

February 18, 2008

SERMONS FOR SUNDAY

February 24, 2008

a.m. *"Three Crosses On Golgotha "*

Scripture: John 19:17-22

p.m. *"Prayers Of A Religious Man"*

Scripture: James 5:13-18

Memorials and Sacred Stones

Don Hatch

In the Old Testament sacredness was often attached to an act of divine power or a place of sacred activity. Such power and places were to bring remembrance the event and God's involvement in it. These events brought the worshiper into a favorable commemoration and devotion toward God. Often under the Old Testament the worshiper offered a sacrifice (Lev 2:2, 9; 16; 5:12; 24:7). The places were marked with a monolith, rock or stones. Such places became boundaries or crossroads which took on a sacred character. Jacob raised such a monolith to remember a covenant which he and Laban, his father-in-law, made concerning their being brethren (Gen 31:43-55). They erected it at Mizpah saying, "Jehovah watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another. If thou shalt afflict my daughters, and if thou shalt take wives besides my daughters, no man is with us, to see, God is witness betwixt me and thee". The heap or pillar was set between them as a witness that neither would pass over the boundary line to do harm. With further solemnity they said, "...the God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us. And Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac. And Jacob offered a sacrifice in the mountain, and called his brethren to eat bread: and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mountain. And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his sons and daughters, and blessed them: and Laban departed". Jacob saw a vision of a ladder reaching to heaven and the angels of Jehovah ascending and descending and "behold Jehovah stood above it, and said, I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north, and to the south; in thee and in they seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen 28:10-17). Jacob took the stone from under his head setting up a pillar in memorial of this event. He vowed saying, "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, and Jehovah will be my God, then this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house: and all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee" (Gen 28;18-22).

When Rachel died Israel raised a stone upon her grave and called it "Rachel's Stone" (Gen 35:20). This venerated the life and love of this great woman. Joshua raised stones as an altar in the Jordon River and beyond it near Jericho (Josh 3). He set up twelve stones in Gilgal according to the tribes of Israel (Josh 4). Gideon offered a sacrifice of a kid to Jehovah, unleavened bread and meal with a broth from a pot upon a rock near an oak tree (Judges 6). Often Israel had places of sacredness where memorial pillars were employed to remind them. They never erected any type of statue or image of a person, as an Asherah. Yet there was clear evidence of deity being honored by these memorials. Twelve pillars at Sinai commemorated the covenant (Ex 24:4). Moses commanded a monolith at Mt. Ebal with the words of the law incised

in the plaster overlay (Deut 27:2). Saul built a monument of victory and the great stone altar served as a memorial (1 Sam 15:12, 33). Absalom raised a pillar to memorialize himself (2 Sam 18:18). Many honored the dead with permanent and temporary monoliths (1 Macc 12:7). Thus the memorial of graves became a custom. Jehu destroyed the prohibited pillars to Baal (Deut 16:22; 2 Kg 10:26, 27). The cases of sacred stones is seen in many Bible passages (Josh 15:6; 18:17; 24:26, 27; 1 Sam 20:19; 2 Sam 20:8).

The New Testament speaks of memorials as well. Christ was in Bethany at the home of Simon, the leper, reclining at a table and there came a woman with a sealed alabaster cruse (Mk 14:3-9; 16:3-; Lk 7:37-39; Matt 26:6-13; Jn 12:1-8). This semitransparent vessel was so designed that the neck of it had to be broken before the contents could be dispensed. This ointment left no oily stain but evaporated into the loveliest of odors like a costly perfume. It was called "nard" or "spikenard", taken from a variety of the Valerian family, of which roots furnished a fragrant essence. Thus, part of the plant had to die to furnish this fragrance. John alone gives the woman's name, Mary the sister of Martha (Jn 12:3). Of interest, the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were written many years after the death of Christ and special events became a unique part of biblical history. The disciples were indignant over what they considered a wasteful use of this nard. Judas heads the list of those who complained. They wanted it to be given to the poor and criticized Mary's labor of love. Jesus stopped them by placing two facts before them. They always had the poor with them and He was going to die. Yet Jesus is not thinking of these only. He wants them to know that she had done all she could do. She had undertaken in advance the preparation for His death and burial. Thus throughout the generations of those who read the Bible her deed would be as a memorial. It does not surprise Bible readers today that Mary had her mind on sacred things. The disciples were more engaged in the temporal matters. In this providential manner she had intuitively undertook to bless the Lord in such a unique manner. Jesus announced that wherever the Gospel was preached her name would be spoken of as a memorial of one woman's love for the Son of God (Mk 14:9; Mat 26:13).

FAMILY CARE

A Message From Our Shepherds

The following are some excerpts from Oleg Yakimenko's January report. Please read the full report on the Mission Board in the front foyer.

Dear brothers and sisters at Belt Line,

Greetings in Jesus Christ from the Neva church of Christ in St. Petersburg, Russia!

Let me share with you some of the events from the Neva life and ministry in January. Please rejoice with us about Vasilina who was immersed in Christ on January 5! Dima and I had studied with her for about two months. I was very happy to see Dima's part in leading Vasilina to Christ. As you know, Dima serves as church building manager in Neva.

In church on Sunday, end of December, I made an announcement about going to a children house early January. Our brothers and sisters brought many presents for the kids there, which I took to the house. A few of our members accompanied me. There we had a good talk with the director of the house and with some of the children. The kids were so happy to spend time with us (it seemed they even were happier to talk with us, than to receive gifts... However, they were

thrilled to get the gifts too!). Some of our members decided to come and spend time with the children (one of these members was Vasilina!).

NEVA	6Jan08	13Jan08	20Jan08	27Jan08
Members	53	60	67	71
Visitors	11	9	4	17
Children	11	12	15	17
TOTAL	75	81	86	106

Natasha and I are doing well. Our boys are ok too. The economic changes in Russia produce a big financial challenge to my family these days. Please pray about it. And I want to ask for your prayers on behalf of my mother Ludmila who was hospitalized the other day with some stomach problems. .

Dear Beltline brothers and sisters, thank you for your work of love and for your evangelistic spirit! Thank you so much for your financial and prayerful support of the Lord's work in Russia! You are in our prayers!

In Christ,
Oleg & Natasha Yakimenko

We also have recent reports posted in the foyer from: Ian & Mabel McPherson and Glen & Kuin Tattersall, Australia; Ted Lingren, Cambodia; Roland & Rose Mohsen, France; Charlie & Mary DiPalma and Dennis & Beth Johnson, India; Gary Workman, Russia and Terry & Pam Laurence, Bear Valley Bible Institute of Denver.

The Belt Line congregation is being blessed as we are actively pursuing Matthew 28:19-20.

Have a wonderful week in the Lord.

~Richard L. Renfro

SOWING THE SEED OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IN 2008

are surprised to know that God does not accept "just any kind of worship". God's standards are clearly set forth in the Scriptures.

Man must seek to fulfill God's spiritual and moral excellence. Spiritual worship is under specified conditions which are biblically defined, communicating the awe we hold for God. Jesus said, "God is spirit and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and truth" (John 4:34).

To worship in "spirit" means to have one's heart, soul and mind engaged without pretention, giving God the glory. Focusing on God in a spiritually, humble-minded earnest worship, seeking to do His will is more meaningful than any clever scheme of man.

To worship in "truth" means to worship by being in accord with recorded Scriptures for in them one finds eternal life (John 5:39).

Worship which excites and is sincere, but is not in keeping with the Scriptures is unacceptable to God. Worship which meets the Bible's criteria for performance but lacks sincerity fails to be acceptable to God. Both elements must be presented to God for worship to be acceptable. This is why we invite you to worship with us Sunday where spirit and truth are prerequisites.

~Don Hatch; article to appear in the February 22, 2008 issue of the Dallas Morning News

GREETER ASSIGNMENTS

Sunday, February 24, 2008

Front foyer: Bob & Gwen Bingham; Max Melton

Back foyer: JC & Dessie Ross

Sunday, February 24, 2008

Front foyer: Richard & Carolyn Renfro; Nancy Pond, Roberta Price

Back foyer: Robert & Cathy Taylor

Family News:

MISSION PRINTING

Mission Printing will meet **Sunday** at 4:00 p.m. in the Jr. Auditorium. We need more volunteers; please see Dorris Walker for more information.

MEN'S' GATHERING/DEVOTIONAL

The **Monday morning** gathering will meet at 6:00 a.m. in the Annex.

SINGING SESSION

The **Sunday afternoon** singing session will meet in room #116 at 5:15 p.m.

LADIES

Ladies' Bible Class will meet **Tuesday, February 26th** at 9:30 a.m. in the Annex.

39ers

Be sure to sign up **by next Sunday** for Breakfast With The Teens on **Saturday, March 8th** at 8 a.m. in the Annex.

FAMILY BIBLE SCHOOL

As mentioned earlier, Family Bible School will take place **June 16-18** and the theme this year will be on Creation. Begin thinking about how you'd like to be involved.

THANK YOU

Thank you for the cards, phone calls & food, but most of all thank you for the prayers & love.
Jerry Grantham

Thank you for the cards & calls during our illnesses the last couple of months; we appreciate all of your caring. AC & Maxine Prude

Dear Ladies' Bible Class, thank you so much for allowing me to attend your luncheon & share my opportunities of volunteering with you. Also, thank you for the gift of birds. You are a wonderful group & great support for each other. God bless you all, Martha Forbes

DIRECTORY CHANGES

Rob & Michelle Farmer: 2112 Burnside Dr.; Ft. Worth, 76177.

Kenica Parish also lives at 8604 Valley Ranch Pkwy. #2009; 75063.

SENER PARK

There's an opportunity for community outreach on **March 1st** at Senter Park. An effort will be made to present to Irving the educational opportunities offered by Belt Line Road. If you're interested & can work, please see Brother Don. The time: 8:30am-3:30pm.

FAREWELL TO THE DONLEY'S

Join us after evening worship this Sunday, **February 24th** in the Annex for a farewell reception for Neil & Nancy.

PRAYER CONCERNS

√**Debra Alonzo** is in Baylor/Irving, room #424.

√**Erma Lee Baker** had tests run last week.

√**Bob Bradley** did not have surgery; he'll be treated with medication.

√**BC Fowler** is in Baylor/Irving, ICU #10.

√**Grady Fowler** has been ill at home.

√**Jean Haddock** is in Las Colinas Medical, ICU #1 following bypass surgery. No visitors for now please.

√**Georgia Meyer** is not doing well.

√**Frances Tipton** is scheduled for knee therapy.

√**Emma Lee Martin** (Elizabeth Garrison's sister) was discharged from the hospital on Friday.

√**Bill Montgomery** (Carolyn's husband) was scheduled to go home on Friday.

√**Bill Roses** (Polly's husband) has been diagnosed with cancer & will need another surgery soon.

Continue to remember those who are recuperating or suffering with long-term illnesses, including: Fauna Garrett, Don & Judy Hancock, Frances LaFerney, Garldean Latham, Thomas West, Bran Anderson (Bill Paschall's friend), Paul Batot (Mike's dad), Shirley Bryant (James Gilliam's sister), Vern Daniel (Janice's son) Frank Garrett (Fauna's husband), Elizabeth Oliver (Becky Henry's sister), Nell Rogers (Carol Swinney's sister), Nita Spencer (the Webb's niece), Chelsea Sutton (the Garrison's granddaughter), Lewis Tomlinson (Nelda Bell Newton's son), Larry Toye, & our shut-ins.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Be sure and mark your calendar -

- Feb 26 - Ladies' Bible Class at 9:30 a.m. in the Annex
- Feb 24 – Farewell to the Donley's in the Annex after p.m. worship
- Mar 1 – Community Fest at Senter Park; 8:30 – 3:30
- Mar 8 – 39er's breakfast with the Teens in the Annex at 9 a.m.
- June 15 – Family Bible School

NURSERY ATTENDANTS

Sunday morning:

- Shellie Pearce

Sunday evening:

- Melissa Allen

LORD'S TABLE/MORNING

Front Table

- Grady Fowler
- Dorris Walker
- Glen Kelly
- John Mayer
- James Gilliam
- Stan Selby
- Ron Baker
- Robert Ruckman

Rear Table

- JC Ross
- Max Melton
- Jeremy Hardegree
- Robert Taylor
- Harold Head
- Bobby Bowen
- Roy Martin
- Derroll Allen

SUNDAY A.M. PRAYERS

- Richard Renfro
- Melvin Armstrong
- Darrell Allen

SCRIPTURE READING

- Mike Batot
John 19:17-22

SUNDAY P.M. PRAYERS

- Brandon Thomason
- Rob Farmer

LORD'S TABLE/EVENING

- Jerry Baker
- Bill Matthews

COMMUNION TO SHUT-INS

- Ty Harvey

FOR THE RECORD: WEEK ENDING ATTENDANCE & BUDGET

	<u>Last Week</u>	<u>This Week</u>	<u>YTD Avg.</u>	<u>Goal</u>
Sun. Class	90	90	97	125
A.M. Worship	154	160	168	210
P.M. Worship	80	85	92	112
Wed. Class	95	100	94	110
Ladies Bible Class	22	20	27	35
Contribution	\$5652	\$4975	\$5550	\$5400

MISSIONS

Gary Workman – Ukraine

21st Century Global Missions

Charlie & Mary DiPalma - India

Roland & Rose Mohsen – France

JB & Ivy Paul – Bitragunta, India

Glen & KuinTattersall – Australia

Ian McPherson – Tasmania Australia

Oleg & Natasha Yakimenko - Russia

Chennai Teacher Training School - India

Wil & Telanda Sadler – Military Missions

Christ's Haven Children's Home - Keller, TX

Foster's Home for Children – Stephenville, TX

Wayne Jackson – Christian Courier on the Web

Ted Lingren - Sisophon Bible School – Cambodia

Mission Printing Worldwide Literature Distribution

Terry Laurence – Bear Valley School of Preaching