



Glad Tidings

Of The Kingdom Of God



Featured **Articles**

How To Be Happy (p. 3)

The Tabernacle (p. 8)

What Are Angels? (p. 13)

A monthly magazine written and published by the Christadelphians (brothers and sisters in Christ) and available throughout the world.

Its objectives are to encourage the study of the Bible as God's inspired message to humankind; to call attention to the divine offer of forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ; and to warn people that soon Christ will return to earth as judge and ruler of God's worldwide Kingdom.

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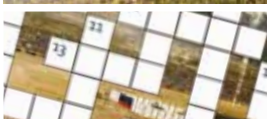
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Glad Tidings Distributors for orders and payments

United Kingdom

Becky Collard, 7 Lindridge Close,
Redditch, Worcs. B98 0QJ, UK
Tel: +44 (0)7521 079 190 (24 hrs)
orders-uk@gladtidingsmagazine.org

Australia

Ruth Morgan, 51 Jesmond Road,
Croydon, VIC 3136, Australia
gladtidingsaustralia@gmail.com

Canada

Vivian Thorp, 5377 Birdcage Walk,
Burlington, ON L7L 3K5, Canada
vivianthorp@bell.net

New Zealand

Neil Todd, 14 Morpeth Place, Blockhouse
Bay, Auckland 0600, New Zealand
thetodds@xtra.co.nz

U.S.A.

Pat Hemingray, 1244 Pennsylvania
Avenue, Oakmont, PA 15139, USA
orders-usa@gladtidingsmagazine.org

Other Countries

Andrew Johnson, 22 Hazel Drive,
Hollywood, Birmingham B47 5RJ, UK
orders-int@gladtidingsmagazine.org

Editor

Chris Parkin, 7 Thorntree Lane, Newhall,
Swadlincote, Derbyshire DE11 0LP, UK
editor@gladtidingsmagazine.org

Publisher

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How To Be Happy

A PROMINENT MEDICAL professor claims that the reason why there is so much unhappiness in the modern world is that we have confused happiness with pleasure.* We have persuaded ourselves that when we buy products and experiences that give us pleasure, they will make us happy. And so most of the world's economies are based on the promotion of pleasure, from tobacco to fast food to mobile phones and countless other commodities which promise to make us happy. But they do not deliver—it's a scientifically proven fact.

The professor suggests four basic ingredients as a recipe for happiness:

- **Connect**—foster real life interpersonal relationships
- **Contribute**—give rather than take
- **Cope**—adopt a sustainable lifestyle, with adequate sleep and exercise and reduce stress to a manageable level
- **Cook**—prepare proper unprocessed food with natural ingredients.

Few would argue with this recipe. But here's another ingredient which the professor overlooked—**Faith**.

Faith is a way of life. The Apostle Paul describes it like this: *'I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but*

* Dr Robert Lustig in
The Hacking of the American Mind

Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me' (Galatians 2:20). This is a profound statement. The Christian life is one of devotion to Jesus Christ who is your master (Luke 9:23). Not everyone would see a life of service as a route to happiness, but the key is to recognise who Jesus is: your Saviour, who loves you and gave his life for your salvation.

The life of faith is a developing relationship with God and His Son Jesus Christ, a life of personal transformation (2 Corinthians 3:18), with its goal eternal life in God's Kingdom (Luke 12:32). That is a recipe for a special kind of happiness.



Blessedness

As you'd expect, the Bible has a lot to say about happiness. In an English translation you're more likely to find the word 'blessed' than 'happy', but they essentially mean the same thing. Here are a few examples from the Bible's songbook, the Psalms:

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither (Psalm 1:1–3).

Blessedness is the result of consciously pursuing a God-centred life.

Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit (Psalm 32:1–2). Blessedness is the peace of mind that comes from knowing that everything you've done wrong has been forgiven.

Blessed is the one you choose and bring near, to dwell in your courts! We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house, the holiness of your temple! (Psalm 65:4). Blessedness comes from belonging to God, and being a member of His household.

And here are some examples from the teaching of Jesus Christ. In Matthew 5:3–11 he gives a set of eight pronouncements which each begin '*Blessed are...*' They are sometimes called the 'Beatitudes'. This is simply Latin for 'blessedness', but someone has observed that it's a good name for them because they describe attitudes that shape how we should be—'*be attitudes*'. Here are the first three:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (v. 3). To be 'poor in spirit' is the opposite of being proud of yourself—it's to be aware of your need for the grace of God.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted (v. 4). To 'mourn' is to be saddened by the ungodliness we see in the world, and in ourselves.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth (v. 5). To be 'meek' is to be teachable, ready to learn and follow rather than go our own way.

You may like to carry on and read the rest of the Beatitudes, but these three give a flavour. If you were asked to write a list of attitudes that make for happiness, would it look like this? But do you see what Jesus is doing: he is

making us look beyond ourselves. And he is making it clear that true happiness is rooted in looking beyond this life to the future. If our focus is on God, His grace, and eternal life which He promises in His coming Kingdom—if we are living in faith—happiness will be a by-product.

How To Be Happy

Buying stuff that gives temporary pleasure will not make you happy. Getting in control of your life—connecting, contributing, coping and cooking—that sounds like a good start. But true happiness is found in the life of faith—'*O LORD of hosts, blessed is the one who trusts in you!*' (Psalm 84:12).



Believing God

IT IS HEART-RENDING when a couple cannot have a baby. And the older couples get, the harder it becomes. Desperate would-be parents go to all sorts of lengths to try to conceive. In some cases worried friends fear that they are trusting in the impossible: hoping against hope.

Centuries ago, Abraham and Sarah faced a similar plight. On several occasions God had promised Abraham that his descendants would become a great multitude of people (for example Genesis 13:14–16, 15:5–6, 17:4–6). But Abraham's wife Sarah was infertile (Genesis 11:30). Worse still, they both grew old—very old. Abraham was 99 years old, and Sarah was 90 and way past child-bearing age. But once again, God promised that Abraham and Sarah would have a son:

I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife shall have a son (Genesis 18:10).



This defied any 'natural' logic, all the experience and evidence of life. It made no human sense. But it made sense to Abraham. He did not 'weaken' or 'waver' at this promise (Romans 4:19–20), but

believed. He not only believed in God, but he believed God—that He keeps His promises, even when this is 'against nature'.

The son was born. He was called Isaac, and he was the only son of Abraham and Sarah. His name means 'laughter', and he must have brought untold joy to his parents. All seemed well.

And then there was another momentous twist to the story. God told Abraham to sacrifice Isaac: to kill this very special and unique son of promise. To kill the son he had longed for, the son promised by God, the son who was to father a multitude of people (Genesis 22:2). Again, Abraham obeyed, not doubting. Although he had never experienced resurrection, he believed that God could raise Isaac back to life and so he was actually prepared to kill him on an altar. We know this because of comments in the New Testament:

By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, of whom it was said, "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named." He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back (Hebrews 11:17–19).

At the last minute an angel of God stopped Abraham (Genesis 22:10–12), and Isaac lived to father the Jewish nation.

What amazing faith Abraham had! We can be pretty sure that he knew about the events recorded in the early chapters of Genesis, but we don't know what else he knew about God. We do know that he trusted God implicitly, he believed God's words more than the evidence of his own knowledge and experience. No wonder he is called the 'friend of God' (James 2:23). And no wonder we are urged to have the faith of Abraham.

Do We Believe God?



God wants us to believe that He exists, and that we can find Him: *'And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him'* (Hebrews 11:6).

He asks us to believe that He will forgive us and that He wants to give 'His flock' eternal life in His kingdom on earth. Jesus said: *'seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you. Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom'* (Luke 12:31–32).

In contrast to Abraham, we have much scientific knowledge. But like Abraham, there are still things that we cannot explain. We have the complete Bible, full of accounts of the character, promises and actions of Almighty God; details of the life,

teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus, His Son. We did not see Jesus, and the events of his life are outside our experience and inexplicable by science. But after convincing the sceptical disciple Thomas, Jesus said *'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed'* (John 20:29).

God does not expect us to have 'blind faith'—there are many reasons why we can have confidence in what the Bible says. But faith is precisely about what we cannot actually see: otherwise it is not faith! *'Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the people of old received their commendation'* (Hebrews 11:1–2).

Events such as the return of Jesus to earth to raise the dead and set up God's Kingdom are completely outside our experience. We might even think that they make no human sense. We cannot work out how they could or will happen. Nor could Abraham. Nor could the disciples. But that is no reason to disbelieve. For the Bible clearly teaches that when God says something will happen then it surely does. *'For nothing will be impossible with God'* (Luke 1:37).

Anna Hart

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Ephesians

THIS LETTER was written to the believers in Ephesus, a prosperous cosmopolitan city in what is now Turkey. It was home to the temple of the Greek goddess Artemis (whom the Romans knew as Diana). The account of the Apostle Paul's visit to Ephesus and his encounter with Artemis's worshippers is in Acts 19.

Temple of Artemis at Ephesus



Followers of Christ are called to a greater Temple—formed of believers, both Jews and Gentiles. This Temple, when completed, will be greater than even the Jewish Temple at Jerusalem! Built on the foundation of the teachings of God's word, through the apostles and the prophets, with Jesus Christ as 'the cornerstone', this Temple will become a dwelling-place for God Himself! (Ephesians 2:19–22).

The Unity of the Faith

Unity is a key theme of this letter. The barrier between Jew and Gentile has been broken down by Christ (2:14), and all true believers have become one in him. And they are united in agreeing on the basic doctrines of their faith—summarised in 4:4–6 (and set out below).

ONE BODY	—true believers
ONE SPIRIT	—God's power
ONE HOPE	—eternal life
ONE LORD	—Jesus Christ
ONE FAITH	—the promises
ONE BAPTISM	—adult immersion
ONE GOD	—the Father

Chapter 5 includes a beautiful portrayal of marriage, drawing out the spiritual parallel with 'Christ and the church' (vs. 22–33).

The Armour of God

The letter gives sound practical advice on how believers are to live, putting off the 'old man' and putting on the 'new man' (4:22–24); by their actions they will witness to Christ. Though raised to a high status (called 'heavenly places', 1:3), they still have to fight against sin, being protected by 'the whole armour of God' (6:10–17).

Norman Owen

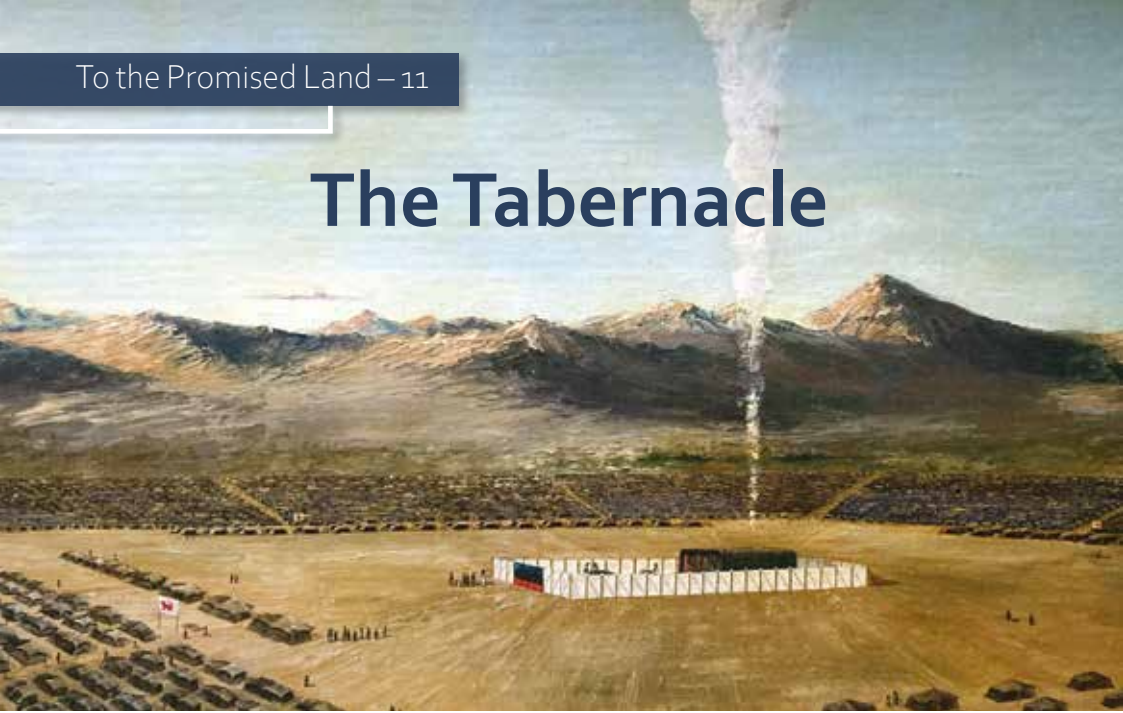
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Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible:

- ◆ Ephesians 1:22—see Romans 12:5; 1 Corinthians 10:17.
- ◆ Ephesians 2:8—see Romans 3:24; 6:23.
- ◆ Ephesians 2:12 – see Acts 11:18; John 10:16.

The Tabernacle



AFTER THE INCIDENT of the golden calf the people of Israel were deeply repentant. When Moses, their aged leader, toiled to the top of Mount Sinai to beg the Lord to forgive their great sin, He graciously agreed (Exodus 32:14). But He sent Moses down with a task for the people which would test their sincerity.

On an earlier occasion God had spoken to Moses about building for Him a mobile temple, to be called 'the Tabernacle'. 'Let them build me a sanctuary', He had said, 'that I may dwell in their midst' (Exodus 25:8). He had described the building carefully and shown Moses a model which he was to follow. Now the time had come to put the plan into action. The whole construction was to be made from gifts of timber, cloth, and precious metals donated by the people, and it would be put together by volunteer labour.

Construction of the Tabernacle

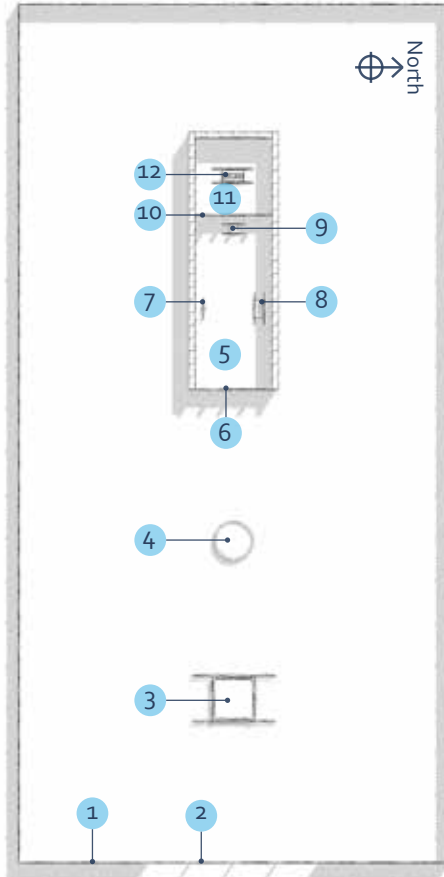
When Moses informed the people, the response was overwhelming. They brought brooches, earrings, metal mirrors, bales of cloth, silver and bronze—so much that he had to post an order that the target had been exceeded, and no more was required. Then they set to work. Under the direction of two inspired craftsmen (Exodus 31:1–6), the women spun thread, then combined different colours to be woven into cloth and embroidered. Metal workers cast bronze and beat gold into articles of furniture. Carpenters built the giant wooden frames that formed the walls. When it was ready, it was an imposing sight. And it was made to last! We know that it was still standing over four centuries later in the time of King Solomon (2 Chronicles 1:5), for he brought parts of it into the great stone temple he built in Jerusalem. Yet the whole thing was

designed to be completely portable, so that as the encampment moved on, the Tabernacle could go with them.

Let us make an imaginary tour of what must be one of the most remarkable buildings ever made. The smallest details are listed in Exodus 36 to 40, so we need have no doubts about its appearance. From a distance, all you could see was a three-metre (10-foot) high wall of white linen ¹, enclosing an open court approximately 23 metres by 46 metres (25 by 50 yards. The measurements are given in cubits—a cubit is the length of a man's forearm.)

The only way to look inside the court was to pass through the entrance gate ², a flap of embroidered cloth in the outer wall. In the centre of the court, in line with the gate, stood an altar plated with bronze ³. Close by was a huge bronze bowl ⁴ from which water was taken for washing hands and feet. Behind was the Tabernacle proper ⁵, an open fronted rectangle, walled with timber panels each 10 cubits high by 1.5 cubits wide. Each of the panels stood on

end in a row, coupled firmly to the others with wooden bars. The roof of the building consisted of layers of cloth, topped with leather, stretched taut, and anchored securely to the ground with metal pegs.



Inside the Tabernacle were the most striking sights of all. The entry curtain ⁶ opened on to a room 20 cubits long and 10 cubits wide, containing three items of furniture. On the left stood a lampstand of pure gold ⁷, made to look like an almond tree, with seven lamps poised on the ends of seven branches. On the right was a gold-plated table ⁸, laid ready with a simple meal of bread and drink. A tiny golden altar, used only for incense, stood at the back ⁹. Behind, stretched from side to side, hung a great embroidered curtain or veil, of exquisite workmanship ¹⁰. Beyond the veil lay yet another room, a perfect cube with sides

of 10 cubits ¹¹, its walls coated with purest glittering gold. Here, in the heart of the sanctuary, the Holy of Holies, you might have expected to find a god—an image of metal or stone. But Israel's God was the living Creator. The room was empty, save for a wooden chest ¹². The chest had a lid

of solid gold, worked at the end into two great winged figures that formed a seat or throne. It was the throne of God Himself, Israel's king, dwelling in their midst in a cloud infused with fire. The glory of the Lord is referred to over and over again in the wilderness journey.

God's presence was seen outside the Tabernacle in the form of a pillar of cloud which remained directly above the Holy of Holies. It was a cloud in the daytime, but glowed red with fire at night. When the time came for the camp to move, it went before the people as a pillar stretching up into the sky. It indicated the presence of the angel of the Lord. As soon as the camp was pitched, it filled the Holy of Holies: *'For the cloud of the LORD was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel throughout all their journeys'* (Exodus 40:38).

The Way to God

What are we to make of this strange building, pitched at the very heart of the encampment of Israel? What was the meaning of its court and rooms, and its

peculiar furniture? Firstly, there is the wonderful thought that the great Creator, Lord of heaven and earth, sent His angel to dwell in the camp, in a building made from the offerings of the people. We may think of God as being remote, somewhere 'up there' in heaven. But the Bible teaches He condescends to come right into the lives of ordinary people. Isaiah the prophet had a lovely way of putting it. *'I dwell in the high and holy place'* says God, *'and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit'* (Isaiah 57:15). Jesus puts it this way: *'If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him'* (John 14:23).

Notice the conditions. Israel in the wilderness had to make the Tabernacle exactly as God commanded Moses. Isaiah says we must be humble. Jesus says we have to keep his word. In humble obedience, the offering of the best of our lives to God will be rewarded by His presence and His guidance through life's journey. The Tabernacle was a daily reminder to Israel of God's interest in their lives.



Pages 10–11: Reconstruction of the Tabernacle in the Timna National Park, Israel

We can take the analysis further. The division of the Tabernacle into two compartments taught Israel that one day, on God's terms, they could come even closer to Him. We have the clues in a fine passage in the letter to the Hebrews. The Holy of Holies was separated from the outer by the veil. *'By this the Holy Spirit indicates'*, we read, *'that the way into the holy places is not yet opened as long as the first section is still standing (which is symbolic for the present age)'* (Hebrews 9:8-9).

On this basis the outer room, often called the Holy Place, represents the Christian's mortal life now. The furniture corresponds to that idea. The table with the meal represents God's generous provision for His children's needs, and also the regular sharing of bread and wine at the Lord's Supper (Luke 22:19). The light dispelling the cavernous gloom came from seven lamps, each burning pure olive oil. Oil is a Bible symbol of God's Holy Spirit, condensed for us into His holy word, the Bible, which enlightens our path. The altar of incense stood close to the veil. Incense was burnt

on this altar morning and evening. Incense always stands for prayer in the Bible (see Revelation 8:4). Like the smoke from the incense, His people's prayers pass through to God in heaven, represented by the glory of God beyond the veil.

Ordinary people could not pass beyond the veil. The perfect cube of the inner room, the Holy of Holies, with the gold of immortality and the brilliant glory of God's presence is barred to us, says the Apostle, so long as the Holy Place, our mortal life, continues. But there is hope. The veil was a curtain, not a wall. In a beautiful figure it represented, says the letter to the Hebrews, the body of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 10:20). His flesh, sacrificed on Calvary, linked mortal humans to immortal God. Carrying the offering of his own blood, poured out in love for his followers, Jesus went through the veil to prepare the way for others to follow. With a deep significance, Luke in his Gospel recalls that at the moment of Jesus' death on the cross the heavy veil in the Temple tore in two (Luke 23:45). The barrier was removed. Now we can come near to God.





Echoes of Eden

We can see parallels here with the Garden of Eden. In the book of Genesis, Adam and Eve were expelled from the garden paradise because of their sin. They were kept out by the cherubim and a flaming sword (Genesis 3:24). They could perhaps stand at the entrance and see the Tree of Life in the distance. In faith, they would offer the sacrifices God had prescribed, which pointed forward to the death of His Son (Genesis 4). All they could hope was that one day they might be allowed to return to the perfection they had lost.

The Tabernacle preserved the same visual imagery. The altar, the bowl for washing, the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies beyond, all are pictures of the way of faith and obedience that leads to paradise: the sacrifice of Christ, baptism for washing away our sins, the daily life of discipleship, and at last immortality in the Kingdom of God.

The chapter in Hebrews concludes with the promise of Christ's return, to bring eternal life to his friends, and that fellowship with God that belongs to immortality: *'For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things,*

but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf... so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him' (Hebrews 9:24, 28).

The book of Revelation concludes with John's vision of a holy city that comes down to earth. It has no temple, for the city itself is a perfect cube, and all who inhabit it enjoy perfection. *'Behold', he writes, 'the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God' (Revelation 21:3).*

David M Pearce

Questions? Comments?
We'd love to hear from you!

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or write to the Editor—address inside front cover

What Are Angels?



WE HEAR LITTLE about angels in our unbelieving age. But although we hear little and see nothing of them today, they are real and there is actually a lot of information about them if we know where to look—that is, of course, in the Bible.

Jesus Christ said that those who are given eternal life when he returns to the earth *'cannot die any more, because they are equal to angels and are sons of God'* (Luke 20:36). For this reason if for no other we should want to know more about them!

The English word 'angel' is a translation of the Hebrew word *malak* (in the Old Testament) and the Greek word *angelos* (in the New Testament). Both these words mean 'messenger'. That is basically what angels are—they are God's messengers. *'Bless the LORD, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word!'* (Psalm 103:20).

- **What is the purpose of their messages?** *'Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?'* (Hebrews 1:14). They are God's messengers whose role is to serve for those who believe.
- **What do they look like?** They can fly (Revelation 14:6) but they evidently do not have wings, because they are often mistaken for ordinary men (Genesis 18:1–2, 19:1–3, Hebrews 13:2). Jacob spent a night wrestling with one (Genesis 32:24). They can be visible and invisible as they choose (Numbers 22:22–31). On occasion their actions are startling (Judges 13:20).
- **What do they do?** It was an angel who led the people of Israel out of Egypt—the angel was in the pillar



of cloud and fire (Exodus 13:21). An angel ravaged the nation of Israel as punishment for David's sin (2 Samuel 24:15–16). An angel destroyed an entire Assyrian army in one night (2 Kings 19:35). An angel unlocked Peter's chains and led him out of prison under the noses of his guards (Acts 12:7–11).

- **Angels were very much involved in the life of Jesus Christ.** It was the angel Gabriel who announced to Mary that she was to have a son (Luke 1:26–28). A company of angels sang for joy over the fields of Bethlehem when Christ was born (Luke 2:10). Angels served him in the wilderness after his temptation (Matthew 4:11), and an angel comforted him during his agony in Gethsemane (Luke 22:43). An angel rolled away the stone door from his tomb (Matthew 28:2), and two remained in the tomb to greet the astonished women (John 20:12). At his ascension to heaven two angels reassured the disciples with the promise of his return (Acts 1:11).
- **Jesus Christ often spoke about angels.** Even the angels do not

know the time of Christ's return to earth (Matthew 24:36). If someone acknowledges their allegiance to him before others, Christ will acknowledge them before the angels (Luke 12:8). There is joy in the presence of the angels when a sinner repents (Luke 15:10).

- **The angels will play a crucial part in the events of Christ's second coming.** When he returns to earth the angels will be with him (Matthew 25:31). The angels will gather people to judgement (Matthew 13:41). Angels will praise Christ in the Kingdom (Revelation 5:11).

Unseen, the angels are involved in steering world events according to God's purpose. Daniel 10:13 affords a fascinating glimpse of angels at work behind the scenes in the machinations of the political world. But they are also intimately involved in the lives of individual believers: *'The angel of the LORD encamps round those who fear him, and delivers them'* (Psalm 34:7). You may well have witnessed the work of an angel today.

Bible Finger Post

Sylvester

I CAN'T REMEMBER where Sylvester came from except that it was somewhere in the north of Kenya. This I do know, he'd had a long and arduous journey: setting out very early in the morning, mostly on foot with a stretch on the back of a pickup truck. At last he reached the small village where the Bible School was to be held.



As I stood up to teach I noticed Sylvester on the front row—smartly dressed as though he'd just walked out of a dressing room, and keen to listen.

We learned later that this was his first visit to a Christadelphian meeting of any kind. His sole previous contact with us was with an English lady who had used correspondence courses and letters to help give him a good understanding of what the Bible teaches. I was talking about the book of Revelation, and he was engrossed. He was the first to answer when I asked the audience a question, and the first with his hand up to ask his own questions.

At the Bible School he asked to be baptised into Jesus Christ. What a busy

couple of days that was! There were many people wanting to be baptised. Some had been instructed by the elders of

the church, others like Sylvester had been instructed via correspondence and were unused to being with other believers. It was their first opportunity to really discuss what they were coming to believe. And of course alongside

these conversations the Bible School lessons provided a hectic schedule.

Confession of Faith

Before anyone was baptised, they gave a 'confession of their faith'—we held a conversation with them to ensure that they really knew what they believed, and that their understanding of the Gospel was the same as the Christadelphian community they were about to join.

There was a shared appreciation that we were there to compare our growing faith together. There was an understanding that after their baptism each one must go on their way rejoicing (Acts 8:39) to face the future, whether in company with fellow believers or alone. Whatever their situation was, each would have confidence

in what they believed and a firm assurance of the loving care of their heavenly Father and their beloved Lord Jesus Christ.

Sylvester was on a journey, and this was his first stop. He was a man on a mission. His priority was to get his “faith life” in order. Having discovered a community of believers with whom he could share his faith, his intention was to go on to train for a nursing career and find work in Nairobi.

So it was that we were to hear Sylvester confess his faith, late in the evening after our supper. The Bible Mission team gathered in the home that had been made available to us. Darkness had fallen and the room was lit by a single hurricane lamp. Once the meal was cleared away most of the family and visitors retired to the shadows. We sat, Sylvester and I, with a table between us, the lamp to one side on the table and open Bibles in front of us.

We began with a short prayer. Once our conversation had begun, Sylvester needed only gentle prompting to articulate each aspect of his growing faith. And he was articulate! His personal conviction, sincerity of faith and Bible-based understanding shone out of the darkness. He had clearly thought through what his faith would mean in the rough and

tumble of life—there would be challenging choices and decisions to make as he went on his way, but underlying it all there was an obvious joy that he had found something beyond price, a faith which would sustain him through everything that life could throw at him. As he spoke, it was as though everyone in the room was lifted to a different spiritual level. There were gasps of sweet surprise. Quiet, gentle sobs of happiness came from the shadows. To this day, years later, Sylvester’s confession of faith must rate as one of the most wonderful it has been my joy to hear.

Baptism

We were of course pleased to baptise him the following day in a river near the village. He waded out into the water with a brother, who asked him “Do you believe the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ?” (Acts 8:12).

His answer rang out clear, “I do.”



“Then upon this public confession of your faith, I baptise you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. May God bless you in your new life in Jesus Christ.” He was dipped under the

water, and emerged a new man.

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in

the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:18–20).

Sylvester was joined that day in baptism by seven others who also had prepared themselves and *‘witnessed a good confession’ (1 Timothy 6:12–13)*. What joy as we walked together back to the meeting hall, singing hymns as we went. In the hall it was time to share their first communion—the simple feast of bread and wine which is at the heart of the Christian’s life (Luke 22:19). The bread is a symbol of the body of the Lord Jesus which was given for us, the wine a symbol of his shed blood by which we are granted the forgiveness of sins and hope of life everlasting in the Kingdom of God.

Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” (Matthew 26:26–28).

It was my duty to welcome Sylvester and his new brothers and sisters into our world-wide Christadelphian fellowship.

I was representing the members of the church in that small village, and also his new family throughout the world. We reached out our hands all together, as an expression of joining in our one united faith, declaring that we would help and support each other on life’s way.

A New Beginning

This was of course only the beginning. It was a new fresh start, confident in the blessing of God, the company day by day of the Lord Jesus, personal peace of mind, and the faithful anticipation of the Lord’s return to establish the Kingdom of God on earth.

The following morning we went our separate ways—rejoicing in hope, one in heart and mind.

Where would life take us? We have over the years since then just caught sight of each other across the miles around the world, each serving our Master in our different places, still confidently anticipating that glorious day of fulfilment when the Lord will come. Under the guiding hand of the Father, by His grace we will all come to His glorious Kingdom, never to be separated again.

He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming soon” (Revelation 22: 20).

David Nightingale



IF *The Jewish Sabbath was Saturday. So why do Christians say the Sabbath is Sunday?*

Ed God made the world in six days, and rested on the seventh (Genesis 1–2). Thus he designed the working week, which has been the predominant measure of time ever since.

In the Bible the seventh day of the week (which we know as Saturday) is called the Sabbath, a word which comes from the Hebrew word meaning 'rest'. In the Law of Moses which God gave to the nation of Israel to regulate their national life, observance of the Sabbath was compulsory: *'the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy' (Exodus 20:10–11).*

Throughout history, human experience has confirmed that one day off in every seven is an eminently healthy lifestyle choice, and many people who aren't at all religious appreciate its value. But it's a matter of personal choice. Christians are not obliged to keep the Law of Moses (Galatians 3:23–25), and this includes the observance of the Sabbath (Romans 14:5).

Sunday is the first day of the week, and the Bible never refers to it as the Sabbath. However, it's clear that Sunday was a special day for Christians right from the start. It was the day they habitually met together (1 Corinthians 16:2); it seems it was the day when they shared the Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7); it's probably a Sunday which the Apostle John calls *'the Lord's day'* (Revelation 1:10).

Why did the early believers choose Sunday rather than Saturday as their special day? The answer is we don't know. One reason may be that they were busy on the Sabbaths preaching to Jews in the synagogues (for example Acts 13:14 & 42, 17:2), so chose to set aside another day to meet together. And Sunday would be the obvious choice, because it was Sunday when the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead (John 20:1), and so it's entirely fitting that this should be the day they chose to celebrate their faith in their risen Saviour.

There is no rule for followers of Christ which governs when they must meet. They can share fellowship and worship with each other and share the Lord's supper as often as they wish. But the experience of generations has confirmed the wisdom of those first disciples, who made the Lord's day the focus of their weekly routine.

Across

Down



- 1 The Israelites made these, woven of fine linen (Exodus 39:27)
- 3 One of the colours of the veil of the Tabernacle (Exodus 36:35)
- 5 This gave light for the Israelites during the night (Exodus 40:38)
- 6 The hangings of the Tabernacle were made of this (Exodus 38:16)
- 10 The vessels of gold were put on this (Exodus 37:16)
- 13 On both sides of this were hangings of fifteen cubits (Exodus 38:15)
- 14 A thin plate of gold _____ (Exodus 39:3)
- 15 The Israelites did what God had commanded this man (Exodus 39:42)

- 1 These were made like almond blossoms (Exodus 37:19)
- 2 10 across was made of this wood (Exodus 37:10)
- 3 Five were made for the frames on each side of the tabernacle (Exodus 36:31)
- 4 A garment worn by the High Priest (Exodus 29:5)
- 5 Moses and Aaron washed these in the basin (Exodus 40:31)
- 7 Each of the twelve stones of the breastpiece had that of a tribe (Exodus 39:14)
- 8 These were made to contain incense (Exodus 37:16)
- 9 The Israelites were not to make gods of this (Exodus 34:17)
- 11 Aaron fashioned the gold from which he made this (Exodus 32:4)
- 12 Those of the tabernacle were made of bronze (Exodus 38:20)

(These clues use the English Standard Version of the Bible.

If you're using another version some words may not be quite the same.)

Colin Jannaway

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requests@cbm.org.uk

The Americas

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CA 93065, USA
cbma.treasurer@gmail.com

Caribbean

CBMC, Box 55541, Unit 119, 15280,
101 Avenue, Surrey, BC, Canada V3R 0J7
philsnobelen@shaw.ca

India

T Galbraith, GPO Box 159, Hyderabad,
500001, India
tim@galbraithmail.com

South and East Asia

ACBM, PO Box 152 Cobbitty NSW,
Australia 2570
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