

TEMPLE NEWS

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH

APRIL 2013



**Celebrating 25 years of ministry
as the ordained pastor of
Temple Baptist Church**

Thoughts from the Editor

Beware the Leaf-tailed Gecko

In the photo on the right, do you see a plant or an animal? If we could show this photo to you in colour, you would see that all the objects in focus in the foreground of the photo look the same: they are the drab brown of a dried-up leaf in the fall.

And yet, those are not all leaves. The curved “object” near the top is actually a living creature: the Satanic Leaf-tailed Gecko (or *Uroplatus phantasticus*), to be precise. It is a gecko indigenous to Madagascar and found nowhere else.

Everything about this gecko’s physical structure and appearance lends itself to camouflage, deception and stealth. Not only does its colour and leaf-like shape allow it to blend in with its surroundings so that it can move through trees undetected, but it doesn’t have eyelids. A transparent covering over its eyes allows it to keep its eyes open at all times.

This gecko can drop its tail in order to distract and confuse a predator. As well, when it opens its jaws, it frightens other creatures with its bright red mouth.

Although the leaf-tailed gecko probably does not deserve the descriptor of “Satanic,” the word does serve to remind us of how deceptive, cunning and



dangerous the devil is. Satan does not announce his presence with obviously evil messages that immediately alert us to danger. He doesn’t label the temptations he sends our way as sin. If he did, we would immediately move away or call on the Lord to get rid of him.

Instead, he blends into the background of our lives, mimicking the things we value, creeping around us so that we’re lulled into a sense of safety, which then turns into complacency. Then, when we’re starting to doze off spiritually, he moves in for the kill.

But the devil is far more dangerous than a six-inch gecko. The Bible warns: *“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”* (1 Peter 5:8)

Ask God for discernment and for the spiritual eyes to detect the enemy’s schemes before it’s too late.

Ann-Margret Hovsepien

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News from Our Mission Fields

News from Armenia

By Lilit Mantashyan

March 6 — My dad (Artur) went to Dilijan, a village in Armenia, about three years ago. He met a group of students with their parents there and talked about God with them. Among the parents was a woman who invited my dad to her house so she could hear more. She called all her neighbours and there were about 15 to 20 people there when my dad visited. Then two years passed and my dad stopped going there because of some problems.

Now, we have a Bible Study and prayer meeting in Armenia every Friday. After the meeting, God reminded my dad about this woman. He called her right away and she was very surprised to receive his call because it was already about 11:30 p.m. My dad said: “You know, I have not called you for a long time, but you should know that God loves you all.” The woman told him that he called her at the right moment.

The next day when my dad went to see them, the woman confessed that the night before, when my dad called her, she was going to commit suicide, along with her daughter. She had lost her job (she was a doctor), her husband had left for Moscow and had not come back. Her son and son-in-law had also lost their jobs so she had to take care of her grandchildren and her other daughter as well. These are all the reasons she had decided to commit suicide.

When my dad talked all about the

results of committing a suicide, they realized that if they had done such a thing, they would have gone to hell after all. So they repented and said, “From now on, even if we don’t have bread to eat, we will never think about that thing.”

They were pleased to know that God really loves them. After that, my dad went there twice and helped them. They also received the Bibles My dad promised to take *God’s Workshop* next time he visits them.

March 22 — There is a woman who came to our church recently. She asked for prayer because she has cancer and her condition is already very bad.

On Wednesday, my dad and two other Christian brothers went to her home, where eight people were gathered.. My dad talked about God there. All eight people repented that day! Today we called the lady again. She had very painful aches and was crying as she knew she would die soon. She has two little children and a husband. We were very upset about her. Please pray for her.

March 25 — Some days ago, a man called Pastor Hovsepian from Armenia and the pastor gave the man our phone number. At last he called my dad on Saturday evening and came to our place on Sunday morning. It turns out that he has been attending a church called The Word of God. This man and my dad talked with each other from 12:00 to 5:00 p.m.!

The man did not have any conviction

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Check our Web site regularly for updates, as well as for helpful resources and archives of sermons and messages.

www.templebaptistmontreal.com

Vaya Con Dios!

The **Marquez** family is in the midst of a move to Toronto. **Efraim** has already taken the first step in beginning his new job there and his wife **Alejandra** and daughter **Isabel** will follow soon.

Please pray for the family as they go through this time of transition.

Two Date Changes

Please note that we have had to make two changes to our monthly schedule in April:

1. The Men's Fellowship will meet for breakfast on the *first* Saturday (April 6) instead of on the second. Please be sure to note this on your calendars and to notify any friends you normally invite to the breakfast.

2. The Married Couples' Fellowship is cancelling its April meeting. The couples will resume their monthly meetings on Saturday, May 25.

QABC Annual Meeting

The reason the Men's Fellowship had to be rescheduled is that Saturday, April 13, is when the Quebec Association of Baptist Churches is holding its annual general meeting and the Pastor, as well as a few deacons, will be attending.

This event is actually open to all church members and we encourage you to attend if you don't have another com-

mitment. Beginning with coffee and fellowship at 9:00 a.m. and ending around 12:30 p.m. with a free lunch, the program gives all our Association churches an opportunity to share about the exciting things happening in our churches.

The meeting will be held at Westmount Baptist Church (at the corner of Sherbrooke and Roslyn in Westmount). For more information, please speak with **Ann-Margret Hovsepian**.

Women's Retreat

Ladies, please mark your calendars: The annual Quebec Baptist Women fall retreat will be held October 18 to 20. If you start saving \$1 a day, you'll have enough to pay for your registration *and* have some cash for the silent auction! Details about the speaker and theme will be announced at a later date.

This Is Your Magazine!

We're always looking for fresh material and invite you to send us your testimony, a praise report, greetings, comments or questions, an inspirational thought based on something God recently taught you, etc. The more input we have from our readers, the richer the material in our monthly newsletter will be.

Don't worry about your writing skills. Our team will happily help you out with whatever you submit. You can e-mail us at templegoodnews@gmail.com.

*Happy
Birthday!*

Sonia Pehlivanian - April 7

Samuel Tchiavegatti - 7

Jessie Hovsepian - 13

Matt Wohler - 13

Tamar Dekirmenjian - 17

Pete Vavas - 28

If we've missed *your* birthday, please let us know when it is!

Celebrating 25 Years



Surprise!

January 2013 marked 25 years since the ordination of Pastor **Joseph Hovsepian** but we surprised him with a celebration of this milestone on March 17 during our monthly Praise Lunch.

The celebration included a short historical slideshow of Pastor Joseph's ministry, a video with greetings from 65 members and friends, written greetings by over a dozen members and friends, the presentation of a commemorative plaque and the special cake pictured above.

A Word of Thanks from the Pastor:

What a surprising day! I was ready to share a short devotional message at Praise Lunch when I was told to take a break and not worry about a message that day. Not knowing what was happening, I sat down and, for the next two hours, I heard letters read and video messages presented, with many words of praise about my service and ministry at Temple. All of this was a surprise because I had not even thought about my ordination 25 years ago until I was reminded about it.

Thank you all so much! Special thanks to Quentin and Sirirat Newhouse for putting together the video messages and to Ruth Hovsepian for the slideshow. Thanks also to Rita Assan and Greg Dekirmenjian

*for the thoughtful plaque and **Magy Libarian** for the lovely cake.*

Thank you all for your love and support. May God help us all continue serving Him until He calls us home.

A Sample of the Greetings:

I wish to communicate in the warmest possible way our thanksgiving and appreciation for Joseph and Jessie in all these years of service. They are models for a tentmaking ministry and I speak of them wherever I am in the world.

Paul Stevens (past TBC pastor)

I envy those under your leadership while I am in New Zealand. I think and pray for you all frequently. May our Lord bless you abundantly in many different ways in your very effective service for him.

Graeme Robertson

To me, Pastor Joseph is a true shepherd, a tireless servant of God—but on a more personal level: he's just so legit! That one characteristic above all the other positives is what I've always appreciated about him: his authenticity.

Christopher Alleyne (past member)

You're an example of a true Christian and you show us how to be one. Thank you for everything, for every teaching and for being a good leader/pastor.

Violy and Hortencia Velez

Despite all the challenges, you have fought the good fight and you are still in the race. May the Lord keep your faith and commitment strong and may He equip you fully to finish your course with joy!

Rita Pehlivanian

Reflections

A Quarter Century

By Pastor Joseph Hovsepian

I was 16 years old when my father said to me, “Son, I want to talk to you about an important subject.” So I thought he was going to speak to me about life and girls, but I was wrong. He said, “Son, I want you to be a pastor. I will get a second job so you can go to study and become a minister.” My quick response was, “No, father, I don’t want to become a minister. I want to become an electrician and radio repairman.” My father replied, “Well, then, I will pray for you.”

To make a very, very long story short, at the age of 17, I joined the Royal Greek Air Force and studied there and worked as a wireless engineer of aircraft on a special team that served the king’s plane. A few years later, in Canada I started a company (Radio Hovsep Inc.) and I still work there full time with my wife Hasmig (Jessie).

But that is only half of my life’s story. Because of my experience in Athens, Greece, as a counsellor at the evangelical youth camps, and my interest in evangelism and missions, the pastor at Temple Baptist Church asked me to teach an adult class. Eventually, after some difficulties the church went through, I was asked to fill in between pastors.

About 28 years ago, the church asked me to become the pastor. I accepted with one condition: I would not receive a salary. They agreed and I was inducted. Three years later, in 1988, I was ordained. Thus my father’s prayers and wishes were fulfilled.

From the beginning of my ministry, my wife (even though she never wanted

to marry a pastor) has been with me, serving with all her heart and talents. My wife has never regretted serving God wherever and however He wanted us to serve Him. Praise the Lord.

But no pastor or leader can do well and be fruitful without friends and other leaders who are eager to serve God and spread the Gospel to others. In our ministry, I have been blessed with such a group of brothers and sisters. Thank you and may God bless you and use you all in His service and for His glory.

Small Investment, Huge Dividend

By Brian Norton

While recently spending five days at the hospital for surgery and recovery, I had the occasion to witness many interesting things that go on in the hospital.

After my surgery, they introduced me to a plastic breathing apparatus to induce air into my lungs to prevent possible pneumonia. The problem was their timing; I was still heavily sedated and not attentive whatsoever.

After this brief training session, there was no mention of it and, consequently, it sat on my night table until I questioned why I was still receiving oxygen after four days. That is when I took charge and starting exercising my lungs and walking.

My small investment paid huge dividends as I was released within eight hours. Can you imagine how much money could have been saved or how my bed could have been freed up earlier for a new deserving patient?

The same applies to our spirituality.

Reflections

When we invest in our relationship with our Saviour, the dividends are huge. Why waste time? Start engaging yourself in the best investment you will ever know: a relationship with God. The dividends will be overwhelming!

The Baroness and the Houseboy

A Christian baroness, living in the highlands of Nairobi, Kenya, told of a young national who was employed as her houseboy. After three months, he asked the baroness to give him a letter of reference to a friendly sheik some miles away.

The baroness, not wishing the houseboy to leave just when he had learned the routine of the household, offered to increase his pay. The lad replied that he was not leaving for higher pay. Rather, he had decided he would become either a Christian or a Muslim.

This was why he had come to work for the baroness for three months. He had wished to see how Christians acted. Now he wanted to work for three months for the sheik to observe the ways of the Muslims. Then he would decide which way of life he would follow.

The baroness was stunned as she recalled her many blemishes in her dealings with the houseboy. She could only exclaim, "Why didn't you tell me at the beginning?"

Author unknown

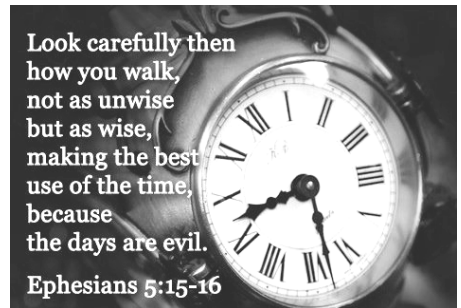
Seven-Days-A-Week Christianity

I was reading a few days ago of a young man who, in applying for a position, handed to his prospective employer a recommendation from a minister. The business man handed back the recommendation with the question, "Haven't you something from some one who knows you on week days?"

Too many look upon religion as something to put on once a week or as occasion demands, but to be taken off and laid on the shelf the rest of the time. The minister would not recognize some of us if he saw our acts or heard our words during the week.

The real genuine brand of Christianity is the kind that we use seven days in the week, and which works just as actively at home as at church or when in society. If we are not Christians at home, we are not Christians at all.

Author unknown



*Please join us for Bible study on
Sundays at 9:45 a.m. and
Tuesdays at 7:15 p.m.*

News from Our Mission Fields

...continued from page 3

about salvation. He claimed that no one can tell who is going to heaven or hell. My dad talked with him and explained God's Word to him.

My dad was curious about the fact that this man had been attending church for about a year but he still did not know how to be saved. He claimed that no one can say for sure if he or she is saved. He said that they only go to church to worship God.

My dad asked, "Then what is the reason to worship God?" He did not know what to answer. Then, with God's help, my dad helped him to understand what God wants from him. After a long time, he repented and accepted God into his life. At first when he came, my dad noticed there was some sadness in his eyes. But after accepting God, the man was shining.

There is a notable thing I would like

to emphasize. It turned out that this man lives close to our apartment building. But we had never met each other before! As I told you, he had been going to church for a year but only now, through Pastor Hovsepien, the man found us. This is great evidence that God works through us and our cooperation. "*How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways.*" (Romans 11:33) We also gave him a copy of *God's Workshop*.

God bless you for being a tool for evangelizing people in Armenia even though you live over there!

News from Bangladesh

By Shankar Shikdar

Excerpts from the February 2013

Ministry Update: On February 21 we celebrated International Mother Tongue Day at William Shakespeare Academy. The little children are aware of those who sacrificed their lives for the Bengali language. February 25-26, we travelled to the Chunati preschool for which children are in queue to attend.

Two new preschools have been launched, one in Khulna and one in Jessore. Please pray for the pastor leading the preschool in Jessore, a former Muslim. He has been attacked several times but he is very committed to children's ministry.

We are thankful to the Lord Jesus Christ and the members of Temple Baptist Church. We are here working for His Kingdom because of your active prayers.

We are also thankful for our mother. God has blessed us. Our mother has returned home and her physical condition is much better.

EVANGELISM

You don't have to be a pastor or missionary to share God's Word and His love with people who desperately need His touch.

We encourage you to join our tract distribution team on the fourth Sunday of each month as they give out tracts and New Testaments to hundreds in our city.

*The next outing is on April 28. Please speak with **Vahe Dzaghgouni, Shubroto Shikdar** or **Rita Assan** for more details.*

The Pastor's Page

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2. God Works Through Ordinary Events (vss.13-14)

Naaman went to Elisha's house with a great display of horses and chariots and gifts. Maybe he felt he could buy his healing. Elisha did not even come out to meet Naaman but sent his servant Gehazite to tell him what to do.

It was a simple task: *Go take a bath seven times in the Jordan.* Naaman got upset. He had expected some elaborate ritual and special religious task. He did not expect this. He would not do it, period. He left angry and sad.

Once again, his ordinary servants challenged him. They said: *"If the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you have done it? How much more, then, when he tells you, 'wash and be cleansed'?"* (verse 13)

So Naaman went down and dipped himself seven times. And his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy (verse 14). Washing seven times in the Jordan was not an extraordinary act, but God worked through this simple act.

Sometimes God is not in the earthquake or wind or thunder, but in a still, small voice. We expect God to act in extraordinary ways—a miraculous healing, the end of a war, etc. God does work in extraordinary ways and events, but He also works in not-so-spectacular ways. God may deal with us through ordinary events such as reading the Bible, prayer, worship or a conversation with friends.

Who gave this word of hope to Naaman? It was not a king, it was not a religious leader. It was an ordinary slave girl, and God worked through her.

Later, when Naaman became angry at the instruction to wash in the Jordan seven times, it was ordinary servants who went to him and persuaded him to try it. Not the military leaders. Not his trusted advisors. Not his family. No, it was his servants, the "nobody" people of his day. God used servants to speak to Naaman.

Sometimes, as we seek to know the will of God, we go to the great religious leaders to get answers. We listen to seminary professors and read famous religious writers. We expect God to work through great religious leaders. Yet God often works through ordinary people: mothers, fathers, children, friends, the mechanic at the garage or the sales clerk in the store.

God can and does work through anyone at anytime. Maybe God will choose to work through us, through you. Acts 4:13 says: *"When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus."*

3. God Works Through Ordinary Acts of Obedience (v.14)

Here is the heart of the matter: Would this rich, powerful, respected commander do what Elisha commanded him to do? Would he trust his words? To his credit, he humbled himself and went and washed in the Jordan. Through that ordinary act of obedience, he was healed.

Obedience is hard and we often rebel. But here is what can happen if we obey: In the simple acts of obedience, God can speak to us, renew us, change us, heal us. Will we have faith enough to trust Him?

Pastor Joseph Hovsepien



Ordinary People

2 Kings 5:1-14

People often want to see extraordinary and supernatural signs and wonders, either because the extraordinary excites and entertains them, or because they have doubts about their faith and beliefs. In the formation of clouds they might see a face and call it a supernatural revelation. Others may see a face in a slice of toast and claim that it is the face of Jesus. Others will claim that, by reading palms or tea leaves or by channelling the dead, they can give extraordinary messages.

Even many Christians and other religious people, when they think of God, they think of extraordinary things and supernatural acts such as the parting of the Red Sea, the burning bush that didn't burn up, someone walking on water or Jesus feeding thousands of people. Yes, these were amazing and extraordinary events; God is all powerful and amazing God and does amazing things. But the truth is that God uses ordinary things to do extraordinary things.

In 1 Corinthians 1:27, we read: *"But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong."* Jesus fed thousands, but He used the few fish and pieces of bread of an ordinary young boy to do it. From cover to cover in the Bible, we see God using ordinary people to do His work:

- He chose a young shepherd boy named David to be the king of Israel (1 Samuel 16).
- Gideon was a farmer but God chose him to deliver Israel.
- Abraham, an ordinary man from the

city of Ur, became the father of many nations.

- Amos was a herdsman and took care of sycamore-fig trees but he became a prophet.
- Jesus chose Peter, John, Andrew and James, ordinary fishermen, to become His disciples. Christ used these men to build His church.

The story in 2 Kings 5:1-14 is another example of how God works in ordinary experiences of life. Naaman was a Syrian general, who was a great man, honoured and respected for his military successes. But there was one problem: He was a leper. He suffered from that terrible disease that made him a social outcast. People avoided him. His future was not hopeful. The disease would get worse and worse. It is at this point that we see God act in ordinary ways.

1. God Works Through Ordinary People (vss. 2-5)

A young slave girl enters the story. She had been captured in Israel and brought to Syria, where she served Naaman's wife. She was a nobody in those times, a less-than-ordinary person in the minds of others. However, she had a word of hope: She knew about a prophet in Israel; if only Naaman could see him, he might be healed.

It was good that Naaman did not ignore or dismiss the advice of the slave girl and the servants. He listened and gave them the benefit of the doubt that might be God speaking.

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