
TAF TIMES

Theme Verse 2013 : But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen (2 Pet 3:18)

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A - Word from the President

God's Word is a source of joy and peace! It provides inspiration and instruction for living. When we read, study, and meditate on the words and messages of the Bible, we find a joy like no possession or relationship can give and a peace deeper than anything the world has to offer.

When you are down, try reading the Psalms. When you need direction, try looking through the Proverbs. When you need inspiration, try looking at the examples of great men and women whose faith have made them heroes of the Bible. And when you need peace and joy, focus on the many verses and passages in the Bible that give assurance of God's love and compassion for those who cry out to Him. We should make His Word a priority in our lives.

President of TAF

Bro Eric Toh

B – Word of Encouragement

Serving our Lord Jesus Christ (Col 3:23-24)

A missionary father decided to return home after having served in the mission field for more than 40 years. Upon reaching shores, the Captain of the ship made an announcement that a Celebrity had just returned home and no one could leave the ship until the Celebrity had ended her home coming tea reception party at the ferry terminal. Throngs of people flocked to the ferry terminal to receive the Celebrity. The son of the missionary became impatient and complaint to his father saying “This isn’t fair!! You’ve been in the mission field for more than 40 years and had almost lost your life on many occasions, now that you are coming home after sacrificing your entire life to serve God, no one gives you any reception at the ferry terminal, why should this Celebrity who had never been to any mission field be given a tea party reception with throngs of people to receive her?” The missionary father turned to his son and said “Son, you got it all wrong, this is not my home, I’m not home yet, my home is in Heaven, not here on earth, Praise the Lord !!”. How many of us today are like the son of the missionary father when we hear of worldly people receiving earthly rewards, we are compelled to compare or question if our service for God had been in vain or gone unnoticed. Should we not learn from the missionary father who neither complaint nor was discouraged but only gave God praise and glory for his goodness and grace and for granting him the honor of serving his Lord and master Jesus Christ.

As we continue to serve in the ministries where our heavenly Father has placed us, let us not compare or feel discouraged by comparing



ourselves with the world but rather remember that God is faithful to remember us and that this world is not our home, we are only pilgrims on a journey to our heavenly City “This is not my home, I’m not home yet, my home is in Heaven, not here on earth, Praise the Lord!!” (Heb 12:1, Luke 6:23, Col 3:23-24).

May the Lord help us to persevere as we continue to serve and to live for Him each day.

By Editor

Elijah At The Brook Cherith (1 King 17:2-6)

Abstract from the book Prophets of fire and Water

By Rev Timothy Tow

1 Kings 17:2-6 And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that *is* before Jordan. And it shall be, *that* thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. So he went and did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that *is* before Jordan. And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook.

Elijah was a man powerfully motivated by the Word of God. The Word of the Lord came to Elijah instructing him to hide by the Brook Cherith. This command of God on the surface seems contrary to reason. Why should he hide, and from whom should he hide? God is sovereign and Ahab is really subject to God. Elijah may also have reasoned that if he had to hide and wait, he would have preferred doing so in the mountains of Gilead. But Elijah “went and did according unto the Word of the Lord”.

God ordered Elijah to Cherith which was the only place for Elijah. It was God’s place for him.

How servants of the Lord need to realize that the place of ministry God gives is the right place for them even though they may think otherwise. I’m reminded of a restaurant where I once stopped enroute from Philadelphia to Florida. There was a sign on the wall which read “There is no place anywhere around this place like this place, so this be the place”.

There was only one place for Elijah at this time in his ministry. The place was near the brook Cherith, a brook God ordained to supply water to Elijah during a time of severe drought and for possibly a year or more. Any other place would have been the wrong place for Elijah. God also ordained the ravens to provide food for Elijah every morning and every evening. God surely ordained the circumstances and the steps that He ordered for his servant Elijah. God created the ravens and He created the water that flowed in the brook. God the creator designed the birds of the air and the fish in the sea into a marvelous navigational system. It was no problem for Him to reprogrammed the navigational system of the ravens and change their nature to supply food for Elijah. It would be most interesting to know where the ravens obtained the bread and the flesh which they brought each morning and each evening., and I’m sure right on time. I can assure you that it was neither moldy bread nor old meat. I believe Elijah received delicious nourishing dark whole grain bread that met the needs of his body. I believe the same could be said of the flesh which was prepared just right for his need.

God also ordained the length of time Elijah would be in this location beside the brook Cherith. This was the place of protection and provision and the only place of protection and provision for Elijah. He learned this and many lessons from the Lord during his stay at Cherith. Elijah was public enemy number one and surely was marked for death by Ahab.



May we learn to trust and obey the Word of God like the prophet Elijah and be at the place where God wants us to be.

C - Testimony

By Bro Martin Cheong

How I have profited and been edified by the course on NT Introduction.

I thank God for the opportunity to attend the above course on New Testament Introduction in 2011. It has given me a bird's eye view of the New Testament and it has also given me a better and deeper insight of it. Some of areas where I have profited and been edified from it are:-

- 1) **How the New Testament came into existence.** I learnt that God used human writers to pen His inspired words in the original languages of Hebrews, Aramaic in the Old Testament and Greek in the New Testament. These men were specially chosen by God and perfectly guided by the Holy Spirit so that it is without errors. Since it is inspired by God, the Bible is infallible, inerrant and authoritative. I can totally rely on it and can count on it as the only basis for my faith and practice. Because the Bible is inspired and fully preserved by God, I can be fully convinced and committed to it in spite of the various attack on in recent times by the modernists, liberals and the neo-evangelists.
- 2) **Is the New Testament just 27 books or are there more than that as propounded by some authors?** Can books like Acts of Paul; Epistle of Barnabas; Acts of Andrew etc... be part of God's words? Apparently not as the contents do not fit in the nature of divinely inspired writ. They are filled with fairy-tale-like and even blasphemous stories of Christ. I am assured that God in His providential care and wisdom has caused a gathering of

His own at a meeting called the Council of Carthage in 397AD chaired by Augustine to identify only 27 books as divinely inspired books which serves as the only basis for faith and practice in the life of the church. The 27 books are the New Testament canon. This assurance will help me to withstand the fiery darts of the devil as he attacks me today in the form of a novel called The Da Vinci Code and other similar materials. I will response to this attack by putting on the armour of God as instructed in Ephesians 6:11-18 and by praying for Holy Spirit guidance in all truth.(John 16:13)

The reading of 'Bird's eye view of the bible' also gave me a better understanding when I read the NT books from a worm's eye view. And the arrangement of the New Testament has a pattern and a purpose- to teach God's people a spiritual truth that He is a God of order and He is in charge over everything!

Historical books

- 1) Gospels of Matthew, Mark Luke & John
- 2) Acts of the Apostles

Doctrinal books

- 1) Pauline Epistles
 - a) Soteriological epistles: Romans; Galatians; Hebrews
 - b) Ecclesiological epistles: 1 & 2 Corinthians
 - c) Eschatological Epistles: 1 & 2 Thessalonians
 - d) Pastoral Epistles: 1 & 2 Timothy; Titus
 - e) Prison epistles: Ephesians; Philippians; Colossians; Philemon
- 2) Jacobian Epistle:

There were 2 things I learned in James epistle from the course. The question of

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who was the author of this epistle and the apparent contradictions between this epistle and Romans on faith.

There were 3 possibilities of which James wrote the epistle. Is it James the son of Zebedee or James the son of Alphaeus or James the Lord's brother. I thank God for the reasons propounded by the lecturer that the likely writer is James the son of Alphaeus. The reasoning given by him sounds very reasonable to me and I have profited much by it.

In the study of the book of James during the course, one of the things that I profited from was the question of whether salvation is by faith or by works. In James Chapter 2:14-26, the author argued that faith without works is dead. On the other hand, in Romans it is clearly stated by Paul that salvation is by faith. So the question that is asked is 'Is salvation by works or by faith?' Is there a contradiction in God's Word? I thank God for the clear explanation given by the lecturer that there is no contradiction. Let God be true and every man a liar... The verses in the two books complement one another. In Romans, the question is 'What saves?' Only faith saves and it is address to the unbelievers! In James 2:23 it states that we are saved by faith too. But it venture further to ask to question 'What kind of faith saves?' Here he is writing to the Jewish believers. He is emphasizing that genuine faith is a kind of faith that works! It will produce good works. Not the kind of faith that gives lip service only. In James 2:21-22, we see that Abraham was already a believer by his faith and he prove it by his work!

3) Petrine Epistle

4) Judean epistle

5) Johannine epistles

Another thing I profited from in the course is the question of the 'Johannine Comma' The question is asked if there is a clear biblical proof text that exist in the Bible for the doctrine of the Trinity. Yes, there is and the answer is found in 1 John 5:7-8. Of course there are other verses to support the Holy

Trinity but 1 John: 7-8 is the clearest and best proof!! Unfortunately, these 2 verses have been omitted in many modern bibles like the NIV, RSV and the New ASB. Modernists argued these verses are not found in any Greek manuscript or NT translation prior to the 16th century and on account of this they argued that the verses are spurious. But this is not true as the text has been found in several extant pre 16th century manuscripts. I thank God for the many theologians whose research supports 1 John 5:7-8 in the KJV and I can have full confidence in the KJV in using these text to support the Holy Trinity. Praise God!

6) Revelation

In a brief exploration of the book of Revelation which is a translation of the Greek word - Apocalypse which speaks of an uncovering or unveiling of things to come, we see how God deals with the sinners and unbelievers and how he vindicate the believers. I am much edified by this comforting understanding that we believers shall escape the wrath that is to come!!!

In the few verses from revelation, we see that God will pour down his wrath on sinners and unbelievers.

Revelation 6:17, "For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

Revelation 11:18 And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

Revelation 16:1, "And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth."

But praise God that God has given us this assurance from his Word that we will escape it!

1 Thessalonians 5:9, "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."



The brief study of NT theology from the reformed perspective helps me to better understand the differences between it and the postmodern and ecumenical worldview. It helps me to defend the forever Christian faith and survive the onslaught of open theism and neo deism.

The Jewish calendar and the Jewish day gives me a better understanding of the time Peter denied Christ. The Jewish day was from sunset to sunset, in 8 equal parts. The first watch is from sunset to 9pm. The second watch is from 9pm to midnight. The third watch is from midnight to 3am and the fourth watch is from 3am to sunrise. The first hour is from sunrise to 9am. The third hour is from 9am to noon. The sixth hour is from noon to 3pm and the ninth hour is from 3pm to sunset.

According to the verses below, it is likely that Peter denied Christ between 3 am and 6 am.

Mark 13:35, "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning:"

Mark 14:68, "But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew."

Mark 14:30, "And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice."

Luke 22:59, "And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him: for he is a Galilaean."

We have this assurance from Holy Scripture that the Holy Spirit will help us to understand!!!

John 16:12-16, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall

receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you. A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father."

John 14:25-26, "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

D - Book review

The Asian Awakening

By Sister May Ling

Chapter 1 - Man Sent from God

Dr John Sung the man that was sent from God, he came and bears witness for the Lord. He started his education in America and returned to China at the age of 27. He was a brilliant man and he studied in Ohio, graduating with the Ph.D. in Chemistry, with many awards. Dr John Sung's conversion happened on February 10, 1927 when he came to a point that he no longer has the desire to live. But he persevered to pray and confess his sins. When the clock struck twelve midnight, there was overwhelmed by a vision of the crucified Christ standing before him. In a compassionate voice the Lord comforted him " My son, your sins are forgiven! Your name is now changed to John." That same night he received a great commission to go into the world to be His end time witness, preaching the word of God and saving souls for Him. Dr John Sung was so excited and preached on the " You are the of the devil, you made me lose my faith !", he was send to lunatic asylum where he was confined for 193 days. During the days in the mental hospital, he read the Bible day and night forty



times. The Bible is an inspired Word of God and is written by the Spirit of God. In his early ministry, the Lord has revealed to Dr John Sung that he was granted fifteen years to serve Him. His preaching at Nanchang was a breakthrough of the ministry, he realized that Chinese Church need a thorough repentance and new birth, he boldly lashed out the sins of the people, naming them one by one. And he preached the cure to all their sins is the cleaning of the precious blood of Christ and Holy Spirit that cause them to be born again.

Chapter 2 – John Sung’s Doctrinal Emphasis and Methods

“All things worked together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose “ (Romans 8 : 28). God’s plan was perfect for Dr John Sung by sending him to Union Seminary went through the bitterness of liberal theology and found the sweetness of the grace and truth of the living Saviour. He emphasized the reading of God’s and relies in the Holy Spirit to teach him and much time was spent in prayer and meditation. He read eleven chapters have the Bible everyday and thirteen on the Lord’s Day. Dr John Sung knew the Old Testament as well as the New Testament, his sermon ranged from every book of the Bible. He expounded in the book of Daniel or Revelation to remind of Christ’s coming and emphasized of the holiness of God by quoting the Ten Commandments and list down the sin by their families under each Commandment. He spoke on wages of sin is death, Heaven and Hell and acting out the Rich Man and Lazarus. When he first spoke against the Government of bowing three times to the portrait of Sun Yat Sen, Father of the Chinese Republic. He cited that was breaking the Second Commandment and is no different from ancestor worship. As a result, John Sung

was arrested but God delivered him. And Dr John Sung the Chinese preacher is the one who speaks the language so that the congregation both old and young and the educated could understand . Dr John Sung has devoted his life totally to His Saviour and pressing on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Phil 3:12-14).

Chapter 3 – John Sung Contrasted With Today’s Evangelists

The Lord has specially prepared and anointed Dr John Sung with divine power was poured upon him. Through Dr John Sung’s evangelist’s preaching, churches has multiply by scores and hundred into thousands and ten thousands. In 1949, several hundred thousands of Protestants were born again and filled with the Spirit under his hand. John Sung’s messages were filled with evangelism, revivalism and his messages were directed to the hardened church members and converting believers from heathen background. Dr John Sung mobilize the whole church to action for the Gospel was to organize Preaching Bands. The preaching band would bring unbelievers to the Sunday congregation and those who went through the revival were became lively stones and no more dead wood in the church.

Chapter 4 – The Spirit of John Sung in the Bible-Presbyterian Church Movement in Southeast Asia Today.

During the 1950, there was about thirty adult members with their children were transferred from mother church and half a dozen were living today and were among the hundreds who consecrated their lives to the Lord during John Sung’s ministry. The spirit of evangelism have resulted more than forty congregations of BP Churches planted in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia. Thailand, Philippines, India, Australia and Burma. The Asian Awakening has moved the hearts of many nominal Christians to



repentance and the new birth, which pressed towards a holy life. The evangelist challenged his hearers to lived according to the standard of God's Holy laws given in the Ten Commandments, members were kept awake for Christ's return and were encouraged to be a witness for Christ.

Chapter 5 – Following Christ in the Step of St. Peter

When we decided to follow Jesus, we cannot follow Him based on our own terms. The follower cannot go before the one who is leading him. Like an Olympic participant, he must be coached, be given instruction and knows the terms and much of losing oneself. The Lord Jesus Christ said “ If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.” Are you willing to follow the Lord, on His terms, paying the price of your life ? We must ask the Lord for strength and only by the love and devotion we are able to please Him. God honors those

who honor Him. Whether the task is big or small, we have to do it for the Lord. Jesus wanted Peter to re-consecrate himself, may we pray and ask God to help us to consecrate our life anew to Him just like Dr John Sung had done.

Chapter 6 – I Remember John Sung

Dr John Sung has been a great teacher, he taught him to preach from the Bible, to find the key word in each Bible book, and the key to each chapter and connect them together. He ahs also taught to explain one of part of the Bible with other parts of the Bible. He would use illustration in his sermons with diagrams and reinforced the main purpose of the sermon through choruses. Dr John Sung has one-track mind, his only purpose is to obey God and to fulfill the life-plan Jesus had revealed to him. God has done a marvelous work, entrusting great responsibility of reviving a Chinese

church. There were many who have appreciated his ministry including his wife. Later we read Dr John Sung's beloved son died due to serious illness, he was prayed for healing but he died so that typifies sufferings and agony and ministry of God in this world. In 1942, Dr John Sung was down with cancer and died, but his zeal and aspire leaders around the world to follow his footsteps.

Chapter 7 – The Life and Work of Rev Ting Li Mei

During the reign of the Governor of Shantung Province, there was great persecution Rev Ting Li Mei was arrested and tortured in the prison with five times forty stripes on his bareback. The Lord did not forsake him, through the corporate prayers of Dr Hayes with Yuan Shih-Kai, he was honorably released, just like Paul and Silas by the Philippians magistrates (Acts 16 : 38-39). The situation in Nanking was very threatening, but God's comforting words from Deut 33 : 27 “The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms, and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them.” “If God be for us, who can be against us ?” (Rom 8:31). Rev Ting has gone through fire and great suffering, emerged a flaming soul for his Lord. He traveled to every province and every town himself to spread the gospel, passed by Swatow in Kwangtung and has brought salvation and revival to the Tow Clan.

The book on Asian Awakening have shown great testimonies of Dr John Sung and Rev Ting, their faithfulness for Christ and their evangelist spirits have brought great revival to China and South East Asia countries. They are truly sent by God to do His work and God was their refuge despite of all trials, difficulties and sufferings. May we learn precious lessons from our great leaders and carry on the great commission that were pioneered by them.



E - Reflection

We thank God for a blessed New Year 2013. In year 2012, the TAF covered a wide range of messages which provided members plenty of spiritual feasting from the preaching of God's Word from different speakers. We also had ample Christian fellowship and other activities during TAF meetings. This year, our focus will be based on the theme verse taken from 2 Peter 3:18. We pray that the TAF will grow to greater heights and to seek after the knowledge of Christ and not after earthly pleasures or to pursue after worldly treasures. Below is an abstract from the book entitled: Lessons from the University of LIFE by our late Rev Timothy Tow on the study of the Book of Ecclesiastes. May the meditation of this passage bring joy and comfort to all in TAF.

All the energy Solomon spends in the study of Psychology, Arts, Science, etc, under the sun is vanity. If done in God's will above the sun it is acceptable of Him and meaningful.

Ecclesiastes 2:21-26 For there is a man whose labour *is* in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity; yet to a man that hath not laboured therein shall he leave it *for* his portion. This also *is* vanity and a great evil. For what hath man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the sun? For all his days *are* sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity. *There is* nothing better for a man, *than* that he should eat and drink, and *that* he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw, that it *was* from the hand of God. For who can eat, or who else can hasten *hereunto*, more than I? For *God* giveth to a man that *is* good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to *him that is* good before God. This also *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

Here is a man who has wisely, intelligently and sanely done a good job to leave it to an unknown who will take it over. This is vanity and a great loss. What does a man gain from all he has worked for with much vexation of heart "under the sun?" All the days and night that he spent in sorrow and grief come to nothing!

I conclude: There is nothing better for a man than that he should enjoy himself in food and drink and for his soul to enjoy good in his work and given by God. Who can excel me in what I've just said? To a man good in God's sight He gives wisdom and knowledge and joy, but the sinner, He adds travail only to be heaped up as he deserves in God's sight. This is also vanity and vexation of spirit. By the way of application we may stray into Solomon's path of spending unfruitful time in the pursuit of pleasure or even some useful hobby, or pursuing a higher degree for vain glory "under the sun". We must know we are only stewards of all that we receive from God, whether it be time or talent. There are those bent their energies to serve God in their younger days, who backslide in their old age, like Solomon. Coming to church is no more cheer but chore. Giving to the Lord's House in order that God's work might go unhindered, dwindle from tithes to tit-bits. But King Solomon repented.

So can we, as we grow older the nearer we come to facing God. Will He say "well done" to us, or will He turn His face from us? Let us, whether young or old, return to giving our time, talents and energy to serve Him in any way we can. Then we live a life "above the sun" to His glory. Amen.

By Rev Timothy Tow

May God help us to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

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