

Volume 92 No. 1

AUSTRALIA

January-March 2009

BE AN EXAMPLE

The Apostle Paul had special affection for Timothy. He wrote: “*To Timothy, my dearly beloved son... I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day, greatly desiring to see thee...*” (2 Tim. 1:2-4). One factor that might have endeared Timothy to Paul was Timothy’s love and zeal for the gospel, as Paul went on to write: “*When I call to remembrance the unfeigned (sincere; without hypocrisy) faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also...*” (2 Tim. 1:5).

And so it was that Paul assigned the young Timothy a challenging task: “*As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do*” (1 Tim. 1:3-4). “*These things command and teach. Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity*” (1 Tim. 4:11-12). The ministry with which Timothy was charged required his personal conduct to be exemplary.

In the King James Version, the above quotation from 1 Timothy 4:11-12 lists six aspects of conduct to which Timothy was to pay particular attention: his word, conversation, charity, spirit, faith and purity. It is suggested that every Christian today should pay particular attention to their conduct so that they too will be “*an example of the believers*”.

His word

Paul’s first exhortation to Timothy was that he be an example in word, that is, in his speech. The Christian’s manner of speaking reveals much about their inner being as Jesus declared to the Pharisees: “*O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh*” (Matt. 12:34). The words that one speaks indicate the condition of their heart and hence Jesus went on to declare: “*For by thy words thou shalt*

be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned” (verse 37). The justification to which Jesus referred was not justification to life: the only means by which anyone can be justified to life is faith in the blood of Jesus Christ: “*Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus... that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus*” (Rom. 3:24-26). “*Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved*” (Acts 4:10-12). The challenge that confronted Timothy was to ensure that his speech did not give any of his observers grounds to defame the Faith.

Likewise the condemnation to which Jesus referred in Matthew 12:37 (Greek: *katadikazo*) was not a condemnation to an eternal destiny but rather the adverse judgment made by other men. This condemnation is mentioned only four times in the New Testament: Matthew 12:7, 37, Luke 6:37 and James 5:6. Matthew 12:7 reads: “*But if ye had known what this meaneth, ‘I will have mercy, and not sacrifice’, ye would not have condemned the guiltless...*”; the condemnation to which Jesus referred was the judgment the Pharisees had levelled at Him for eating the ears of corn on the Sabbath day; it is not a condemnation additional to the condemnation inherited from father Adam.

In This Issue

Be An Example	1
Visions, Dreams and Revelations	4
The Samaritans	6
And Called Their Name Adam	8
God, Jacob and Joseph	10
Love Is Not Easily Provoked	12

Thus the standard to which every Christian is to strive is that their speech will not give fuel for any adverse criticism by other men; the words that one speaks are the basis on which fellow man makes judgments about the fidelity of the gospel. In that vein the impression given by Jesus' words is not surprising: "... all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth..." (Luke 4:22). Jesus was totally pure in heart, his words reflected that purity, and exemplified the standard for which the Psalmist prayed: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Psa. 51:10).

The Apostle Paul's letters to the other churches also exhorted them to exercise control over their speech: "*Let no corrupt (worthless) communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers*" (Eph. 4:29); and "*Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man*" (Col. 4:6). To Titus Paul wrote: "*In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works... sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you*" (Titus 2:7-8).

Another aspect of a Christian's speech is that it should be simple, plain and honest, without any intention to deceive with false praise: "*For our exhortation was not of deceit... But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts. For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness...*" (1 Thess. 2:3-5).

While the Christian must exercise continuous diligence and watch-care over their speech they should not be discouraged by unintentional lapses because every one fails at times: "*if any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man*" (James 3:2).

Conversation

Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "*You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men...*" (2 Cor. 3:2-3). Just as mankind makes judgments based on what a person speaks, likewise with what they do. Every person's conduct is visible to everyone with whom they come in contact, and either consciously or sub-consciously their observers will make judgments about them. In Ephesians 5:8-16 the Apostle Paul gives some clear instructions regarding Christian conduct: "*For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light... have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them... see then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil*".

Likewise the Apostle Peter wrote: "*Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake... For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men*" (1 Pet. 2:11-15). Peter's instructions are clear: Christians are to be honest and law-abiding, not with the idea of reaping any reward in the present time but so that the ministry may not be blamed.

Peter went on to explain that such conduct will necessitate a change from that in which his readers engaged when they were in darkness: "*For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you*" (1 Pet. 4:3-4). One challenge of the Christian is to withstand the surprise that others will express at their changed 'life style'.

There is yet another aspect of Christian conduct: the Christian is not to do 'good works' in an endeavour to attract praise from men, as was the practice of the Pharisees: "*But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments*" (Matt. 23:5). The Christian is not to seek praise and honour at the present time; mankind in general will not praise the Christian's 'good works' until the "day of visitation" (which is still future), and at that time the praise will be given to God, not man.

One source of strength that helps the Christian 'make the change' and stand apart from activities in which they engaged before their consecration, is to remember the words of Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:16-18: "... ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty".

Charity

Paul also exhorted Timothy to be an example "in charity". The first aspect of being an example in "charity" is to love all believers, whatever their background or circumstances, and Timothy was to be an example in that regard. Jesus told His disciples: "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” (John 13:34-35). One of the most powerful witnesses of Christian discipleship is the love that believers have for each other; if it is absent the Adversary will seize upon its absence and trump it as evidence that the Christian faith is phoney.

In general it is easy to love fellow-believers. However the love that is to be exercised amongst the believers extends to “*forbearing one another in love*” (Eph. 4:2): no-one in the flesh is perfect and such forbearance includes “putting up” with any annoying and irritating traits in fellow believers.

Exercising love to all the believers also includes an acceptance of those who are in poor material circumstances. The Apostle James gives clear instructions regarding the exercise of love towards all believers regardless of their material wealth: “*For if there come into your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment, and you have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, ‘Sit thou here in a good place’; and say to the poor, ‘Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool’: are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?*” (James 2:2-4). James continues to point out that such discrimination is sinful and does not fulfill the royal law to “*love thy neighbour as thyself*” (James 2:8-9).

Another aspect of love is not to deliberately offend anyone, to the extent of denying oneself if another would be hindered by an action. In apostolic times this principle embraced eating different kinds of food due to the prevalence of food that had been offered to idols and which was afterwards available for human consumption. The Apostle Paul wrote: “*But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died*” (Rom. 14:15).

Christian love (Greek: *agape*) includes benevolence and is to be extended to non-believers: “*And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you*” (1 Thess. 3:12). As Jesus taught His disciples: “*For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect (that is complete, loving both believers and unbelievers) even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect*” (Matt. 5:46-47). God’s love embraces all mankind, believers and unbelievers alike and the Christian is to practice the same love toward all.

Spirit

According to the King James Version, the next aspect listed in 1 Timothy 4:12 in which Timothy was to be an example is “*in spirit*”. However it is uncertain whether those words are authentic: they are retained in the New King James Version but are omitted in the Revised Version, the American Standard Version, the New International Version and the Diaglott, and therefore they will not be addressed in this article.

Faith

However there is no doubt that Timothy was to be an example in faith—the question was **how** was his faith to be an example?

The answer is contained in Paul’s exhortation to him: “*I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ... Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry*” (2 Tim. 4:1-5). Not being ashamed of his ministry but “preaching the word” was an example of his faith. He was to be as a bishop, holding “*fast the faithful word*” as Paul exhorted Titus (Titus 1:9). To do so was an example of faith.

Purity

The setting of an example in purity also presented Timothy (and continues to present all Christians) with a difficult challenge: “*unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure...*” (Titus 1:15). If those whom Paul describes as “*defiled*” wish to deem another’s actions as impure they will do so regardless of the nature of the actions. The only precaution any Christian can take is to “*abstain from all appearance of evil*” (1 Thess. 5:22), that is, abstain from everything that anyone can reasonably deem to fall short of “Christian standards”. However there is ‘no guarantee’ that allegations will not be made: what may seem to be pure to the Christian may be deemed sinful by another if the other is determined (predisposed) to deem them so. In such situations one may be comforted by remembering that “*all things are open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do*” (Heb. 4:13), and that “*... the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart*” (1 Sam. 16:7). Christians everywhere may repeat the words of David’s prayer: “*Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; Try my mind and my heart. For Your loving kindness is before my eyes, And I have walked in Your truth*” (Psa. 26:2-3 NKJV).

VISIONS, DREAMS AND REVELATIONS

The Bible is the greatest book the world has ever known. It was written by people who were inspired by God. It contains the answer to every question of importance to mankind. It records the past, describes the present and predicts the future. It explains why mankind is on the earth and where he is going. It explains what is wrong with the world and how it will be rectified. No other book is so powerful, so harmonious or so prophetic. Its pages record the visions, dreams and revelations that God has given to His servants to enable them to achieve His purposes.

The Macquarie Dictionary defines a VISION (3) as “*something seen or presented to the mind otherwise than by natural ordinary sight in the normal waking state*”; a DREAM as “*a succession of images or ideas present in the mind during sleep*”, and a REVELATION as “*something revealed or disclosed, especially causing astonishment*”.

Visions

The first vision recorded in the Bible is in Genesis 15:1-5: “*After this the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision. ‘Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward’ ... And Abram said, ‘You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir’. Then the word of the Lord came to him: ‘This man will not be your heir, but a son coming from your own body will be your heir’. He took him outside and said, ‘Look up at the heavens and count the stars - if indeed you can count them’. Then He said to him, ‘So shall your offspring be’*” (NIV). Abram saw a vision and heard the word of the Lord; he did not see God, he did not see an angel of God, he only saw a vision. The purpose of the vision was to tell him that he would have a son, and also that his offspring would be innumerable, like the stars of heaven.

The vision that God gave Abram was the springboard for much of Abram's faith, and it is recorded because it should give encouragement to His people: “*For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope*” (Rom. 15:4 NIV). In this vein the New Testament books of Acts, Romans, Galatians, Hebrews, James and

Peter all mention the faith of Abraham as part of their exhortation to Christians.

Dreams

A second method by which God has instructed His people is dreams, and the Scriptures contain more than seventy instances of Him using dreams. The Lord appeared unto Jacob, Joseph, Samuel, Solomon, Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel by way of dreams and at the time of Jesus' birth God spoke to Joseph by dreams on four separate occasions.

Joseph's first dream is recorded in Matthew 1:18-25: “*This is how the birth of Jesus came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a Son and you are to give Him the name Jesus because He will save His people from their sins’ ... When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife; but he had no union with her until she gave birth to a Son. And he gave Him the name Jesus*” (NIV). God used a dream to instruct Joseph such that he complied with His plan and hence facilitate the birth, as a human being, of Man's redeemer.

Joseph's second dream from the Lord came after some wise men from the East had offered their gifts to the new-born King. They had followed His star in the East and enquired from King Herod as to His whereabouts. Matthew 2:13 (NIV) reads: “*When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph in a dream. ‘Get up’, he said. ‘Take the child and His mother, and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill Him’. So he got up, took the child and His mother during the night and left for Egypt*”; a distance of some 400 km. Again God used a dream to direct Joseph and so fulfill the words of the prophet Hosea written more than 800 years

previously: “*that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, ‘Out of Egypt have I called my son’*” (Hosea 11:1; Matt. 2:15). Such records should strengthen the faith of every Christian.

Joseph's third dream occurred when he was in Egypt: “*After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, ‘Get up, take the child and His mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child’s life are dead’*. So he got up, took the child and His mother and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there”. (Matt. 2:19-22). Joseph’s fear was justified because Archelaus was a cruel tyrant.

God gave **Joseph a fourth dream** to instruct him what to do. The dream is recorded in Matthew 2:22-23: “*Having been warned in a dream (Joseph) withdrew to the district of Galilee, and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets, ‘He will be called a Nazarene’*”. Again the Lord gave directions to Joseph by means of a dream so that the details of His plan were fulfilled.

Revelations

A third supernatural way in which God has communicated His will to His earthly servants is revelations.

The term “revelation” is translated from the Greek word ‘*apokalupsis*’ which, according to Dr. Strong, means “*a disclosure*”. The book of Revelation is often referred to as “*The Apocalypse*”, “*which God gave him (Jesus Christ) to show his servants what must soon take place*” (Rev. 1:1).

The Apostle Paul received revelations as he explained to the Galatians: “*I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I preached is not something that man made up. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ*” (Gal. 1:12). The revelation he received gave him the confidence that was necessary for him to carry out the work that God had chosen him to do. He explained to the Ephesians: “*Surely you have heard about the administration of God’s grace*

that was given to me for you, that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation ... in reading this then you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the spirit to God’s holy apostles and prophets” (Eph. 3:2-5 NIV).

In 2 Corinthians 12:1- 4 the Apostle tells a little about the revelation he received: “*I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know ... I know that this man was caught up to Paradise. He heard inexpressible things, things that man is not permitted to tell*” (NIV). Paul does not give any other details of the revelation—he was “*caught up*” to the “*third heaven*” which he associates with “*Paradise*”. From 2 Peter 3:5-7 it may be deduced that the third heaven is the age to come “*wherein dwelleth righteousness*”; the first heaven and earth were destroyed by the flood of Noah’s day, and the second heaven is the “*present heavens and earth*” which are “*being kept for the day of judgment ...*”.

One can speculate regarding what Paul saw in the revelation of the third heaven that was given to him. Maybe he saw vast numbers of people from every nation and kindred and tongue drinking the waters of the river of life and partaking of the tree of life in order to live forever (Rev. 22:1-2); maybe he saw “*the redeemed of the Lord ... coming with singing to Zion with everlasting joy upon their head*” (Isa. 51:11), or maybe he heard the mighty chorus of voices singing “*Hallelujah, for our Lord God almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give Him glory, for the wedding of the Lamb has come and His Bride has made herself ready*” (Rev. 19:6-7).

Assurance

And so the testimony is that, whether it has been by visions, dreams or revelations, the Lord has watched over His servants and has provided them with all the evidences they have needed to accomplish His will. Likewise today, “*He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself ...*” (1 John 5:10), even though their experiences might not include visions, dreams or revelations as He gave to some of those who have served Him in earlier times.

THE SAMARITANS

There are more than 130 references in the Scriptures to either the Samaritans or to the region of Samaria. Some examples are Jesus' instruction to His disciples that they were "*not to go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans*" (Matt. 10:5 NKJV); at Jacob's well it was a Samaritan woman to whom Jesus revealed His authority and power (John 4:5-29); He remained in Samaria and preached to the Samaritans for two days; many Samaritans believed on Him (John 4:39-43); one of the lepers whom Jesus cleansed was a Samaritan (Luke 17:11-19); the story of what is widely referred to as "The Parable of the Good Samaritan" (the purpose of which was to teach the Jewish lawyer how he had strayed from the correct interpretation of the Law, Luke 10:25-37); Jesus' advice to His disciples that they would be "*witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth*" (Acts 1:8 NKJV); it was to the Samaritans that Philip "*preached Christ*", and when "*the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them*" (Acts 8:14).

Samaria had its origin in the days of Omri, one of the kings of Israel, in about 925 B.C., after the nation of Israel was divided into the kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

The Division of the Kingdom

When King David died, his son Solomon became king over Israel: "*So David rested with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David... Then sat Solomon upon the throne of David his father, and his kingdom was established greatly*" (1 Kings 2:10-12). However King Solomon contravened God's commandment and married non-Israelite women (1 Kings 11:1-3), who, when he was old, "*turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the LORD his God, as was the heart of his father David. Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, 'Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant. Nevertheless I will not do it in your days, for the sake of your father David; I will tear it out of the hand of your son. However I will not tear away the whole kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of my servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen'*" (1 Kings 11:4-13).

God used human beings to accomplish the rending of Israel: "*Now the LORD raised up an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite; he was a descendant of the king in Edom*" (1 Kings 11:14); "*Then Solomon's servant, Jeroboam the son of Nebat,*

an Ephraimite from Zereda... also rebelled against the king" (1 Kings 11:26). Jeroboam's rebellion was significant—Solomon had made him "*the officer over all the labor force of the house of Joseph*" (1 Kings 11:28) and thus he was one of Solomon's prominent servants, and his rebellion was also directed by God through the prophet Ahijah (1 Kings 11:27-39). Jeroboam's rebellion angered Solomon who "*therefore sought to kill Jeroboam. But Jeroboam arose and fled to Egypt...*" (1 Kings 11:40), leaving Solomon to continue as king over all Israel.

When Solomon died, his son Rehoboam succeeded him (1 Kings 11:43). Rehoboam rejected the petition of the Israelites for relief from the burden that Solomon had imposed on them, refused the advice of the "old men", accepted the advice of the "young men" and increased the Israelites' burden (1 Kings 12:1-15). Rehoboam's action was not his own—he merely acted as God directed him: "*So the king did not listen to the people; for the turn of events was from the LORD, that He might fulfill His word, which the LORD had spoken by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat*" (1 Kings 12:15 NKJV). Israel rebelled against Rehoboam's harsh decision and "*departed into their tents. But as for the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them*" (1 Kings 12:16-17). Thus the nation of Israel was divided into two camps and "*so Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day*" (1 Kings 12:19).

When Jeroboam learned that Solomon was dead he returned to Israel. The record reads: "*When all Israel heard that Jeroboam had come back, they sent for him and called him to the congregation, and made him king over all Israel. There was none who followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only*". Thus also was fulfilled the prophecy that God would leave Solomon's son with one tribe over which he would be king (1 Kings 12:20 NKJV).

Jeroboam's transgression

Although the Israelites had rebelled against Rehoboam and installed Jeroboam as their king, Jeroboam became afraid that they would return to Rehoboam. In an attempt to replicate the worship with which the Israelites were familiar he set up two golden calves, appointed priests from tribes other than Levi, and introduced Israel to the worship of strange gods (1 Kings 12:26-33).

The City of Samaria

Successive kings ruled over the ten tribes of Israel while other kings ruled over Judah (1 Kings 15), until "*in the thirty-first year of Asa king of Judah, Omri*

became king over Israel... And he bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver; then he built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, Samaria, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill" (1 Kings 16:23-24 NKJV). The name Samaria means 'lookout', which is consistent with it being on a 91-metre (300 foot) high hill about 68 kilometres north of Jerusalem, and 40 kilometres east of the Mediterranean Sea (it was near the present day city of Nablus in the West Bank region of Palestine).

Smith's Bible Dictionary states that, "from the date of Omri's purchase, B.C. 925, Samaria retained its dignity as the capital of the ten tribes, and the name was given to the northern kingdom as well as to the city... The possessor of Samaria was considered *de facto* king of Israel". Thus the ten tribes of Israel under the kingship of Omri were the first "Samaritans".

The Region of Samaria

Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary states in part: "the territory surrounding the city of Samaria, approximately within the lands allotted to the tribe of Ephraim and the western portion of Manasseh, became known as Samaria. It consisted of attractive fertile land, bounded by the Valley of Jezreel on the south and Mount Carmel on the north. Its rich alluvial soil produced valuable grain crops, olives, and grapes. Samaria engaged in commerce with neighbouring Phoenicia as well as the nations of Syria and Egypt." However such trade with those nations corrupted the people such that the prophets strongly condemned the wickedness of Samaria (Hosea 7:1; 8:5-7).

The Assyrian assault

The prosperity of the region attracted invaders and although successive kings added to the fortification of the city of Samaria, it fell to the Assyrians in 722-721 B.C., when many Israelites were deported to Syria, Assyria, and Babylonia. (2 Kings 18: 9-12)

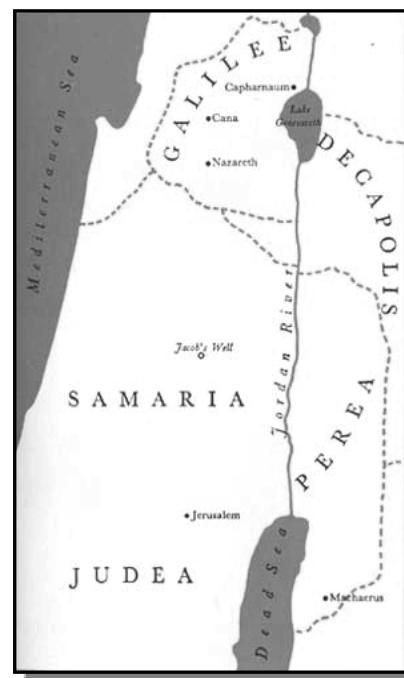
Sargon (a king of Assyria) replaced the deported Israelites with foreign colonists (2 Kings 17:24). These newcomers intermarried with the Israelites who had remained in Samaria, adopted the name 'Samaritans' and attempted to settle the land. "They did not fear the Lord, and the Lord sent lions among them, which killed some of them" (2 Kings 17:25). In despair they sent to Assyria for "one of the priests" who would "teach them the rituals of the God of the land" (2 Kings 17:27). Thereafter the Samaritans worshiped the God of Israel, but they also continued their idolatry, worshiping the pagan gods imported from the foreign lands (2 Kings 17:29). The Samaritans therefore were a "mixed race", contaminated both by foreign blood and the worship of foreign gods.

Samaria in New Testament times

In the time of Jesus, the region of Palestine west of the Jordan River was divided into three provinces: Galilee, Samaria, and Judea.

The district of Galilee had been known as such from at least the time of Joshua (Joshua 20:7). The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (Geoffrey W. Bromiley) states that: "when the monarchy was divided, Galilee became part of the kingdom of Israel under Jeroboam (1 Kings 12:20)". Thus the region of Samaria was situated between Galilee in the north and Judea in the south, which meant that the shortest route between those two provinces was through Samaria. Hence it is written: "*When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John... He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee. And he must needs go through Samaria*" (John 4:1-4). It was during that travel that He met and preached to the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, and the record testifies that her attitude and reaction were consistent with the history of the Samaritan people.

Thus is evident the significance of the other instances that mention the disciples' preaching to the Samaritans: Acts 1:8 (that they "would be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria"); Acts 8:5: ("Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them"—Christ as opposed to their foreign gods); and Acts 8:14 ("When the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John"—the Samaritans had been converted from the worship of foreign gods). Also, 'The Parable of the Good Samaritan' (Luke 10:25-37), and the specific mention of the churches of Samaria in Acts 9:31, gain greater significance.



“... AND CALLED THEIR NAME ADAM”

Genesis 5:2 is a verse of Scripture that is translated quite differently in various versions of the Bible. The different wording gives rise to at least two different meanings, and to those two may be added a third, derived from the meaning of the Hebrew words from which the verse is translated.

In broad terms, the translations may be classified into two groups: one group includes the KJV, ASV and RV, and the other group includes the NKJV, GNB, NIV, RSV and Young’s Literal Translation.

In the KJV, Genesis 5:2 reads: “*Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created*”. The ASV and RV also include the clause “...*and called their name Adam...*”.

The translations in the other group use a variety of words, but the meaning in all translations is the same. Some translations in that group read:

- NKJV: “*He created them male and female, and blessed them and called them Mankind in the day they were created*”;
- GNB: “*He created them male and female, blessed them, and named them ‘Human Beings’*”;
- NIV: “*And when they were created he called them man*” (A note in the margin states that the Hebrew is “adam”.);
- RSV: “*Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created*”;
- Young’s Literal Translation (Robert Young also compiled Young’s Analytical Concordance): “...*and calleth their name Man...*”.

The translation “...*and called their name Adam...*”, used by the first group, may be interpreted to mean that the purpose of Genesis 5:2 is to name the first human beings as the generation of “Adam”, whereas the second group may be interpreted to mean that the purpose of the verse is to distinguish mankind from the other life forms on the earth.

A third interpretation may be derived from the word “their” being plural whereas “Adam” may be singular.

The name “Adam”

The meaning of the first group, that the purpose of the verse is to give the first generation of human beings the name “Adam”, is consistent with the context—Genesis 5:1 reads: “*This is the book of the generations of Adam*”, (the same word “Adam” as in verse 2), and the rest of Genesis 5 lists Adam’s direct descendants, from Seth down to Noah (verse 32).

Such an interpretation is clear and consistent with the lists of other “generations”; for example Genesis 6:9-10 lists the generations of Noah: “*These are the generations of Noah... And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth*”; and Genesis 10:1: “*Now these are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth...*”. Thus Genesis 5:2 may be interpreted to simply list the name of the first generation of human beings as “Adam”.

Mankind: a distinct species

However the NKJV, GNB, NIV group of translations indicate that the meaning of Genesis 5:2 is to declare that Adam and Eve are distinct from fish, fowl and beast. Such a translation is consistent with the record of creation: “*And God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth’*” (Gen. 1:26). Mankind is the only species that was made in the image of God and was given dominion over the other species, thus the species ‘mankind’ is separate from all other species. Thus the NKJV, GNB and NIV etc. translation of Genesis 5:2 is consistent with Genesis 1:26.

However the question is, which meaning is the intended one? Ascertaining the answer requires consideration of the meaning of the word “Adam”.

Meaning of “Adam”

Strong’s Concordance defines “Adam” as: “(#121): the same as #120, Adam, the name of the first man; also of a place in Palestine” (the “place in Palestine” is mentioned in Joshua 3:16).

Except in Joshua 3:16 and Deuteronomy 13:6 (where #121 is translated ‘son’), #121 is always translated ‘Adam’ in the KJV and refers to the first man. One example is Genesis 2:19: “*And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof*”. The only other verses where #121 occurs are: Genesis 2:20, 21, 23; Genesis 3:8, 9, 17, 20, 21; Genesis 4:1, 25; Genesis 5:3, 4, 5; 1 Chronicles 1:1; Job 31:33. Thus it is concluded that the meaning of “Adam” in Genesis 5:2 is the first man and not the human species.

It is realised that such a conclusion differs from the meaning given by the translations in the second group (NKJV etc.) and is not adopted lightly. It is

recognized that it differs from the understanding reached by many eminent scholars, for example, the publisher's prelude to the NKJV reads: "Commissioned in 1975 by Thomas Nelson Publishers, 130 respected Bible scholars, church leaders, and lay Christians worked for seven years to create a completely new, modern translation of Scripture, yet one that would retain the purity and stylistic beauty of the original King James. **With unyielding faithfulness to the original Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic texts**, the translators applied the most recent research in archaeology, linguistics, and textual studies...". In view of such an extensive effort and such noble objectives, it is difficult to differ with their conclusion. Nevertheless the exhortation in this matter is the same as it is regarding the Sabbath: "...Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind" (Rom. 14:5), and it is emphasised that the purpose of this article is not to criticize any Work but to present the results of some research that was undertaken in an attempt to ascertain the intended meaning of Genesis 5:2.

Their name

A third interpretation of Genesis 5:2 arises from the KJV translation, that God "called **their** name Adam". The word "their" is plural and may suggest that, despite God recognising them as two separate beings, He also regarded them as one—"Adam".

The consequences of such an understanding are far reaching because they may be understood to mean that Eve was counted in with Adam in everything that he did.

The two words '*their name*' are a translation of one Hebrew word (Strong's #8034) which is defined as: "shêm (*shame*), a primitive word... an *appellation*, as a mark or memorial of individuality; by implication *honor, authority, character*". Young's Concordance agrees that the Hebrew is "shem" and defines its meaning as "name, renown". Each of the meanings given by Dr. Strong are exemplified in various verses, for example: "individuality" - Genesis 4:25 ("called his **name** Seth"); "honour" (or renown) - Numbers 16:2 ("men of **renown**"); "authority" - Genesis 26:25 ("called on the **name** of the Lord"); "character" - Job 30:8 ("children of **base** men"). Thus the various uses of "shem" vindicate Dr. Strong's definition.

Another consideration in trying to establish the legitimacy of the understanding that Eve is included in everything that Adam did, is that a group may be referenced by just the name of the leader. One example is Moab, referenced in Genesis 19:37 and Exodus 15:15: "And the firstborn bare a son, and called his **name** Moab: the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day". In that verse the reference is

to a single person, but in Exodus 15:15 the word "Moab", the name previously given to an individual, refers to a group of his descendants: "*Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling...*". In the same way that more than one person is embraced by the name "Moab", so also the name "Adam" may be used to refer to more than one person (Adam and Eve) without inseparably uniting them as one person in every instance.

Another example of a single name being used to refer to more than one person is the name "Israel". Initially the name "Israel" was ascribed to Jacob only (Gen. 32:28), but later the word is used to refer to the nation of Israel, two instances being 1 Samuel 28:19 and Romans 9:6.

Thus the name "Adam" in Genesis 5:2 does not necessarily mean that only one person is meant.

Adam and Eve

Another consideration that affects whether the reference to "Adam" in Genesis 5:2 means that Adam and Eve were regarded as one, is that Adam and Eve are mentioned separately in only nine verses in the Bible: Eve is mentioned by name in four verses and as Adam's wife in five verses. The five verses in which Eve is referred to as "Adam's wife" are: Genesis 3:8, 20, 21; Genesis 4:1, 25, and the instances where 'Eve' is mentioned by name are: Genesis 3:20, Genesis 4:1; 2 Corinthians 11:3 and 1 Timothy 2:14.

The only instances where Eve is identified by name separately from Adam refer to her womanhood or to her being deceived—that she is referred to by name in the texts that relate to the garden of Eden, and that she was deceived but Adam was not deceived, indicate that Adam and Eve are to be regarded separately in the transgression, the purpose of the distinction being that, although Eve "*was in the transgression*" (1 Tim. 2:14), it was Adam's transgression that led to Man's condemnation and it is for Adam's transgression that Jesus died. That it is Jesus alone who paid the ransom price for humankind is stated in verses such as 1 Peter 2:24: "*Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree...*", and 1 Timothy 2:5-6: "*For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time*" (noting that it was the man Christ **Jesus** who gave Himself a ransom for all; those who "*suffer with him*" (Rom. 8:17) are never ascribed the name Jesus).

Two other points that must be considered to exhaust this subject are Genesis 2:24: "*Therefore shall a man... cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh*", and the meaning of Strong #120, but space does not permit that study in this article.

GOD, JACOB AND JOSEPH

Were it not for an understanding of God's overarching purpose, the story of Jacob and Joseph would be heart-rending.

Joseph's birth

Jacob loved Rachel, the second daughter of Laban, and served him seven years in order to gain her as his wife (Gen. 29:18). However the custom was that Laban could not give Rachel to Jacob until the elder daughter, Leah, was married (Gen. 29:26). Laban betrayed Jacob which caused Jacob to unknowingly take Leah to wife. After Jacob had served Laban a further seven years Laban gave Rachel to Jacob. However Rachel was barren whereas Leah had borne Jacob four sons (Gen. 29:31-35).

Eventually Rachel conceived and gave birth to Joseph. Genesis 37:3-4 records that "*Israel (previously Jacob—Gen. 32:28) loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours. And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him*".

Jealousy

Joseph's brothers' jealousy lead them to fabricate his death and to sell him as a slave to the Ishmaelites/Midianites who in turn sold him into Egypt (Genesis 37:12-36).

One can only try to imagine the distress that the news of Joseph's apparent death caused Jacob:

- He had served Laban 14 years to gain Rachel's hand in marriage, but initially she was barren;
- God gave her a son in Jacob's old age, whom Jacob loved more than his other sons;
- Now his son (Joseph), by the woman he loved most (Rachel), was dead.

Hence it is understandable that "*Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, 'For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning'. Thus his father wept for him*" (Gen. 37:34-35).

Joseph in Egypt

However "*the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the LORD was with him... and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand... and he left*

all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat" (Gen. 39:2-6).

Famine

Genesis 41 records Pharaoh's dreams of the kine and the corn. Joseph was the only one who was able to interpret the dream and he told Pharaoh that the dreams foretold what the Lord "*was about to do*" (verse 25, 28)—to bring seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine.

During the seven plenteous years Joseph stored the surplus food which enabled him to provide food during the seven years of famine. The famine was widespread and so Joseph's brothers came to Egypt to buy food: "*And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all lands*" (Gen. 41:53-57).

Genesis 42:7-8 records Joseph meeting his brothers when they came to Egypt: "*Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly unto them; and he said unto them, 'Whence come ye?' And they said, 'From the land of Canaan to buy food'. And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him*". It was a very emotional scene for Joseph: "*And he turned himself about from them, and wept...*" (verse 24).

Joseph demanded they leave Simeon in Egypt as surety until they brought their youngest brother Benjamin to Egypt to prove they were genuine. Jacob was distressed by Joseph's demand that Benjamin accompany them to Egypt: "*And he said, 'My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone: if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave'*" (Gen. 42:38). Nevertheless eventually Jacob agreed to allow Benjamin to go to Egypt and when Joseph met them the emotion was overpowering: "*Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, 'Cause every man to go out from me'. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard. And Joseph said unto his brethren, 'I am Joseph; doth my father yet live?' And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. And Joseph said unto his brethren, 'Come near to me, I pray you'. And they came near. And he said, 'I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before*

you to preserve life... God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God..." (Gen. 45:1-16).

Genesis 45:17 - 49:33 records that Jacob went to Egypt, met Joseph and prospered until his death.

God's purpose

It might be difficult to understand how God, who loved Jacob (Rom. 9:13), could allow him to suffer such heartbreak during his life—did God really love him?

Alternatively it may be assumed that the events of Jacob's life were not extraordinary and that such misfortune and heart-break are experienced by many in the world. In other words, all the events in Jacob's life may be deemed to be 'natural'—it would be 'natural' for Jacob to love one of his wives more than the other; Rachel's barrenness was not unique; in view of the circumstances it would be 'natural' for Jacob to love Joseph more than his other sons; it was 'natural' for Joseph's brothers to be jealous of him; and it would be expected that the Lord would protect Joseph in Egypt (indeed it might be assumed that the Lord reacted to Joseph's brothers' action of selling him as a slave and nullified their spite by making Joseph prosperous).

However while all of those explanations are plausible, the truth is that the Lord was not reacting to their action but, unknown to Jacob and Joseph's brothers, He was working out His own purpose as Joseph stated plainly to his brothers: "God did send me before you to preserve life... God sent me before you to preserve you... it was not you that sent me hither, but God".

The Apostle Paul explains that such events are not merely stories but are "written for our learning that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4).

There are several things Christians should learn from the record of the lives of Jacob and Joseph:

- ◆ **God dealt with them individually to achieve His purpose;** and so there is no reason to doubt that He may elect to deal individually with any other person;
- ◆ **God blesses whom He will,** as exemplified by His choosing of Jacob above Esau. His purpose in doing so was to show that His "purpose according to election might stand", and hence it is written: "... I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth,

nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy" (Rom. 9:15-16)

- ◆ Such an understanding reminds the Christian that it is by God's grace that they rejoice in their calling and that it is not of their own doing (1 Cor. 1:26-27; 1 Pet. 2:9). However such an understanding does not relieve anyone whom God has called from the requirement to "work out their own salvation with fear and trembling" in order to make their calling and election sure (2 Pet. 1:10);
- ◆ It is not beyond God's ability to exercise individual watch care over all whom He has called, as He did in the lives of Jacob and Joseph, even though they did not realise it;
- ◆ The Christian may have full confidence that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28), in exactly the same way that all things worked together for good for Jacob and Joseph and for the whole nation of Israel;
- ◆ The lives of Jacob and Joseph testify that God's ways are higher than Man's ways as Paul declares: "*O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?" (Rom. 11:33-34).*

THE PRESENT FINANCIAL SPASM

"All financiers must ultimately agree that the present financial spasm was directly caused by selfishness on the part of the bankers, etc., and nearly all the wealthy are either directly or indirectly bankers or bank directors. Shrewd bankers realize that their business prospers in proportion as the volume of money currency is small in comparison to the amount of business.

Because they make their money on interest and discounts, and it is to their advantage to have the public short of money and needing to borrow. The scarcer money can be made without injuring prosperity and promoting a panic the greater will be the demands made upon them by borrowers, and the greater their profits."

WatchTower; January 1, 1908

Entered into Rest
Harry Marlor
17/7/25 - 17/10/08

On arrival in Australia in 1951 from Cheshire, England, Harry and his wife Anne settled in South Australia. They attended the Adelaide Class until they moved to Queensland in 1989, where they attended the Brisbane class. Sister Anne and her family are in our prayers.

LOVE IS NOT EASILY PROVOKED

“Charity... is not easily provoked” (1 Cor. 13:4-5 KJV), is a clause that might be interpreted to mean that, in extreme circumstances, it is acceptable for a Christian to be provoked; the proviso being that it not be “easily”. Such an interpretation may be considered to be consistent with Romans 12:18: “If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men”; in that both verses acknowledge that there are limits to the tolerance of human beings and consequently, in extreme circumstances, a Christian is excused if they succumb to the weaknesses of the flesh.

However there is some doubt whether the word “easily” in 1 Corinthians 13:5 is authentic: the New King James Version, Revised Version, American Standard Version and Wilson’s “Emphatic Diaglott” all omit it and translate the clause: “Love... is not provoked...” To those translations may be added the marginal comment in the Companion Bible: “There is no word for ‘easily’. The statement is absolute.” W. E. Vine in his *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* states that “the word ‘easily’ in A.V. [Authorised Version] represents no word in the original”. If the word “easily” is omitted from 1 Corinthians 13:5 the verse does not give any allowance for the weakness of the flesh but declares that love does not allow anyone to be provoked under any circumstances: the clause imposes the same standard as Jesus exemplified: “Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously” (1 Pet. 2:23).

Provoked

There are several Greek words in the New Testament that convey different aspects of provocation, however they will not be examined here because to do so would be likely to obscure the theme of 1 Corinthians 13:5— that the Christian who is cultivating the fruits of the spirit is not to yield to provocation.

However it is worthy of mention that the context of each passage in which provocation is mentioned determines the sense in which it is to be interpreted. Acts 17:16 reads: “Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was

stirred [“provoked”] in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry”. Paul’s provocation was not one of anger but one of love: he was agitated because he saw the futility of their ways and his love for them stirred him to “dispute” with the Jews in the synagogue: Paul’s motivation was wholly virtuous.

Provoking to good works

Hebrews 10:24 reads: “consider one another, to provoke unto love and good works”. The thought here is to incite to good works, to call forth love in others, to exert an influence favourable to righteousness and is thus to be encouraged; whereas the thought in 1 Corinthians 13:5 is that of not being roused to anger as inferred in both the New International Version (“... is not easily angered”), and the Emphatic Diaglott (“is not provoked to anger”).

Likewise Ephesians 4:31-32 reads: “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you”. The absence of bitterness, anger and evil speaking, and the cultivation of tenderness, will not allow one to provoke another.

Antidotes

One antidote that assists the Christian to suppress the temptation to be provoked when they are unjustly criticised is to remember that the whole world is suffering the blight of sin, and therefore all accusers are to be pitied rather than opposed—it must be remembered to always leave all things to God: “Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God” (1 Cor. 4:5).

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM
ABN 23 734 654 922 Reg. No. 0022186J

Published by the Berean Bible Institute, Inc.
P.O. Box 402 Rosanna, Victoria, Australia, 3084
www.proclaimingchristskingdom.org.au

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