

Pastoral Letter is a weekly Bible reading material published by the Calvary Bible-Presbyterian Church (Singapore). It is freely downloadable quarterly from www.calvaryjurong.com. If you have been blessed by this ministry, do let us know at info@calvaryjurong.com.

Church Weekly for 3 July 2005

My dear readers,

1. RECENT GOSPEL ADVANCES, LOCAL AND OVERSEAS

Our Lord's words in Acts 1:8, spoken at the dawn of the Gospel Age, continue to bear fruit in our Church ever since we launched out from Life Church in 1970. This latest movement of the Spirit came during the latter part of the midyear school vacation. These exciting developments are shared with our readers for information, encouragement, to provoke unto good works, and for prayer. Please read with Holy Spirit understanding and make it an item for prayer.

2. VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2005

(Report by Superintendent Mrs Anne Lim)

We thank and praise God for the recent VBS (held over three days from 21st to 23rd June) which had about 200 children (aged 5 to 12) attending. The messages on the theme 'Give Me Thine Heart' were well delivered by Nelson Were and Sister Merlin from FEBC. The Lord blessed with a great team of dedicated teachers, excellent food served by the kitchen staff and energetic young people who were bus-captains and game leaders.

The children enjoyed themselves tremendously. They were receptive to the Word of God - some were assured of their faith and others confessed Christ as their Saviour. There was a variety of programmes to cater to the different interests of the children. Thus some found the Art and Craft enjoyable, some liked the Bible Reading segment but all of them looked forward to the games session which ended the day for them. The three day VBS ended on a high note with a Quiz, Testimony time and Prize-giving. May the Lord be pleased to bless this endeavour for Him with long lasting fruit.

3. CALLED TO SERVE THE LORD

In obedience to our Lord, we have prayed, *"Lord, the harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few. Please send forth more labourers from our midst to co-labour with us."*

Last year Brother Lek Aik Wee responded, forsaking a comfortable position to study at FEBC, and Sister Lillian Chin took up the call of God to head a new ministry to Senior Citizens. Both are receiving much blessing serving the Lord.

This year, a first response comes from one of our own youths, Brother Ko Ling Kang, second son of Mr & Mrs Ko Swee Chay. After a full year's waiting on the Lord in prayer

and soul searching, Ling Kang finally yielded his life to God. Reproduced here is the concluding paragraphs of his testimony.

"The final proverbial straw that broke the camel's back came during the recent sharing of Rev Quek's testimony of his call to the full-time ministry during the Sunset Gospel Bible Fellowship in March this year. The hymn sung by the FEBC choir before the sermon was "Channel's Only." It was the lyrics of this hymn that stripped me of my pride, and made me realize that it is not any of my own talents or abilities that God wants, but for me to be a willing channel for Him, and His blessings will pour forth. The third verse especially struck me deeply. *"Emptied that Thou shouldst fill me, a clean vessel in Thy hand. With no pow'r but as Thou givest, graciously with each command."* Many things shared during the subsequent message also weighed down on me, prodding me closer and closer to yielding my life to do His will. Finally, after the closing prayer, I bowed down, and in silent prayer with tears in my eyes, I prayed for repentance, and promised my life to service for the Lord.

"A large burden immediately rolled off my back! I was now free to consecrate my life fully to his service. Free to serve Him joyously. Through my study of God's Word and service in various ministries I am more and more convinced each day of the pressing need to fulfill his command to go out to preach the gospel and save souls. Constrained by the love of God, I pray that the Lord will use me till my life burns out for Him. For *"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest."*

Readers, please pray for Ko Ling Kang.

4. MISSIONS TRIP TO PONTIANAK 18-20 JUNE

(Report by Elder Dr George Foong)

Team Members:

Elder Lim Yew Cheng, Elder & Mrs George Foong, Dn Lek Aik Wee, Mr Kenneth Ong, Miss Lillian Chin

Purpose of visit:

- 1) To see the work in Hanura Permai
- 2) To study the feasibility of a work in Siantan
- 3) To find a suitable venue for the 5th Borneo Camp in Nov

Sat 18 June

Upon arrival we headed straight for the small church at Hanura Permai for a gospel meeting. Elder Foong spoke (interpreted by Peter Yoksan) to a capacity crowd of 75 attentive people.

Sun 19 June

Kenneth and Lillian ministered to a group of 91 children at 7.00 am. Elder Lim spoke at the 9.00 am worship service, again to a capacity crowd. After a quick lunch we proceeded

to Siantan (about an hour's drive) to see the land which is in the midst of pig farms, fruit orchards and flower gardens. Next, we visited Rev Djunaidi in his Siantan home. He had been paralysed from waist down due to injuries sustained from a fall 7 years ago. Though down, he certainly is not out. His zeal for missions work is still very strong. He assured us of his blessing and co-operation if we should start a work in Siantan. In the evening Dn Lek preached to a group of about 40 people in the home of Rev Phang (Peter Yoksan's father).

Mon 20 June

After breakfast, we had a quick look at some hotels to determine the venue for the coming Borneo camp before catching the flight to Batam.

Conclusion

The work in Pontianak has great potential. The church in Hanura Permai has to be rebuilt. Further thought has to be given for a work in Siantan. The venue for the Borneo Camp is Hotel Kapuas. *(End of Report)*

5. PRAY FOR PASTORS TOW AND QUEK

Pastor Quek is in Nairobi, Kenya teaching at the Bible College of East Africa and returning on 11 July. Pray for me as I leave for Sydney July 7 for Winter Family Bible Camp and returning July 14.

Church Weekly for 24 July 2005

My dear readers,

1. IN OUR LORD'S "SCHOOL OF TRAINING"

For over three years our Lord led the Twelve, "day in day out" wherever He went, preparing them for the day He had to leave them, when the task of founding the Church (God's Kingdom on earth) would be wholly left to the little band.

Intellectually, they were a paltry lot, fisherfolk and unlearned men. Spiritually, they were self-seeking and self-important. Ultimately, when put to the test, they were disloyal and cowardly. One turned out to be a traitor.

Such was the band of twelve chosen men, hand-picked by the Son of God to initiate the Church of God. Yet the result of our Lord's choice is a world-wide body of believers whose witness over two thousand years bears testimony to the wisdom of the divine choice and the efficacy of Christ's "School of Training."

2. A LOOK AT THE GOSPEL RECORD

Our Lord, the Divine Teacher, makes no mistake. He knew each of the Twelve, their human frailty and failures, and their sinful nature. He knew exactly what each of them would turn out to be, how they would fail Him. The Gospel Record bares all before us -

a) "Self-seeking and politicking"

Madam Zebedee felt and schemed for her two sons, James and John. She brought them to Jesus with the request that "...*my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom*" (Matt 20:21).

b) "Power struggle among the group"

Immediately following the Last Supper instituted by our Lord, the Gospel of Luke records: "*And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest*" (Lk 22:24).

c) "Empty boast and cowardly denial"

At the Last Supper, our Lord plainly disclosed to the Twelve His impending betrayal and death at the hands of the authorities. Peter rashly assured Jesus: "*Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended .. Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples*" (Matt 26:33, 35).

When the chief priest and the elders sent a great multitude with swords and staves to arrest Jesus, "... *all the disciples forsook him, and fled*" (Matt 26:56).

Some may wonder, "How could our Lord have put so much trust in such an untrustworthy band?"

3. "OUR LORD MAKES NO MISTAKE"

Dear reader, thank God for our Lord and the provision which He had for the transformation and equipping of the disciples, as recorded for us in the Gospels. Take note of the "*step by step*" preparation and equipping of the disciples made by the Lord, before the great day of Pentecost, when in one day, the New Testament Church was born. But, before then, our Lord had laid the ground-work.

a) Our Lord washed the disciples' feet

All twelve disciples, including the traitor Judas, had their feet washed by the Master - "*... having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end*" (John 13:1).

Then Jesus made application, the significance of the washing of feet. "*A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another*" (Jn 13:34,35).

b) Our Lord promised to send the Comforter

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" (Jn 14:16-18).

God the Father had a perfect plan. Our Lord made it known to the disciples. "*Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you*" (Jn 16:7).

It was only after the Ascension of our Lord that the Comforter Holy Spirit would descend and change the disciples, transforming them from their natural state into a new band of spiritual persons, through whom God's power would flow and God's work accomplished.

c) The coward Peter recommissioned

At the Galilean lakeside, the resurrected Lord graciously and gently recommissioned Peter to "*feed my sheep*" three times, without reminding him of his shameful failure of denying the Lord on the night of His betrayal (Jn 21:15-17).

d) Finally, the need to be "*baptized with the Holy Ghost*"

Our Lord's last instructions, before His Ascension was to the disciples to tarry in Jerusalem, to wait for the promise of the Father, to be " .. *baptized with the Holy Ghost*" (Acts 1:5,6). Only by this divine work would the disciples be transformed, "converted" (Lk 22:32) and made effective for God's use. Only by the Spirit's cleansing and renewing work were the disciples freed from the binding sins of the natural man -- sins of self and pride, of envy and strife, of fear and cowardice."

At Pentecost, the promised Comforter came and the disciples were "men made new." But before Pentecost there were ten days of waiting in prayer and supplication. This was the price of renewal.

Are we prepared to pay the price?

Church Weekly for 31 July 2005

My dear readers,

“GRATITUDE URGENT LIKE LIFE DEBT”

How apt is this Chinese proverb:

人情 緊 如 生 債

Who knows gratitude better than one who has received more than usual kindness in a time of dire need when no help was in sight, and that kindness has touched his heart to its very core. Thus moved he does not rest, or forget, but acts with haste to show that he is truly thankful to his benefactor for what he had received.

But fallen man by nature is not grateful. Favours received leave little lasting impression, and benefits are taken for granted, soon lost in oblivion. How rare and refreshing, then, if one should find a truly grateful man, whose presence would be a credit to society.

Our Lord leaves us a precious lesson in gratitude, in the Gospel of St Luke, Chapter 17:11-19. On the way to Jerusalem, he was met by ten lepers who standing afar off, “... *lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.*”

The cry was urgent and pitiful. They had heard of our Lord’s amazing power to heal. Who in all the land had not heard how Jesus healed every sickness? Indeed, no one who came to Him went away unsatisfied.

Leprosy is a fearful disease caused by the *leprosy bacterium*, a microorganism which attacks and destroys nerves, tissues and organs of the body, resulting in rotting flesh and disfigurement. In Jesus’ time leprosy was a social scourge with scant hope of cure. Our Lord, ever merciful, responded immediately by sending them to the priest, not for treatment, but to be seen and certified that they had been healed of their condition. Jesus said not a word about the healing which was to follow even as the lepers acted on our Lord’s command.

As the ten men went on their way, they suddenly saw that they were miraculously cleansed and fit to be certified by the priest of their cure. Our God is ever ready to show us mercy if only we are willing to obey. If we do what we can, God will do for us what we cannot.

Then one of the ten turned back to Him who was the Author of his cure, and with a loud voice, he glorified God, lifting up his voice in praises. Then falling down at the feet of Jesus, he humbly acknowledged the amazing act of healing which had been wrought upon his body.

Now, notice our Lord's comment: "*Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.*" And this grateful man was a Samaritan, whereas the nine absent men were Jews. Samaritans belonged to a despised people, looked down by Jews, treated as aliens and outsiders, strangers to the commonwealth of Israel. And yet the one who returned to give glory to God was a Samaritan. But where were the nine?

Our Lord knows the ingratitude which rules in the human heart. Many receive God's mercies, but few return to give thanks. From the account we have read we may conclude that ten percent or fewer are truly grateful. And how often those least expected prove to be most grateful. A Samaritan, outsider and outcast, gives thanks, but the Jews, members of the household did not.

Now, let us turn our attention to the happenings of the nineteen thirties, during my early childhood. In those days of deep poverty, when the world depression cast a pall of gloom over Malaya and Singapore, were times when our faith in God was sorely tested. In the midst of our distress, we were to discover who were our real friends. These were not many, nor were they easy to find. But when Father asked, they opened not only their hearts to us, but their purses also, and help flowed freely.

Another proverb left us by Father was this:

渴 時 滴 水 如 甘 露

"In time of thirst, even a drop of water is as the sweet dew of heaven"

Father never forgot. Those who had come to our family's aid were even as God's angels, and Father and Mother were ever mindful and urgent to repay as well as express thanks. At that time, I was only five, but those memories remain. Mother baked her best butter cakes (learnt from the English missionary ladies back in China) and roasted the best fatted chickens. Then Father made the trip to Singapore to express thanks to various benefactors. As his favoured son, I tagged along many of those trips. Knocking on doors not to beg or borrow, but to return sincere thanks. We visited various of his friends. These "*Thanksgiving Missions*," if one might call them, were great events in our parents' lives, and they were lessons which I can never forget.

Again, Father left us an age-old Chinese saying:

飲 水 思 源

"Drink water, think source"

This means "*Forget not benefits received.*" Does not this remind us of Psalm 103:2?

On a higher plane, Father ever since his conversion under Dr John Sung's ministry, became a life-long debtor to the bounteous grace of God. Wherever he went he would seize every opportunity to testify to God's goodness and witness to the saving power of the Gospel.

Mother, no less than Father, was active, sharing Christ among the womenfolk.

Indeed, repaying our Gospel debt became the family's urgent business, out of gratitude to the Saviour.

Recall the hymn by Robert Robinson (1735 - 1790)

*“O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be!
Let Thy goodness like a fetter
Bind my wand'ring heart to Thee:
Prone to wander - Lord, I feel it -
Prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart - O take and seal it,
Seal it for Thy courts above.*

(RHC#26)

Up until this day, the debt of gratitude continues to be repaid in the lives of five living offsprings, long years after Father and Mother have gone to their rest. Urgency is the keynote, knowing the days are evil and our time is short. By God's abounding grace we press on, with thankful hearts, remembering Father's words: **“Gratitude is urgent -- like a life debt.”**

Church Weekly for 7 August 2005

My dear readers,

This week we have three interesting letters to share with you.

1. TERROR IN LONDON

Report by Rev Dr Patrick Tan

It was Thursday, 7th July 2005, For an hour there were explosions in six underground Tube Stations in central London between 8.51 a.m. to 9.97 a.m. and one bus was ripped by an explosive device. Terrorists had taken the early morning rush hour to set off explosives that caused 36 deaths and 700 casualties. The Police force had been diverted to Edinburgh for the G8 Summit of the world's richest nations. This was also the day after the celebrations of London being awarded the Olympic venue of the games in 2012.

New Lifers Are Safe

At 8.30 a.m. Carol took the Bakerloo line from Queens Park Station intending to meet Maureen and Daniel Poh for a visit to the flower show at Hampton Court. She passed through Edgware Station where the explosion took place at 9.17 a.m. She was unharmed. Rachel took the same line from the same station at 9.15 a.m. to Elephant and Castle for the School of Theology. She was stopped at Warwick Station and told to use the bus. She took No 6 and was turned back at Edgware Station. Mok, George, Bernard, Andrew and I were on the train after Rachel but we were told that all the underground and surface trains were not running and advised to take other forms of transport. We decided to take bus. There were so many people at the bus stop and finally we boarded Bus No 6, but we were turned back at Warwick Station. All forms of public transport had ceased. We returned back to the manse at 11.30 a.m. and the TV announced that Central London was attacked by terrorists. Becky and Jeff went to work early and passed through King's Cross before the explosion. Becky's office was near to Liverpool Street Station where there was another explosion. All New Lifers are safe. We praise the Lord. Carol, Maureen and Daniel had a pleasant time at the flower show. In the evening we met in the Poh's home for thanksgiving dinner. *"The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore."* Ps 121:8

Yoong Chiang was able to text and email our safety to the brethren in S'pore.

Dr Patrick Tan

2. PASTOR PANG THREATENED BY EASTERN LIGHTNING CULT

Praise God for preserving Pastor Pang. His letter follows.

Dear brethren in the Lord,

I am fine with no harm. Thank you very much for praying for me.

I am still in big C. I have conducted a wedding and gospel meeting last Saturday (about 20 family members accepted Christ) but not the Sunday Worship as we were spied on most probably by the Eastern Lightning Cult members. Some of the suspected cult members pretended to be young believers and tried to infiltrate into our baptismal Service to cause trouble. One of the cult members later revealed (after being exposed) that they were following me wherever I go. They even knew where I was staying.

The Church leaders cancelled the Baptismal and the Lord's Supper Worship that morning. All the candidates (about 40) and the worshippers from various places were asked to disperse and return to their local churches. Some of our former Saipan members who came from far away provinces did not even have the chance to see their pastor as I was asked to hide at a safer place to prevent being arrested. This is because the EL cult members now employ the wicked tactic of reporting our meetings to the Gong An (Police) to disrupt true Christian meeting.

I flew to another city that evening to baptise 35 despite the threat of being kidnapped that morning. Thank God for a spirited and blessed Worship Service which lifted all our hearts. I was advised to move on the next day (Monday) to my next destination. The planned meeting on Monday was cancelled. This was like a 'sabbath day' for me.

Now I am at the South, will try to meet up with other returnees in this area. Please continue to uphold me in your prayer. I am having a little sore throat after the Saturday Wedding and gospel meeting.

*In His love,
Guek Mui, KH, En Yang & En Hong*

3. GOLDEN YEARS CARE GROUP REPORT

Visit Mr Tan Koh Thiam - 84 years

I thank the Lord for His protection on Tuesday, 26 July at 10.30 am despite the rain.

The Lord was very merciful to us as Mrs Teh drove me and Mrs May Leong to Hougang Avenue 8 in the rain. We reached Mr Tan's house safe and sound. Thank God, Mrs May Leong was able to walk up the staircase despite her recent operation.

Mr Tan was very glad to see us. He had not been feeling well since 18 July with a bout of heavy cough, giddiness and had a fall on 22 July at home. But he was very cheerful and kept praising the Lord. We had a blessed time of Bible reading, prayer and fellowship. He enjoyed reading the Bible especially on Psalm 103 and Psalm 27.

I also thank the Lord for giving me the opportunity to speak to Mrs Tan. Normally when I visit Mr Tan, she would keep herself busy and did not like to talk. But this time she was so cheerful and told me about her daily chores at home.

Although Mr Tan was not feeling well he still managed to keep himself cool and calm. Seeing Mr Tan's cheerfulness, I was very encouraged and rejoiced with Him. Thank God for He has a purpose for our lives.

Mrs Sylvia Teh, Mrs May Leong and I had a very blessed and wonderful time visiting Mr Tan. *(End of letter by Miss Lillian Chin, Staffworker, Calvary Pandan BPC)*

Church Weekly for 14 August 2005

My dear readers,

1. BETTER TO GO TO THE HOUSE OF MOURNING

So says the wise King Solomon. And the day of one's death is better than the day of one's birth (Eccles 7:1,2). This week-end (Aug 5-8) was a "*double blessing*" as I ministered to members of two Tow families. Cousin Siang Ling's wife Rose and Cousin Soon Ai passed away within the space of three days. One was 83, the other 84. Both had been unwell for some time, so their passing was timed by God, a call to rest from our all-merciful Creator.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord ... that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them" (Rev 14:13). It was a blessed experience spread over four nights and days at the Garden of Remembrance in Choa Chu Kang, as the Word of God was shared with family members and friends. The Lord be praised.

2. HILLTOP NEWS

This week we have an interesting report from Hilltop, Philippines, the Center for Biblical Studies founded by Rev Dan Ebert II and his sons, a ministry supported by Calvary from the beginning. Please read the letter with prayer, especially for Pastor Lubaton and Rev Dan Ebert III.

Dear Dr. Tow,

Just wanted to let you know how Pastor Lubaton is doing, about the same, sadly and in need of much prayer and more on him later in the letter.

We had the biggest and best evangelical service Sunday! Pastor Hector Badong gave a rousing message after a song service of some very moving songs/hymns. Do you know, at least 50 people went forward "with questions", that is one way Pastor Hector phrased it when he asked folk to come forward. . And there were a LOT of visitors in attendance. Those who were to counsel the ones who came forward took them downstairs and we do pray souls were saved and got right with God.

What was SO encouraging also was that a longtime antagonist to our work, a woman living just outside our gate, came to the meeting and went forward! Bill and I nearly fainted in shock and bliss. The woman had allowed her sons to come to church for a long time, her little boys and even her baby girl whom Beelee, one of our ladies, brings every Sunday. But the woman herself, as Beelee put it, "Is too proud." Well, God broke through her veneer. We pray through subsequent Bible studies and pastoral visits that these folk will grow in the Savior, in even half the way Brother Esmer has. His personal testimony Sunday had touched lives, a former drunk and ne'er-do-well of the neighborhood who attempted at every point to sabotage the road to Hilltop and thwart our work, Esmer is a

shining example of what God can do with a life that turns itself over to Him. I like that verse in Isaiah, "You have lifted my soul from the ash heap." And that he did for Esmer, and not only for him but for me too! What a God we serve.

Pastor Hector talked to Bill for a long time about Pastor Lubaton. We are all still so concerned particularly as one of our men, Bro.Nilo, had learned via online medical information that someone as serious with pancreatic problems as Lubaton has, should really no longer be alive. It seems the pancreas start to work and Lubaton gets so much better, then suddenly and with no apparent reason, the pancreas start producing toxins and destructive juices that again eat at the pancreas and surrounding organs. We do not yet know the results of the CT scan and Bill has not heard from Dr. Abagon.

During the service Bro. Nilo received a phone call from Lubaton! He was crying because he wanted to be at the anniversary service. So sad. So hard. Do keep praying for the poor man, he is so well-beloved and so much of an asset to the work, so talented, and godly. Bill said he just did not understand why, if God is going to ultimately take Lubaton home (we pray NOT) why is he still here and in so much pain? I know so many of God's children ask that question every day.

Bill is not feeling well, same symptoms as last year at this time, and he is very aware that this "thing" follows a pattern. He gets weak and then nauseous and very quickly goes into fevers. The Doctor could find nothing really wrong (thankfully), and gave Bill a round of medicines for his stomach and fever and told him to start antibiotics in two days if this does not clear up. Bill also has a toothache which made me wonder if there is an infection from that causing the initial fevers. Just pray for him. It seems I'm always asking for prayer for Bill's health. I feel so so sorry for him . Bill is all drugged up and sleeping comatosedly right now. At least Bill's Dad is here to provide levity and assurance.

Our children are well and happy, we praise God for their joyous lives, for their involvement in their churches, for seeking God's will in their lives. God bless you and yours and thank you for praying for us here. "Beware in your prayers, above everything, of limiting God, not only by unbelief, but by fancying that you know what He can do. Expect unexpected things, above all that we ask or think (Eph. 3:20). Each time you intercede, be quiet first and worship God in His glory. Think of what He can do, of how He delights to hear Christ, of your place in Christ, and expect great things." *Andrew Murray (End of letter from Mrs Bill Ebert).*

God bless all readers.

Church Weekly for 21 August 2005

My dear readers,

1. PRESERVATION OF THE BODY OF CHRIST

The body of Christ our Lord is the company of believers, men and women purchased with the precious blood of the Lamb, and translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son (Col 1:13).

The apostle Peter (who had been commissioned to feed the flock of God three times by the risen Christ in John 21) wrote in his first epistle to the elders of the church: "*Feed the flock of God ... taking the oversight thereof ...*" not "*...as lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock*" (1 Pet 5:2, 3).

The church is the flock, God's heritage, the peculiar people of God, separate from the world, precious to the Saviour who paid the price of blood to claim them as His own. **We form part of that body, God's heritage.** To us is committed the work of the gospel, the heaven-given task of turning men from darkness to light, from the perishing world to God's everlasting kingdom.

As members of the body of Christ, we have a sacred trust and duty to preserve its well-being, unity, and harmony. To do otherwise is to harm our Lord's body: **this we must never do.**

2. BE LIKEMINDED, OF ONE ACCORD, OF ONE MIND

Paul, apostle and the master church planter, was concerned over matters which might cause discord and divide the church. To the Philippian Church, and to us Calvinians, he writes: "*Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves*" (Phil 2:2, 3).

The Apostle mentions three ingredients of unity: to be *likeminded*, to *love one another*, to have *lowliness of mind*. Our Lord's last injunction to the disunited striving disciples was: "*By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another*" (Jn 13:35). The vital ingredient of unity is love or charity.

Recall the Apostle's words: "*Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth*" (1 Cor 13:4-6).

By love or charity, let all Calvinians guard the unity and harmony of Calvary. "*Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory ...*" (Phil 2:3).

3. "SEPARATION" THE SOLUTION TO "IRRECONCILABLE DIFFERENCES"

Calvary, by God's grace, has been established and sustained a "gospel outpost" for over thirty years. We are "Bible-Presbyterians" - - separated from the original "English Presbyterian Mission," with its ecumenical connections and persuasion. We have our peculiarities and distinctives. Those who test us out, sample our wares, and find it agreeable and beneficial, stay with us. Those who stay are now "churched" in three locations: **Jurong, Pandan, Tengah.**

In our congregations, not everyone believes exactly the same things. These, being minor differences, are graciously accommodated and we continue in harmonious fellowship. In our midst are those who are not fully persuaded of our practices, nevertheless their agreements outweigh their disagreements (which are minor and not crucial). So they stay and we are happy and blessed. Some may not agree with infant baptism, premillennialism, our method of keeping the Lord's Day, of remembering our Lord's birth, our "Calvinism," etc.

Over the years, some dissenters have graciously bade us goodbye and peaceably departed for other Bible-believing churches. To these we give much credit and blessing; for such we bear no ill will in Christ our common Lord.

4. "LET NOTHING BE DONE THROUGH STRIFE OR VAINGLORY"

The instruction from God's Word is clear and explicit as earlier expressed: we do not, and cannot, expect everyone to agree with everything we believe or do. This, however does not mean a dissenting member may do whatever he pleases: disseminate his own agenda whether in public or private; create division or sow discord among the flock. To do so is to harm the flock, God's heritage: **this is sinful and wicked.**

The Pastor is a watchman for God: it is expected of watchmen to be vigilant and faithful. Great trust is placed on him and great is the Chief Shepherd's expectation of him.

Paul was a faithful watchman. He sounded a warning note to the elders of Ephesus, and to us: *"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them"* (Acts 20:28-30).

Supposing someone should initiate a move to **organize a signature campaign in our church and related churches to collect signatures by hundreds and thousands for a cause which would unsettle our church, what should we do?**

As mentioned, Pastors are watchmen. Our Lord expects them to be faithful, not as hirelings, for the hireling "... seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf ... scattereth the sheep" (Jn 10:12). **God save Calvary.**

5. READERS, PRAY FOR THE PEACE OF CALVARY

"... in every thing by prayer and supplication ... let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil 4:6). The result: God's peace which passeth all understanding will be ours.

Church Weekly for 28 August 2005

My dear readers,

1. THE CHURCH'S BEST INVESTMENT

Children are our best investment, with an eye on the future. A Church without children will likely shrink with time. Our Lord loved children. To the disciples who thought children were troublesome, our Lord said, *"Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven"* (Matt 19:14).

CMC (Calvary Missions to Children) is our outreach to children. Their latest report is reprinted for readers' interest and prayer.

2. CALVARY MISSIONS TO CHILDREN

Our Team Notes- August 2005 Volume 1

I received a call this evening from a brother in-Christ, who is gifted of God in the area of art & craft, and serves actively in the ministry of tracting (i.e. evangelism). I had approached him a few weeks ago and invited him to take the children through art & craft during our Missions Week in September, to which he heartily accepted. *"I would like to seek your advice in the craft I've planned for the children", he said over the phone, "it'll be a styrofoam ball which the children will make into a globe, and the tiny islands of Singapore and Saipan will be marked with a flag each, and on the underside of which we'll get the children to write 'thank God for saving me in Singapore' and 'thank God for saving you in Saipan', respectively. Let's get the list of names of the children from the Chinese Christian Church of Saipan (CCCS) to write on the flags! I'll also be delivering a short message to the children from Psalm 8:4, will you please pray for me?"*

Psalm 8:4 *"What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"*

O such is the humility of the servants of God, and what a blessing it is to be serving God with zealous, purposeful brethren. It is during such times that our hearts go out to God with thanksgiving, praising Him for leading faithful men and women to co-labour in His ministry to the children. Brethren, please pray for brother Patrick and sister Thory as they prepare to lead the children on the 3rd of September.

Answered Prayer:

On 30 July 2005, we celebrated CMC's 17th Anniversary. Remember Mrs Gan whom 2 sisters and I visited last month and was mentioned in our Team Notes in July? She was 1 of 41 parents who came! And she brought along her father and sister! On this blessed occasion, we had a heart-warming song presentation by the children, a puppet show that depicted the scene in the Garden of Eden, and a follow-up message on the Origin of Sin

by Preacher Yeekin. Thank you for praying! *"Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable."* [Psalm 145:3]

Pre-school Classes Ballooning!

Just last Saturday, I was told that our pre-school classes have increased in attendance, with 20 children in Nursery, 17 in K1, and 16 in K2! Sister Patricia exclaimed with joy and excitement, *"We need more helpers!"* The Lord must have anticipated the increase, and provided a new staff in sister Cindy Cassin for nursery through the 'Invitation to Serve' Sunday. She expressed as such in one of her email reply, *"I'm looking forward to seeing CMC in action and meeting Sister Patricia. Thanks for helping me serve our Lord in this ministry."*

Beloved brothers and sisters in-Christ, there are many areas where we continue to desire assistance (e.g. librarians, teachers, helpers, etc). It was our prayer, and continues to be so, that our Father in Heaven may bestow upon us men and women of purpose, who are committed and zealous for the cause of our ascended Lord, Christ. Please pray the Lord of the harvest to lead the right people into the ministry.

*In-Christ,
Simon Chua
18th August 2005*

3. THE HIGH COST OF LIVING LONG

Moses, in Psalm 90, wrote: *"The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away"* (verse 10).

As men live longer these days with improved medical care, more and more enter the disease-prone age bracket. Of late, our Church Prayer list for those with cancer, heart conditions, and age-related diseases, has grown out of all proportions. Why is this so? Moses has the answer.

"Who knoweth the power of thine anger?" (verse 11). In righteous wrath, the Creator had sentenced the fallen Creation to curse and death for the offence of our first parents, eating of the forbidden fruit on that fateful day, for *"...in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die"* (Gen 2:17).

For ten years, Stepmother had suffered the wrath of God, falling victim to Alzheimer's disease. Slowly but surely, her mental faculties degenerated with the passing years. Her memory failed, her former skills faded away. Her beautiful cakes were baked without sugar; her dishes were burnt to ashes. Gradually she lost her memory of old familiar people. In the last three years she could not recognize the family members.

But praise the Lord, she was constantly in prayer and singing the songs of heaven, until her mental faculties gave way. We prayed for God to take her Home "*O Lord, how long?*"

Last night that prayer was finally answered. She was ninety nine. Now she is in the land of everlasting health and youth, forever freed from the burden of this body of death.

To readers, learn a lesson from Psalm 90:12 "*So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.*"

Church Weekly for 4 September 2005

My dear readers,

1. JORDAN - WHY DID WE GO?

The story of Jordan goes back some twenty years to the mid nineteen eighties when Pastor Pang Kok Hiong answered God's call to China to reach out to the Chinese. After the second trip, the Tiananmen crackdown by the authorities called for a pause and a re-think. It was then that Bro Kok Hiong received a call to Saipan where over 15,000 Chinese factory workers became a fertile mission field, and hundreds came to salvation in Jesus Christ.

Some of these converted workers subsequently took up job offers in Jordan and looking for a place of worship, found in the Baptist Church Irbid (N Jordan) a ready welcome. But there was a language barrier. In November 2001, the elders in the Arab Church sent a message to Bro Kok Hiong, *"Come over and help us - your Chinese workers need you!"* That, very simply, is how we went to Jordan. The ways of the Lord surely are mysterious, beyond human comprehension.

2. REPORT ON JORDAN MISSION TRIP

(17 June to 3 July 2005)

Thank the Lord for His grace and mercy for a blessed Jordan Mission trip. It enabled us to witness first-hand God's work in Jordan and has helped us to pray for the Jordan ministry in more specific ways. Thank God for giving us unity in purpose and ability to serve as we ministered to the Chinese believers in Sahab and Karak.

Sahab

We held 4 lunch time meetings at a corridor in front of the elevator at the Al Tajamout Industrial City for the believers from 20 - 23 June 2005. The attendance averaged about 70. These believers had come from a number of different factories within the complex. Some of the sisters had to walk as long as 15 minutes to reach the worship venue. These sisters had come to hear God's Word and to fellowship in spite of their tiring schedules - they work from 6:30 am to 11:00 pm every day with only 1 hour break for lunch and ½ hour break for dinner. Dns Peggy Leong shared from 1 Corinthians 13 on the practical aspects of love and encouraged them to press toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ from Philippians 3:14. Sister Clara Teo shared on what it meant to bear the cross of Jesus. Sister Laura Foo shared her testimony on how the Lord helped her during her battle with cancer.

There was one particular lady, Hai Li who was suffering from fatigue and appeared frail and listless. She also claimed that she could see evil spirits in her sleep. While she managed to come for the lunch meetings, she could hardly stand and had to be supported by the other sisters. Preacher Andrew Tan and the 2 sisters from Pandan Chinese Service

(they were stationed in Irbid, covering the work for the Chees) came down on Wednesday, 22 June 2005 to minister to her. Thank God she accepted the Lord as her Saviour that day. The next day after our meeting, we visited her in her hostel and shared God's Word with her and prayed with her. The latest we heard before returning to Singapore was that her condition has improved and has since gone back to work. Praise the Lord for deliverance from sin and the evil one.

While in Karak, we had also received news that 7 souls in Sahab had come to receive Jesus as their personal Saviour through a hostel meeting led by the more spiritually mature believers. Thank God for His mercy and salvation grace!

Karak

The next 8 days were spent in Karak where we had 14 hostel meetings. We arrived on Thursday, 23 June and had our first meeting with the Chinese believers from the Honoway factory at 10.30 pm. Subsequently, we had only 3 more meetings with this group as we had to cancel 4 meetings because they had to work overtime till almost midnight. Their physical fatigue was evident but the fellowship was warm. The Lord be praised! Their faith has been continually tested as they struggled with the demands of their work. Much prayer is needed for them as they persevere and press on towards growing spiritually.

We also had meetings with the believers on night-shift from the Camel factory after they finished work in the morning. The group averaged about 15 each day. Dns Peggy Leong shared on the book of Philippians, drawing lessons from one chapter each morning. The sisters are learning to trust the Lord in their trials and the importance of being continually joyful in their Christian walk. On the last morning, the sisters from the Camel factory chartered a minibus and the whole group of us went to the Dead Sea for an outing. We sang hymns and chatted about our experiences on the 2-hour bus journey. We had a blessed time of fellowship with these sisters-in-Christ.

The believers on day-shift at the Camel factory heard from their fellow believers from the night-shift that we were in Karak and requested to meet with us in our hotel room at 7:30 pm after their work. Praise the Lord for His wonderful providence! Altogether, we had 5 blessed nights of fellowship with these believers.

The afternoons were spent resting, memorizing scriptures and preparing for the meetings, with sweet fellowship with one another. Thank God for giving us good health for all our commitments.

In addition, we also attended two Friday morning worship services with the Karak congregation where Preacher Andrew Tan preached from the book of James.

Irbid

We had one meeting at the Hassan Hostel II on the first night we arrived in Jordan and also attended the Friday evening worship service on our last day there.

Sight Seeing

Besides all the meetings, we also take time to smell the flowers and eat of their delicious fruits; visiting places like Jerash, Mt Nebo, Gadara and Dead Sea; passing through biblical lands like Madaba (land of the Moabites).

Conclusion

In capturing a beautiful photo shot of the setting sun, a thought came to mind - the sun may set on Jordan, turning day into night, yet our God has not given up on His people. He still loves them and offers salvation to as many as will come to Him by faith. While there is still time to repent, make no delay, for the sun may not rise tomorrow when your life is taken from you, sooner than you think. Time on earth shall then be no more.

We continue to pray for a missionary couple to minister to the brethren in Sahab and Karak. These believers, especially those in Karak, are like sheep without a shepherd and we pray that they will be faithful even amidst their trying circumstances.

We also pray that Tengah members will be minded to go and witness for themselves God's work in Jordan. Amen. *(Submitted by Clara Teo)*

P.S. - Please do not be put off by the summer temperature. It is hot but it is bearable at 36 to 38 degree Celsius in the day as it is hot and dry and windy, unlike Singapore where it is hot and humid. We hardly perspire and were in fact feeling comfortable. At night, it is cooler and most enjoyable, like in an air-con environment. In summer, sunrise is at 5:30 am and sunset at 7:30 pm.

Church Weekly for 11 September 2005

My dear readers,

1. OUR SOUL SAVING WORK GOES ON

Two thousand years after our Lord gave the Great Commission, the number of souls still needing to be reached with the Gospel is greater than ever before! Everywhere harvest fields are ripe and waiting to be reaped. "*The harvest is plenteous, the labourers are few.*" Will you pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into the harvest?

2. GOD'S AMAZING GRACE

-testimony of God's great salvation from idolatry

Greetings in the precious name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I thank God for rescuing my family from idols some 18 years ago.

Before conversion, we had many carved images both big and small in my house. Collecting them was vital to us as we believed that the more idols we had at home, the more protected we would be. This is not true as the Bible clearly tells us that these idols have eyes that see not, ears that hear not, and mouths that speak not. If idols need someone to offer food to them, then they must be very hungry and miserable as we only offered food on certain festive occasions, so most of the time they would be starving!

We used to visit temples on every 1st and 15th of the Chinese lunar month and also engaged in frequent meditation. Occasionally, we would consult the temple medium when we were in any trouble. They would advise us to pray by the roadside and gave us yellow talisman paper to burn and consume after mixing with water. This was supposed to remove curse.

I was the chairman of many *hungry ghost festivals* and used to hang big urns and lanterns outside the door of the house to receive blessings and also to prevent evil spirits from entering our home.

Before shifting to my new home, we approached the temple medium to select an auspicious date and timing so that all our birth dates will not "clash" with the spirits during removal. The timing was picked by the medium and we had to comply, otherwise the idol spirits would not come to dwell in our new home and we would not be blessed.

Our lives were meaningless and often in a mess. There were times when I wished how nice it would be if life was like a computer keyboard where you can just press the alt-ctrl-delete button, reboot and restart all over again.

The turning point came on 23rd December 1987 when Florence my staff nurse from Philips, gave me a hymnal and invited me to her church at Calvary Bible Presbyterian Church for Christmas worship service. I accepted her invitation as my daughter, Clarinda

(6 years at that time) was also performing on that day. The Lord truly touched my heart and I decided to accept Jesus as my Lord and personal Saviour on that very same night.

On 18th January 1988, my pastor Rev James Chan came to remove all the idols and gave me a verse taken from **Isaiah 12:2**: "*Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song*"

Subsequently my family attended our first Bible camp organized by Calvary Pandan in April 1988 at AWANA. Soon after our return, we enrolled for the Basic Bible Knowledge Course in preparation for our baptism. My whole family was baptized on 25 December 1988.

Truly as we look back and reflect, we can only thank the Lord for His grace and mercy and also for meeting all our needs. All praise and glory to God in the highest for all that He has done! Amen. - *Adrian Chua & family, Calvary Bible Presbyterian Church.*

3. "PUT YE IN THE SICKLE, FOR THE HARVEST IS RIPE" (JOEL 3:13) Report by Rev Peter Wong

August 11th

From Brunei, we rode to Miri and then flew to Kuching. Then we took the long bus trip to Pontianak. We were received by evangelist brother Ajin John Frederick in the late night and taken to preacher Peter Yoksan's house in Sungai Raya Dalam. Peter Yoksan's father, Rev. Elyakin Phang is a retired minister of Gereja Kristian Kalimantan Barat; GKKP. He is a warm-hearted preacher whose wife has been suffering from a stroke for the last five years. We had a wonderful fellowship time with them in prayer and sharing.

His son Peter Yoksan is a recent graduate of FEBC after leaving his highly-paid job in Malaysia, responding to the call of God.

August 12th

The next day we preached to eighty students in a classroom of a local government school. Most of them are upper primary and lower secondary students from ages eight to twelve. Evangelist Ajin does a weekly Friday Bible study with them with the school's permission. I spoke to them about the importance of the Ten Commandments and they were very attentive. We had also been able to channel some of them to attend our Hanura Permai Church. Praise God there is still a good opportunity in Pontianak to witness to the Dayak, Javanese, and Chinese. (*To be continued*).

Church Weekly for 18 September 2005

My dear readers,

1. "A GREAT DOOR IS OPENED"

The apostle Paul seized every opportunity to advance the cause of his Lord. Writing to the Corinthian church, he expressed his delight that God had given him such a challenging harvest field. *"For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries"* (1 Cor 16:9). But the apostle was not deterred or discouraged. *"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain"* (Phil 1:21). His one unshakable ambition was to do God's work God's way, *"... with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death"* (Phil 1:20).

God is well able to keep him in His loving care, and deal with any adversaries.

The greatest excitement was *"a great door of Gospel opportunity!"* For us in Calvary, our great excitement is *"a great door is opened to us in Pontianak!"* We did not go hunting or looking, but the Lord opened the door, because He saw that we had *"... a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name"* (Rev 3:8).

Readers, will you pray for our Gospel Door in Indonesian Borneo? The Lord has opened a *"great door"* in the capital city Pontianak. We did not go knocking or seeking, but it was the Lord who opened it. Our 5th Borneo Missions Conference (November 30 to December 4, 2005) calls you to pray, and if the Lord wills, to make the trip to Pontianak. If you wish to know more, please call Dn Lek Aik Wee at this number 96355679 / email: awlek@pacific.net.sg.

2. REPORT ON PONTIANAK GOSPEL WORK

(by Rev Peter Wong, continued from Calvary's Weekly of 11 Sept 2005).

13 August (Saturday)

Brother Ajin took us to see a piece of land in Siantan where there is a plan to build a church and Bible college. Siantan is a fairly new housing estate with many new Chinese families. The prospect of starting something like this poses a great potential for our future work. In the afternoon, we were taken to visit Rev Djunaidi who has been confined to bed for the past ten years after a boat accident. Rev Djunaidi is a long-time friend of Rev Timothy Tow and a supporter of BP work. Two Indonesian brothers Chung Yew Onn with his father-in-law came to see me and I invited them to attend our year-end Missions Conference. In the evening we had a gospel rally and about forty people showed up. I shared with them on the topic of *"Jesus, our best friend."* Brother Peter Yoksan had just come back in time from Singapore to interpret for me.

14 August (Lord's Day)

From 7.30 to 8.30 am, eighty children came to Sunday School. Mrs Ivy Wong taught them the gospel and some Chinese songs. After that it was followed by the main service in which I preached on the Great Commission and Peter Yoksan interpreted into Indonesian for me. At the end of the service we dedicated one lay brother Kwet Khiong, his wife and his daughter Anila to serve in the church as a helper. Pray for Anila for she is suffering from body pains. She is only 18 years old. Her older sister died a few months ago from blood cancer. We had half-an-hour of adult Sunday School using the "Basic Christian Doctrines" led by Peter Yoksan. The last part of the morning was the Teenage Fellowship where I spoke from Luke's Gospel. There were thirty of them and some were taking notes which is very encouraging.

During the evening we had a sunset service in Peter Yoksan's house where I took the opportunity to speak to the group about knowing the wiles of Satan. It happened to be the time of the Chinese "*hungry ghosts festival*" (and Pontianak is known to be a "*ghost city*".)

At the end of the meeting I was asked to pray for several sick people. The third floor of this house is currently under construction for the second worship place for Hanura Permai Mission Point.

15 August

We had a morning meeting with all the leaders of the Hanurai Permai Church with Preacher Peter Yoksan and his parents, brother Ajin, brother Hermanus and his wife, and a new worker who has just joined the team called Daud Latif, and finally Kwet Khiong. I shared with them 1 Peter 5 on the role of a pastor in the local church. We had a time of prayer and discussion. There is a great need in these areas:

- (1) To register the Hanurai Permai Church with GABBI (Gereja Alkitab Presbyterian Pontianak). Pray that the approval will come soon
- (2) To purchase a church van
- (3) To obtain approval of plans for Hanura Permai Church to be built soon
- (4) Baptism of a few more candidates
- (5) To send workers to FEBC i.e. Hermanus and wife
- (6) To pray for our Conference, 30 Nov to 4 Dec, 2005

I left in the evening with much praise and thanks for what I saw in the church.

The following is my evaluation for the needs there;

1. There is a golden opportunity to have a quality Christian Kindergarten for Pontianak to reach the non Muslims now
2. To help the local pastors financially with their living support
3. To link up Sarawak, Brunei and Pontianak into a body both for fellowship and support.

There is a need to channel our prayer, energy, effort and money to this needy place. We can do much for the people there.

During our 5-day stay we find that Pontianak is quite hot and humid. It is where the equator line falls. Thank God that we were kept safe during our travels. We left on the evening of Monday, 15 August, with hearts full of praise for the gospel work in the mission station in Borneo, the third largest island in the world. Amen. - *Pastor Peter Wong, 24 August 2005 (End of report)*

3. BIBLE LANDS TRAVELLING SEMINAR (SEPT 14-28)

Our group of 41 persons from four countries are now in "*The Land where Jesus walked.*" Please remember us in your prayers. God bless all readers.

Church Weekly for 25 September 2005

My dear readers,

1. BIBLE LANDS REFLECTIONS

SQ492 touched down at Cairo Airport twelve hours after take-off from Changi. Grateful thanks to God for a safe and restful flight.

"REFLECTIONS" is meant to keep readers informed and (hopefully) blessed as you read of our God-given experiences in the BIBLE LANDS, EGYPT and ISRAEL.

PYRAMIDS: our group of forty-one gathered in the shadow of the great pyramid of CHEOPS ("KEOPS"), soaring 450 feet into the cloudless sky. Our guide MAX told us that there were some 140 of these geometric structures all over the country, their ages dating to as far back as 2,600 BC. When Israel arrived in Egypt, the pyramids had been standing for hundreds of years.

These wonders of the ancient world never cease to fascinate and intrigue: how did the builders of those colossal structures do it without the aid of modern equipment and technology? Again, we were told that the *"big one"* Cheops took 50,000 men 20 years to complete, a feat of human ingenuity and industry.

2. NIGHT ON THE NILE

The first night our guide took us to *"Fish Boat"* restaurant standing in the Nile. There we reflected on God's great salvation of baby Moses lying helpless in a basket to be discovered by the Pharaoh's daughter, who adopted the child to be a royal Egyptian prince. But God had other plans for Moses. In the book of Hebrews it is recorded, *"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season"* (Heb 11:24,25).

It was a night for quiet reflection, that some 3,500 years ago, God set in motion the world's largest *rescue operation* and by His servant Moses led the children of Israel out of their 430-year bondage to their Promised Land.

3. MOTORING DOWN THE SINAI PENINSULA

Friday 16 September. As the 50-seater coach sped along, we read a running commentary from selected portions of Exodus, how the Lord used Moses to lead a disgruntled, murmuring and complaining people. Yet our God had compassion to bear with them and to sustain them forty years in *"... in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness ...he kept him as the apple of his eye"* (Deut 32:10).

In the second half of the drive we were treated to a spectacular display of the aftermath of Noah's flood: hundreds of kilometers of sedimentary rocks in beautiful symmetrical layers, mile after mile of brown limestone rock formation. The same rock formation was seen in Israel when we crossed from Taba in Egypt to Eilat in Israel.

4. DESERT BLOOMING BY THE SHORES OF THE DEAD SEA

While the terrain was the same brown sand, rocks and hills, before long a marvelous transformation appeared on the shores of the Dead Sea. Springing up from the *salt sand* were rows and rows of greenhouses by the roadside, *as far as the eye could see*. From these "*food factories*" Israel is exporting all sorts of fruits and vegetables to distant parts of the world.

Truly, the desert is blooming like the rose. This is but the beginning of the restoration mentioned in God's Word. When our Lord returns *millennial promises* will be fulfilled. For that glad day when God shall redeem His creation: let us be zealous to declare and broadcast the Gospel of hope to all who will hear.

5. DOUBLE BLESSING ON LORD'S DAY

We had heard of the severe rainless climate in Israel and how arid the land is. This morning, as we set out for the Nazareth Evangelical Baptist Church, suddenly it began to rain! Not heavy, only a light drizzle, but nevertheless the welcome drops maintained a steady rate. God had sent showers of blessing.

At the Baptist Church we were welcomed by the Arab Pastor Fuad Sakhnini, who kindly gave us the use of his beautiful sanctuary. Our group of forty-one had a blessed service of worship: Responsive reading of Isaiah 19:18-25 told of the final restoration and reconciliation of the Arab countries with Israel. My message (of 10 minutes) was taken from 1 Cor 15:22: "*For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*" It is this blessed hope which gives us meaning and purpose in living and a bright and glorious future in the eternity to come.

6. PRAY FOR PEACE - THE GIFT OF GOD

Calvary Pandan and Jurong have enjoyed peace and unity since the beginning, 1973. This is the gift of God and precious beyond price. We must all treasure this peace and strive our utmost to preserve it. None should do anything to disturb or destroy that peace. To do so is to hurt the body of Christ our Lord.

As your founding and elected pastor from the beginning, I thank God for His enabling through many a trial. The adversary does not leave us alone, but as the accuser of the brethren and father of lies, he uses his cunning craftiness to undermine our unity. In the past the Lord had delivered us from intrusion of false doctrine from outside, and dissension from within. **Presently voices of dissension seek to divide and destroy us.**

But our God has set watchmen and faithful shepherds over the flock. By His grace and enabling, I have stood fast through many a test. I can confidently say, "*The Lord is my helper, of whom shall I be afraid?*" My Lord put me in Calvary to care for the safety of the sheep; **He will not fail us.** Presently powerful forces seek to overthrow the leadership, but I have cried unto the Lord, "*... in the shadow of thy wings ... I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast. I will cry unto God most high, unto God that performeth all things for me. He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up. God shall send forth his mercy and his truth*" (Ps 57:1-3).

Writing on the 6th day of our Bible Land Travelling Seminar, in my room overlooking the Sea of Galilee I thank God for showering on us His blessings which are new everyday. To our **praying people** at Pandan: **please pray that soon we shall see the salvation of the Lord. He will, without a doubt, deliver Calvary from those who seek to break us in pieces. Our Lord is able. "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear"** (Is 59:1).

Please remember **DAILY TO PRAY FOR GOD'S SALVATION** from threats of **JAIL** against your Pastor. **Pray that no harm will come to the shepherd. Our God is able.**

Weekly Supplement 25 September 2005

My dear readers,

1. GREETINGS FROM THE HOLY LAND

Grace be to you, and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, who called me to be His servant these thirty years, to preach the Gospel of peace and unity in the church through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Staying at a Kibbutz hotel near Tiberias, overlooking the Sea of Galilee, our group are blessed with peace and harmony, demonstrated also by the hotel staff, Arabs and Jews, working together in harmony and brotherly kindness. I have spoken to a few, and they are contented and happy --- because they are all ISRAELIS, one nation, one loyalty. This is the way it should be. After all, traced to their roots, they are one family, children of Abraham.

Out of this observation, I draw a lesson for Calvarians: whether you adopt VPP or not, we are one family. **VPP need not, should not, and must not become a stumbling block and bone of contention to cause confrontation and division.**

2. WHAT IS VPP?

I write simply and plainly, not as a theologian but a servant of Jesus Christ our Lord, and as God's shepherd to feed His flock at Calvary. I accept VPP as a link between our two keystone beliefs:

a) **Constitution 4.2.1.** which has been our foundational doctrine from the beginning. It states: *"We believe in the divine, verbal and plenary inspiration of the Scriptures in the original languages, their consequent inerrancy and infallibility, and, as the Word of God, the Supreme and final authority in faith and life."*

b) **The KJV (Authorised Version Holy Bible)** is the only Bible for use in Calvary at **all** meetings and worship services, being derived from the best **TEXTS**, translated by the most trustworthy **TRANSLATORS**, using the most accurate and faithful **TECHNIQUE**, *"verbal equivalence,"* meaning *"word for word,"* and the best godly **THEOLOGY**, uncontaminated by modern thought, by liberalism, evolutionism and higher criticism.

Where does **VPP** come in? **VPP** provides a link between the two **keystone beliefs**. **"Verbal Plenary Preservation"** simply means that all the words of God in the text from which the **KJV** is derived are perfectly preserved by God, so that the translators, **using these preserved MSS**, were able to give us a Bible (**KJV**) without mistakes, which I can read, preach from, and confidently say, *"This is the inerrant, infallible, inspired word of God"* (as stated in Constitution 4.2.1).

.3. WHAT ABOUT MEMBERS WHO DO NOT HOLD TO VPP?

Answer: I ask another question: what about all of us in the BP Church (founded 1950) all these 50 years, **before VPP**? That provides part of the answer. God has enabled the BP Church to preach the pure Gospel, using the KJV only, to earnestly contend for the faith, and to plant Bible-faithful churches in many parts of the world --- **before VPP, without VPP.**

Can we still do the same, **without VPP**? **Answer: Absolutely yes.** But **VPP** is an added **safeguard** against future attacks on God's Word, that the **KJV** has mistakes. **VPP** wards off this attack.

Does it bother me if a member does not subscribe to **VPP**? **Answer:** Not at all, as long as he steadfastly abides by **Constitution 4.2.1, "KJV-only"** and does not say that the **KJV** has mistakes. Beyond these, it is unprofitable to **debate** and **argue**. Better to spend the time in study of the Word, in missions, and in works of mercy. **I am convinced: to confront each other is to fall into the enemy's trap, for we achieve nothing, only generate anger, heat and disaffection.**

Recognizing the danger (and the damage already done by needless **argument** and **confrontation** and **debate**), I would rather persuade with the wisdom from above which is *"... peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated ..."* and leads to peace, **not conflict** (James 3:17, 18).

Finally, before I leave this particular subject, let me share my own testimony: *we can never know enough.*

4. "MUCH STUDY IS A WEARINESS OF THE FLESH"

These past few years, the amount of printed material **debating the VPP issue** coming to me has grown into a sizeable library. The more I read, the more I realize how little I know, and the more confused I become. Little wonder that the wise Solomon wrote: "... *of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh*" (Eccl 12:12).

Readers who wish to know more of how I came to accept **VPP** and **KJV-only** are advised to read my short and easy treatise "***Beyond Versions***" available at Tabernacle Books, Calvary Pandan.

Satan would like to see us embroiled in **arguing** and **debating**, and ending up **angry, broken** and **ineffective** for God. **I say, by the word of God, "Be at peace one with another, for this is God's will for you."**

5. ALL IN THE FAMILY

Again, I remind readers: I am writing, overlooking the Sea of Galilee, in God's Land. It is such a blessing to see Jews and Arabs speaking, walking and working in harmony as *one big family*. May the day of our Lord's return be soon, when His peace will fill all of Planet Earth.

Even so, Lord Jesus, come! Meantime, by Thy mercy and grace, turn Thy people to Thyself, in **humility** as true children of God, and by lovingkindness consider this: **whatever my stand on VPP, matters little. What matters is the peace and oneness of my Lord's body.** Let me not be the cause of friction and faction.

Let me resolve: I must remember and obey my Lord's parting commandment before He went to Calvary: "*By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another*" (Jn 13:35). Let the love of Christ prevail, then "... *all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking ...*" (Eph 4:31) will become things of the past. Then peace is soon restored, to the praise of our Saviour and blessing of the Church.

All because the love of Christ constrains us, for we are one family. God bless readers with the peace which passeth all understanding. Amen.

*Lovingly in the Lord,
Dr SH Tow, Sr Pastor
Israel (Tiberias), 20 September 2005*

---The End---

