



# Trumpet's Sound

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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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**Prayer points**

- Pray for Armenia and the much needed peace with neighbouring countries
- Pray for safety, wisdom and strength for our co-workers
- Pray for Dr James visiting Armenia in March
- Pray for the 2025 ACM mission trip to Armenia
- Pray for the many families in our care in Armenia and Lebanon
- Pray for the Lord to provide all our needs

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## Fear

What is fear? Is it just an emotion, a feeling, or is it more? We fear looking at the daily news. We fear when we see the world around us changing. We fear looking at ourselves, the way our bodies are changing daily: hair going whiter, finding it harder to hear and harder to see – and more.

Any change in our lives, whether at work, in the family, or just a sudden unexpected situation, will bring anxiety and fear.

The Lord Jesus talks about the birds. *Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?* (Matthew 6:26-27).

King David sought the Lord God daily. *I sought the Lord, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame. This poor man called, and the Lord heard him; he saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them* (Psalm 34:4-8).

Life can bring us to situations where we need the Lord and need His immediate help. I myself, when looking back, can never forget the situations where I called upon the Lord and He reached out and no trace of those situations are visible on me.

*The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and he helps me. My heart leaps for joy, and with my song I praise him* (Psalm 28:7).

So take courage! His help is there for you as well. Just call upon His name. The Lord is able to help you.

HK

## ***He taught them...***

### ***Matthew Chapter 5***

#### **Part 1 - Standing in the crowd**

Imagine yourself living at a time when a fever could be a death sentence, when life was short and hard, and people suffered without hope. Then imagine hearing of a man who freely healed all who came to Him of whatever diseases and torments they had, and who, with just a word, freed people bound by demons. Think of the joy that He brought as broken and wasted bodies were healed, lives saved, and livelihoods restored. Hopelessness and despair became thanksgiving and wonder, mourning was turned into dancing, and all the talk was about the prophet from Nazareth. You are among the multitudes who flock to Him.

You see Him seated on a hillside with His disciples gathering around Him. The curious crowds surround them, attentive to His every word.

*“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”*

The first words He utters sound a note so new, so hopeful, so different from anything they have ever heard. Just as His healing touch had power to restore life to diseased bodies, so now His words seemed to be restoring faith and hope to dejected and darkened souls.

For these common people, the Law of God was like a towering mountain, impossible to climb. They were not scholars with time to study all the intricacies of Moses' writings, so the prophets' words frightened and confused them. Each Sabbath in the synagogues, the teaching of the scribes and Pharisees only burdened them further and did not help them at all.

*“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”*

Like cold water to a thirsty soul, like cool fresh air in a crowded room, these words were wonderful to hear. They might even have caused the crowd to gasp, that is, if they had dared to believe them.

Here were a people humbled by the demands of daily life, working

men and women, fully occupied with the need to provide for their families. They could not boast of great achievements, great learning or great virtue. They were indeed poor in spirit, but was He saying that such would inherit the kingdom of heaven? How could that be? Were there not myriad laws to obey, offerings to make, and holy days to observe? What of all that?

*“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.”*

There were those who were bitter and resentful at the life they had been given. But there were others who mourned their own fallen state and the pitiful condition of their nation, once free and prosperous but now shackled by Rome and exploited even by its own rulers. To these He held out the promise of comfort. Their prayers and their tears were remembered and would be answered.

*“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”*

Rome despised weakness and gloried in its power and its conquests. Shall the meek, the humble, those who are submitted to God whatever He may lead them into, shall they inherit the earth? How can it be?

*“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.”*

Anyone who pauses to ponder his own heart soon discovers layers of pride and a furious rebellion against God that staggers the mind. We can hunger for righteousness, but from where will it come? Light cannot come out of darkness. Yet again, they hear His strange promise, that such a hunger will be satisfied, and beyond measure.

With these few words, He set before them a picture of a soul that is poor and grieving, humble, submitted to God and longing for the righteousness that is His alone. And this soul, held in no regard by the rich and powerful, nor by the religious rulers and ministering priests – this soul was to be blessed beyond measure, and toward this soul heaven's eyes were turned.

Standing with the crowd that day, how would you have reacted to these astonishing words? Would you have turned away, mocking

what you thought was foolish idealism? Or would you have been irresistibly drawn to Him, straining to hear more, to know more, and to understand His words, the words of eternal life?

Neil Buckman

## ***The Fruit of the Spirit is Meekness***

**T**he word meekness was used in Greek of a horse that was broken to the harness. In the Bible it does not mean simply natural mildness or gentleness, but it is the humble condition of heart of one who is submissive to the Lord. The meek man practises the words of the Apostle, "Why do ye not rather take wrong? Why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?" (1 Corinthians 6:7). He follows the example of the Lord who, "when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously." (1 Peter 2:23).

Nor is meekness to be found only in our relation to one another. It is especially seen in our attitude to God and His providence. Job showed great meekness when he said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21); but the greatest meekness was that of our Lord, when He uttered the words "Not as I will, but as You will" (Matthew 26:39).

It is indeed in our Lord Himself that this grace is found in its perfection. We all know the words of Matthew 11:29, "I am meek and lowly in heart". In the preceding verses the Lord was upbraiding the cities in which His mighty works were done. They had been rebellious and had missed the blessing. Then the Lord answered and said, "I thank You Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them unto babes." In heart He was on the side of the babes rather than of the wise and prudent.

Again the Lord's meekness is referred to in Matthew 21:5, "Behold, your king comes unto you, meek." A meek king! How different from the thoughts of the world! The popular idea of a king was derived from men like Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander and Caesar, with all their pomp and pride, but our Lord's dominion was in the heart, and He was bereft of all such regal trappings. He was the meek king.

The Scriptures contain many examples of meek men. Let me mention just two. In Acts 7 we read the defence of Stephen before the Sanhedrin. There was no weakness in that speech. There was mighty power in it. Nevertheless his last words, as he kneeled down, with the vision of the Lord Jesus before him, were of great meekness, "Lord lay not this sin to their charge" (verse 60). He had learned something of the meekness of Christ, who said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Again in Numbers 12:3, we read "Now the man Moses was very meek, above all men which were upon the face of the earth". There was little weakness about Moses. A man who could lead a vast multitude out of Egypt and bear with them in the wilderness had the heart of a lion. Yet Moses was meek. The context may suggest wherein his meekness lay. Miriam and Aaron had spoken against Moses. There was rebellion in the camp. However, Moses did not vindicate himself. He committed himself to the Lord. That is the very essence of meekness – submission to God in the most trying circumstances.

There are many lessons taught in Scripture in connection with meekness. We select some of the most important.

### **1. It is only the meek who learn the will of God**

We have already noticed the words of the Lord concerning the wise and prudent. Years before the Psalmist had expressed the same thought. "The meek will He guide in judgment, the meek will He teach His way" (Psalm 25:9). Dr Pierson has written that George Muller once remarked to him that he foresaw that Mr. Moody was to be greatly used of God because, in his first visit to England, he came to see him at Bristol, and exhibited such docility and humility.

But it was not the humility of diffidence or morbid self-distrust. He was not lacking in a proper self-confidence. Nor did he shrink, like Moses, from any work to which God called, or hesitate to appropriate a promise of God. His humility was that of dependence on God.

## **2. Meekness is essential to salvation**

"The Lord hath anointed me to preach glad tidings to the meek" (Isaiah 61:1). "God arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth" (Psalm 76:9). "For the Lord takes pleasure in His people! He will beautify the meek with salvation" (Psalm 149:4). In the parable of Luke 18 it was the meek publican and not the proud Pharisee who was justified.

## **3. Meekness is a characteristic of the heirs of the kingdom**

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5). Our Lord was quoting Psalm 37:11. Originally the thought was that God would give the land of Canaan to those who were submissive to His will. In Matthew it means that the coming kingdom will belong to the meek. What a reversal of present conditions! Men now depend upon intrigue, diplomacy and armed might, but when the King of kings reigns the meek shall inherit the earth.

## **4. Meekness should characterise the teacher and defender of the faith**

"The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to each, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves" (2 Timothy. 2:24-25).

"Be ready always to give an answer to every man who asks you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15).

How many defeats the cause of truth has suffered through lack of meekness in its champions!

## **5. Meekness is essential in the maintenance of unity among the saints**

"With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:2-3). It might astonish us if we really

knew how many divisions among the Lord's people were due to a lack of meekness. Pride and self-will will cloak themselves under the name of zeal and faithfulness, but how quickly meekness vanishes when brethren are contentious!

## **6. Meekness is needed in dealing with erring saints**

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering yourself, lest you also be tempted" (Galatians 6:1). How many backsliders might be recovered if we put that one verse into practice!

## **7. Meekness is part of the Christian's wardrobe**

"Put on therefore as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering." (Colossians 3:12). F.B. Meyer used to say that some Christians came out in the morning half dressed!

## **8. Meekness is very precious**

Several of these graces are not very popular, but we venture to think that meekness is the least popular of all. Men do not prize it, but God does. Peter in his first epistle (3:4) tells us that a meek and quiet spirit is in the sight of God of great price. Again in chapter 2:20 he writes, "For what glory is it if when you be buffeted for your faults, you shall take it patiently? But if, when you do well, and suffer for it, you take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." Such a man has the mind of Christ.

J. R. Miller summed up meekness by saying that it is like those fragrant trees which bathe with their perfume the axe that smites into their wood. The meek man gives back love for hate, kindness for unkindness, sweetness for bitterness.

"Seek meekness" (Zephaniah 2:3). "Follow after meekness" (1 Timothy 6:11). "Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:1). "The fruit of the Spirit is meekness." (Galatians 5:23.)

Tom Carson

## ***Eight questions***

### ***Read Malachi 1-3***

**T**he people of Malachi's day asked questions that revealed their lack of any spiritual integrity. They were satisfied in their self-righteousness, failing to realise how far from God they really were. We need to think about their questions and examine ourselves before the Lord because such attitudes can easily creep in among us.

#### **In what way have You loved us? 1:2**

Malachi's prophecy opens with the Lord's statement that He loved them. The people immediately asked "In what way have You loved us"? Here were people who failed to realise that it was only God's love for them that gave them life. God's love to them was shown in His choice of Jacob, the one from whom the Messiah would come. God had also preserved them in contrast to the desolation the descendants of Esau were experiencing.

#### **In what way have we despised Your name? 1:6**

Despising the name of the Lord God Almighty is something we would be horrified about. But the priests were constantly despising the Lord's name by offering defiled food on the altar. So they asked the third question.

#### **In what way have we defiled You? 1:7**

When God accused the priests of offering defiled food on the altar, they asked how they had defiled Him. The answer was that although they were offering sacrifices, they were not offering God their best animals. In this the priests were in league with the people who brought inferior sacrifices. The priests should have rejected the animals which were brought for sacrifice. Instead they went along with the people who were bringing their old, diseased, and inferior animals to God instead of doing as Moses had taught them. God required that the offering was to be an animal without blemish.

We have reached a low ebb when we think that we can give God

what is left over. We spend our time doing what pleases us and then give God one hour on a Sunday. We spend our money on things that give us pleasure and drop a few coins into the collection box. If we do this we are no better than the Israelites who said that the table of the Lord was contemptible.

### **For what reason? 2:14**

God was not pleased with the lives the people, particularly the men, were living. They had been divorcing their wives and marrying pagan women. Then, realising that God was not accepting their offerings they covered the altar with tears in a sham repentance. Then they asked why God did not accept them!

There is something deeply wrong if we cannot see what it is in our lives that is not pleasing to God. These men had become so blind to their sin and were so out of touch with God's requirements that they could not imagine why God was not pleased with them. But some of those who belonged to God's people were divorcing a wife who was also one of God's people. No wonder God was not pleased.

God hates divorce. Paul's instruction in 1 Corinthians about a married couple who were both believers, was that the husband was not to divorce his wife. If the wife left her husband she was to remain single or be reconciled to her husband. We are not to be influenced by the standards of the world around us but must follow God's instructions for our lives.

### **In what way have we wearied Him? 2:17**

The people had been wearying the Lord with what they said and then asked in what way they were wearying Him. However, they had turned their standards upside down. They were saying that those who did evil were good in the sight of the Lord. This attitude is very common in our day. Many in our society have rejected any belief in absolutes and say that anything is acceptable. For them, a thing is right if a person feels comfortable with it! But we often find that those who think this way expect us to fit in with their contorted way of thinking! But God and His standards do not change (3:6).

**In what way shall we return? 3:7**

Because God is unchanging He kept His covenant with Abraham and therefore the Israelites were not consumed. Even though they had departed from His ways He still called them to return to Him. But they asked in what way they were to return.

This is a sad situation. People had departed from the Lord; they had gone away from His ordinances. Yet they were still offering sacrifices! They thought they were doing the right thing. What were they to return to? But the problem was that they were only going through the motions of worship. Their hearts were not wholeheartedly seeking the Lord. And because of this, they did not know how to return to the Lord.

We look at ourselves today and ask if we are genuine in our worship of the Lord and in our service for Him. Or are we merely going through the motions?

**In what way have we robbed You? 3:8**

People were living entirely for themselves and gave no thought to giving any of their possessions (or their time) to the Lord. God saw this as robbery even if they were not actually stealing anything from the temple! All that we possess belongs ultimately to the Lord. Do we give Him what is due to Him?

**What have we spoken against You? 3:13**

The last of the eight questions concerns their attitude to serving God. God described their words as being harsh against Him. What the people had said was that it was useless to serve the Lord. They expected some benefit for their service. Yet all that they owned had come from the Lord Himself. Could they not have willingly given of their possessions or their time in His service?

But let us ask ourselves how willingly we give to the Lord. Do we give and serve out of love or with an expectation of reward?

We must not finish without noting that not all the people were like this. We read (3:16) that those who feared the Lord spoke to one an-

other and the Lord listened and heard them. A book of remembrance was written before Him. God does see our service for Him and He blesses those who serve and worship Him whole-heartedly.

May we be among those who resolve to serve Him faithfully and well.

Don Stormer

## ***Building the church - Acts 1-12 (1)***

### ***Foundation of the church***

**R**ecently there have been marches and rallies against violence against women, abuse of power and injustice. The ongoing nature of these issues shows that human relationships are flawed, and we can't repair them. This is a symptom of our rebellion against God. But in Jesus the justice we long for can be found. By having a right relationship with God through Jesus, a new life can be ours. And churches are where we can learn to live with others, where we can develop healthy human relationships.

If you want to find out about the early church, don't look in the Old Testament of the Bible, because the church didn't exist then. And don't look in the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John), because the church didn't exist then either. As the church began 10 days after Jesus ascended into heaven, we need to look in the book of Acts, where we see that God's witnesses spread the gospel message and established churches.

#### **Context**

The Jewish Messiah was promised in the Old Testament and He came to earth in the gospels. The Holy Spirit was promised in the gospels and He came to live in believers in the book of Acts.

The Old Testament describes the relationship between God and the Jewish people before BC 400. And the New Testament is the story of

Jesus and His followers and what it means to follow Jesus. The Gospels describe the life of Jesus. And Acts describes the first 30 years of the church. It is written to educate Christians about the early church.

Acts was written by Luke who was a companion of Paul (Colossians 4:10-14; 2 Timothy 4:11; Philemon 24). Luke therefore had first-hand experience with the followers of Jesus and what their message was. He knew their history. Luke was probably a Gentile – but he was familiar with the Jewish faith.

The events in Acts occur in the Middle East and in countries around the Mediterranean Sea. The Roman Empire was in power and the people were required to acknowledge the superiority of the Emperor and the polytheistic Roman gods.

Jesus and the apostles were Jewish. And the members of the early church were Jewish or Jewish proselytes (first-century converts to Judaism). They still followed many Jewish customs and went to the Jewish temple and synagogues, as there were no church buildings apart from homes.

Christians and unbelieving Jews disagreed over the person and work of Jesus. The church proclaimed that Jesus was the Jewish Messiah who had conquered death and was restoring all creation, beginning with His own resurrection from the dead. But the unbelieving Jews considered it impossible for a man crucified as a criminal to be the promised Messiah. This difference created a rift between Christians and non-Christian Jews that continues today.

The early Jewish Christians thought that all Gentiles were pagans, but they gradually came to understand that Gentiles who followed Christ were to be granted full status in the Christian church.

George Hawke  
To be continued...



## ***Vanadzor in Focus***

**A**nd he said unto them, *It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1:7-8).*

We all need reminders just like the people who were closest to the Lord Jesus before His ascension.

It not for us to know:

- the times (*chronos*) – a space in time or chronological time as we know it
- the seasons (*kairos*) – a measure of time, and also a reference to an opportune moment

These two words (times and seasons) cover the concept of time, its reality and its unique dimension as a gift of the creator for us to appreciate.

But the Lord Jesus states with absolute clarity that *chronos* and *kairos* are not the disciples' concern! Henceforth they were to be His witnesses with His power to the ends of the earth.

As the body of Christ, these closing words of our Lord must reverberate in our minds and continue to energise every fibre of our being as we endeavour to live for Him.

We praise the Lord that through the Armenian Christian Mission, the gospel has gone to various parts Armenia and beyond.

One area of work we like to highlight is in Vanadzor, the third largest city in Armenia. It is located about 130 km north of Yerevan.

It was a thriving city in the Soviet period and was known for its chemical production. Unfortunately the 1988 earthquake decimated Gyumri and the large surrounding settlements and the effect of that

disaster is still visible today. Our annual mission trips have enlightened many believers to the plight of these dear ones as we make a point to visit these areas as part of our program.

Through the financial support of our loving brethren from a New Zealand organisation, we have been able to support many families for more than ten years now.

Our faithful workers Ashod and his wife Hasmik continue to see the families on a monthly basis to visit, counsel, pray and distribute the gifts. Many families with children live in metal containers which are lacking in the essentials of water and gas supplies. Furthermore, almost every one of these makeshift dwelling places have damaged roofs and walls. The families continue to live here and experience the extremes of temperature. ACM has a special fund for heating and we praise the Lord for the support we have received over the years.

On many occasions the families we support need extra financial aid for emergency medical treatment and medication that is not readily available. As an organisation we have struggled to meet these extra needs. By His grace alone we have managed thus far.

The gospel is shared through Bible studies in homes and at special events during Christmas and Easter.

Astghik, one of our ACM workers is involved in the children's ministry in Vanadzor. She has three groups of children aged from seven to twelve. She also has a group of teenagers aged from thirteen to fifteen. Our sister is gifted in sharing the gospel with these groups and we continue to uplift our all faithful workers and volunteers who willingly and cheerfully spread the message of hope.

We value your prayers and practical support in this special area of our ministry. Our heart's desire is that many more in this region will commit their lives to our Lord and Christ as the name of Jesus is faithfully proclaimed.

Daniel James