



Trumpet's Sound

48th year, Australia

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

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Cover photo: " We are our mountains sculpture" in Stepanakert, Artsakh republic. Photo by ACM, Artsakh republic dated 2015.



ACM praise points

- Praise the Lord for God is good
- Give thanks that God has kept our needy families safe and warm through winter
- Give thanks for the well-being of all our co-workers and their families
- Give thanks for the new office of ACM USA

ACM prayer points

- Pray that work on the Gospel Centre in Gyumri will start soon
- Pray for our many sick friends that the Lord will touch and heal them
- Pray for the USA mission team visiting Armenia in July
- Pray for the Australian mission team visiting Armenia in October
- Pray for the many poor families needing family support
- Pray for container number 19 being sent to Armenia by the end of this year

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

Resurrection

"For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption." (Psalm 16:10)

She'ol, in the Hebrew Bible, was a place of darkness to which all the dead went, both the righteous and the unrighteous, regardless of the moral choices made in life. It was a place of stillness and darkness cut off from life. Further revelation by the Lord Jesus and the apostles as given us a clearer picture of what happens after death. We know there are many people who fear death and do not want to talk or think about it. Yet death is something all people will face one day whether they want to or not. However, what a victory believers have in Christ! David, although not speaking of himself, could say with great faith and hope "You will not abandon my soul or let me see corruption".

We get four days' holiday each year as we celebrate Easter. People will go to the beach, and enjoy family picnics, holidays, games of cricket, or a day's fishing. For the children there are chocolate bunnies, coloured eggs, traditional food and cakes. But these things do not tell us why Christ came. He came so that you and I may be saved and have everlasting life. By believing in Jesus we inherit eternal life. This is not by works, but by faith alone.

Many times Jesus talked about His resurrection on the third day. Resurrection shows us Christ's victory over death. This victory can be yours today if you believe.

"My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?" (John 14:2).

If any season of the year needs to be celebrated with great joy and anticipation it is Easter. Easter is your day if you believe. You can be joyful knowing that the uncertainty of the Old Testament Sheol is not for believers. It is not for those who repent and have trusted in the Lord Jesus. It is not for those who keep their garments holy for the Lord.

As we come to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, let us be reminded that we who believe will be transformed and receive new bodies that do not come from this corrupted world. Instead, we will receive new bodies in Christ when we are resurrected to live with Him and for Him in heaven.

How will you be celebrate your Easter this year? Will it be with a chocolate bunny or with the victorious hope in Christ: "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"

Have a blessed Easter

HK

Mary: the promise of a Son

Read Luke 1.26-56

S*ix months after visiting Zechariah, Gabriel visited Mary. This time the message was that a virgin would have a son. At the time of this visit, Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph. Gabriel's message was even more unlikely than the one to Zechariah. Older people had been known to have a family, but a virgin had not previously conceived. But with God nothing is impossible and the prophet Isaiah had spoken about a virgin conceiving.*

If Zechariah had been startled by the angel's presence, Mary was troubled by his greeting. However, his greeting was reassuring; Gabriel named Mary as one who was both highly favoured and blessed among women. Furthermore, he assured her that the Lord was with her and she should not be afraid.

Gabriel emphasised that Mary had found favour with God. Her faith was strong and her life was godly. Of all the virgins in Israel she was the one chosen to bear the Son of the Highest. Gabriel told Mary she would conceive in her womb and bring forth a Son, and call His name Jesus. The Son to be born would be great, and would be called the Son of the Highest.

How great is He? Isaiah 61:1-2 speaks about the greatness of the work the Lord would come to do. He was great David's greater Son and would be given the throne of His father David and reign over the house of Jacob forever. In contrast to former kings of Israel, His kingdom will never end. Greatness is seen in His worldwide kingdom with all enemies being made a footstool for His feet.

The angel spoke about the nature of the coming Child; He was no ordinary boy. Gabriel talked about the humanity, the deity, the kingship and the kingdom of the Lord Jesus. Being born of Mary demonstrated His humanity; He was given the human name Jesus. His deity is seen in being named as the Son of the Highest. His kingship is seen in that He was a son of David and therefore the rightful heir to Israel's throne. In contrast to previous kings, His kingdom and His kingship will be unending.

At first, it looks as if Mary's response is similar to Zechariah's. However, Zechariah had asked for a sign; Mary asked how the birth could happen; she was a virgin. She is not condemned for asking a question because her question was different from Zechariah's; it was not asked in unbelief, but in puzzlement. She wasn't looking for proof of something that she did not think would happen. Once the explanation was made she willingly bowed to the Lord as His maidservant ready to do His will. Elizabeth later blessed Mary as one who believed what the Lord had said to her. Zechariah should have believed that God could repeat His goodness to Abraham, but there was no precedent for a virgin conceiving. True, Isaiah had said that a virgin would conceive, but Mary had no reason to expect that the prophecy would be fulfilled in her.

The angel's answer showed that God was in control and emphasised the deity of the Lord Jesus. "The Holy Spirit will come upon you." This conception would be the work of God. Because no man was involved, the child would be without sin. Furthermore, He would be called the Son of God. The babe was God: the Holy One.

The Trinity is seen working together. The angel talked about the Holy Spirit, the power of the Most High and the Holy One to be born.

All three persons in the Trinity were actively involved in the mission to redeem fallen mankind. The one to be born was both perfect God and perfect man. It was important that the Messiah was without sin and yet able to die for the sins of others.

Mary's response was a willingness to be the servant of the Lord. She knew the potential shame involved. The angel left Mary with an important message to ponder: "Nothing is impossible with God!" What man cannot do is within the power of God. The one who would enable a barren old woman to have a child could also enable a virgin to conceive.

To us today

The nature of the Son who was to be born is a key factor in our salvation. The Lord Jesus was fully God and fully man. To have been otherwise would have rendered our salvation ineffective. Only one who is God is perfect and therefore free from sin; only one who is man can die to bear the penalty of the sins of others. Without this there is no hope for mankind. We thank God for the perfection of His Son, knowing that this was essential for our salvation.

Mary is an example to us in her faith and in her willingness to be the servant of the Lord. Are we prepared to bear reproach for the name of Christ?

To those who believe, the Lord gives encouragements to assist their faith. Mary was told about her relative Elizabeth in whose life God had done an "impossible thing". Learning from the experiences of others encourages us to continue steadfastly in the faith.

Don Stormer

"We have all things and abound; not because I have a good store of money in the bank, not because I have skill and wit with which to win my bread, but because the Lord is my shepherd." (Charles Spurgeon)

Persevere in prayer

Read 1 Kings 18:1, 36-46

Have you ever thought about the difference between receiving the **answer** to your prayers and receiving the **requests** of your prayers? Let me put it another way. Which of the following questions reflects the way you look at prayer in general. "How much should I have to pray to receive my request?" and "How much should I have to pray to receive an answer?" I think the right attitude should be "praying till we receive God's answer". God may not give us whatever we ask from Him, but it is impossible for Him not to answer the prayers of His children offered in the Lord Jesus' name.

God can answer our prayers in three ways: yes, no and wait. Actually, God's third answer can be understood as a green light to continue praying until it turns to yes or no (or we realise it is yes or no). In the experiences of daily life the end result of waiting is yes or no. I think it is right to think that God's answers to prayers will be either yes or no. But the big question for you and me is "Do we persevere in our prayers until we receive God's answer?"

How much did Elijah pray that there would be no rain? And how much did he pray for rain to come again? In the scriptures it is not mentioned how much he prayed that there would be no rain so that a drought would come (probably once), but for the rain to come at the end of the drought he continued to pray seven times. It is interesting that when James speaks about this in his letter he does not mention the number of times Elijah prayed to stop and bring rain. He merely says "Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit" (James 5:17-18). Elijah prayed till the rain came down from heaven. He would continue to pray 7, 8, 9, 10 times because he had the assurance that the rain should come. God has promised it (1 Kings 18:1). As a man of God, a mighty prophet, he surely could think to himself "I know God has told me, I prayed once and the rain will

certainly come. Why spend time and energy, since I am a prophet of the living God". But we see he humbly persevered until he received the answer and the request he prayed for.

Now, let us think about the fire coming from heaven. We read that Elijah prayed a short prayer and fire from the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the dust, and also licked up the water in the trench.

We see two entities, rain and fire, occurring in the same geographical area, in the same time frame, coming from the same source, heaven, coming as a result of prayer from the same person.

But let us stop and think, where do we need to exercise greater faith? In bringing rain from heaven or in bringing fire from heaven? Which is more natural? The natural option is that heaven gives rain, not fire. If that is so, why is it that for the easy, natural and promised one (the rain) Elijah prayed seven times, but for the hard, unnatural and not promised one (the fire) he prayed just once? It is crystal clear that he prayed more intensely for the easy request, but for the hard one he prayed just once. Or perhaps we need to think that the prayer for fire was said with greater faith and was immediately answered, but for the rain there was weak faith (if we consider that for three and a half years it had not rained).

We need to accept the fact that Elijah had never had the experience of bringing fire from heaven before. After King Ahab's death he had such an experience (2 Kings 1:10-14). A greater faith and much prayer was needed for fire, but we see the opposite here. Also we need to remember that the prayer for rain and fire occurred on the same day with only a short time gap between them. First, he prayed for the fire and then the rain. This helps us understand that the faith for praying for fire and the faith for rain was identical, so why pray seven times? It is clear that the secret was not faith, but perseverance, a virtue missing from the dictionary of modern day Christianity.

Dear believer, do you persevere in your prayers until you get your request or your answer? How many blessings would be yours today, if you had persevered in prayer?

Perseverance does not mean to repeat your prayers so that you express a strong will or try to teach or dictate to God what He should do for the best results. It means to continually trust in Him and openly speak about your trust to Him.

The Lord Jesus also persevered in prayer. When the time of crucifixion came He prayed three times that the Father would take the cup from Him. Why did He pray three times and not once? Did He think that the Father did not hear Him the first time? No, Jesus had the certainty that the Father was always with Him and always heard Him. In John 11.42 Jesus says "I know that you always hear me..." The three times show the attitude of trust that Jesus had; He would trust His Father till the end. Are we better than the Lord Jesus that we don't want to persevere, or does our faith exceed the Lord's faith?

God wants us to persevere in our prayers, so that we will persevere in our worship and thanksgiving. Elijah persevered and it brought great blessing to him, to the nation (they turned to God) and the country (the rain). May we learn this and apply it in our lives, for the glory of our Lord Jesus.

Vartan Sarkissian

***Do not get discouraged even when
people do not do what they should
(Acts 12:25, 13:1-13)***

A*re you angry with someone today? Before you express your anger consider two things. First, what you think may not be completely true. Second, what you think may be true but you cannot force other people to make right decisions.*

Think of John Mark. When Barnabas and Saul had finished their mission of taking aid to the poor in Jerusalem, they returned to Antioch, taking with them John, also called Mark (Acts 12:25). The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia

and sailed from there to Cyprus. When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. John was with them as their helper (Acts 13:4-5). From Paphos, Paul and his companions sailed to Perga in Pamphylia, where John left them to return to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13).

Things were too difficult. John Mark gave up the missionary journey and went back to Jerusalem. It was more difficult work than he had expected. Missionary work can be demanding.

First great promise, then disappointment. Paul and Barnabas saw great promise in John Mark, but he opted out early in this first missionary journey. They both depended on John Mark for his help but he disappointed and frustrated them by being undependable.

Why do we become undependable? People do so for many reasons. Some are logical, others are not.

We need to be careful. We also need to remember that in the course of our lives perhaps we have also disappointed and discouraged some people.

Disagreement between brothers in Christ: as we know Paul and Barnabas split up over the issue of accepting John Mark back in the team for the second missionary journey (Acts 15:36-41).

Encouragement! We can be encouraged by the fact that they made up because later Paul mentions his good relationship with Barnabas (1 Corinthians 9:6) and also with John Mark (2 Timothy 4:11).

Do not get discouraged even if people do not do what they should!

Dr. Czeslaw Bassara
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It is a masterpiece of the devil to make us believe that children cannot understand religion. Would Christ have made a child the standard of faith if He had known that it was not capable of understanding His words? (Dwight L. Moody)

True worship

What is “true worship”? You may think that worship is limited to a church meeting or the singing that takes place in such a meeting. But it’s much more than that!

In Romans Paul shows that worship is an important part of our Christian lives. After 11 chapters on doctrine (what we believe about what God has done for us), he turns to practice (how we should live in view of what God has done for us).

This turning point in the book of Romans begins, “I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship” (Romans 12:1 NIV).

Christians are urged to do something here. We are told that our actions, conduct and behaviour should flow from an appreciation of what God has done for us. Paul says “I urge you”. It’s not a command from a dictator, but an appeal from a friend. God, through Paul, is urging us to live in fellowship with Him.

This appeal is in view of “God’s mercy”. All that God has done for us and given us is described in the previous 11 chapters. This includes salvation, forgiveness, justification, grace, redemption, righteousness, peace, hope, love, reconciliation, a spiritual life, the Holy Spirit, being released from the law of Moses, and being children of God, heirs of God, and co-heirs with Christ. It’s all so amazing that Paul concludes this section with a doxology expressing awe and wonder at what God has done, and continues to do, through Jesus (Romans 11:33-36). That’s the basis of why we should live for God.

Paul says “offer your bodies” to God as a living sacrifice. This means to offer our whole lives to God, in the way that sacrifices were offered in the ancient world. It’s our whole body, soul and spirit and all we do, not just in a meeting at church. It’s a total commitment.

It’s a “living sacrifice”. Animals were sacrificed daily to God in the

Old Testament; today we are to be the sacrifice. We give up our rights and obey God. Our sacrifice is to be "holy", exclusively for God. Just as in marriage we give ourselves fully to our spouse, so we give ourselves fully to God. The sacrifice is also to be "pleasing to God". We are to live to please God.

This is "true and proper worship". It's what worship is! It's offering ourselves to God because of all He's done for us. It's our logical and reasonable response to God.

We have seen that Romans 12:1 describes what worship is for each believer. It's a way of life. It's individual worship. This worship is not just a church meeting or singing, but the whole of our lives.

So according to the Bible, worship is a part of our response to God's revelation. It is an attitude and an action. The attitude is offering adoration, respect and honour to God (Philippians 2:9-11; Revelation 5:14). And the action is showing this respect by a life of service, obeying God (Romans 12:1). Everyone worships something or someone. It's evident in how we spend our time and money.

But God also calls us to collective worship (1 Corinthians 11: 23-33). That's how our individual worship can be combined and expressed corporately. It's an opportunity to express our adoration, respect and honour of the Lord collectively. Corporate worship is focused on what the Lord has done in dying for us. That's one of the purposes of the Lord's Supper. Like individual worship, this should engage our minds, wills and emotions.

Let's worship the Lord "in the Spirit and in truth" (John 4:23-24).

OFFERING YOURSELF TO GOD IS WHAT WORSHIP IS ALL ABOUT.

George Hawke
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"An infinite God can give all of Himself to each of His children. He does not distribute Himself that each may have a part, but to each one He gives all of Himself as fully as if there were no others" (Aiden Wilson Tozer)

The joy of journeying

Sometimes we meet people who are landmarks in our lives. Let me tell you about an old lady I once knew. She was frail, bedridden and so thin that she scarcely put a contour in the sheets on her bed. As a teenager I would occasionally visit her in the hope of being some sort of encouragement. Looking back now, I have no idea what she thought of my attempts at friendship and pastoral care, but I used to come away from each visit with the curious feeling that I had somehow received much more than I had given. As I think about her now, I realise that despite her advanced age and frailty, she had an inner energy that was infectious and a sense of friendship with God that even now I envy. In her advanced age she was still a learner, standing on the brink of eternity, ready for the next adventure in her pilgrimage with God.

I have since met a few other Christians of various ages like this, and have wondered what it was about them that seemed so attractive. One of the features that make these people stand out to me is the way their spiritual lives have not stopped moving. They are not motionless like water trapped in a pond but more like a river constantly moving forward with life and energy. They haven't lost the sense of wonder that they are travelling with a boundless God who is leading them to so much more discovery of Him and to personal change in their own lives. They remind me of the comment of Paul's, "Not that I have already ... been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me" (Philippians 3:12). In short, they are people who are pressing on, they are on a journey. They are not journeying with the insecurity of someone looking for the truth. They are more like Paul: they sense that they have been found by the Truth. Christ has taken hold of them and they have found this so wonderfully attractive, that their lives have become drawn into a journey involving personal change as they discover more of Christ.

The symbol of Abraham's life was a tent. "Like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents" (Hebrews 11:9-10). He was a pilgrim

constantly travelling and experiencing more of God. Abraham's nephew, Lot, was quite different and obviously did not like the journeying life of a pilgrim (Genesis 13). Like some today, he wanted the secure sense of having arrived. So he chose to live in the city of Sodom. He did not like life in a tent; cities were far more secure. His was a false arrival; he had simply stopped moving forward. If you read the story in Genesis 19, you will see that in the end, Abraham was far more secure in his pilgrim's tent than Lot was in the city of Sodom.

Christians who feel as if they have arrived and have little desire to travel on like Paul or Abraham, learning and changing in their personal lives as they experience more of God, are in danger of having made a false arrival. Like Lot, they will find that their place of false arrival eventually becomes a place of both boredom and spiritual danger to be escaped from. Their views and understandings of God are fixed in unhealthy ways that do not allow for further deep change towards Christlikeness. In short, they have ceased being disciples or learners.

That old lady had not stopped journeying, unlike Lot. In her advanced age she was still pressing on like Paul and travelling like Abraham. As she continued to move forward in her enjoyment of knowing God, she quite unknowingly whetted my young appetite for God. He calls us to be journeyers rather than settlers.

Take a moment to tell God that you want to move on in your spiritual life and see what happens!

Rex Dearlove

Is your phone fully charged?

Is your phone fully charged? Isn't it frustrating when you are not near an electrical outlet and your phone dies or is about to die? This seems to always occur just when you are checking your e-mails, talking to a business associate, your boss, or your spouse...

I love it when I am at home or in the office, knowing that the phone is connected to the outlet and is being charged while I am using the

phone! I never have to worry that the phone will die because, being connected to the power source, it has an endless supply of power, no matter how much I use it. The problem occurs when I am away from the power source and have no outlet near me to connect to.

Of course, today there are portable chargers that you can take with you giving power back-up anytime. That is great! I don't have to be frustrated, and worried that my phone will die because I can have power anytime that the phone needs it.

It is the same way spiritually! If you and I want to have continuous power spiritually, have victorious lives, have God's strength with us always, and to never be powerless, nor void of God's direction in our lives, we need to stay connected to Jesus! He is the source of God's power! Endless source of power! By reading the Bible and praying, we can have that power, victory and guidance which God gives. Remember to stay connected!

Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Luke 11:28; 1 Timothy 2:1-4; Ephesians 6:18.

Raffi Chaparian

Armenian Christian Mission Incorporated Australia (ACM Inc.)

ACM Inc. has been operating in Armenia for over 18 years. It began by supporting ministry among children in a humble manner. The main calling of Armenian Christian Mission is to take the Gospel to the neediest people in Armenia, working with local churches to reach out to children, youth, adults and the aged.

Today, the head office of ACM Inc. is in Australia with seven directors. It is registered in Armenia as a humanitarian organisation with five board members. This year it has been registered in California with four board members. ACM Inc. is a non-profit organisation. The workers in Armenia are the only ones who are paid.

All donations go to the following projects:

1. *Family monthly support*
2. *Family food parcels*
3. *Medical expenses*
4. *Winter heat*
5. *Rent support*
6. *Syrian refugees*
7. *Christian publications, Trumpet Sound magazine*
8. *Youth ministry*
9. *Tertiary education*
10. *Container ministry*
11. *Supporting ACM Armenia co-workers*
12. *Supporting the field officer's travel expenses*
13. *Supporting Child Evangelism Fellowship co-workers in Armenia*
14. *Upgrading the Gospel centre in Gyumri*
15. *House repair work for the poor*
16. *Vanadzor project, helping poor people who live in containers*

We encourage you to help us help others in need. Please contact your nearest office if you would like to be a volunteer, or if you would like to assist in promoting the work or would like us to give a presentation of our mission in your church. You may also support any of the projects above. Please ask to be placed on the list of those who receive our prayer letter. Contact us if you would like to join our 2017 mission team to Armenia.

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