



# 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 and praise points**

- Praise the Father for all His goodness
- Thank the Lord for His love and compassion to the poor in Armenia, Lebanon, Georgia and Greece
- Give thanks for the container of clothing that will be distributed among the needy
- Pray for ACM’s children’s ministry and the many villagers who will come to hear the Christmas message
- Pray for the much needed firewood to keep people warm during winter
- Pray for the sick and for the provision needed to cover their medical expenses
- Pray that during this Christmas many will come to know that salvation is only through Christ

Cover photo: Ruins of Amberd Fortress, Armenia.

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## ***Names given to the Lord Jesus***

*"Today in the town of David, a Saviour has been born to you;  
He is the Messiah, the Lord." Luke 2:11*

*"For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given, and the government  
will be on His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counsel-  
lor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6*

*"The Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall con-  
ceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel." Isaiah 7:14*

**Saviour:** Looking at the world today, we can see how much we need a Saviour. A Saviour was needed at the time when Jesus came and is needed even more now. For just as it was in the days of Noah, just as it was during the time of judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah, isn't it the same today? We have drifted so far away from the godly things, yet the door of salvation is still wide open for all who will come to repentance.

**Messiah:** Jesus of Nazareth was and is the promised Messiah. He is the true Son of God, one of the persons of the Trinity. God took the form of a man to bring eternal life to lost sinners.

**The Lord:** Jesus Christ is our sovereign Lord. He is the one before whom every knee will bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord. As believers we worship Him today without seeing Him. We direct our prayers to Him and seek to recognise His Lordship in our lives. Soon when we are all united in eternity we will see Him in His glory, surrounded by all the angels and we will all fall down and worship Him.

**Wonderful Counsellor:** Many people spend vast sums of money on counsellors to get guidance and advice, but the Lord Jesus is our true Wonderful Counsellor. He is the one who guides us by His Holy Spirit. He shows us the way to heaven, protects and guides us in difficult circumstances. He neither slumbers nor sleeps.

**Mighty God:** The Lord Jesus was there from before the beginning and was involved in the creation of the universe, planning all things with the Father. Hebrews 1 says “God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds”. He is the heir of all things and is sitting on the right side of His Father.

**Everlasting Father:** One translation has “the Father who lives forever”. He was and is and is to come; He is the everlasting one, as well as the one who loved us and gave us His life for the salvation of mankind. He became the mediator between God and us, for there is only one name by which we can be saved – the name Jesus.

**Prince of peace:** the only source of peace. We should not look for peace any further. The world may talk about peace, but true peace is only through Christ. When we repent and accept the Lord Jesus in our hearts, a deep peace comes and rests in our hearts. That peace is not affected by the things that happen around us; it is His presence in our lives that we experience daily.

**Immanuel:** God with us. How blessed we are to have a God who loves us and is with us at all times of every day. He was with His people when they crossed the Red Sea, he was with Daniel in the lion’s den, and He was with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fire. How much more is he is with us today in our hard times, our sufferings and our illnesses.

Yes, God is with us no matter what happens, and Christmas is a very special time for all of us who believe as we gather to celebrate the physical birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

HK

*“What we need as Christians is to be able to feed ourselves. How many there are who sit helpless and listless, with open mouths, hungry for spiritual things, and the minister has to try to feed them, while the Bible is a feast prepared, into which they never venture.”*

— Dwight Lyman Moody

## ***The Second Coming of the Lord Jesus (3)***

### ***3. The Judgment Seat of Christ***

In the Scriptures we read about three coming judgments. Matthew 25:31-46 speaks about the judgment of the living nations which will be gathered before the Son of Man when He comes in His glory with the holy angels. This suggests that this will be a judgment which will take place on earth at the time the millennial kingdom is being established.

Revelation 20:11-15 speaks about a great white throne where the dead, both small and great, stand before God and people will be judged with certain books open before them. All except one of these books is a record of what each person has done. But the other book is more significant in the judgment as it is the Book of Life. If a person's name is not written in that book he will be cast into the lake of fire. The severity of the punishment is decided on the basis of what is written in the other books – people will be judged according to their works. In other words, the record in the books will be used to determine the severity of the judgment a person will receive.

But the Scriptures also teach about one other judgment. It is the judgment seat of Christ. In writing to the believers in Corinth Paul said that *“we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad”* (2 Corinthians 5:10). What is the context in which he makes this statement?

Earlier in 2 Corinthians 5 Paul compares our present body with the eternal home we will one day have in heaven, something which the Lord Jesus has gone to prepare for us. Until we reach that place we walk by faith and aim to be well pleasing to the Lord because we know that one day we will stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

Paul has a very sobering comment about the judgment seat of Christ. It is possible that many believers do not think seriously about

what we have been told. They drift through life more concerned about the cares of this life than about serving our Lord and Saviour faithfully. But the message of verse 10 is very clear: we will all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. And the reason? That we may receive the things done in the body, according to what we have done, whether good or bad. What should be our attitude? Knowing the fear of the Lord (that is, we know what it is to fear the Lord) we seek to persuade men. We want them to believe the gospel. Clearly the judgment seat of Christ will be a serious event.

In 1 Corinthians 3 Paul also talks about the assessment that God will make of our lives and work. At present we are all fellow workers belonging to God; we serve under His direction. We are also His field and His building – the local church – and, as fellow workers, we are adding to that building. But we have to be careful about the way in which we build and make additions to the local church because there will come a day when our work will be assessed.

Paul could say that he had faithfully laid the foundation of the church in Corinth; he had begun the work well and set it on a solid basis. The foundation of the local church is Jesus Christ; there is no other foundation. Paul had preached Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Others were now adding to the work which he had started. But each person has a solemn responsibility to ensure that what he adds to the building is made of the best materials and is well constructed. This is because a day is coming when the work that we have done in adding to the local church will be judged. Some people will have added substantial material – gold, silver, precious stones – to the building and these believers will be rewarded. But those who have been careless in their work and have added wood, hay and straw will see their work go up in flames. What may have once looked impressive will disappear as something in which there was nothing for God. A person who has worked well and done something of value will receive a reward; the one who had not produced anything of lasting value will suffer loss; even though *“he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire”*.

The seriousness of all this is seen in verses 16 and 17. *“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells*

*in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are (1 Corinthians 3:16-17).*

One day our work for the Lord Jesus will be assessed. What are we doing to ensure that our work does not go up in smoke? What are we doing so that He will reward us for faithful service?

Don Stormer

## ***Building the church: Acts 1-12 (5)***

### ***The themes of Acts***

#### **The church**

When a messenger preached the gospel message, those who accepted it became followers of Jesus. That's how God builds the church. The church is a gathering of followers of Jesus.

The church is a living spiritual organism. It's illustrated as a body with Christ as the head. Its mission is evangelism and discipleship – to spread the gospel message and bring believers to maturity.

Members of the early church were committed to one another (2:42-47). They shared life, which is called fellowship. There was support and unity. They cared for each other (4:32-37). They provided for each other's needs. And they were generous.

Church is not a spectator event or entertainment. It's relational. We are a family. It's collective, not individual. It's shared life, not a private life. It's being connected, not isolated.

The early church faced two big issues: persecution and multiculturalism. People scattered away from Jerusalem to avoid severe persecution by the Jewish authorities. God used this to spread the gospel geographically. Christians around the world face varying degrees of persecution today. We can learn from the accounts of how the early church faced persecution.

The early church was Jewish. But God showed Peter that the gospel was to go out to Gentiles as well. He shattered the Jewish Christians' prejudice. They had to learn that all believers are equal before God (Galatians 3:26-29). The nation of Israel was being replaced as the sole people of God with people from every nation (the church) as the people of God. The people of God were no longer a single nation. The church was the new people of God. This was hard to accept and there was racial conflict. There can be conflict between Christians in churches today. We can learn from the accounts of how the early church dealt with conflict.

The Bible is honest. Because people are flawed, the church isn't perfect. Sin devastates the fellowship. The first instruction to the church was how to confront sin in the church (Matthew 18:15-17). And lying and hypocrisy was the first sin to be disciplined in the church (5:1-11).

## **Prayer**

Prayer is mentioned more often in Acts than in any other book of the Bible – 33 times. The believers prayed before the day of Pentecost (1:14). Prayer was one of the main activities of the early church (2:42). They prayed amidst persecution (4:24; 12:5; 16:25).

Prayer and Bible teaching were the main activities of the apostles (6:4). The apostles prayed before God did miracles through them (9:40; 28:8). They prayed when people were appointed to service (6:6; 13:3; 14:23). And Cornelius the Gentile “prayed to God regularly” (10:2).

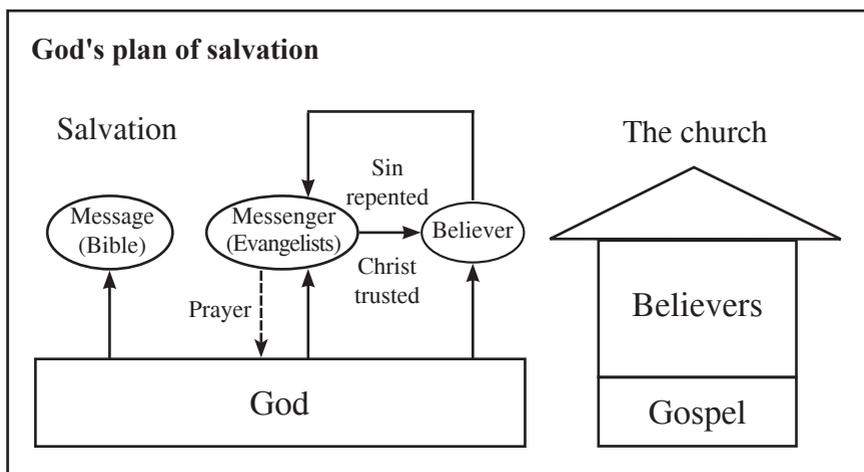
How often do you pray to God?

## **Lessons for us**

In Acts, God's witnesses spread the gospel message to all kinds of people and established churches. It was a unique transition period from the old covenant to the new, and from the Jew to the Gentile. Some things the apostles did were unique to their era, whereas some apply today. We can view this period as building the foundation of the church.

The gospel went to the Gentiles because the Jews rejected it. And God used persecution to do this. When God closes one door, He usually opens another door. So God works in all circumstances.

The components of God's plan of salvation to spread Christianity across the world today are shown in the diagram. The message is the good news about Jesus in the Bible. The main messengers are evangelists and believers. And the messenger and believers both pray to God.



That's how the church is built numerically. Peter and Paul boldly presented the gospel to individuals and groups of people. What about us? That's a challenge for us today because the gospel is often ridiculed.

Teaching from the Bible and applying what is learnt to daily living builds the members of a church into maturity.

God is still building His church today. Will you be His witness like those in the early church?

**Appendix: The structure of Acts**

Acts can be divided into two sections, the first dealing primarily with the ministry of Peter in Jerusalem and Samaria (1:1 – 12:24) and

the second following Paul on his missionary journeys throughout the Roman Empire (12:25 – 28:31). Peter's ministry was primarily to the Jews and Paul's ministry primarily to the Gentiles.

In his sermons by Peter taught that Jesus was the promised Messiah (2:14-39; 3:11-26; 4:8-12; 10:28-37; 11:4-18). And many people converted from Judaism to Christianity.

Acts reveals a progression of the gospel that divides the book into six parts. At the end of each section is a summary statement (6:7, 9:31, 12:24, 16:5, 19:20, 28:30-31). The progression begins in Jerusalem (1:1-6:7), extends to Judea, Galilee, and Samaria (6:8-9:31), Syria and Cyprus (9:32-12:24), Pisidia, Pamphylia, Lycaonia, and Cilicia (12:25-16:5), Asia and Greece (16:6-19:20), and finally Rome (19:21-28:31).

George Hawke



## JUST ONE REQUEST

Dear Master for this coming year  
Just one request I bring:

I do not pray for happiness,  
or any earthly thing—  
I do not ask to understand  
the way Thou leadest me;

But this I ask: Teach me to do  
the thing that pleases Thee.  
I want to know Thy guiding voice;  
To walk with Thee each day.

Dear Master, make me swift to hear  
and ready to obey.  
And thus the year I now begin  
a happy year will be...

If I am seeking just to do  
the things that pleaseth Thee.

- Author Unknown

## **Honey and Gold: Psalm 119**

### **Part 1**

**H**oney and Gold. The Bible is sweeter than honey and more precious than gold.

I'm calling this devotional through Psalm 119 Honey and Gold because my intent is not to simply offer a study of doctrinal points on the inspiration or truthfulness or authority of Scripture. All these are mentioned in this Psalm and will be touched on. But my intention is more personal and pastoral. For too many Christians the Bible is not sweet nor precious. I've also been there. Instead we see the Bible as a chore, reading as spiritual homework. We come because we "have to" more than we "want to."

Let's be honest here. Is the Bible sweet like honey and more precious than gold for you right now? Come to the Lord with an open heart. Don't pull away. I think we have hope in this regard.

Verse 103 says *How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!* We love honey, don't we? When you think about honey, what dessert or pastry comes to mind? Maybe something that you are craving right now. Something you enjoy as a treat. Is this how you approach Scripture? Do you crave and enjoy it? If not, keep going. We won't find the sweetness with a closed Bible. The surrounding verses speak of keeping the Word and holding back from evil and not turning aside from the Word. We experience the sweetness as we walk before the Lord in holiness and obedience. Was it worth it? Yes of course. Because this is sweeter than honey. In verse 102 we see that God Himself taught the psalmist – oh how sweet that must be. Knowing the sweetness of the Bible is one thing – experiencing it is another. Jonathan Edwards said "Thus there is a difference between having an opinion that God is holy and gracious, and having a sense of the loveliness and beauty of that holiness and grace. There is a difference between having a rational judgment that honey is sweet, and having a sense of its sweetness. A man may have the former, that

knows not how honey tastes; but a man can't have the latter unless he has an idea of the taste of honey in his mind. So there is a difference between believing that a person is beautiful, and having a sense of his beauty." There is a big difference between having an opinion of God as holy and gracious – and really sensing that to be true in your life. We may know in our minds that the Bible is sweet, but personally knowing that sweetness is something else.

And so, honestly, if you feel spiritually flat right now and your heart is bland, can you think of a time in the past when Scripture was sweet to you? Where were you and what were you studying? What passage or topic? Was this during a personal study or a conference or the message from an average Sunday. And take heart, God will make this sweet again for you. And now – gold. Verse 14 says *In the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches*. Finding the Bible to be precious is not something instant. The previous verses in the stanza spoke of meditating on them and hiding them in one's heart. Studying with the mind and storing in the heart make the Word precious to the believer. Consider the immediate excitement that comes from hearing you have won a grand prize. Maybe you were assuming that as long as you won, your problems would be solved. All your needs would be met. But here in the Word of God we find provision for all our needs in living for the Lord. There is a delight that will not fade away. Even in the hardest of days, there is still a genuine and deep satisfaction in what God has revealed to us in the Word. Riches can lose their value or be taken from us, but not the Word of God. Verse 162 reads *I rejoice at your word like one who finds great spoil*.

Consider the fruits of victory. The war is over and the soldiers collect the spoil. Our fighting is over; now we collect the spoils of war. Jesus has won, and all the spiritual blessings of the heavenly places are ours in Him. Consider all the great gains by mighty men. Consider what land and wealth the victors have grasped when the fighting is over.

But the treasure here is far more – rich and refreshing and unending. Spurgeon once said “The law is better than gold and silver, for these can be stolen from us, but the Word cannot be. These take flight, but

the Word of God remains". Verse 72 says *The law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces*. He doesn't say "like" but "better". Why is it more precious? Because the writer had walked through deep suffering. He was wandering and drifting, but in and after that season of suffering he was grounded. He walked in obedience. That was good, because God is good. Look at how many times "good" is repeated in this stanza. He lost a lot in suffering but spiritually gained so much more. And so, the Word was precious to him – even in the midst of all that. Maybe he read the Word of God and suddenly discovered such great teaching on the heart and work and purpose of God. Far better than gold! More than relief and restoration, more than the fixing and ending of suffering is the treasure of the Word of God. Priceless and precious. The Word is that precious. More than anything else that I own. More than anything else that I have. Actually, more precious than my life. I'm afflicted but in that affliction I get to be in the Word to learn it and to delight in it – so precious – and that is a good thing. Affliction had been the season and reason for learning the precious and priceless Word – and for that reason, it was good. We see this again in Verse 127: *Therefore I love your commandments above gold, above fine gold*. The Word does what gold cannot. We need money to get through the week – more so, we need the Word. While money brings power and opportunity, God's Word works and accomplishes far more. Verse 111 says *Your testimonies are my heritage forever, for they are the joy of my heart*. Do you see the ongoing connection between the precious Word and the joy of one's heart? He has inherited such rich teaching to which, he will incline His heart to obey (verse 112). He received riches from those believers who came before Him and he is intent on faithfully passing this inheritance on to the next generation.

Three quick observations and some final questions. First, while too much honey isn't a good thing and too much gold brings problems and pain, you cannot get enough of the sweet and precious Word of God. It will always be so. Over time, it will not become bland.

Second, down the line, this will be good and helpful for you. This brings maturity. How you approach and handle the Bible now will

determine where you will be spiritually in years to come. Faithfully finding and feasting on this sweet Word will prove to be so good and helpful in the years and generations to come. To be a good steward of the life and days that God has given you, don't drift or coast. Consider the godly life that you want to have at the end, and turn to the Word again today.

Finally, this is true – it is really sweet and precious, because this is God's Word. This is inspired; it is from the very mind and heart of God for you and me. It is really good and really true. It is powerful, refreshing and daily helpful. It is alive! As you faithfully and humbly and earnestly come with an open heart, you can only find this to be sweet and precious.

Where are you with all this? Do you find the Word sweet and precious? Or have you been far too easily pleased and distracted with the cheap and trivial? Is your soul so stuffed with things that don't matter that you don't have room for the great? Be honest with God. Consider what has been wrong with your heart. Plead for help. Receive His grace again.

Ask Him to make this more sweet and precious than ever before. Ask Him to do what only He can do. And He will do it. This is what He wants from you, and He will work in your heart to get there. I encourage you to slowly and carefully read Psalm 119. Read it again and again, pray through it for your own heart. Pray that this will be really sweet and really precious – like honey and gold.

Aren Bahadourian



*“We are quite persuaded that the very best way for you to be spending your leisure time, is to be either reading or praying. You may get much instruction from books which afterwards you may use as a true weapon in your Lord and Master's service. Paul cries, “Bring the books” — join in the cry.”*

— Charles Haddon Spurgeon

## ***Consider Your Ways!***

*"Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways. Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD." Haggai 1:7-8*

**M**ore than 500 years before the birth of the Lord Jesus, the people of God were given a stern reminder by the prophet Haggai that the building of the house of the Lord had been neglected. In their lethargy they even discussed whether it was time to build.

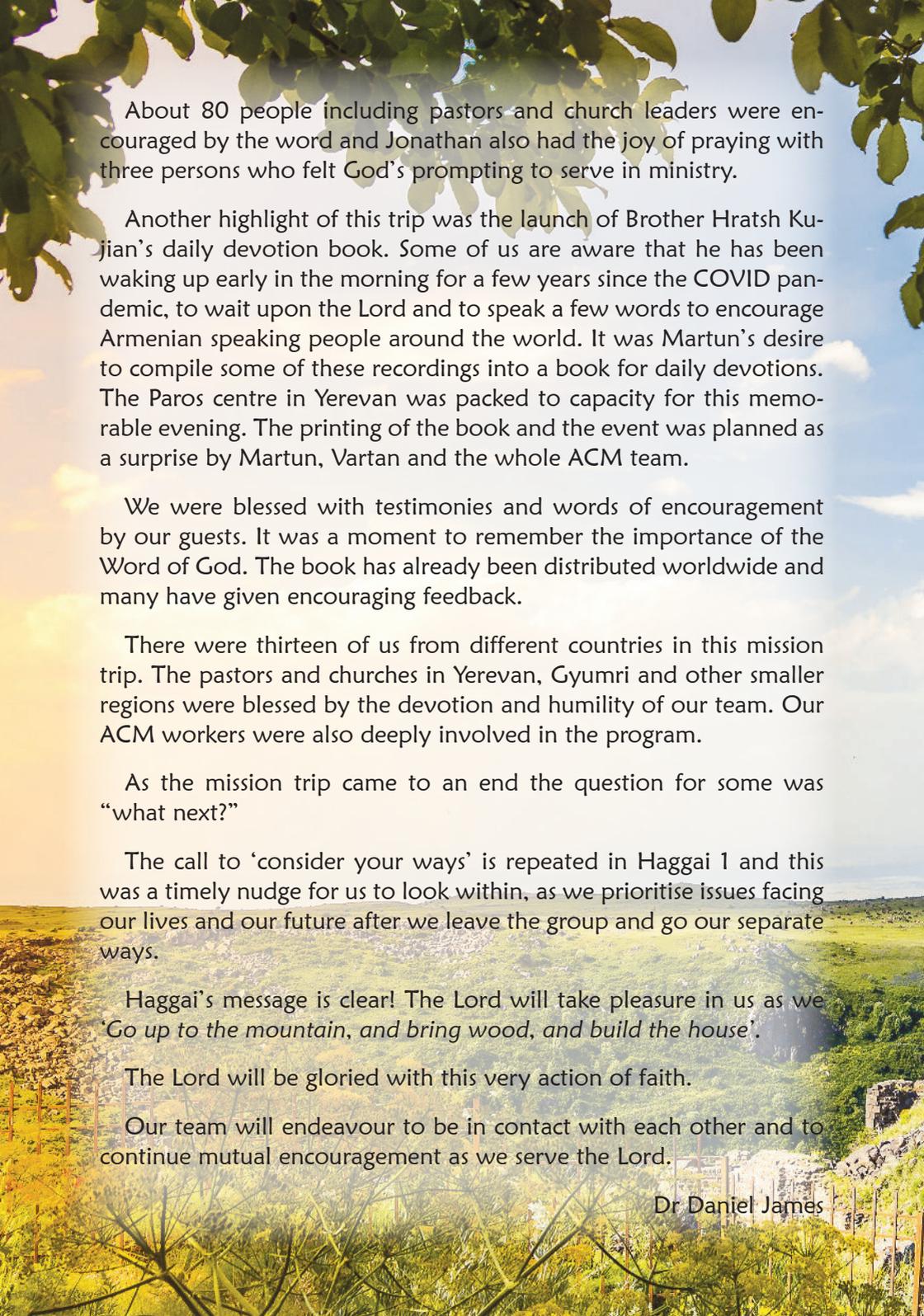
The first temple built by Solomon had been destroyed and now as the exiled people returned to their home, they saw the ruins of the house of God, but their plans were to not only build their own houses, but to indulge in the vain excesses in their earthly sojourn.

From the very first mission trip that I was honoured to be invited to in 2010, to the last one in September this year, I realised that for many of us, it is a great time to pause and reflect on our own personal desire and ambitions as believers. Perhaps the children of Israel thought that as they were released from bondage, they could reward themselves with their own personal projects.

*"Is it time for you, yourselves to dwell in your panelled houses, and this temple to lie in ruins?" Haggai 1:4*

The Lord continues to touch us and remind us that it is all about His 'house', His kingdom and His task that is set before us. Indeed the field is, 'white already to harvest' (John 4:35).

Our recent trip from 13–28 September, was filled with reminders for us to focus on the Lord and how He has entrusted us to be custodians of the gospel. This began with a two-day seminar on *Evangelism in Today's World* with Dr Jonathan James, Executive President of Asia Evangelistic Fellowship International, as the speaker.



About 80 people including pastors and church leaders were encouraged by the word and Jonathan also had the joy of praying with three persons who felt God's prompting to serve in ministry.

Another highlight of this trip was the launch of Brother Hratsh Kujian's daily devotion book. Some of us are aware that he has been waking up early in the morning for a few years since the COVID pandemic, to wait upon the Lord and to speak a few words to encourage Armenian speaking people around the world. It was Martun's desire to compile some of these recordings into a book for daily devotions. The Paros centre in Yerevan was packed to capacity for this memorable evening. The printing of the book and the event was planned as a surprise by Martun, Vartan and the whole ACM team.

We were blessed with testimonies and words of encouragement by our guests. It was a moment to remember the importance of the Word of God. The book has already been distributed worldwide and many have given encouraging feedback.

There were thirteen of us from different countries in this mission trip. The pastors and churches in Yerevan, Gyumri and other smaller regions were blessed by the devotion and humility of our team. Our ACM workers were also deeply involved in the program.

As the mission trip came to an end the question for some was "what next?"

The call to 'consider your ways' is repeated in Haggai 1 and this was a timely nudge for us to look within, as we prioritise issues facing our lives and our future after we leave the group and go our separate ways.

Haggai's message is clear! The Lord will take pleasure in us as we '*Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house*'.

The Lord will be gloried with this very action of faith.

Our team will endeavour to be in contact with each other and to continue mutual encouragement as we serve the Lord.

Dr Daniel James