

Glad Tidings

Of The Kingdom Of God



Featured **Articles**

Good Manners (p. 3)

Superstition (p. 10)

Moses' Departure (p. 17)

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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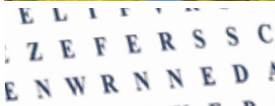
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Good Manners

WHAT ARE GOOD MANNERS? It depends where you are in the world, of course. In Malawi, when you shake hands with someone make sure your other hand is in view. In Japan you don't eat or drink on the street. In Britain, don't ever push into a queue.



Manners are a 'social lubricant': they help us get on with each other. We feel at ease when someone behaves the way we expect them to. Different cultures have different systems of manners, but there are some general expectations that we'll tend to find the world over. It's rude to talk over someone when they're speaking. It's polite to hold a door open for the person behind you. Basically, good manners are behaviours which show consideration for the feelings and wellbeing of other people.

The Basic Principle

As you might expect, the teaching of Jesus Christ provides an excellent definition of good manners: '*As you wish that others*

would do to you, do so to them' (Luke 6:31). Pause here, and think of that. Wouldn't the world be a spectacularly better place if everyone just adopted that simple principle?

Actually, that verse is part of a more broad-ranging teaching. This is the verse in context:

I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either. Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them (vs. 27–31).

It is common sense that if people treat each other with courtesy and consideration, society will work better. Societies all over the world have worked that out. But Jesus is not just telling us how to get on with each other (although that will be an inevitable consequence of following this teaching). He is taking the principle to another level. His followers should be so focused on the feelings and wellbeing of other people that they will naturally put others' needs before their own. And not just their friends, but strangers as well, and even enemies. That is revolutionary—and it is of course not at all easy to do. So he explains why and how:

If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful (vs. 32–36).

It is an attitude that does not come naturally to us. But the reason we should aspire to it, and the key to obtaining it, is to remember that we are learning from God. *'He makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust' (Matthew 5:45).* He *'so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life' (John 3:16)*—even though He knew that His son would be rejected and killed by those who did not believe.

So the follower of Christ must think beyond themselves—not just about other people, but about God.

The Ultimate Example

Jesus Christ was a man of supremely good manners. Being a country peasant, he may not always have been recognised as such by the polite society of his time. But throughout his life he displayed thoughtfulness and consideration in everything he did and said. Think for example of the last day of his mortal

life. Before he sat down to share his Last Supper with his disciples, he washed their feet (John 13:1–11). While they were eating he dipped a morsel of bread and gave it to Judas Iscariot as a sign of friendship (v. 26), even though he knew Judas was about to betray him. He led his disciples out of the city to the garden where he was arrested, and his last miracle was to heal the wound of one of his enemies (Luke 22:51).



He always put others before himself. He was kind to the ungrateful and the evil, and he was merciful (Luke 6:36). He is the ultimate example of good behaviour—that is, Godly behaviour.

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Under Construction

'SIMON,' said the resurrected Jesus on a Galilean beach, 'do you love me?' (*John 21:15*). It was a painful moment for Simon Peter, as he looked his master in the eye and was forced to face up to his failure and betrayal on the night before Jesus' crucifixion.

But there was no recrimination in the Lord's voice—only gentle encouragement. Three times Jesus asked 'do you love me?' and three times Peter responded as best his conscience would allow.

At last Jesus was satisfied. We might paraphrase his words of reassurance: 'Well Peter, if that is where you are, then I will work with that. Follow me, and I will help you learn to love me and your brothers and sisters with undying love. I will meet you where you are and walk with you on your journey, until you are finally willing to die for me' (v. 18).

Like Peter, we are not going to get it right all the time. We are going to stumble and fall. We are going to sin and do the wrong thing, despite our best efforts.

But this story shows us how Jesus responds to our failure—not with condemnation or rejection, but with understanding, forgiveness, and renewed purpose. He

meets us where we are, and commits to helping us move to where he wants us to be.

In this he mirrors the love of the father in the parable of the wayward son (*Luke 15:11–32*). The son goes off and squanders his inheritance, but then comes to his senses and returns to seek forgiveness. His father is watching for him, and runs to meet him and embraces him even before the words of repentance fall from his lips.

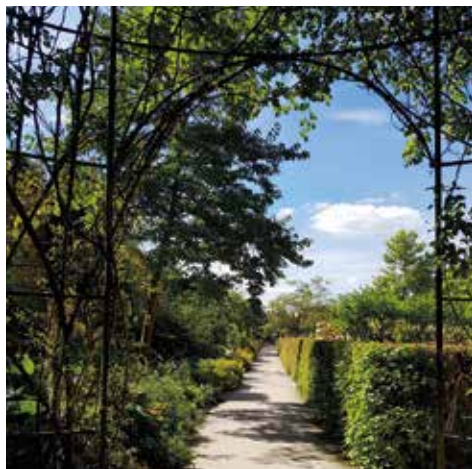
God's Fellow Workers

The prophet Isaiah said of Jesus, 'A bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench' (*Isaiah 42:3*). And Jesus reassured his disciples, 'Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom' (*Luke 12:32*).

The good news of the Gospel is that God wants us to succeed. And not only to succeed, but to partner with Him in building His Kingdom. 'For we are God's fellow workers' (*1 Corinthians 3:9*).

Humans were not designed to passively stand by and watch God do all the work. He has invited His children to be Kingdom builders. From the start of creation, to be fully human was to be made in God's image

and sent into the world to work it and to keep it (Genesis 2:15). When a person is baptised they become a 'new creation' in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). They are being renewed after the image of their Creator (Colossians 3:10). Like Adam in the Garden of Eden, they are sent into the world to share in God's work (John 20:21). The mission of God's people is to change the world.



Jesus taught us to pray, *'Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven'* (Matthew 6:10). Primarily this is referring to the Kingdom of God which Jesus Christ will establish at his return to the earth (Luke 22:28–30). But every sphere in which God's will is being done on earth is an outpost of the Kingdom. Every act of obedience to God's will expands this sphere. Every act of love for God and our neighbour is an act of building the Kingdom, in anticipation of the day when Christ will establish his throne in Jerusalem and the Kingdom will fill the whole world (Micah 4:1–5).

Good Works

It is for this reason that our good works matter, and God is pleased with them. Nothing we can do can earn God's favour, or make us righteous in our own right (Galatians 3:22). Our good works are not enough to save us—but when we respond to God's call we give Him pleasure. As Jesus said, *'You are my friends if you do what I command you'* (John 15:14).

It is a wonderful thing to be friends of Jesus Christ: *'For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord'* (Romans 8:38–39).

No, we are not going to get it right all the time, but when we belong to Christ we have confidence: *'But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ'* (Ephesians 2:13).

The Bible says wonderful things about those who belong to Christ. They have been redeemed (Galatians 3:14) and saved (Ephesians 2:8). They have been justified (Romans 8:30). The Father and His Son make their home with them (John 14:23). They have been given eternal life (1 John 5:11). They can forfeit all these blessings if they are not faithful (1 Corinthians 9:27)—but God is on their side, and He will do all He can to make them succeed.

All too often they will do the wrong things—they will be impatient and ungracious, get angry, gossip—but they are a work in progress. Paul tells us, *'I am sure of this,*

that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ' (Philippians 1:6).

All we can do is our best at the time, and if we don't get it right, we ask for forgiveness and try to do better next time. *'For the righteous falls seven times and rises again' (Proverbs 24:16).* Falling is to be expected, but God's children will get up and keep trying—over and over—because Jesus is there beside them (Matthew 28:20). They are not alone in their walk. Jesus sympathises with their weaknesses. He has been there. *'For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need' (Hebrews 4:15–16).*

Working With God

Children of God know that they do not rely on their own strength. As Paul said, *'I can do all things through him who strengthens me' (Philippians 4:13).*

When Jesus went to his Father, he provided his followers with the Holy Spirit (John 14:15–17) which, among other things, brought everything to their remembrance. That gift was like a seal of their inheritance—an engagement ring to show that they are betrothed to him (Ephesians 1:14), and he will never leave them or forsake them.

Often it is hard to remember that, as the thorns of life threaten to choke us. But those who belong to Christ need to remember that their labour is not in vain

(1 Corinthians 15:58). God meets us where we are, but in His love He doesn't leave us there. He works with us to strengthen us, to lift us up when we fall, to inspire us to good works, and to use those good works, meagre though they may be, to His glory. Just as a loving parent incorporates their child's handiwork into the finished product of a shared project, so God will use the stones of our lives in His purpose.



You yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2:5).

Helen Smallwood

Questions? Comments?
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1 Timothy

THIS IS THE FIRST of the three 'Pastoral Epistles'—1 and 2 Timothy and Titus—in which the Apostle Paul gives guidance on how affairs should be run in a congregation of believers and of the need for sound Bible teaching.

Paul met the young man Timothy at Lystra (Acts 16:1). Timothy had a Greek father and a Jewish mother and grandmother (2 Timothy 1:5). He became a faithful helper in the work of preaching the Gospel. Paul treated him as a son (1 Timothy 1:2), training him for the ongoing work of '*shepherding the flock*'. Timothy had been entrusted with the work of guiding the believers at Ephesus, and needed advice on holding fast to the faith, and countering the influence of false teachers (1:3; 6:3).

The Importance of Correct Belief

Paul had previously warned the elders in Ephesus, '*I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock*' (Acts 20:29), and this was already starting to happen. The vital need for them to keep to the original teachings of Christ and the apostles is stressed (1:3, 19; 4:6, 13, 16; 6:3, 20).

Drawing on the images and language of his times, Paul uses many military, athletic and medical metaphors. He says that teaching should be '*sound*' (1:10), using a Greek word which has come down to us in the word 'hygiene'—referring to what is 'wholesome' or 'healthy'.

Five times in the Pastoral Epistles, Paul emphasises the truth and importance of what he is writing by calling it a '*trustworthy saying*' (1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2 Timothy 2:11; Titus 3:8). Another powerful expression, this time taken from the world of banking, is the '*deposit entrusted to you*' (6:20, 1 Timothy 1:14). Paul tells Timothy, and us, that the Gospel is a precious 'deposit' which we are to guard safely.

Those who taught false ideas would 'miss the mark'. This is the literal meaning of the original words used in 1:6, 6:21 and 2 Timothy 2:18 (translated 'swerved').

Norman Owen


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Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible:

- ◆ 1 Timothy 2:5; 6:15—see 1 Corinthians 8:6; Isaiah 45:5.
- ◆ 1 Timothy 6:10—see Matthew 6:24, 25, 33.
- ◆ 1 Timothy 6:16 – see Psalm 49:12; Ecclesiastes 9:5.




 Teach and urge these things. If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain. Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he will display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honour and eternal dominion. Amen.

As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you. Avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called “knowledge”, for by professing it some have swerved from the faith.

Grace be with you. 

1 Timothy 6:2–21

Superstition

AT WORK RECENTLY, someone observed that his colleague's bald head was gradually becoming like the head of the king vulture. He remarked, with pretend confidence, that for this reason he would be a wicked person if ever he became wealthy or famous. Another colleague, adopting even greater confidence than the former, affirmed that his bald-headed friend would rather be very intelligent or perhaps a genius if he gained a higher education. The argument became intense with a lot of examples cited by both parties, and neither showed any sign of yielding. At last a third colleague assumed the office of arbiter in the discussion, and after careful consideration declared grandly that the bald fellow would become both wicked and very intelligent if he became famous. For the first time the two parties agreed. But then another brought before them the case of a well known chief in a neighbouring village, who although very well educated was reckoned as the most foolish person in the village.

This example illustrates the prevalence of superstition in daily life. One may ask:



“What really is superstition?” We begin to answer with two definitions:

- to believe in spite of the evidence; and
- to irrationally fear the unknown.

More could be added but these will suffice for our present purpose.

The fact is that superstition is built on ignorance. No one cared to work out whether there was a link between the bald head, wisdom and wickedness. Ignorance and gullibility led to an irrational deduction.

There are so many examples of superstitious thinking, and with a little thought we can quickly see that they are unfounded and wrong. Many, especially those who are highly civilised, will fall into the trap of thinking they are not affected by superstition. But how often, even in our 21st Century, do we come across belief in such things as lucky colours, unlucky numbers and horoscopes. Superstition is found in the wallet of the poor and rich, the educated and the uneducated.

The Bible says *'The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein' (Psalm 24:1).*

This is a memorable verse, but think what it means: we need not fear anything since we

are assured that all is God's. There are no other powers of which we should be afraid.

Religious Superstition

So far, we have discussed superstition only as it appears in day-to-day life. We are also interested in religious superstition. All superstition interferes with the proper worship of God, but religious superstition is particularly dangerous.

The earliest work on religious superstition I have come across is one written by Robert Ingersoll in 1898. He ridiculed those who venerate 'saints' and everything pertaining to them including their corpses, bones and clothes. He wrote: "The diseased were cured by kissing a box in which was kept some bone, or rag, or bit of wood, some holy hairs, provided the kiss was preceded or followed by a gift—something for the church... intelligent people now know that the bone of a saint has no greater virtue than the bone of an animal, that a rag from a wandering beggar is just as good as one from a saint, and that the hair of a horse

will cure disease just as quickly and surely as the hair of a martyr."¹

How do we distinguish between truth and superstitious error? The Bible, the inspired word of God, is the only authority on the subject. Beliefs and doctrines, even if they have the veneer of Bible truth, must be tested thoroughly against what the Bible teaches: '*Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world*' (1 John 4:1).

Concerning the origin of religion and superstition, a modern writer says: "It has been opined by some, that religion probably began as a result of man's fear and helplessness in the face of mysterious forces, most of which are invisible around him."² This may be partly true, but the Bible reveals that truth came before error. False ideas arose when knowledge of God's way was lost and understanding corrupted by ungodly thinking.

Another writer points out more accurately: "If man had not transgressed, there would have been no religion, and but one sovereignty upon earth: because religion is the cure for sin... that only is true religion which God has pleased to appoint; exercises which he hath not enjoined are superstition and not religion."³ The Bible is the only authority on true religion. Any other faith, whether it is found in the market place, school or church pulpit, is merely superstition.



¹ Robert Ingersoll: *Superstition*

² Wellington Wotogbe-Weneka: *Religion and Spirituality*

³ John Thomas: *Herald of the Future Age*

Peter Ojike

The Leprous Man



NO ONE CAN DOUBT that the Covid pandemic has been both disruptive and destructive. Its toll in terms of suffering and death and also its financial cost may never be truly known. It has brought home to us how vulnerable we are in the face of disease.

About 2000 years ago there lived a man who could deal with any disease he came across, and be unfazed by it—and deal with it compassionately. That man was Jesus Christ. In the Bible we have the opportunity of observing him at work, particularly with people suffering from one particular disease. This disease was leprosy, and it was the scourge of the age. It made sufferers into outcasts. If you had leprosy, you had to permanently self-isolate.

I'd like to think about ten individuals who came seeking help one day. The account is in Luke 17:11–19. The men were probably all Jews except for one, who was a Samaritan.

(Samaritans were the Jews' neighbours, who were related but did not follow the Jewish faith and so were generally despised by the Jews.) These ten men stood afar off from Jesus, maintaining a respectful distance, and called out for help.

Generally the Jews would not have anything to do with foreigners, especially Samaritans; but here there is a fellowship of need. They all need desperately to be healed, and they come together to appeal for help: *'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us'* (v. 13).

On other occasions Jesus did not hesitate to touch people who were unclean. He was not afraid of contamination—he had the power of God. Interestingly on this occasion he did not actually touch them, but he simply told them to go and show themselves to the priests. They were miraculously healed as they went on their way! One of the lepers, the Samaritan,

returned to give thanks to Jesus. Jesus commended him: *'Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well'* (v. 19).

What has faith to do with it?

The Disease of Sin

First, a bit more about leprosy. It is a bacterial infection which attacks the nerves under the skin. As the nerves die the skin and body are damaged, because the sufferer is unaware when they contract infections or accidentally hurt themselves. In Bible times lepers were outcasts from society who lived on their own or in isolated colonies. It was seen as a kind of living death. In Jewish society whenever a leper came close to other human company they were required to shout "Unclean! Unclean!"

The Bible speaks of other diseases being healed, but leprosy is the only disease which it describes as being 'cleansed' (for example Leviticus 14:4). The Bible uses leprosy as a picture, to help us understand the condition we are in as sinners. We are 'afar off' from God. For example the Apostle Paul paints the picture in his letter to the Ephesians. Before coming to Christ *'you were dead in the trespasses and sins'* (Ephesians 2:1); and those who have not come to Christ *'are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous'* (4:18–19).

Sin is so highly infectious that we all have it; it is under our skin and in our blood; it makes us insensitive to God reaching out to us; it makes us unclean and separates us from Him. It is a living death. In Bible times leprosy was incurable by medicine—

but Jesus Christ, alone, had the power and authority to cure it. Similarly there is no cure for sin, except by Jesus Christ.

Leviticus 14 describes the process under the Law of Moses for cleansing a person who had been cured of leprosy. The priest had no power to cure the disease, but it was his job to examine the person and certify that the disease had gone, and then perform the ritual of cleansing which would enable the leper to rejoin society. Notice with these ten men who came to Jesus, it was as they went to find the priests that they were cleansed. It was at this point that the Samaritan turned around and came back to Jesus, glorifying God and falling on his face before Jesus in thankfulness.



Cleansed by Faith

Let's think through this miracle again, and remind ourselves of the question: what did faith have to do with it? There is in Luke 17 a clear process by which the leprosy came to be cleansed and healed:

- The lepers appealed to the Lord Jesus
- He directed them to go to the priests to be proclaimed clean
- They discovered, while they were on the way, that they were cleansed.

All ten men exhibited a certain degree of faith in that they knew to whom they should appeal. They recognised that there was no other source of healing than the Lord Jesus. He directed them to go to the priests. But only one, the Samaritan, turned back to Jesus, recognising that he and not the priests was the source of the cure.

Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus answered, "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" And he said to him, "Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well" (vs. 17:15–19).

It was only for this one man that the event became an act of faith which would transform his life. Only he acknowledged the reality that having received the answer to his prayer, he should give God thanks through the Lord Jesus Christ, because ultimately all healing is from heaven. It is the only place which can offer a solution to all illness, the only source of salvation, and the only genuine source of continuing care.

Isn't this where we all are in life? We are all suffering from a disease for which we do

not have a cure—the Bible calls it sin and it leads inevitably to death (James 1:15). It is a terminal illness. Without help we are doomed. However God has provided a way of salvation. He sent Jesus who did two things:

1. He showed that there is no human problem which cannot be overcome by the power of God
2. He defeated the disease of sin. He himself had the infection, because he was a man like us—he was capable of sin (Hebrews 4:15). But he never let it get a hold on him.

Jesus was treated most cruelly and then died on the cross to show that there is nothing in human nature which cannot be conquered. This was proved by his resurrection, coming back to life again, healed, alive for evermore (Acts 2:24). He is now in heaven and continues to provide loving care to all those who believe and trust in him (Hebrews 4:14–15). No matter what afflicts them in this life, they can be confident of eternal health in the Kingdom of God.

No more sin, pain, sorrow, suffering, mental torment or disease of any sort—death ended for ever. Just think, you could be there—if you believe, turn to God and are baptised, and follow Christ in your life (Mark 16:16). If you have faith.

He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away (Revelation 21:4).

David Nightingale



The Leprous House



THE LAW WHICH GOD GAVE to His people through Moses in around 1500 BC contains many teachings which pointed forward to the Lord Jesus Christ. One such teaching concerns what the Israelites were to do if they suspected a case of leprosy was in a house. Leprosy is of course a disease of humans and animals—when the Bible speaks of leprosy in a house it is probably a fungal outbreak such as dry or wet rot, but it is called leprosy in order to draw out the similarity with the human disease. The Law's instructions are found in Leviticus 14:

The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, "When you come into the land of Canaan, which I give you for a possession, and I put a case of leprosy in a house in the land of your possession, then he who owns the house shall come and tell the priest, 'There seems to me to be some case of disease in my house.' Then the priest shall command that

they empty the house before the priest goes to examine the disease, lest all that is in the house be declared unclean. And afterwards the priest shall go in to see the house. And he shall examine the disease. And if the disease is in the walls of the house with greenish or reddish spots, and if it appears to be deeper than the surface, then the priest shall go out of the house to the door of the house and shut up the house for seven days. And the priest shall come again on the seventh day, and look (Leviticus 14:33–39).

If the rot had spread at the end of seven days, the priest would order every piece of affected fabric—plaster, stones and all—to be stripped out and disposed of safely away from the city, and the house would be repaired with new materials. That should be the end of the problem, but there was a possibility that spores may still be present and the conditions right for the rot to reappear:

If the disease breaks out again in the house, after he has taken out the stones and scraped the house and plastered it, then the priest shall go and look. And if the disease has spread in the house, it is a persistent leprosy disease in the house; it is unclean. And he shall break down the house, its stones and timber and all the plaster of the house, and he shall carry them out of the city to an unclean place (vs. 39–41).

This was not just public health guidance that was far ahead of its time. It was an

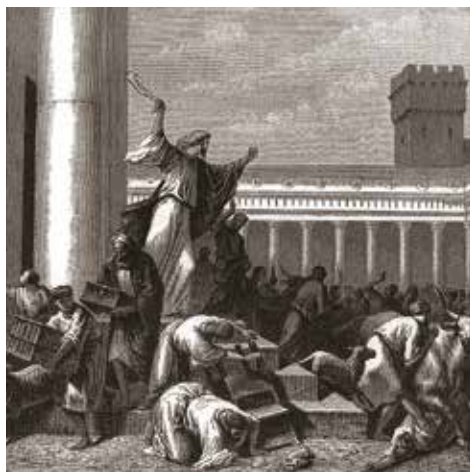
elaborate picture that pointed forward to the work of Jesus Christ. Early in his ministry, Jesus visited the Temple in Jerusalem—the House of God.

The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. And he told those who sold the pigeons, "Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade." His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me" (John 2:13–17).

On this first 'inspection of the house', Jesus demonstrated his priestly qualities. He identified that the temple was a house full of sin, and he purged it thoroughly.

The Law required that the house be inspected again to see whether the leprosy had gone. So at the end of his ministry, a week before his death, Jesus performed his second priestly visit:

And they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. And he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. And he was teaching them and saying to them, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you have made it a den of robbers" (Mark 11:15–17).



The rot had returned, and the only remedy was the destruction of the house. We read on in Mark's Gospel: 'As he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, Teacher, what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!" And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? There will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down"' (Mark 13:1–2).

The temple in the First Century was operated by corrupt men, it was full of rot and consequently it was destroyed in 70 AD. But the Bible contains many prophecies of the Kingdom of God, when Jesus Christ himself is on the throne and the temple will be rebuilt—this time it will really be 'a house of prayer for all the nations'. This is one such prophecy:

As the glory of the LORD entered the temple by the gate facing east, the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the temple (Ezekiel 43:4–5).

Stephen Blake

Moses' Departure

THE OLD MAN SMILED. Drawing himself up to his full height, he sniffed deep the balmy wind that floated up from the valley—a glorious scent of forests and the salty tang of the Dead Sea which glittered a mile below.

As he climbed Mount Nebo the mists had cleared away, and now the whole land lay before him, the air transparent as crystal. It was one of those rare days when every fold of the hills stood out knife-edge sharp. They rolled away to the Great Sea, 60 miles to the west. The white peaks of Hermon glistened to the north. The harp-shaped lake of Galilee at its feet was linked by the twisting River Jordan to the plains of Moab, where the Israelite tents lay in their regimented rows. In their centre the white court of the Tabernacle guarded the Holy Place where the pillar of cloud brooded over the camp. To that meeting place with God he had so often carried the requests, the sins and the burdens of the people.

It was 120 years since he had been drawn from the reeds beside the Nile, a weeping baby, but destined to become the greatest leader Israel had known. Still his eyes were as keen and his mind as sound as a man less than half his age (Deuteronomy 34:7). But today he must die.

It was his last gift from God. Years before, he had been warned that he would not enter the Promised Land (Numbers 20:12). Only with his eyes would he savour its beauty. Now his cup was full. That great wilderness that stretched southwards towards Egypt had been conquered. God had kept His word. The people were poised to enter into the land that was promised to their ancestor Abraham, and Moses' life's mission was complete. For him, the next three and a half millennia would pass instantly in the silent sleep of death, until that glorious day when he will arise with his father and mother and all their great ancestors and descendants to inherit the Kingdom of God.

As a young man he had 'refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin' (Hebrews 11:24–25). He had never regretted that choice. Now, the God Who had led him father-like to his goal would grant him his reward. 'So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD' (Deuteronomy 34:5). The people below mourned 30 days for their oldest, dearest friend.

David M Pearce

HS **Why do Christadelphians say the Kingdom of God will last a thousand years?**

Ed IN 1 CORINTHIANS 15 the Apostle Paul describes the principles of resurrection from the dead. Christ was raised after he died, and his followers will be raised when he returns:

'Each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet... When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all' (1 Corinthians 15:23–28).

When Jesus Christ returns the world will not be made perfect instantly. There will be initial resistance (for example Psalm 2, Zechariah 14:16–19), and there will be a period after he returns in which he subdues the world to his rule, and restores it to perfection. This is the Kingdom about which we read so much in the Bible's prophecies. At the end of this period there is the final eternal phase in which God is 'all in all'—we're told little about this eternity, perhaps because we wouldn't be able to comprehend it.

The Kingdom is described in some detail in Revelation 20, and it's identified as lasting 1000 years:

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while (Revelation 20:1–3).

Revelation is a book of pictures and symbols. Satan being bound and thrown into a pit until the end of the thousand years is symbolic of human rebelliousness being subdued until the end of the Kingdom, when it will be allowed a last flowering before it is completely removed. How do we know we should take the 1000-year period literally? That's a fair question.

Another line of evidence is that the Bible speaks of the Kingdom as being a 'sabbath' for the world: *'there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God (Hebrews 4:9)*. The 'sabbath' in the Bible is the seventh day of the week. There have been around 6000 years since Genesis chapter 1. The Kingdom will be the last day of the world's 'week', so it is appropriate that it will last 1000 years.

Jesus the High Priest

Here are seven statements about Jesus as the High Priest for Christians. The underlined words are in the Wordsearch. One of the seven statements is false: which one? The other six statements are based on Hebrews chapter 5.

Jesus:

- was offered as a sacrifice for sins
- was born in the priestly tribe of Levi
- is a priest for ever
- prayed with tears during his ministry on earth
- learned obedience from what he suffered
- was then perfected in glory;
- saves those people who obey him.

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V	E	N	W	R	N	N	E	D	A
J	C	B	O	A	I	K	E	P	S
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Answer:
Jesus was from the royal
tribe of Judah
(Hebrews 7:14).



Anna Hart

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