

The Berean Ecclesial News

A monthly magazine devoted wholly to the Berean Christadelphian Ecclesial welfare, with the object of providing Ecclesial news, exhortations, articles and information of fraternal interest to the Brotherhood. Upholding the Truth since 1923.

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God Willing, The Berean Ecclesial News will be published monthly as an avenue of providing information of Ecclesial interest to the Brotherhood. Ecclesial news and correspondence, Fraternal Gathering notices, special activities and upbuilding exhortations are encouraged. This is an effort to upbuild and prepare us in heart and mind for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Ecclesial News

WANAQUE, New Jersey, 224 Conklintown Rd. - Wanaque, NJ 07465-2125 - Phone: (973) 831-8815 - email - DCvanpelt@AOL.com - Memorial Service (each first day of the week) Study on Scripturally related subjects as opportunity permits.

Greetings to All in Christ,

It has been quite some time since we have submitted any news from this portion of the vineyard. It has been a long, cold and very snowy winter here in the Northeastern US, but before the snow came, we had a wonderful weekend up in Massachusetts with those of the household of faith in the Boston area. They held an informal study weekend (Dec. 23-24) which was, to all attending, a badly needed oasis in the midst of the spiritual desert we see and experience in the world all around us. Bro. Mike Morrell (of the Dedham EccleSia) gave a series of talks on the tongue and its proper use by all aspiring to life eternal. He also spoke of the many dangers and evils we fall into by the misuse of this "little member." We were all encouraged (from Scripture presented) to use the tongue for wholesome communication in conversation and for edification. It was so pleasant to be with all assembled there for the gathering. We were especially glad to see Sis. Rachel Johnatty there, whom we haven't seen in several years!

Sis. Lois and I have spent time this winter reading from different works in the Truth. It is a pleasure to journey anew through Yahweh's holy word of truth! Of particular interest have been the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and Joseph. The lives of Esther (Hadassah) and Mordecai have been an additional strengthening to us both. We also meet weekly for the Memorial Service. Our time of meeting (due to circumstances) often varies. We are always very desirous to have visitors of like precious faith from across the vineyard whenever possible. This winter, however, we have had none; but plan a trip to the Boston area this April (lord willing) for another study weekend. We do look forward with joy to that time.

We have been trying to follow events in the news from a "Signs of The Times" aspect. Of riveting interest is the election of Ariel Sharon as Prime Minister of Israel. The ongoing violence and virtual state of siege in Israel speak to us of the fact that it simply cannot be much longer until the master appears. We all should strive to be prepared and ready to meet him at his coming. May we each hear from him those welcome words in that day.

With love in the Master's Name,
Bro. David Van Pelt

FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held God Willing)

BOSTON STUDY WEEKENDApril 21, 22 2001

Bro. Paul Garvey at 508-224-6840 email at Pga4419302@aol.com; or Bro. Len Naglieri at 603-598-1745 email at lenpam@adelphia.net

LAMPASAS FRATERNAL GATHERINGJune 8 - 10, 2001

Bro. Rusty Stephen, HC3 Box 16A, Lampasas, TX 76550, 512-556-6771

RICHARD FRATERNAL GATHERING June 29 – July 2, 2001

Bro. Ed Truelove, 2165 Douglas Ave., N.Battleford, Sask, Canada S9A 3N8, 306-4453240

HYE FRATERNAL GATHERINGJuly 23 - 29, 2001

Bro. Curtis Hurst, Rt.1 Box 40, Mullin, TX 76864, 915-985-3868

HOLLADAY FRATERNAL GATHERING October 6-7, 2001

Bro. Warren Rankin, 699 White Tail Rd, Holladay, TN 38341, 901-584-3925

Chastening and Development

While trials are necessary for the polishing and developing of the spiritual man, our reaction to trial is a fundamental aspect of our character development. No man who is truly the subject of divine interest can escape trial.

Hebrews 12:6, *"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."*

It is how we react to the trials which determines whether or not the polishing effect of the trial is working. The flesh tends to go first to the question, why me? Am I a bad person? Such is the superstition of all ages. Fleshly wisdom imagines that bad things happen to bad people. Jesus observed this among the people of his day. Jesus asked his followers:

Luke 13:1-5, *"There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."*

These men, unfortunate though they were, were not wicked above all others. They simply suffered the fate common to all mankind, a fate which all who fail to repent from wicked works will suffer. When we consider this superstition, we should keep in mind that the worst of things happened to the most righteous of people--in the ridiculing, cruel and tormented

death suffered by Jesus. And while Jesus is our example, he is by 75 no means alone in having to deal with terrible ordeals. The apostle Paul reminded his Jewish brethren of the righteous from the Old Testament:

Hebrews 11:36-38, *"And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy.) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth."*

The answer to "Why Me?" is found in the above verses. For the truly righteous man, this world is not worthy. But perhaps even more than this, the true answer is that it is necessary for our development, and for God's plan to be realized.

To the flesh, following the period of time of asking, "Why me?" the flesh finally decides that it is not "me," but someone else who is to blame, and therefore, that someone else must pay consequences. It is commonly called "revenge." Revenge is always cloaked under the guise of "justice." After all, is not our God a just God? (Isaiah 45:21) So we certainly must be correct in vindicating ourselves and bringing retribution on those creating our trials.

Our God truly is a just God, but He has reserved to Himself and Himself alone the authority to punish. The apostle wrote:

Romans 12:19, *"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord "*

The flesh is impatient. God is not. It is an act of faith and a testament to our own conviction that God exists and is working out His own plan, to not exact our own punishments on those who wrong us, or despitely use us. It is even more than that. It is a trial of our own faith. In his sermon on the mount Jesus taught us:

Matt. 5:44-48, *"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. 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, even as your 76 Father which is in heaven is perfect."*

If we love those who love us, what are we beyond all the rest of the countless billions in the world? Do they not do the same? This is Jesus' argument to his followers. If we truly wish to be among the class judged too worthy for this world, we must transcend the flesh's thinking and pray for those who create evil for us. And this prayer must be sincere. We must sincerely desire the conversion of our enemies and we must truly forgive them, or we are simply acting out a charade. We have heard the Bible misused so many different ways, but perhaps none so terribly as a young man once explaining this verse.

Romans 12:20, *"Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head"*

The argument was made that the reason we pray, feed, and give comfort to our enemies, was so that coals of fire may be laid on his head. Nothing could be more distorted. No one who grasps Christ's teaching could come to this conclusion. If that is the motivation for our acting lovingly to our enemies, then our enemy has every right to continue to be our enemy--and God will justify him. If we act in love and sincerity--honest, heart felt sincerity--and treachery and hatred is given in return, then God will repay our enemy. But the first "if" is--what we do, we must do in love. Sincere love. Honest love.

This is a trial. It is not easy. It does not come naturally to the flesh to love those which do evil to us. And while following the Scriptures command to pray for our enemies is not difficult when done as a matter of command, it is much harder to do this sincerely, and instantaneously.

It takes much praying for ourselves, and acquainting ourselves with God's words, precepts, and plan of salvation before we can sincerely act in this manner.

It cannot be emphasized enough, that the only way to attain grace in the face of trial is by becoming closer to God. It can be accomplished no other way. The flesh imagines (and always has imagined from the first counseling session the serpent had with Eve) that it knows some better way than God to attain to righteousness. Examine that session for a minute. Eve explained the teachings of God to the serpent, and concentrate on the serpents reply.

Genesis 3:2-5, *"And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall 77*

not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

The serpent makes three challenges to God in this discussion. First and foremost, the serpent lays out the argument that God is wrong. "*Ye shall not surely die*" flatly argues the serpent. Here the foundation is laid for all else that is to come. The serpent argues that God's ways are not the necessary and correct ways because God is not always right. With this laid before Eve, the serpent goes on to the next step. "*God cloth know that in the day ye eat thereof then your eyes shall be opened*" **In** this the serpent is explaining to Eve that through following the Divine teachings, she is allowing herself to be blinded. The forbidden fruit is her eye salve, through which she will see that there are other ways to righteousness. And finally, the serpent argues that by eating, "*ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.*"

Is it not clear that the serpent's teaching hasn't changed much in 6000 years? The foundation is still that God is not always right. Some try to put a religious face on the serpent's teaching, arguing that while man has developed contrary ideas to God's teaching, still these may be harmonized in some spiritualistic manner to work with God. But the truth of the matter is that God's ways are not the flesh's ways. God's ways are infinitely high above the thinking of the flesh, but this cannot be perceived by the flesh. This can never be any different. If we think it is, it is because we have failed to grasp the righteousness of God. The two thought process, the mind of the flesh and the mind of the spirit, are at complete opposite ends of the principles of righteousness, and it will ever be this way. This is a universal law. The universal principle is stated by Paul:

Romans 8:7, "*Because the carnal mind [the thinking of the flesh] is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*"

This is the reason that the flesh, whether serpent or modern philosopher must begin with the premise that God is not always right. God's teaching convicts them as wrong. Therefore they fight back in this manner. Upon laying the foundation that God is not always right, they lay the premise that the reason we may not understand this is that the teachings of God has blinded us to the way we are intended to live. We are not learned. We have not attained the necessary level of worldly wisdom to be able to see all the good that the world has in store for those who love the Word. In response to this, the apostle John taught:

1 Cor. 1:18-25, "*For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish 78 foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God For it*

is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

Such is the total repudiation of all that the world holds as wise and dear by God. In times of trial, then, can we turn to the world, its philosophers and its practitioners for salvation from trials? God counsels the salvation from trial to be through meditation, study, and prayer. The world counsels salvation from trial to be through entertainment, worldly distractions, drugs, and worldly wisdom. Where does the world counsel immediate forgiveness to all who wrong us--even before they ask? Where does the world counsel and quiet resolve to dedicate our lives only to God and put behind us any and every distraction? Where does the world even teach the simple concept that our trials are necessary for our salvation, in the development of the Godly man? If the answer is "nowhere " (and it is) then let us quickly put the world and its foolishness behind us, pressing on to the development of the perfect man through Christ. Modern society has been educated at a level higher than at any time in the world's history. We ourselves have been carried along in this movement, many Christadelphians having been educated in the centers of higher learning of the world's wisdom. We rationalize this in many ways, the validity of which will be in the eye of the beholder. As Jesus said, "wisdom is justified of her children." But the one thing that is inescapable is that we have allowed ourselves to be exposed to the "philosophers"-- the PhDs (PhD stands for Doctor of Philosophy) of this world." As a brother once put it, this is the equivalent to David sending Solomon to Gath, to be educated by the Philistines. This problem becomes very dangerous when we fail to realize that these men and their ideas are the exact things we have been so powerfully warned against.

Col. 2:8, *"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."*

Seeking relief from our trials through the world's wisdom can only have catastrophic results. It is not the true believers who need to have 79

their eye's opened by the forbidden fruit, but rather this wealthy and worldly, Laodicean society we have been born into. This society which imagined itself as rich and in need of nothing, was in fact pronounced by Jesus to be in need of eye salve so that they could see.

Rev. 3:17-18, *"Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."* This is the Spirit's correct evaluation of us. We are so wealthy as a society that we are too close to the world and her treasures, foremost of which is her worldly wisdom. We need to keep the eyesalve handy, that we do not get caught up in the supposed wisdom that is merely worldly foolishness. Finally, the serpent promised that we would become as the gods, knowing right and wrong."

The nation of Israel lapsed into this same pitfall, only it was referenced as: Judges 17:6, *"In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes."*

Certain things may seem right and just to us, but if they are not based upon divine principles and rooted in love, they have no place in the heart of the man of God. The flesh is not the arbiter of right and wrong. God is. **The flesh desires to circumvent the teachings of God.** God desires opportunities, giving us all the chance to learn His ways, and incorporate them into our lives, to succeed or fail by divine measures. God has set the measure of what is good or evil, and despite the serpents teaching, we alter this at our own eternal peril. When we find ourselves tried, we cannot alter God's laws for some peculiar circumstance that we may find ourselves in. We follow the trial with the same patient continuation of God's teaching that we know is required of us at all times. We forgive one another. We truly love our enemy. We do nothing that even hints of vengeance or punishment to others. We have been permitted to withdraw ourselves from unrepentant offenders against us, but nothing more. And even these, we continue to pray for. This is the only thing that brings true, lasting peace.

Bro. Jim Phillips

Six Days in the Life Of..

I was blessed to have been born into a large family, of which I consider everyone here an extension. I am never happier than when I am in 80 the company of my family—both biological and spiritual.

Unfortunately, this feeling of happiness is tempered somewhat by the realization that it will be another week before I will be able to meet with most of you again and refresh my spiritual energy level. As soon as I leave this hall today, the cares and troubles of the world around us will again overwhelm me. Whether I win any of the battles I will face in the days ahead is unknown, but my recent history gives cause for concern.

It has been six full days since we last met here to commemorate the sacrifice of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. These days are gone now, and nothing we do or say from here on out will change that. When we look back, can we say that we fought the good fight? Or, did we meekly surrender to the temptations of the world around us? I am sure that some of you are wondering why we should even bother to examine the six days that have passed; after all, "What's done is done, and we can't change history." Our reason for self-examination should be evident to everyone here—there will soon come a time when judgment of past deeds will have a major impact on whether we see the Kingdom or not. God is not going to be unmindful of our past mistakes at the Judgment Seat.

So, how *do* our last six days look? Have they been as profitable as we had hoped? Don't be disheartened if they haven't. The Apostle Paul said in the chapter we had read in our hearing (Romans 7:15) , "*What I would, that I do not, but what I hate, that do I*". There is an ever-present war in our hearts between our innate sinful nature and what the Lord demands of us—unconditional love and memory of Him and his word. He desires that we should be as David when he declared in Psalms 42:1, "*As the hart panteth after the water brook, so panteth my soul after thee.*" With David, we see a man who had done plenty of wrong in his lifetime. So how can we reconcile the two (sin vs. good) in our lives? There is no easy answer to this question.

In my mind, it comes down to your actions. The disciple Peter was forgiven for his denial of Christ because Christ himself interceded for him, just as he now does for us. Another point to consider about Peter's denial is that it was an isolated incident, and he was immediately repentant; as recorded, he "went out and wept bitterly." His sin, in retrospect, was a *sin of will* (brought on by a weak and sinful nature), rather than a *sin of purpose*, which is methodical and planned.

For an example of a sin of purpose, we need only to look to Judas Iscariot, another of Christ's disciples. His sin, that of deliberately betraying his Master for money, was a sin of purpose, and he knew it. As Christ said, "It were good for that man if he were not born."

Rather than depress ourselves unduly over our wrongdoings of the last few days, let's take a different approach: What did we do *right* during the

same time period? Can we immediately point out several occasions in which we championed the cause of good? If so, what form did these "good deeds" take? Did we discuss the Truth with our co-workers? If so, did we then proceed to nullify our good deed by acting in an un-Christlike manner? We should remember that, as Christadelphians, we are messengers of the Word, and it is important that we show our faith both in word and in deed. We are told in the Bible that "faith without works is dead". Consider this for a moment. Faith without works is DEAD!! You can't put it any more strongly than that. That's why our everyday actions are so important. If we profess to be possessors of the "one true faith", and yet act like heathen...who will believe us?

This brings to mind a public awareness spot I saw on TV a few years ago. It showed a father confronting his son with drug paraphernalia and asking him where he learned to do drugs...to which the son replied, "I learned it by watching you!" If people in the world can see that words and actions are often contradictory, can we not do the same?

If we have sinned in the last few days, there is but one recourse: We must repent and beg forgiveness of our Heavenly Father. And, in so doing, let us keep in mind some of the commandments we are given in the Scriptures:

"As you would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them"

"Be kind to the unthankful"

"Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God"

"Walk worthy of the vocation wherein ye are called"

"Avenge not yourselves"

And, *"Abstain from every form of evil"*

So: Can we say, upon reflection, that we have done our best to follow these commandments? Those who serve Christ willingly and wholly will have those sins (due to our innate sinful nature) forgiven if we repent. Are we among those who will stand at the Judgment Seat at the last days, only to be turned away because we were found lacking?

It is my fervent hope that this will not happen to any of us assembled here today. The way that leads to life everlasting is narrow and surrounded on all sides by dangerous obstacles. What lies at the end of our journey, 82 however, is well worth the effort required to stay on the path. And, if we are in danger of straying from that path, there is no better place to turn than to the Word of God. The Apostle Paul said in Romans 8:18, *"The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us."* Let us take these words with us as we leave here

today, and may they sustain us well in the week to come.

Bro. Matthew Brown

IN THIS FINAL HOUR

Good morning, Brothers and Sisters. In this final hour of our day of probation the world surrounds us on every side and it pulls at our natural mind in every direction. The decisions and choices we make determine the state of our heart and whether or not we want to be in the Kingdom more than anything else. Just how important is it to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season?

The biggest celebration of the year, representing everything the antichrist stands for, will be here in fifteen days. What brother or sister who wants to be in the Kingdom more than anything else in the world will have anything to do, will have any part at all, in this part-Catholic, part-Protestant, part-pagan holiday of sun-worshipping origin, named after mass for Christ—an institution of the diabolos called Christmas. We are instructed by our God to *"come out from among them and be ye separate"—"to touch not the unclean thing."* Remember what Israel told God at the base of Mt. Sinai? *"All that thou hast said, we will do."* That's what we likewise agreed to with God when we went under the waters of baptism.

The time is short, Brethren. Let's take the time to consider the consequences before doing whatever it is the mind of the flesh is trying to convince us that it's OK to do. What did Solomon say? *"Go to the ant, thou sluggard: consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest."* (Proverbs 6:6-8) The ant is a worker, a planner, a preparer for times to come. The ant is not lazy, but always busy. We are to be as the ant, and get our houses in order, so that rapidly approaching day doesn't overtake us as a thief in the night.

Today is the day of salvation: tomorrow may be too late. *"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away."* (I Peter 1:24)

Not only is it time for Christ to return, for resurrection and judgment, but our very existence is like a vapor we are told, as temporary as

the flower of grass. It is even like a shadow, momentarily visible. Let us awake from the stupor in which we are held captive by earthly possessions, customs, entertainment and glittery attractions, and focus on true beauty, which is found only in the Word of our Creator, and the promises it holds.

"Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not;: and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." (Luke 12:27) Consider our Heavenly Father who made the beautiful and fragrant lily of the field, who is able to put our sin away as far as the east is from the west. All He asks is faith, love and obedience. His infinite power and intellect is so magnificent that even the small glimpse of it, that puny man can comprehend, takes one's breath away.

Now, scientists have discovered that there exists particles smaller than atoms---so much smaller in fact, that they continually pass through all matter and never collide with anything. They can pass through a mountain of granite and never touch a single atom, of the trillions of atoms, which make up the solid rock. This is smaller than the human mind can comprehend, on the scale of smallness. On the flip side of the coin, we know it takes light eight minutes to travel from the sun to the earth. Light travels trillions of miles in a year. Through the eye of the Hubbell Telescope, millions of light-years in deep space, there is an area of the heavens that is occupied by what is plainly not just stars, not just planets, not just solar systems...what then? What are visible there in the field of view are multitudes and multitudes of galaxies similar to the Milky Way to which the earth belongs—galaxy after galaxy after galaxy.

How can a Creator of things so small and so great of gargantuan proportions be described? The prophet Nahum describes Him like this: *"God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies. The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers: Bashan languisheth, and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth. The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein. Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and rocks are thrown down by him. The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in Him."* (Nahum 1:2-7)

He knows them that trust Him. This great and infinite Deity, who created the universe, knows them that trust Him.

James 5:1-6 is descriptive of the wicked adversaries on whom God will take vengeance: *"Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you."*

Nahum 1:2 says, *"The Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries."* How will He accomplish this? We are given the answer in Ps 149: 4-9, as it is written: *"For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beauty the meek with salvation. Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand: To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; To execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD."*

This is how God will take vengeance on His adversaries; by destroying them by the hand of the immortalized righteous as it is written, *"This honour have all His saints."*

IF we are to be instrumental in God's destruction of the wicked, IF we are to be among the destroyers, and not the destroyed, what are we to do with ourselves in this final hour?

We surely must all agree that we're living in the end times and the end of gentile rule on earth. For I Thess 5:3 says, *"For when they shall say; Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child;- and they shall not escape."* What is the cry going forth in the Middle East peace accord? These present days are just prior to the change in power from mortal dying man, struggling in vain to rule himself as he has so pitifully done for the past 6000 years, to the divine rule of Jesus Christ. Yes, as bad as it seems to be in the world around us today; actually we are living in what would be accurately described as the calm before the storm. The storm being referred to by Daniel (12:1), as a *"time of trouble, such as never was since there was 85 a nation even to that same time."* News from the Middle East daily reports

of bloodshed, as the sons of Ishmael clash with the sons of Isaac, trying to possess the land from those to whom it was promised for an eternal inheritance. We can easily see how Jerusalem will need to be liberated by military force.

Not many years hence will the cry go out from Jerusalem: *"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory."* (Psalm 24:7-10)

Zechariah 13:6 tells us what happens next: *"And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends."* Then the Jews recognize that Jesus truly is their Messiah.

The most exciting times in the history of the world will very likely happen in our lifetime! The times described in Matt. 24:37-39 seem very familiar: *"But as the days of Noe were, so shall the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."*

Yes, this describes the present times. Seeing that this is the case, what are we to do? James tells us in chapter 5, We are to be patient and set our hearts aright (vs.8). We are to forgive our brother and sister unconditionally not reserving forgiveness for only those who ask (vs. 9). Remember Jesus, in his final hour, *"Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."* Remember Stephen, in his final hour, *"Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."* Let's not forget Mark 11:25, *"And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any, that your Father also which is in heaven, may forgive you your trespasses."*

As we are running down the home stretch of our race for eternal life in the Kingdom, we must look to others who have gone before us, so that we can run upright, down that straight and narrow path, and be able to be strong and courageous, not tripping and falling. And, if we do, getting up and pressing on, not taking little side roads off the main path that lead only to destruction if we take them.

Who are these we are to look to for examples? Those faithful in Heb. 11, and of course, the apostle Paul. James tells us to look to the prophets

in verse 10 of chapter 5. We are to swear not, and if we say something, we must mean it (vs. 12). We must pray often and sing praises to Him (vs. 13). We must confess our faults one to another (vs. 16). Prayer is so important, and James emphasizes it repeatedly here at the end of the chapter. We must communicate with God. What parent is there here this morning that could bear for their son or daughter, spending their years of growing up, while intentionally ignoring them with virtually no communication? Would we be satisfied with a few sentences once a day—should they condescend to speak to us? Wouldn't we, as a parent, desire love, respect, and lots of communication? So does God. Shouldn't we spend our years growing up in the Truth praying to our heavenly Father more than once a day? Of course we should, if we love Him. After all, love is the key.

It is written in Proverbs 10:12, "*Hatred stirreth up strifes, but love covereth all sins.*" Love covers all sins. Over and again we are told to love our brothers and sisters, and to love our wives. The relationship between husbands and wives represents Christ and his relationship to the ecclesia, who are to be the bride of Christ at the marriage supper of the lamb. Here again, at the end of the chapter, James seems to tell up the same point Paul was making to the Corinthians when he told them "*the greatest of these is charity.*"

James exhorts us as to what to do if a brother or sister err from the Truth. We are not to point the finger, accuse, deride, degrade, demoralize, judge, nor humiliate. Nor are we to turn our backs on them, talk about, mock, nor forget the brother or sister. What we are to do is an expression of love. We are to reach out a helping hand so as to convert him or her from the error of their way. "*Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you.*" Yes, Brethren, to lend a helping hand, or offer some words of encouragement may be all that's necessary to get one to turn from the error of their way. What does it say? Luke 15:7, "*I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.*"

In conclusion, in this final hour, let us turn our attention to the apostle Paul. What wisdom, what instruction in righteousness, he gives to us, "*Let your conversation (life style) be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he has said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*" (Hebrews 13:5-6)

I Timothy 4

As we read these chapters in I Timothy, we see Paul was warning Timothy of what was to come and how he was to handle it. In this chapter we deal with a slightly different situation. We deal with the reality of the situation Timothy was to encounter. Paul warns him what is to follow, because Paul knew that "in man is no good thing."

We look at the first verse, and we see some terms that tell us exactly what Paul was speaking of when exhorting Timothy. What is a "seducing spirit"? According to a [Bible Dictionary](#), it is a "deceitful, or wandering teacher;" or as described in Jude in verses 11 — 13: *"Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."* In another sense, we could say a "seducing spirit" is anything that leads us away from the Truth. All of us are to search out everything; everything should be proven.

The next phrase — "doctrines of devils." What does that mean? The "doctrines of devils" was a worship of spirits ... of the good and the great. They are those who eventually became the "saints" of the Catholic Church. It began with the Greeks. Greek mythology, superstition, and Christianity combined, and this evolved into what we have today in the Catholic Church. They were supposedly mediators or intercessors between man and the gods. Plato described them as "intermediate order between God and man." We can see in this, that man thought he had a better way. He was not about to follow God's way. As we know, it was not the way it should be. God had given His Son as the one way to approach in prayer.

Some say that the last part of this verse should read "doctrines taught by demons." This also fits, because those who were teaching were, as David said in the Psalms, *"They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them."* (Psalm 115:8; 135:18).

Verse 2, *"Speaking lies in hypocrisy;"* ... we can understand that, we hear it every day ... *"having their conscience seared with a hot iron;"* Although I'm not a rancher, when an animal is branded this is as close as we can come (this day) to being "seared." It is a permanent brand: it will not go away. It cannot be covered up; the area is dead. It becomes 88 insensitive to pain, feeling. This is what we spoke of a moment ago —

those "doctrines of devils," the "seducing spirits." They were willingly ignorant. They were in a deluded state.

As we know from history, the disciples suffered as a result of those people in that deluded state. In this "seared way" they, without care for human life, killed the disciples in many ways.

The only manner in which we use the word "sear" is in cooking meat. If we put the meat on the grill to "sear it," we are sealing in the juices. We seal it so nothing can escape. Our consciences cannot maintain "searing." Our consciences must be sensitive. We have that responsibility to the demands that life in the Truth puts upon us. We cannot shut the Truth out.

When we pass through the waters of baptism, we put on that responsibility. Furthermore, we put on the responsibility for all of like precious faith: even more so for those who have strayed. As the parable says, *"How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray."* (Matt. 18:12-13) We also know those who have been "seared" will answer for their crimes in the time to come.

In verse 3 Paul goes on with the list of wrong doctrines, and now includes "forbidding to marry" to that list. If we look up "forbidding" we would see it has a stricter meaning. By "forbidding to marry", they were saying it was a command not to marry, which is contrary to God's command, and opposite of what we read yesterday in I Tim. 3 of the qualifications of a deacon or bishop.

In order to handle the matters in God's House, we must first be able to handle the matters in our own houses. In this, we can learn many things and apply them to the ecclesia to care for God's family. While in any family things aren't always smooth, if the love of the Truth is first and foremost in our minds; it will bring us back together. And if it is never lost, we will survive, and grow.

The next item mentioned is the forbidding, or abstaining from meats. Now, if God hadn't wanted us to eat meat, He wouldn't have given it to us. He wouldn't have made any of those foods we eat today. Again, this is man having a better idea; and this has no place in the lives of God's family.

Verse 4 – Paul confirms this very thing, adding an important statement: *"For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:"*

We know when the Mosaic was fulfilled there were no longer clean and unclean meats. All was to be received with thanksgiving. Verse 5 goes on to say, "*For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.*" Before we eat, we give thanks for the food. But, do we reflect on what it really means? In prayer the food is "sanctified", or dedicated to the Lord. Thus, when we give thanks we are dedicating all the strength we derive from it to His honor, glory, and (most importantly) for His service. Those who do not are not his servants and can only gain temporal strength from it.

In the 6th verse we, just as Timothy, Isaiah, Paul, and others, were to bring these things to the front and help each other focus on the Way which has been presented to us. We have an obligation to do this. Why do we use the word "obligation"? We often use the word "responsibility". An "obligation", according to the dictionary, is basically a contract with God. In return for our obedience to His commands, we will be granted life eternal.

There is only one problem with this idea: we cannot keep our part of the contract. We cannot keep His commandments. He is a merciful God, and has opened a way for us: and that is through prayer. We also know that even after we have done our best, eternal life will be a "gift".

We should be "*nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained*" We should be eating up God's Word, and not just the milk, but also the meat, in order to have a well-nourished diet of that Word. When we eat (and I'm speaking of "eating the Word"), we should eat with as much zeal as we do our favorite dessert. Do we? Do we spread this zeal around us?

We can see from the writings, Timothy has a very hard job to do. He was to spread the "zeal" to an ecclesia that didn't want to listen.

The 7th verse we discussed yesterday. Paul was telling Timothy not to worry about what was going on and to get to work. He shouldn't become bogged down by present day things.

The last of verse 9 and the beginning of verse tells us, "*and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little:*" This seems like a way out for those of us who don't like to exercise, but what do we do with the time? Would we sit down to read the paper, or wash the dishes? Or would we do what Paul says we are to do? He tells us to exercise our minds in the way of godliness. To that, we must train (exercise) for we are creatures of habit. We must have an incentive and a goal before us before we will do anything. Most importantly, goal must be 90 possible. It must be something we feel we can attain.

In the 9th verse, Paul tells Timothy something he knew. Why would he tell him again? It's there for us. He is telling us this is the way: it won't be easy, and don't be surprised when things become difficult. What do we know about difficulties? Have we been beaten? Have we been shipwrecked? Have we been lost at sea, or stoned? Our lives are "a piece of cake" compared to Paul's. How did those things help Paul? They helped him to focus. Why do we come to Hye every year? We come to refocus.

The words we're hearing this week aren't new. They're the same words that have been spoken over the last hundred years, from the same podium; and yet, we have a responsibility, an obligation to ourselves and the young to come and start them in the training for the work ahead — to command and teach, teach and command.

As we discussed yesterday, Timothy had a problem. He was young. How was he to tell the elders what to do? He knew he had a great work to do, but he was young. Would they listen to him? Would they pay attention to what he had to say? Paul told him, "That's up to you." But Paul didn't leave him hanging; he gave him a boost. He said, "Don't just say it. Don't just read it. Be an example. You need to show them what they need to do."

When I was younger in the Truth and was asked to give my very first talk, I sat and thought, "What can I come up with that is new, that the elder and more experienced brethren hadn't heard before?" The answer was *NOTHING*. There is nothing new. For them it's just a refresher course. For the young it's a first time, but for each of us it's an exercise in our minds, an exercise in growth. This is what Paul wanted Timothy to do.

And then, he told him how. At the end of verse 12, he says, "You should do it *in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*" In love: AGAPE love, the love that's unfeigned, undying toward one another. In faith: with full confidence in God that He will perform what he has said. In purity: in cleanness, above reproach in thought and motive.

And in the 13th verse Paul says, "*Till I come;*" Three simple words, TILL I COME. Timothy was to continue not for a week, or two weeks, or even a month. We know Paul hoped to return, but didn't know when, and so he said simply, "*Till I come;*" It means, "until you are relieved of this duty, do it unto the Lord." But it means more, too. It was as though Paul was telling Timothy, "This is all yours. I prepared you the best I could. This is your job, and this is how you do it. You read it, you teach from the Word, you talk to the ecclesia, and you use the doctrine of the Word. You have all the facts, you have everything you need to do the work." 91

Then, maybe as a boost, in the 14th verse it appears Paul gave Timothy a portion of the spirit power to help exercise his mind, to get him started, to give him confidence, to overcome his youth. We need to do that for one another.

He told Timothy what he need to do in the 15th verse, "*Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.*" Complete dedication: not partial. This was a full, lifetime job.

The 16th verse, "*Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.*" Take heed – don't lose focus. You need the ecclesia just as they need you to gain the gift promised.

I'd like to end this by looking at II Timothy, the 4th chapter and the 8th verse. We can see Paul's life summed up in this one verse. "*Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing*" THIS was Paul's message to Timothy.

Bro. Steve Osborne

As Ye See The Day Approaching

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof ..Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." (2 Timothy 3:1-7)

Brethren and Sisters, these are indeed perilous times in which we live. The words quoted above (we all know) were written by Paul to Timothy nearly two thousand years ago. These things in that list have been inexorably realized with increasing frequency and intensity from the days of Paul's contemporaries to this present generation. The ever-increasing flood of wickedness has been as a filling measure. The world's cup of iniquity is rapidly reaching its limit. There is a limit - a set bound beyond which it cannot pass! This is comforting to us. This helps us in our warfare to press on to the end, fighting the good fight of faith! The words of 92 Yahweh (speaking out of the whirlwind to Job) come to mind in light

of this filling measure of iniquity.

"...Who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it, And brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors, And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?" (Job 38:8-11)

We are told that God's secret is with the righteous, (See Pro 3:32). That secret is the knowledge of the truth. One of the elements of the truth is understanding that God knows the end from the beginning. *"...for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, D e c l a r i n g a n c i e n t t i m e s t h e t h i n g s t h a t a r e n o t y e t d o n e, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:" (Isaiah 46:9-10)*

Though *"evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived"* and *"Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished"* (2 Timothy 3:13 and Proverbs 11:21) *"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."* (Psalm 9:17) But now we see the wicked high in place, having all that heart can desire, walking in pride with little or no regard for Yahweh or His holy word of Truth. Neither have they any regard for His son, Jesus Christ. While many profess belief in the Father and the son, their doctrinal beliefs, life styles, speech and actions show that they do not. They neither know the Father nor the son and have not (an accurate understanding) of His words in them. They shoot out the lip, opening wide their mouths, saying in effect by their actions, especially: *"Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice...I know not the LORD..."* They also say: *"...With our tongue will we prevail; our lips are our own: who is lord over us?"* (Exodus 5:2 and Psalm 12:4) By their actions and in the way they live: *"They say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?"* (Job 21:14-15)

Brethren and Sisters, we have to be very careful not to envy the wicked or covet their power, positions, present advantages or wealth. This is part of the peril we are in while in this probationary state. Peril by definition speaks of risk and exposure; potential loss, injury and destruction. Asaph, (one of David's three chief musicians - author of Psalms 50 and 73-83) Said: *"But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men; neither 93*

are they plagued like other men. Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment. Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish. They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily. They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth. Therefore his people return hither: and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them. And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High? Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches."

Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning. If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children. When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors. As a dream when one awaketh; so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image. Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins. Sofoolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee." (Psalm 73:2-22)

We are in constant *peril* from within, as well as from without. It is needful that we be constantly, therefore, on guard - circumspect and vigilant. **The thinking of the flesh can so easily take over and cause us to err and to stumble** - literally fall away and become vain in our worship and displeasing to Yahweh and to His anointed. We cannot have it both ways. We cannot serve two masters - God and mammon. We have to also remember the teaching of Jesus in the candle (oil lamp) and the bushel. Secular humanism and humanistic reason and teachings (so prevalent in these last days) can very easily corrupt us. So subtle is this humanistic reasoning: it permeates every aspect of "modern" life. Recently, while eating in a popular fast food restaurant, I noticed the place mat which stated their company slogan - "Have it your way." This subtle thinking and reasoning is everywhere around us today. It simply can't be our (natural, fleshly) way in things that matter in our spiritual walk and conduct. In this world of options, we can so easily catch the idea that we deserve these things. That is what society constantly tries to foist upon us in advertisements, TV, etc. We can be so easily defiled and deviated from the right way without even realizing it. Do we remember Lot's wife, Balaam, Achan, Gehazi, Judas and Ananias and Sapphira?

94 When we think of peril in relation to the Scriptures, Paul doubtless

comes to mind. His listing of all that he endured and suffered is recorded there for us each to read and consider. *"Howbeit whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also. Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not. In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands."* (2 Corinthians 11:21-33)

We may not be called upon to suffer as he and the other apostles and disciples did in the first century, but it should be clearly manifest to those in the surrounding darkness of the world that we are different and that we do not run to the same excesses as they. We can certainly expect to be misunderstood by them. If our conversation is holy and we speak often of the scriptures and of the things of the kingdom and name, they will usually manifest disinterest and displeasure and often shun us. This is to be expected. Those who live a Godly life will suffer persecution. If our master was misunderstood, hated, persecuted and spoken evil of, etc., we can expect the same. We are commanded to be holy and to not be conformed to the world.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." (1 John 2:15-17)

What Does That Mean?

"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

(Matt. 18:10)

A friend of mine believes that this verse shows that children have special angels, which have a more direct access to God than other angels. Does this verse really say that, and if so, do we get "different angels" as we get older?

This question deals with two subjects. Because of space limitations, I will address the idea of "children's angels" in this issue and leave the idea of "guardian angels" for another time.

As for children having "special angels," no such meaning can be taken from the above verse when it is understood in the context of the chapter. The eighteenth chapter of Matthew begins with the disciples asking, "Who will be the greatest in the kingdom?" Jesus brought a child into the middle of their discussion and explains that unless an adult has child-like qualities the doors of the Kingdom will be shut. *"Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."* (v3-4)

As we go through this eighteenth chapter, Christ uses the term "child" and "little one" in this context for his lesson on offences and on how we must deal with other Brethren and Sisters. Christ is not speaking of little children *chronologically*, who are neither capable of believing in Christ, nor are they quick to take offence; but of those who belong to him (his disciples and followers) and those who have received him in a child-like attitude of innocence and humility.

We find other reverences to believers as children:

"Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men." (1 Cor. 14:20) We see the "maternal" side of Paul in Galatians 4:19, where he represents himself as a woman in labor and called these believers "his children." *"My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you."* And the Apostle John in 1 John 3:18 uses the same tender language. *"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."*

As we can see, there is no justification in applying Matthew 18:10 to chronological "children." When the context is considered, "children" is consistently applied to humble and innocent believers. To infer then that children have "special angels" is simply reading into the text.

The lesson we can take from this is that we must be very careful in dealing with our fellow Brethren and Sisters in Christ. The ones that we may tend to look down on and poke fun at are the very ones that may be watched over by the Elohim. It is not below their dignity to minister even to the least among Christ's disciples, the "children" and "little ones" among us.

