



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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Please pray for

- peace on the borders of Armenia
- the Lord to open the eyes of the people of Armenia to spiritual truth
- many to come to the Lord Jesus in repentance
- ACM's teen camp
- CEF's children's camps to be held over the summer months
- ACM's Bible study groups
- Mission team 2024 to Armenia
- the needed missionaries to join our team
- the many poor in Armenia and Lebanon
- the safe arrival of container #26
- the many sick who are crying out for help

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Why the cross?

Some ask who killed Jesus. Was it the Jews or the Romans? However, from the beginning it was the Father's will that Jesus die. We read in Isaiah 53 that He was despised. He was mocked, spat on, and whipped. They put a crown of thorns on Him, nailed Him to a cross, speared His side, and gave Him vinegar to drink.

All this was for me. This was for mankind to gain salvation and forgiveness of sin. It was His blood that cleansed us from all our sins.

He was hanged on that cross covered in blood, in total pain from head to toe. However, His love for the sinner is what amazes us. As He was hanging on the cross there were two thieves with Him, one on each side. One mocked Him, but the second believed in Him and called Him Lord, saying "Lord remember me when You come in Your kingdom".

What an amazing faith, but more amazing was Jesus' response even in all that pain. He was keen to see the lost found, the sinner saved. This was the reason for His coming to this world. And He is ready to save you too if you only come to Him in repentance and faith.

Jesus' response to this sinner echoes loudly even today, "Today you will be with me in paradise". Ever since then His response has been the same to all who come to Him in repentance.

His last words were "Father into your hands I commend my spirit". However, the Father raised Him from the dead on the third day. Jesus is alive! He lives and, because of Jesus, we who believe will also be resurrected to spend all eternity with Him.

HK



Looking at my hands

I looked down at my hands today and for the first time I saw age. I saw the passing of time, the way it seems to meander on without my awareness, without my permission. Hands that look now like my grandmother's did when I first began to consciously remember them, at the age of four or so. Hands that look like my mother's did as she tenderly held my first born.

I see age and time and with those come both a real sting and a deep awe. A stinging for the pain these hands have held, the sting of buried dreams, the sting of questions unanswered, the sting of loss – oh how deep that runs – the sting of knowing that I can't go back but only move forward, the sting of my own powerlessness.

And yet as I look down at my hands, which now show tiny growing fine lines, I am in awe at perseverance and tenacity in the face of pain. I'm in awe of resilience which I never knew I needed so profoundly. I'm in awe of the lives I have held and had the gift to love and cherish. I'm in awe of life itself, its beauty, harshness and wildness.

And most of all, I am in awe of a God who is over and above and beyond all time and exists from age to age. I'm awestruck at this God who holds me close in His own ever loving hands even, or perhaps most so, at the times when my hands have not been able to hold on any longer. And it's ok. The way time passes through my fingers like smoke and takes my breath away. It's all ok. That's because the nail scarred hands of the Son of God Himself promise resurrection and restoration and renewal. Time and age are not the determining factors in my life and story. He is, come what may.

Remain Ministry
(Trina Bahadourian)



The Fruit of the Spirit is Peace

It is said that one of the first Hebrew words that a traveller learns in Palestine is "Shalom", or "Peace", for Jew greets Jew with that salutation. In like manner peace stands at the threshold of the Christian faith, and in Paul's Epistles it is linked with grace in the common apostolic benediction.

Peace is an attribute of God Himself. Six times in the New Testament He is spoken of as the God of peace. Man, on the contrary, is marked by discord. His whole history has been a record of warfare. "The way of peace they have not known" (Rom. 3:17). With all his politics and conferences, man has not been able to produce an abiding peace, for "there is no peace, says my God, to the wicked" (Is. 57:21).

Speaking after the manner of men, we might say that the God of peace had a great problem before Him. How could He guide into the way of peace (Luke 1:79) those who were living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another (Tit. 3:3)? First of all, we must remember that there is something in God's character more fundamental than peace, and that is holiness. David, the man of war, preceded Solomon, the King of Peace. "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable" (James 3:17). Melchizedek was first King of Righteousness, and after that also King of Peace (Heb. 7:2). That explains the apparent discrepancy between the heavenly message of "peace on earth" and our Lord's own words, "I came not to bring peace but a sword" (Matt. 10: 34). The first refers to God's ultimate purpose, but our Lord spoke of the immediate future. He did not say "Peace, peace, when there was no peace", but He established peace on a righteous basis. "The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever" (Isaiah 32:17). "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace" (Ps. 37:37).

So, then, the problem was not simply how to give peace, but how

to do so while remaining a holy God. God's answer was the Cross. Therefore, we read, "He is our Peace" (Eph. 2:14); "Having made peace through the blood of His Cross" (Col. 1:20); "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him" (Is. 53:5). The Gospel is the Gospel of Peace (Eph. 6:15) because it tells us that the ransom price has been paid, that reconciliation between man and God has been effected by the Cross, and that we now have "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1).

But God has more for us than that. He does not want His children to have peace of conscience, yet hearts full of care. In the days of His flesh our Lord rebuked the wind and said into the sea, "Peace, be still," and there was a great calm (Mark 4:39). His voice still has its ancient power. He can give peace to the troubled heart in the most trying circumstances. Hear the words of Paul from the prison-house, "Be careful for nothing: but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6-7).

Even in Old Testament times Isaiah could say, "You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You" (Is. 26:3).

Concerning the same peace in modern times, another has written: "Mary Slessor, the girl who was afraid of a barking dog and terrified by a bull, can, through this peace, calmly knit for hours at a palaver of warlike natives, and remain undisturbed when threatened by a brandished spear. John Paton, on Tanna, could write of the night he spent in the branches of a sheltering tree, while his enemies danced in war-array below, that he would gladly spend a hundred nights in the same circumstances to have similar experience of the peace-encircling grace of God. One of the Scottish covenanters, suffering extreme pain through torture, and awaiting a martyr's death, could write in triumph, "I have pain, but have peace." Peace was our Lord's own legacy to us. With the shadows of the Cross overhead He said, "Peace I leave with you: My peace I give unto you: not as the world gives give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it

be afraid" (John 14:27). We quote the quaint comment of Matthew Henry: "When Christ was about to leave the world, He made His will: His soul He committed to His Father, His body He bequeathed to Joseph to be decently interred, His clothes fell to the soldiers, His mother He left to the care of John: but what should He leave to His poor disciples that had left all for Him? Silver and gold He had none; but He left them that which was infinitely better, His peace... It is the peace He purchased for us, and preached to us, and on which the angels congratulated men at His birth."

We have heard of men living in abject poverty, while a rich relative had left them a fortune that they had not claimed. May God keep us all from treating our Lord's will like that. The Revised Version of Rom. 5:1 says, "Let us have peace." If that is the true reading, the thought is that we must enjoy the peace that has been procured for us. We must not live as paupers who are strangers to such an inheritance.

Let us remember, too, that peace is not only a matter between ourselves and God, but also with one another. How contradictory for the disciples of the Prince of Peace to be warring among themselves! The Apostles constantly emphasised this matter. "If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men" (Rom. 12:18). "Let us therefore follow after the things that make for peace" (Rom. 14:19). "Be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (2 Pet. 3:14).

Last century the world passed through the most tragic war in history, and still to-day we hear of wars and rumours of wars. How comforting to remember that in Him we may have peace (John 16:33). "The Lord of peace Himself give you peace always, by all means" (2 Thess. 3:16). "Let the peace of God preside in your hearts" (Col. 3:13). "The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace" (Numbers 6:26).

It will be as we walk in the Spirit that we shall experience that blessing, for "to be spiritually minded is peace" (Romans 8:6). "The Fruit of the Spirit is peace" (Gal. 5:22).

Tom Carson

Thoughts about belief from Mark 8

Mark 8:22-26 records a very interesting miracle – a man whose sight was restored in two stages. After the Lord's initial acts, the man could see men walking like trees. After He put His hands on his eyes again, the man could see clearly. Why did the Lord perform this miracle in stages? The incident was not only a miracle; it was also an acted parable. As we read the other stories in this chapter, we realise that there were many truths about which both the disciples and those opposed to the Lord Jesus were blind. The light dawned on them (if it dawned at all) in stages. The disciples – and others – did not always appreciate the truth the Lord was teaching and needed to understand truth more correctly.

Feeding the 4,000 (1-9): A crowd of people had followed the Lord to hear His teaching. After three days they had no food. In His compassion, the Lord did not want to send the people hungry because they would faint on the way. But when He talked to the disciples, they saw only problems. They were in a wilderness area. Where would they get enough food to feed such a multitude? We may be surprised that the disciples should ask such a question; they had already witnessed the feeding of the 5,000. Was their problem that they had limited faith in the power of the Lord Jesus? Had they not stopped to think that the one who had fed 5,000 a short time earlier could also feed 4,000? But we need to think about ourselves? Do we limit the Lord's power? Do we really believe that He is the one who is omnipotent?

The Pharisees seeking a sign (10-13): When the Lord arrived in Dalmanutha after feeding the 4,000, the Pharisees came with a request that He show them a sign from heaven. They may have hoped that He would perform some outstanding miracle before their eyes to demonstrate that He was the Messiah. However, we wonder at their effrontery and their unbelief. The Lord had already shown the people so many signs that He was the Messiah, and that He had come from

heaven. They had enough evidence that He had come from the Father; there was no reason for them to maintain their unbelief. The Lord was not going to perform a miracle for unbelieving men. And in all probability a miracle would not have made any difference. These men had already made up their minds that they would not believe!

Is today's world any different? Some people expect to see something outstanding before they will believe. But we come to the Lord Jesus in faith. There is sufficient evidence in creation around us to know there is a God to whom we must submit. We find evidence that there is an all-powerful God in lives of people who have been changed by the power of the Lord Jesus after they have believed in Him.

The leaven of the Pharisees (14-21): After leaving the Pharisees, the Lord and His disciples entered a boat to cross the Sea of Galilee. The disciples had forgotten to take more bread. The Lord told them to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod. Once again, the disciples revealed that they still had much to learn. For them, leaven suggested bread and they thought that the Lord was reprimanding them for not remembering to bring more bread.

The Lord patiently explained His meaning. Even though they only had one loaf of bread, the disciples should have known that that was not an obstacle to their Lord. He could make much out of little. What He meant was that they had to be careful about the teaching of the Pharisees who made a great display of their religious deeds but who were hypocrites. Their devotion to God was a pretence. What they did was to draw attention to themselves in such a way that people admired them. In reality they were seeking recognition in society and respect from the people. If our motives are similar, the Lord's comment to us is that we have already had all the reward we will ever get. If we are Christians our lives we must seek to honour God in such a way that we give Him the glory; we do not draw attention to ourselves.

Peter's confession (27-33): The Lord and His disciples went north to the region around Caesarea Philippi. While journeying, He asked

who people said He was. The answers varied: John the Baptist, Elijah or one of the other prophets like Jeremiah. When the Lord asked who the disciples thought He was, Peter immediately answered that He was the Christ, the Messiah.

We know that the disciples had their own thoughts about the positions they would hold when the Messiah took control of government. This was therefore time to tell them that what was soon to happen was not according to their ideas. The Lord began to talk about His coming rejection by the elders and His death at their hands.

Peter was far from happy with what he heard. He reprimanded Jesus, saying that this would never happen to Him. The Lord in turn had to rebuke Peter in a very forthright manner. "Get behind me, Satan! For you have in mind not the things of God, but the things of men." It is so easy to have our own agendas and be out of touch with the mind and will of God.

Take up the cross (34-38): The Lord had a very important message for His disciples. If they intended to follow Him they needed to take up the cross and follow Him. In our day this expression has little meaning. Many people think of bearing a cross as putting up with something that is inconvenient. However, in the Roman empire taking up a cross meant only one thing. A person carrying a cross was on his way to death. And when the cross had finished its work, that person would be dead. If we follow Christ we take up the cross. We die to self and all the old desires of the flesh. We live for Him alone.

What do we need to do? Some of us may be like the people we have been reading about and have many misconceptions of what following the Lord Jesus means. We may have an idea that we need to achieve a certain standard of holiness before we can start the Christian life. But there is no way we can change our lives by our own power. We need to come to Christ in repentance and faith and ask His forgiveness. And if we have already believed, we need to come to Him daily and seek His guidance and read His word so that we grow in grace and in the faith.

Don Stormer

The Angelic Messenger

The little boy put on his clothes for the cold and then said to his father "Ok dad I'm ready".

His Dad, the pastor, said: "Ready for what?"

"Dad, it's time to go outside and distribute our flyers."

Dad replied: "Son, it's very cold outside and it's drizzling."

The child looked surprised at his father and said: "But dad, people need to know about God even on rainy days."

Dad replied, "Son, I'm not going outside in this weather."

With despair, the child said: "Dad, can I go alone? Please!"

His father waited for a moment and then said: "Son, you can go. Here are the flyers; be careful."

"Thank you, dad!"

And with this, the son went out into the rain. The 11 year old walked all the streets of the village, handing out the flyers to the people he saw.

After two hours walking in the rain and in the cold and with the last flyer in his hand, he stopped in a corner to see if he saw someone to give the flyer too, but the streets were totally deserted. Then he turned to the first house he saw, walked to the front door, touched the bell several times and waited, but no one came out.

Finally the boy turned to leave, but something stopped him. The child turned back to the door and began to touch the bell and pound the door strongly with his knuckles. He kept waiting. Finally the door was opened gently.

A lady came out with a very sad look and gently asked:

"What can I do for you, son?"

With radiant eyes and a bright smile the child said:

"Lady, I'm sorry if I upset you, but I just want to tell you that God really loves you and that I came to give you my last flyer, which talks about God and His great love."

The boy then gave her the flyer.

She just said, "Thank you, son, God bless you!"

Well, next Sunday morning, the pastor was in the pulpit and when the service began he asked:

"Has someone a testimony or something they want to share?"

Gently, in the back row of the church, an older lady stood up. When she started talking, a radiant and glorious look shone from her eyes:

"Nobody in this church knows me. I have never been here, even last Sunday I was not a Christian."

My husband died a while ago leaving me totally alone in this world. Last Sunday was a particularly cold and rainy day, and it was also in my heart; that on that day I came to the end of the road, since I had no hope and didn't want to live anymore.

Then I took a chair and a rope and went up to the attic of my house. I tied one end of the rope to the rafters of the roof; then I climbed onto the chair and put the other end of the rope around my neck.

I then stood on the chair, so alone and heartbroken, I was about to throw myself off the chair, when suddenly I heard the loud sound of the door being knocked.

So I thought: "I'll wait for a minute and whoever it is will go."

I waited and waited, but the door knocking was getting louder and louder every time. It got so loud that I couldn't ignore it anymore.

So I wondered, who could it be? No one ever comes close to my door or come to visit me!

I released the rope from my neck and went to the door while the

bell was still ringing and the door was still being knocked on.

When I opened the door, I couldn't believe what my eyes saw! At my door was the most radiant and angelic child I've ever seen. His smile, oh, I can never describe it! The words that came out of his mouth made my heart, dead so long ago, come back to life, when he said with the voice of a cherub: "Lady, I just want to tell you that God really loves you."

"When the little angel disappeared between the cold and the rain, I closed my door and read every word of the flyer. Then I went to the attic to remove the chair and rope. I didn't need them anymore as you can see. Now I am a happy daughter of the King. As the direction of the boy, when he left, was to this church, I came personally say thank you to that little angel of God who came just in time and, in fact, to rescue my life from an eternity in hell and replaced it with an eternity in God's presence."

Everyone cried in the church.

The Pastor came down from the pulpit to the first bench of the front, where the little angel was sitting; he took his son in his arms and cried uncontrollably.

Don't let this message die of cold; after reading it, pass it on to others.

Remember, God's message can make a big difference in someone's life, never be afraid to spread it.

Selected

God knows everything about you, and still loves you

How much of yourself do you feel you must filter when you're with others? Of course, "others" isn't a single category; there are many types of others in our lives, from our social media contacts to

our closest friends or family members. Is there someone whom you feel you can truly be yourself with? Someone with whom you can express your vulnerable feelings, talk about your deepest struggles, and share your worst moments? We humans learn from a very early age that sharing our deepest parts, especially those we may not like, can be uncomfortable. That's what happens when we see toddlers hide or cover their faces when they know they've done the wrong thing. Experiencing rejection, condemnation, or exploitation after revealing our vulnerable parts is incredibly emotionally painful.

God knows everything about you. Everything – not only everything you've ever done but everything you've ever wanted to do, every thought, feeling, desire. As the ancient Israelite king David declared: You have looked deep into my heart, Lord, and you know all about me... Nothing about me is hidden from you! (Psalm 139:1, 15)

Does that terrify you? Does it make you want to hide, defend yourself, or shake your fist in defiance and declare your autonomy?

But... God knows everything about you and still loves you. God demonstrates His own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

There's a kind of relational dichotomy here that we often find hard to grasp. Yes, God declares humans to be sinners. He doesn't simply look away from our bad bits and mutter platitudes such as "It's all good" or "I know you didn't really mean it." He sees it, He feels it, and He still loves us.

Have you experienced this level of intimate love? One in which you don't have to hide anything; you can't hide anything, and you are still loved and safe. Can you imagine this intimate relationship with God? Because Jesus' death paid for your sin and because God already knows everything about you, you can express all your feelings, talk about your deepest struggles, and share your worst moments with God, confident in His love for you.

Would you like this secure intimate relationship with the God of the universe? You can reach out to Him right now.

George Hawke's blog

A Glimpse of Georgia

It was a joy to be able to visit Armenia again in March this year. The main purpose of this visit was to encourage our workers and to have an overview of the work amongst the refugees from Artsakh.

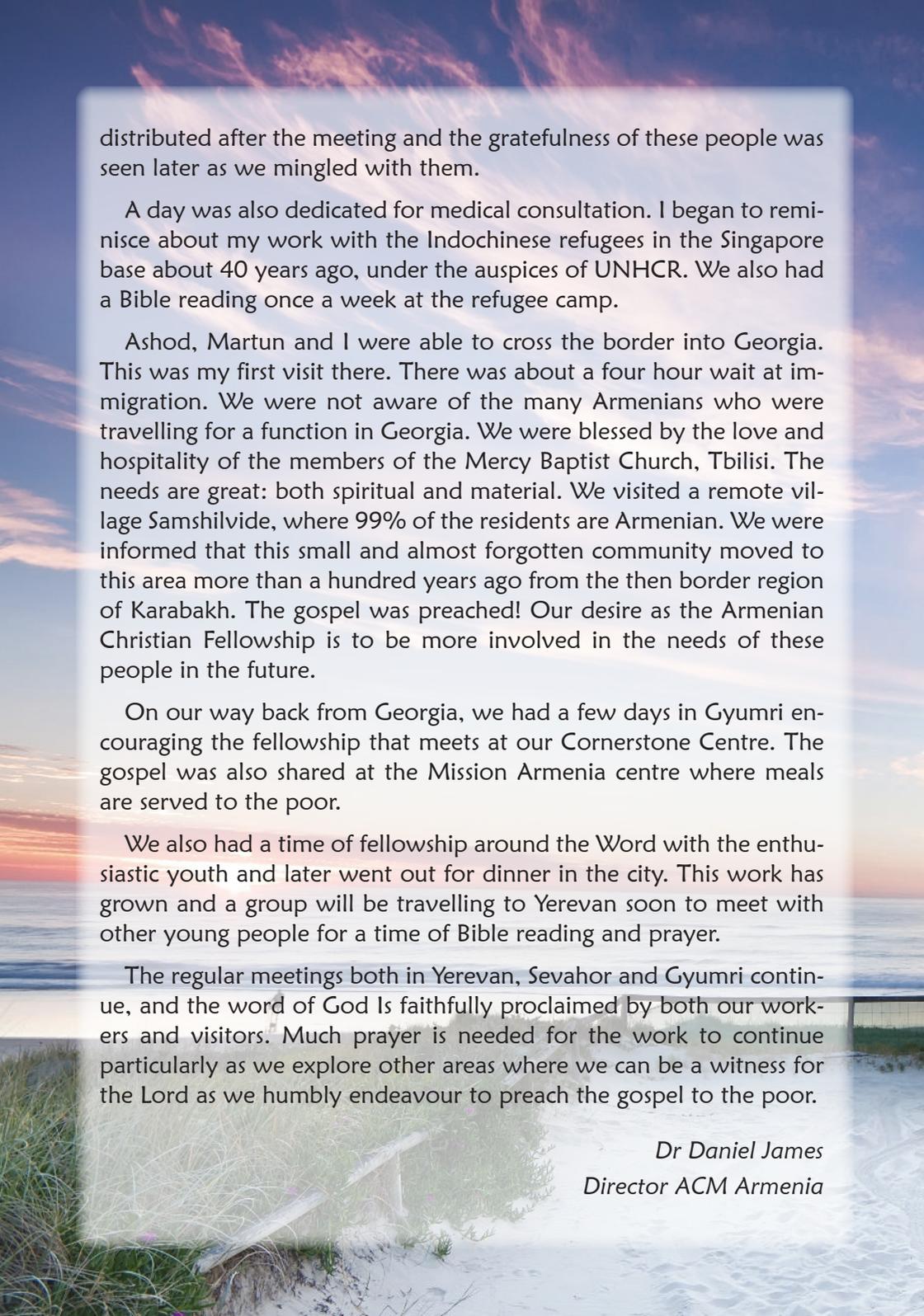
The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised (Luke 4:18). Immediately after the Lord Jesus was tempted by the devil, we note that He was seen at the synagogue reading the words of Isaiah.

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn (Isaiah 61:1-2). The “gospel to the poor” or the “meek” does not merely refer to the one who is destitute of wealth as the Greek word implies, but also to those who lack position, honour and influence in this world.

The motto that we have in Armenian Christian Mission (*taking the gospel to the poor*) became alive to me during the short visit to Armenia and Georgia in March this year.

It was a joy to be with the workers, Martun and Angela in Yerevan, and Ashod and Hasmik in Gyumri, and their families. Also Ani, Hayguhi, Asdghig and Anna who are part of the team. There are about five volunteers who faithfully labour for the Lord in the organisation. Time was set aside to encourage them in their ministry through the word.

One of the highlights was the gathering of refugees from Artsakh in our Paros Centre in Yerevan. We had two groups of about 50 refugees and the gospel was proclaimed to the poor. Food parcels were



distributed after the meeting and the gratefulness of these people was seen later as we mingled with them.

A day was also dedicated for medical consultation. I began to reminisce about my work with the Indochinese refugees in the Singapore base about 40 years ago, under the auspices of UNHCR. We also had a Bible reading once a week at the refugee camp.

Ashod, Martun and I were able to cross the border into Georgia. This was my first visit there. There was about a four hour wait at immigration. We were not aware of the many Armenians who were travelling for a function in Georgia. We were blessed by the love and hospitality of the members of the Mercy Baptist Church, Tbilisi. The needs are great: both spiritual and material. We visited a remote village Samshilvide, where 99% of the residents are Armenian. We were informed that this small and almost forgotten community moved to this area more than a hundred years ago from the then border region of Karabakh. The gospel was preached! Our desire as the Armenian Christian Fellowship is to be more involved in the needs of these people in the future.

On our way back from Georgia, we had a few days in Gyumri encouraging the fellowship that meets at our Cornerstone Centre. The gospel was also shared at the Mission Armenia centre where meals are served to the poor.

We also had a time of fellowship around the Word with the enthusiastic youth and later went out for dinner in the city. This work has grown and a group will be travelling to Yerevan soon to meet with other young people for a time of Bible reading and prayer.

The regular meetings both in Yerevan, Sevahor and Gyumri continue, and the word of God is faithfully proclaimed by both our workers and visitors. Much prayer is needed for the work to continue particularly as we explore other areas where we can be a witness for the Lord as we humbly endeavour to preach the gospel to the poor.

Dr Daniel James
Director ACM Armenia