore God or can rebel against Him without having to face any consequences. But God is not mocked. What a man sows he will also reap. There will come a day when all who have refused to submit willingly to the Lord Jesus will be forced to bow the knee before Him. But that will be too late to enjoy the refuge He offers us today. It is important for each of us to submit in faith to the Lord Jesus now, acknowledging Him as Lord and Master. Then we will be assured of His eternal blessing.

Don Stormer

Matthew 8:1-13

As Jesus concluded His Sermon on the Mount, He went down the mountain. Many people who had figured out that this man, Jesus, was different from the scribes and teachers they had, followed Him. Among those who followed Him, there was yet another group, people who trusted Him enough to come with their problems, as in Matthew 8:2. A leper who was desperate trusted that Jesus could heal him if He wanted to.

A little later, another person who trusted Jesus enough to know that He could help, came to Him with his trials (Matthew 8:5-6). This man had so much faith that he knew that if Jesus would only say the word, without being near, his servant would be healed.

In both instances, Jesus healed the people. In fact, He did many such miracles during His ministry on earth. He raised people from the dead, opened the eyes of the blind, and healed the lame and the deaf. An often asked question is, "Can Jesus heal today?"

The answer is "Yes, Jesus can and will heal today!" The Bible teaches that if someone among us is sick, he should pray (James 5:14). However, there is much misunderstanding about healing today. Many say, "Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever," meaning that Jesus does not change and that the way He and the apostles healed people by touching them still occurs today!

It is true that Jesus is the same and, being God, He will not change. He is the same and, in His power, is still able to heal and will heal people. However, the ministry of the Holy Spirit means a change; He does not intervene in the history of man or reveal Himself in the same way He did in the past. There are many things that God did in the past, that He does not do again today: creation; flood; direct revelation to individuals; prophets and apostles writing what He revealed to them. Because God has completed His special revelation to man, He does not continue to speak to man to reveal new things, even though some

claim that Jesus revealed Himself to them in a dream or vision and told them this or that.

This is because of the dispensational plan of God, a systematic order or division of things. God works differently at different times in history for His purpose and goal! That is why the time of the seven-year Tribulation will be a time like no other in history. God will display His majesty and power as never before. Christ will be revealed as the King of kings and Lord of lords and will pour out His anger as in no other period in history.

Therefore, God will heal the sick today, but not in the same way that He or the apostles did when they said the word, or people touched their garments. People were healed or even rose from the dead. God does not work that way anymore. Why did Jesus do such miracles?

It was for a testimony of who He is: Son of God, Creator of heaven and earth. Jesus' miracles validated His claim to be who He said He was (John 2:11; John 20:30-31). The apostles' message was also validated by signs (Mark 16:17-18).

It was the same reason for the Apostles, Mark 16:20. What were the signs in Mark 16:17-18? Once the message was validated, and the special revelation (the Bible) was complete, God worked through the Holy Spirit in a different way. In fact, even the Apostles, at the end of their ministry were not able to heal everyone; the signs were being slowly phased out (2 Timothy 4:20; 2 Corinthians 12:7-9a; 1 Timothy 5:23). Even during the ministry of Jesus not everyone was healed. Not all the sick people in the world were healed when Jesus was on earth. John 5:1-9 indicates that only one of the many sick people was healed.

God still heals today. When a person is sick, the person should pray, and others should pray and trust in His will and time for healing to take place. However, because the gospel is fully validated and the Word of God is complete, no further signs are needed. God has fully revealed all we need to know. Therefore, today's so-called healing ministries and healers are unnecessary, unbiblical, and fake; That is why it is important to read the Bible, as it deals with these issues. But false prophets may not be wrong in everything. They are false teachers

if an important part of their teaching or practice is wrong. By contrast, the Bible is all true, and not only some part of it.

Another common misunderstanding of what faith is, is seen when people say “what matters is that you have faith,” or “as long as you believe in something,” or “this is how I believe,” or “it does not matter how or what, as long as you have faith”.

We cannot believe whatever we like! prayers for the dead, infant baptism, and praying to Mary and other saints. But that is not what Jesus said in Matthew 8:13.

Let's analyse what Jesus said! What does “believing” mean? How and what did the centurion believe? He believed in Jesus only, and that His Word was sufficient to heal. The same was true of the leper. They did not have a wrong view of who Jesus was. They did not rely on their own faith or way of understanding faith.

They believed in Jesus, the Son of God, the Messiah, the one promised by God to come from heaven. They believed in Jesus accurately: that He could heal them. There was no mistake in their belief, nor did they have their own ideas. Jesus confirmed that they had the right faith, and said to them, “since you believe in me accurately, and know that I can heal, it will be done to you just as you believe”.

Therefore, it is important for us to get rid of all misconceptions and misunderstanding of Christianity, faith, and salvation. That is why it is important to read and search the Scriptures, so that we have the right faith, believe the truth and not necessarily what we were brought up with, or what our culture teaches. We need to cleanse and renew our minds from all the corruptions, pollutions, the false teachings, and misunderstandings of the Bible, so that we may know what the truth as well as the will of God is (Romans 12:2). This can only happen as we continually grow in the Word of God (2 Peter 3:18).

Raffi Chaparian



The God of hope

“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” (Romans 15:13)

Paul had a wonderful ability to condense into a few words great and rich truths. This sentence from his letter to Rome, in which are so many choice treasures, is just one splendid example.

*Who is “**the God of hope**”? He who is, in His nature and work, the source and guarantee of the glorious destiny to which His children can look with confidence and eager anticipation. Hope in the world may be no more than wishful thinking, but our hope is made sure by the God of hope.*

*“**Now may the God of hope...**” Yes, the God of hope, the One who calls us into His fellowship, wants us to have a real and living hope. Like faith, hope is essential to the life of a Christian. In fact, we can know something of the reality of our walk with God by the measure of hope that fills our heart. To know the God of hope is to have hope.*

Dear child of God, do you live only for this life? Are you like Lot, who looked out for present advantage, or like Abraham who counted the stars in hope? As we venture further into the light of God's truth through fellowship with Him, we increasingly long for and expect that which He has promised. Resurrection is coming – our resurrection – when death will be swallowed up by life, when we shall be like Him and when we shall see Him as He is. On that day, this world and this life, with all its troubles and pain, will be looked upon as only the brief preface to the greatest story ever told.

*“**Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing...**” Our hope is certain, and the Lord would have us now filled with joy and peace through faith. Faith is not merely mental assent to a few truths. Our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ brings us into a living connection with the unseen realm. How? The Holy Spirit seals as God's*

own possession all who bow before the Son, who humble themselves and give to Him their heart and life. It is the indwelling Holy Spirit who unites us with Christ. He enables us to begin to see and know His beauty, power and sufficiency. Then **joy** rises from the glorious freedom that Christ Jesus has won for us, and **peace** from our security in Him, having been reconciled "through the blood of His cross". Many people might claim they believe, but they do not bow, but stand, as it were, before the Lord and try to negotiate with Him. That is not the faith that saves, and not the faith that fills anyone with joy and peace.

"Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope..." Paul was not a man of half measures. His desire for the believers was that hope would permeate every part of their life and give them that far-sightedness that characterises so many of God's greatest servants. The same childlike faith with which we begin our life in Christ is the faith that leads to abounding hope.

"Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Assured hope can never arise out of wishful thinking, imagination or self-effort. Because the Holy Spirit is determined that we come into the fullness of our eternal calling, He is working a transformation in us that sets us apart to God. Transformation is the real evidence of the power of God in a believer's life and it is not seen in some loud demonstration that might impress the world or the worldly. Its evidence is in consistent abiding in Christ and His Word, unshakeable joy in Him, unwavering faithfulness and abounding hope.

"Lord, have Your way in us, fill us with abounding hope and glorify Your Name!"

Neil Buckman



Worshipping God and idols at Bethel (1)

Good start, but bad finish

John Akhwari had a good start in the 1968 Olympic marathon race, but he also had a bad finish. He fell during the race and dislocated his knee but kept on going to finish last more than an hour behind the winner. Likewise, the town of Bethel in Israel had a good start but a bad finish.

Geography

Bethel was 20 km (12 miles) north of Jerusalem; west of Ai (Genesis 12:8) and south of Shiloh (Judges 21:19). It has been identified with modern Beitin (or Benin) or with el-Bireh. Bethel was on the ancient north-south ridge road that has been referred to as the Road of the Patriarchs. This road went through Shechem, Shiloh, Bethel, Jerusalem, Hebron, and Beersheba.

Bethel was on the northern border of the land allocated to the tribe of Benjamin, and Jerusalem was on the southern border. Bethel was assigned to the Benjaminites, but they did not possess it, because the Ephraimites captured it from the Canaanites (Joshua 18:21-22; Judges 1:22-26). So Bethel was an Ephraimite town (1 Chronicles 7:28).

During the divided kingdoms, sometimes Bethel was ruled by Judah (2 Chronicles 13:19). And after the Jews returned from exile in Babylon, Bethel belonged to Judea rather than Samaria (Ezra 2:28). Some Benjaminites returned to Bethel after the exile (Ezra 2:28; Nehemiah 7:32; 11:31).

Worshipping God

After God called Abram to move to Canaan, he travelled to Shechem where God promised to give the land to his descendants. So Abram built an altar to the Lord. Next, he stopped near Bethel and “built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord” (Genesis 12:8 NIV). After visiting Egypt, Abram returned to this place near Bethel and

“called on the name of the Lord” once again (Genesis 13:3). So Abram worshipped God near Bethel.

Because Esau was angry after his brother Jacob stole his birthright and blessing, Jacob fled to Haran in Paddan Aram. One night on the journey God spoke to Jacob in a dream (Genesis 28:10-22) where angels were ascending and descending a ladder between heaven and earth. God stood at the top of the ladder and confirmed the promises He had given to Abram. When he awoke, Jacob promised to follow God if God protected him on his journey. Then Jacob named the place “Bethel”, meaning “house of God”. It was called “Luz” before (Genesis 28:19).

After Jacob spent 40 years in Haran, God told him to return to Canaan and said, “I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and where you made a vow to me” (Genesis 31:13).

When Jacob was back in Canaan, God told him, “Go up to Bethel and settle there, and build an altar there to God” (Genesis 35:1). After Jacob did this, God changed his name to Israel and confirmed the promises He had given to Abram (Genesis 35:1-15). And Jacob also set up a stone pillar at Bethel. So Jacob lived at Bethel and worshipped God there.

Deborah held court under the Palm of Deborah near Bethel (Judges 4:5). And in the times of the judges the ark of the covenant of God was at Bethel under the care of Phinehas, grandson of Aaron (Judges 20:26-28). Bethel was a sacred place to offer sacrifices to God and receive messages from God. For example, the Israelites went to Bethel to seek God’s advice when they planned to attack the Benjaminites at the battle of Gibeah (Judges 20:18-28). They made three visits there because they lost the first two battles.

The altar at Shiloh, a few miles north of Bethel, housed the Ark during the ministry of Eli and his sons, but Bethel was still prominent. The prophet Samuel’s circuit included Bethel which was a holy place where people offered sacrifices to God (1 Samuel 7:16; 10:3).

So Bethel was a place where the Israelites worshipped God and were reminded of His promises. Today, believers can worship God individu-

ally wherever they are, and collectively when they meet as a church. And God has given them many promises as well. Do we remember to worship God as Abram and Jacob did? Do we read and remember God's promises to us?

But life doesn't always go easily for God's people. Their sinful nature can cause sinful behaviour and conflict. That's what happened to the Israelites.

George Hawke
(to be continued)

Be encouraged because God provides

"And my God will meet all of your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19)

God provided!

Abraham was asked to sacrifice Isaac and named the place of the altar "God will provide!" (Genesis 22) The story in Genesis 22 is one of the most dramatic and most significant episodes in Genesis. The command to sacrifice Isaac, the sadness of the climb of Abraham and Isaac to the place of sacrifice, the painful binding him and laying him on the altar and the last minute intervention from heaven makes this one of the most excellent stories in the Bible.

Faith and hope

In Genesis 22 we read of the last test of Abraham's faith, which is comparable to the original call to leave his home and family. Although we are told it was a test for Abraham, God's command was totally real. It was on Isaac that all the promises of blessing depended for their fulfillment. Torn between love for his child and obedience to God, Abraham faced a very difficult choice. We see how faith and hope triumphed over fear and doubt until the knife was raised to slay Isaac. In this way Abraham showed that he was willing to put God's

call above every other commitment. At that moment the test ended.

A lamb was prepared!

A lamb was sacrificed in place of Isaac, and the angel declared that Abraham's act of obedience changed the status of the promises. These promises became sworn guarantees to countless descendants, of the capture of land and of blessing on him and, through him, on all the nations of the world. In Genesis 22:16-18 we read the last words spoken by God to Abraham in Genesis, and their implication should not be neglected. From now on there was no doubt about the fulfillment of the promise of God. The fulfillment of Abraham's faith was the lamb (Genesis 22:13), but its ultimate fulfillment is the Lamb of God (John 1:29, 36).

God's sacrificial love

For New Testament truth, there is more to the sacrifice of Isaac than the supreme example of someone committing himself to obey God completely (Hebrews 11:17-19). It is a picture of God's sacrificial love. Just as Abraham gave his only son as a sacrifice, so also the Father "did not spare his own Son" for this world. (Romans 8:32a; John 3:16) The place where the Lord Jesus, God's Son died is the place of God's provision. As the lamb died in Isaac's place, so also the Lord Jesus gave His life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). The Lord Jesus paid the full price to release us from the bondage of sin and death.

God provides!

"...but gave him up for us – how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?" (Romans 8:32b). If God gave His best gift, His beloved Son, to bring us to salvation, He will certainly also give whatever is necessary to bring to fulfillment the work begun on the cross of Calvary! We can be encouraged because God did not stop providing! He is the God of Abraham and He is our God, too! The Apostle Paul in the Epistle to the Philippians knew this truth and it was the reason that he was encouraged, and he was able to encourage others. He was sure that his God would meet all of their needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19).

Dr. Czeslaw Bassara

Armenian Christian Mission Inc.

In 1998 I was strongly burdened to visit Armenia. Initially I visited in winter, going six times and being exposed to temperatures of -35°. I have now made 22 visits. My calling was to take the gospel to the poor in Armenia, to go to places no one wanted to go to and see things no one wanted to see.

Armenia today is so much different, competing with other countries in many ways. Today, not just Armenians visit Armenia, but people come from all over the world. But if we look at the back streets, and behind some closed doors, Armenia is suffering with poverty. 30% of the population live below the poverty line.

Please **“do not love the country but love the people”**, and care for them.

I wish that rather than, instead of wanting to see and visit all the church buildings, villages, and monuments, taste all the food and wine, only to return home to say how good Armenia is, that people would do more. I do not think that what we are doing is enough to really help this poor nation, the babigs and mumigs who are struggling with poverty, a lack of money, food, and hygiene. These are people living in horrible housing conditions with no hope. The children face the same problems: no clothing for winter, no winter heat, no hot water, showering once a month, no shoes to wear to school, no medication. There are people who suffer from high blood pressure, cholesterol or diabetes who need daily medication. Good conditions just do not exist.

We read in the Bible that “the poor will always be with us”; what we can do is care for them.

No, Armenians are not lazy. They have been in difficult situations and circumstances with genocide, earthquake, and communism. Look at New York and see how many homeless are on the streets. Look at Australia and see how many charities are focusing on helping their poor.

Charity begins when we start loving the people. \$100 support per month could help the poor to prosper. Poverty humiliates people, takes their dignity away, and makes the children malnourished, as well as becoming physically and mentally unstable. There are a lot of these people in the villages. No, this is not the enemy's doing; it is the doing of each one of us.

For this reason, some 22 years ago we started Armenian Christian Mission to take the gospel to remote villages where people had never heard about God and Jesus, to give them hope. Now we distribute food, give monetary support, and help with medical expenses, clothing, furniture, rent, tertiary education, or whatever the needs may be. There are many Armenian and Australian organisations and individuals who have been exposed to our mission and are actively involved. If you are led to do the same or send us a gift you can visit our web www.acmaust.org or send us an email to info@acmaust.org