



Trumpet's Sound

52th 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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ACM

- Thank the Lord for all His goodness. Give praise and honour to the King
- Pray for spiritual awakening in Armenia
- Pray for those affected by the pandemic and for our many sick friends
- Pray for the children and the youth who are being reached by our workers
- Pray for peace
- Pray for the many families in our care
- Pray for smooth transit for container 24, soon to be sent to Armenia
- Pray for a container of aid to be sent from US to Lebanon
- Pray for the ability for us to be able to help some who will be affected by severe winter conditions
- Pray for our workers and their safety
- Praise God for what has been done this year by His grace

Cover photo: Lake Sevan, ACM,
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*The costs of the publication are covered by the gifts of believers,
who donate out of the generosity of their hearts.*

Give me back my childhood Christmas

Time after time we hear that Christmas is not the same, and we look back to see if we can find out what is missing. Is it the lights, the presents, or Santa? Yet we have all that. What is missing is the spirit of Christmas.

But how can Christmas be the same if we must stop singing the hymns in public that reflect Jesus, stop displaying the nativity scene that reflects Jesus, if we stop going to church to worship Him, if we are not permitted to speak of Him as the one who came to save sinners? If we take Christ out of Christmas, why do we celebrate Christmas at all? And why do we wonder if there is no spirit left?

No, Christmas spirit is alive in every believer and in every church that comes together to worship the Saviour, the one the angels proclaimed, about whom the shepherds spread the news, and to whom the wise men brought their gifts.

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the LORD. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." (Luke 2:10-12)

This spirit is God's gift to all mankind. You too can receive this gift if you only come to the Saviour Jesus in repentance. "Lord Jesus I come as a lost sinner. Help me, change me, bring my joy back, bless me with your Spirit and make me live again".

And all who come to Him are blessed with new life, a new hope, and an eternity in heaven.

May the spirit of Christmas fill your heart with gladness and joy.

From all of us at ACM and Trumpet's Sound, have a blessed Christmas.

H Kiujian

From Egypt to Canaan (2)

Moses: prepared by God

Moses' story begins sometime after the Pharaoh of Egypt had become alarmed by the increase in the Israelite population. He was afraid that if there was war, the Israelites would join with his enemies and so leave his country. We have no indication why he thought this way. If he thought they were potential enemies who were likely to turn against him, why not send them away before there was trouble? If he wanted to keep them in the land, why not give them some privileges to encourage them to become integrated into the social structure? However, as we have seen, God had His plans and was able to use the folly of the Egyptian ruler to accomplish His purposes.

Pharaoh's answer to his perceived difficulty was to make the Israelites into slaves. He forced them to build supply cities for him – Pithom and Raamses. However, his plan did not work, because the more he afflicted the Israelites, the more their numbers increased. Other attempts to control the population were tried. Pharaoh tried to coerce the Israelite midwives into a programme of infanticide so that any boys who were born were killed at birth. The midwives, however, feared the Lord and disobeyed the king. So the king commanded that all baby boys be thrown into the river.

Moses was born into a slave family, something that was true of all other Israelites. We know that he was born of godly parents, people who, as the writer to the Hebrews tells us, were not afraid of the king's commandment. Therefore Jochebed, Moses' mother, did what any mother would have longed to do. She kept the baby safe for the three months that it was possible to hide his existence. She saw that he was an intelligent child and this, combined with her godliness and lack of fear of the king's commandment, led to her unusual method of saving her son.

The writer to the Hebrews emphasises the faith of Moses' parents at his birth. Three months later Jochebed prepared a waterproof basket

into which she placed Moses before she put it into the Nile. From there Moses was rescued by the king's daughter and later reared as a prince in Egypt.

We notice the way that God provided for Moses' rescue. Someone from within the Pharaoh's family would be the means of the baby's rescue. Because Moses' sister Miriam stood in the shadows to see what would happen, she was present when Pharaoh's daughter came to the river to bathe. It must have been apparent to her that the princess intended to keep the baby, so she offered to find one of the Hebrew women to nurse the child.

In this way Moses spent his earliest years with his own parents. Being a godly woman, his mother would have taught him about the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Moses therefore knew that the enslaved race was his own flesh and blood.

Moses at 40

Life as a prince in Egypt continued for Moses until he was 40 years old. Then he decided to help his fellow Israelites. He went out to see how his fellow nationals were faring and when he saw an Egyptian mistreating a Hebrew, he checked that no one was looking and killed the Egyptian, burying him in the sand. Stephen (Acts 7:23-25) tells us the way Moses was thinking. The thought had come into his heart to visit his brothers. When he saw a Hebrew suffering wrongfully, he defended him and avenged him, killing the Egyptian oppressor. He had a strong conviction that God would deliver the Israelites by his hand, and he supposed that the Hebrews would have understood this.

Both Moses, in Exodus, and Stephen (Acts 7) tell us the response Moses received on the second day. This time he saw two Hebrews fighting and asked them the reason for their fight. The man in the wrong asked Moses who had made him a prince and a judge over them. Instead of being welcomed as a deliverer, Moses was reviled by the people he intended to help. Moses realised that things had not gone as he had planned and he was temporarily overcome with fear and escaped for his life to Midian.

Moses' methods

Did Moses already know that God had chosen him for a special task? We can only assume from the statement in Acts 7:25 about supposing that his brothers would realise that God would deliver them from their slavery, that he did know something about God's plan. He would have known how he had come to live in the palace and that he was different from the other people there.

In addition to his belief that God had called him to free the Israelites, he apparently had a keen sense of justice (or injustice!) and acted on the spot. He saw injustice and killed the culprit!

However, this raises the question of whether he acted in his own strength and before God's appointed time. This is a problem with many of us. We need to realise that God's work must be done in God's time and in God's way. Anything else will fail.

There is one other factor in Moses' thinking which the writer to the Hebrews discusses. In Hebrews 11:24-26 we learn that when Moses became of age, he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Instead he chose to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin. In this he was esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. Rather than earthly rewards, he looked forward to heavenly ones.

The writer to the Hebrews goes on to add that by faith Moses forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king because he endured as seeing Him who is invisible. The placing of this verse in Hebrews 11 raises a question. The writer says that Moses left Egypt not fearing the wrath of the king before he mentions the keeping of the Passover. If the writer of Hebrews is writing chronologically then Moses recovered from his initial fear and left Egypt trusting in God to preserve him.

What can we learn from Moses' methods? He knew that God had prepared a plan for the release of the Israelites from their bondage and that he was part of that plan. However, he acted before God's time and not in God's way. He was therefore unable to continue his program and had to wait until it was God's time to act.

Moses in Midian

Moses needed to spend time in Midian. Why? For forty years he had been living in the luxury of the palace. He was out of touch with how the common Israelites lived. What he needed was time to learn to be a servant. If he were leaving the luxury of the palace to lead hundreds of thousands of people (and their flocks and herds) into and through the wilderness, he had to understand the problems of desert life. Forty years in Midian fully prepared Moses for that part of his task.

Moses therefore had time to think about the whole purpose of life. He would also have learned his own limitations when pitted against the harsh nature of the desert. Forty years in that environment was also ideal training for the forty years he spent leading the Israelites through the wilderness.

Even so, Moses was not fully ready for God's call when it came. Perhaps because of his rash behaviour forty years earlier, he made one excuse after another to avoid doing what God was calling him to do. We turn now to the record of his all to service.

Don Stormer

Service of the King

In 1912, at the age of 25, Alfred Henry Ackley of Pennsylvania (United States), a minister of the gospel, musician and hymn writer wrote about the indescribable, overflowing joy in the worship and service of his Lord and Christ.

I am happy in the service of the King.

I am happy, O so happy!

I have peace and joy that nothing else can bring,

In the service of the King

This King whom Ackley was referring to was

- *Born a King. No one in the history of this universe was ever recognised in this manner. The fact remains that Christ has always been King. Matthew 2:1-2 reads Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.*
- *He was crowned king as prophesied. The day and the way in which the Messiah would present himself to the watchful masses as recorded in Daniel 9, Psalm 118:26 and Zechariah 9:9. John 12:13-15 tells us that they took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.*
- *The truth about his Kingship was a major issue at his trial before he went to the cross. The Roman rulers were most concerned about this. At his birth, King Herod ordered the ruthless killing of the children below two years old in that region. Much later, Pilate was interested to know more about this. We read what he said in John 18:37. Pilate, therefore, said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice.*

He was declared with sarcasm to be king by Pilate and at the same time his very own denied Jesus as true Lord and King. Although they loathed their Roman rulers, they declared openly that Caesar was their only king. This is recorded in John 19:14-15. And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.

- *The announcement of the title king was prominent at the crucifixion for the whole world to see. John 19:19-20 says, And Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.*
- *In His burial, he was given the highest honour reserved for royalty in an unused tomb of wealthy Joseph and the linen he used together with the expensive spices of Nicodemus. And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight (John 19:38-39).*

This was also in fulfilment of prophecy. And He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth (Isaiah 53:9).

1. *The homage and worship by the disciples at the resurrection and ascension was one reserved only for the high King of heaven. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy (Luke 24:51-52).*
- *What has been hitherto hidden from the world will be visible for the world to see and acknowledge at His return. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS (Revelation 19:16).*

As we live in this day of grace, the opportunity remains for us to crown this Lord Jesus as King of our lives. When we recognise our wretchedness and sin and confess that Christ is the only one who has displayed himself as our sin-bearer, He forgives us and at the same time

imputes His righteousness on us. This miraculous transaction forms the basis and the beginning of a life of devotion, worship and service to the Lord, our King. Nathaniel did this before any of the other disciples. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel (John 1:49).

Ackley, who served his Lord and King faithfully from his early years, also wrote the words of the hymn "He Lives",

Paul reminds the church in Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. The Greek for "service" is *latreia*, which also implies worship of God according to the strict Levitical order.

This peace and joy and blessing that Ackley describes in the refrain of the hymn is enunciated in all of Paul's letters.

*In the service of the King
Every talent I will bring.
I have peace and joy and blessing
In the service of the King.*

May the Lord Jesus Christ be glorified and honoured as we continue in our worship and service of the King.

Dr Daniel James

"Beware of manufacturing a God of your own: a God who is all mercy, but not just; a God who is all love, but not holy; a God who as a heaven for every body, but a hell for none; a God who can allow good and bad to be side by side in time, but will make no distinction between good and broad in eternity. Such a God is an idol of your own, as truly an idol as any snake or crocodile in an Egyptian temple. The hands of your own fancy and sentimentality have made him. He is not the God of the Bible, and beside the God of the Bible there is no God at all."

— J.C. Ryle

WHY?

I read of a question recently raised by someone in India concerning the virus: "Why would God do this to us?" This is often asked in difficult times, and we are certainly in the midst, or rather at the beginning, of what may become extremely difficult times.

In the West, belief in God is widely considered unnecessary and even harmful, a frail crutch for the weak minded, an excuse for pride and bigotry or simply the childish dreams of the dull who are unwilling or unable to face reality. It wasn't always so – in just a generation the cultural landscape has been radically transformed. The result has, in part, been the sifting out of those who had no more than a cultural faith from those who continue to hold to a solid, eyes wide open, confidence in the God who created the heavens and the earth.

Is such a bold faith both reasonable and possible in the present day? It is, but only if it has substance and is anchored in unshakable truth. When times are tough, mere sentiment, mere wishful thinking, will be blown away like dead leaves in a puff of wind. It will evaporate like dew in the hot sun.

The substance of a strong faith, and the unshakable truth in which it is anchored, is the cross of Jesus Christ. Why? Because in that one extraordinary historical event, man is seen as he is, and God is seen as He is.

Humanity is not deserving of God's unending favour and blessing. The cross of Jesus shows us what we are and what we deserve. He who did unprecedented good, who spoke only truth, who wanted only our deliverance from sin, was betrayed and cruelly murdered. Few believed Him, most deserted Him, and the ordinary people cried out for His blood. The common human experience, throughout the world and throughout history, has been sin. We suffer so much because of sin in others, and we afflict others because of the sin in our own hearts.

But the cross is not just a story of human sin, it is also the story of

God's great love. Jesus died willingly to suffer the judgment of God on sin due to us. He died our death. He did not need to die. It was not nails but love that held Him to the cross. What should have been unforgivable found forgiveness in the love that was seen on the day that Jesus died.

"Why would God do this to us?" you ask. To warn us. To awaken us to our need. To lead us, each one of us, to seek His forgiveness for our rebellion and corruption. It is His mercy, not His wrath, we are experiencing.

"Whoever is wise will observe these things, And they will understand the lovingkindness of the Lord" (Psalm 107:43),

Neil Buckman

"A zealous man in religion is pre-eminently a man of one thing. It is not enough to say that he is earnest, hearty, uncompromising, thorough-going, whole-hearted, fervent in spirit. He sees one thing, he cares for one thing, he lives for one thing, he is swallowed-up in one thing — and that one thing is to please God. Whether he lives — or whether he dies; whether he has health — or whether he has sickness; whether he is rich — or whether he is poor; whether he pleases man — or whether he gives offence; whether he is thought wise — or whether he is thought foolish; whether he gets blame — or whether he gets praise; whether he gets honor; or whether he gets shame — for all this the zealous man cares nothing at all. He burns for one thing — and that one thing is to please God, and to advance God's glory. If he is consumed in the very burning — he is content. He feels that, like a lamp, he is made to burn, and if consumed in burning — he has but done the work for which God appointed him. Such a one will always find a sphere for his zeal. If he cannot preach, and work, and give money — he will cry, and sigh, and pray. Yes, if he is only a pauper, on a perpetual bed of sickness — he will make the wheels of sin around him drive heavily, by continually interceding against it. If he cannot fight in the valley with Joshua — then he will do the prayer-work of Moses, Aaron, and Hur, on the hill. (Exod. 17:9-13.) If he is cut off from working himself — he will give the Lord no rest until help is raised up from another quarter; and the work is done. This is what I mean when I speak of "zeal" in religion."

— J.C. Ryle

Lifting the weak

Romans 15

My grandmother was a great cook. One of her specialties was sponge cakes. Sometimes when someone had tasted one of her fabulous sponges they would ask, "What recipe do you use?" My grandmother would then look slightly aghast and say, "I don't use a recipe. I just use a couple of handfuls of flour, and a pinch of salt, a bit of this and a bit of that. I throw it all together and it comes out every time. It is so easy anyone could do it." That is where she was wrong. Just anyone could not do it, at least not the way she did it. She just couldn't imagine anyone actually needing a recipe to make sponges. She just did it! There is a problem people have when they are good at something. They cannot imagine what it would be like not to have that particular skill or strength. We have probably all had that feeling when we have seen someone struggle to do something that is easy to us.

Imagine Mum in town taking four-year-old Ben around the shops. Mum has lots of things to do and she is striding it out. Ben is lagging behind. She takes his hand and strides on. What she forgets is that little Ben is now running. Mum has not thought about the fact that for every step she takes, Ben with his short legs has to take two. She has forgotten what it was like to be a child who cannot walk that fast.

"We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves" (verse 1). This is such a fundamental principle, that it is even recognised in business management. Companies send their management staff to adventure courses at places like Mount Ruapehu (NZ) to learn this principle. When then come to a cliff face, do the strong climbers simply scale the face and continue on their journey, leaving the weaker members of the team struggling on a dangerous cliff face? Of course not! They climb the cliff and then stay and help the others up. The team is given a task to climb a cliff and the exercise is that no-one has succeeded until everyone has succeeded. The strong use their strength to help and encourage the weak.

What does it mean to bear or carry the failings of the weak? Let's think back to that Mum rushing through town, dragging her little boy behind her. The weakness of her child is that the child cannot walk as fast as she can. What does it mean for her to bear with the weakness of that child? For her it means to slow down to the walking speed of that child. Instead of using her strength to get herself along as fast as she wants to, it means that she sacrifices her own goal and slows down so she can walk with the child.

What does this look like in church life? It means that strong Christians should not confuse or discourage weaker Christians by imposing their views and their values on them. If you feel before God it is right for you to do something, but a weaker Christian would be hindered in their Christian life by it, don't try to be like that Mum and force the younger to travel at your speed. You will trip them up.

Can you see a problem here? If strong Christians have to limit themselves to the same limitations that inhibit the lives of weak Christians, that means the weak Christians will always have the last say about what can or cannot be done. The church will be like a convoy always sailing at the speed of the slowest ship. Is that right? The church decides to change the format of its services to fit in with the lifestyle of the people it ministers to, so more people can attend the service. But one Christian says, "I don't believe God wants us to do it any different from the way it has been done for the past 50 years?" Does that mean the whole church has to respect and limit itself to the view of this one weak Christian? Christ's way of resolving doubtful problems was to ask the question, "What does love demand?" Love does not demand that strong Christians keep weak Christians happy and always do what they want. Love has a much higher goal than merely keeping people happy. Each of us should please his neighbour for his good, to build him up (verse 2). If the strong believers in the church were to think that God wanted them to keep that weak believer happy by submitting to his or her whims, would that be good for that weak believer, and would it build them up to become strong in Christ?

Joy is found in growing up to maturity in Christ and growth means doing things that are different. Those weaker Christians, fixed in their

ways must learn to grow. Real spiritual learning is often difficult and painful. It involves the ongoing change of long-standing mental habits and behaviours. It also requires one to recognise those fondly held views that, when held up to the light, turn out to be mere prejudices. It involves stretching spiritual horizons and perhaps thinking and behaving in different ways. This may feel strange at first. But that is OK. That is how growth feels. If it feels too comfortable, too natural, or too easy, we're not growing and we're not doing anything different.

Remember that Mum in town? She is not going to walk at Ben's pace for the rest of her life. She is going to walk with him slowly while he needs that. She hopes one day he will be a man with a great stride. A man who will remember what it was like to be small and weak when he has a child of his own.

Christ met and accepted the weak in their place of weakness, but He did not leave them there. He led them to salvation and authority. There is a fundamental principle of life.

You can never change another person, but you can help another person as they seek to change themselves with God's help.

Strangely enough, unconditionally accepting another person, is often the first step in the process of change. When a person feels accepted as they are, it creates an environment where a change can occur. God is already mysteriously at work in this person's life. The question is, "How can I fall in step with what God is already doing, and help build this person up?"

Rex Dearlove



So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

ACM missionary team in Armenia

ACM Humanitarian-Charitable Foundation formed a team on July 9-26, which included Raffi Chaparian, Sako Hartunian, Ani Avanesian, Talin Avsharian from USA. The team included ACM co-workers from different cities of Armenia: Astghik Mkrtumyan from Vanadzor, Martun and Angela Harutyunyan from Yerevan, Ani Hovhannisyan from Abovyan, Ashot and Hasmik Gyurjyan from Gyumri, and Haykuhi Simonyan from Masis.

We had a beautiful and blessed two weeks, and we would like to share our feelings with you. The goal of this team was to visit ACM's needy families, to implement charitable programs, to organise evangelical meetings in churches and at homes. We also had evangelistic services for children in Vanadzor, Gyumri, Sevahogher, Yerevan and Hovk. Many children participated in the one-day children's evangelistic services and heard the message of the Gospel and received gifts from ACM.

We had fruitful services and we give praise to the Lord for our team. We especially thank Brother Raffi Chaparian, who was ready everywhere to serve the people he met with the Word of God. All the members of the team served with great devotion and unity. On behalf of the team, we thank the Board of Trustees of the ACM Foundation on behalf of Brother Harry Kiujian, who organised beautiful tours for the team in the sights of Armenia. We praise God for all the churches that opened their doors to ACM Foundation.

We also visited CEF and Shoghik's children's Christian camps. It was a great blessing to see so many children hear the Gospel through these camps.

We are glad that during these two weeks we were united as a team, encouraging each other, helping each other, and making new friends.

God bless the ACM Foundation for this great fruitful, blessed ministry. May our Lord Jesus Christ be glorified through all His children.