

# 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.

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CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

## **Ecclesial News**

**WORCESTER**, Mass., 29 Ekman St, Worcester, MA 01607

Dear Brethren and Sisters,

It is with much sadness and sorrow that we report the falling asleep in the Lord of our Brother Edward C. W. Prentice on April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2002.

Brother Edward was baptised into the Saving Name of Jesus Christ in 1935 and was married to Sister Jessie Kennedy in 1939. He now awaits Christ's call at Lakeview Cemetery, in Upton, Massachusetts.

With Love to all the Brethren and Sisters,  
Sis. Jessie Prentice and Sis. Norma Rankin

**LAMPASAS**, Texas, Berean Christadelphian Ecclesia - S.S. & Study Class, 9:50 A.M.; Memorial 11:00 A.M.; Seasons of Comfort Class 1:15 P.M., Lecture- 4th Sunday 1:30 p.m.; Bible Class Wednesday, 7:30 P.M.; Fraternal Gathering, 2nd Weekend in June. – Bro. Lee Freeburg, 200 Gabriel Forest, Georgetown, TX 78628; 512-869-2008, e-mail [freebs@gtwn.net](mailto:freebs@gtwn.net)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

On behalf of the Lampasas Ecclesia we report the following news. We have welcomed many visitors around the table of the Lord. Our thanks to those Brethren who gave us the word of exhortation. Thanks to Brother Jim Phillips for his Lecture on the signs of the times. Our quarterly Hye meeting was held May 4th and 5th at which we enjoyed the wedding of Brother Mark Braune and Sister Naomi Phillips on Saturday. They will reside in the Austin area and continue to support the Austin ecclesia. Our Sunday School program will be held this Sunday afternoon. We look foreword to seeing what the children have learned this past year.

The Lampasas June gathering, God willing, will be on June 7th, 8th, and 9th. We welcome all to come and join us. We are sorry to report the death of Justin Roberts, the son of our Brother David and Sister Donna Roberts, and grandson of Brother Wayne and Sister Rotha Wolfe. Justin was just 18 years old our thoughts and prayers are with his family at this time of sorrow. He will be missed. We must also report that our Sister Linda Brown has left our Ecclesia to join the Central Fellowship. We pray she will return to us soon.

In the way of transfer we welcome Brother Bob Bent to our Ecclesia. All future plans are if the Lord will.

Bro. Lee Freeburg, Interim recorder for Lampasas.

**SAN ANGELO**, Texas - Sunday Memorial Meeting, 11:00am; Meetings and Bible study are held in members homes. Bro. Gary Smith, P.O. Box 447, Blackwell, TX, 79506. (915) 282-3829; email [BsmithG@aol.com](mailto:BsmithG@aol.com)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,  
Loving Greetings in the Lord's Name,

It has been some time since our last communication. Over the past months 142 Bro. Nick and Sis. LaRue Mammon have had many health problems.

Bro. Nick had his left leg amputated a year and a half ago and his right leg amputated Monday, May 6th. He is recovering in Shannon Memorial Hospital in San Angelo. He would appreciate any letters of encouragement.

Sis. LaRue is now in Riverside Nursing Home with declining health. Sis. Becky Knox's daughter, Donna, is also in serious health condition. After losing her husband, Sis. Becky continues through her trials.

We have been meeting in our Bro. Todd Smith's home. With the help of this young Brother we have strengthened our ecclesia to face the trials of the last days. All are welcome and encouraged to visit our small ecclesia.

Love in the Truth,  
Bro. Gary Smith

## FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held God Willing)

**LAMPASAS FRATERNAL GATHERING ..... June 7 - 9, 2002**

Bro. Ricky Hurst, P.O. Box 1381; Goldthwaite, TX 76844, 915-938-5109

**HYE FRATERNAL GATHERING ..... July 22 - 28, 2002**

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

**BOSTON FRATERNAL GATHERING ..... Oct 19 - 21, 2002**

Bro. Jim Sommerville, 34 Birch Hill Rd., Northboro, MA 01532, 508-393-2874

## Peace

Not that we all don't have a conception of peace, but in order to define it, the following words were used in the concordance or the dictionary to define "peace": prosperity, quietness, rest, harmony, serenity, calm, not quarrelsome, free from disturbance.

We have gathered this morning, as a people of one mind, yet we are an assembly of individuals of very differing characteristics. We really know nothing of the events in the lives of each other during the week, since we last met. For some the events of life may have been easy enough, whereas others may have had a hard path with restless and anxious experiences. Perhaps we come in this morning with thoughts of these experiences uppermost in our minds, intent on sharing them with God and His Son. And while we come to join in worship as an assembly, we come as individuals, not knowing fully the mind or heart of our fellow brothers and Sisters. Nevertheless in our meeting together, we find a common ground. Whatever our troubles, or our pains, we find that in God and His Son, relief is offered to all. Yet the finding of relief depends on the individual and our condition of mind. Our meetings on Sunday are not a cure-all for all our ills. But in coming to God and His Son we can find freedom - freedom from the world, from fear, from worry, from frustration. This in part is the subject of the song of rejoicing of Isaiah 26: *"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee."* (Verse 3)

This is the song of "the righteous nation which keepeth the Truth." We hear much of "keeping the Truth", beginning perhaps with belief and observance. But belief is not enough in itself, unless we have faith and trust in what we believe. It is this trust and assurance that will bring us peace of mind. So it is that we may be kept in peace, if our minds are stayed or centered on God. This same thought is conveyed in Paul's writing to the Philippians: *"And the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ"* (Phil 4:7). This peace of God surpasses every mind or thought, and keeps the mind as a fortress, strong and steadfast. Sometimes one feels these words are too strong for us, perhaps beyond our comprehension. This is perfect peace, but we never seem to achieve it. But is it not because of limitations we set ourselves? And is it not because of our limited understanding that we fail in trust and faith in God and His promises? So it is that whether we are together or apart, our greatest difficulty is in putting from our minds our own worrisome thoughts and troubles. So often we seek our own way out, instead of trusting and relying on God. Even in coming together to remember Christ and his love for us, we find difficulty in throwing off the shackles of worldly care. Our minds, our thoughts tend to wander. We think about what we have to do later today, things upcoming during the week and so on. The very rat race that causes so much of our stress and trouble, whose ends are death, we often have difficulty putting aside mentally when we should. It is this inability to focus, or the ability to give ourselves over completely to God's will that is so hard for us.

Isaiah goes on to say: *"Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength"* (Isaiah 26:4). *"Trust ye in Yahweh for ever, for Yahweh is a rock of ages."* Paul reminded the Corinthian believers that the *"fathers did all eat the same spiritual meat, and drank the same spiritual drink, for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ."* He it is who exemplifies the perfect trust and the perfect peace, and of this he spoke to his disciples before he suffered. In John 14:27 Jesus comforted them with the prospect of an abiding place in the Father's house and exhorted them not to fear, though trouble should overtake them: *"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."*

Why do we not take hold of these words and cling to them? Why do we allow our heart to be troubled and afraid? Do we doubt God; do we wonder if he is really with us? Perhaps it is not that God will not provide peace, but rather that we have not sought it (with all our heart). *"To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."* (Romans 8:6)

Have we done enough to become spiritually minded? Do we truly trust God, and the promises that only He can and will unquestionably keep? Do we truly believe that He is working in us His will; or, is the real question not whether God will do as He says, but rather if we are doing our part? Perhaps 144 our unrest (that lack of inner peace) is due to our own awareness of the

fact that we could be doing more — that we are not doing our very best. We cannot expect the best if we do not give it.

We have been given a guaranteed formula. In James we read, "*Draw nigh to God, and [then] He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands ye sinners; and purify your hearts ...humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and [then] He shall lift you up.*" What great encouragement! What great hope, and joy... and peace!

This is the principle that stands out clearly throughout the scriptures; that God will not accept us as His children, nor bring His infinite power and love to bear on our behalf "*as a Father doth His children*" unless our hands are clean and our hearts are pure toward Him. Many times as we read the history of Israel, this principle of God's dealings with man is plainly illustrated. As an example, we may cite the words that God sent to Asa, one of the good kings of Judah, by the hand of Azariah: "*And he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; The Lord is with you while ye be with him; and if ye seek Him, He will be found of you; but if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you*" (2 Chronicles 15:2).

The way to God's favor is the way to life, and hope, and peace. As Jesus says, "*I am the way, the Truth, and the life.*" God's love toward His children, who are brought nigh by the blood of His Son, and who continue in that position steadfast and unmovable, is said to be so great that it passeth knowledge! (Ephesians 3:19) It is so great that the whole course of things on the earth is directed and controlled for their (hopefully "our") sakes. "*For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*" (Philippians 2:13) The will of God is free to work in us. If only we could find in ourselves that inner depth of feeling that the power of God is working both as to will and deed in our weak and finite characters, we should in some measure find that the harmony of our own will with that of the Supreme, if difficult, is not impossible.

Men and women today are very distressed. So many have anxious and troubled hearts. Every member of the human race is affected by the iniquity that surrounds us. The evil are desperate, the good are grieved, and none are able to control things. The majority of men have not peace either inside, or out. Neither can the children of God have peace unless their hearts and minds are settled on the testimony and the power and love of God. The peace which Jesus gives is "*not as the world giveth*"; not the external peace, but peace within attained through a good conscience and clear understanding of God and His plan. If then, in times of worldly trouble or anxiety, we can find confident assurance of peace within our hearts, may we not with some sincerity feel that we have come a long way finding the "*peace which passeth understanding.*"

This morning we'll briefly look at peace in four different aspects or applications.

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1) There is first of all, peace with God. Paul says "*being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*" This is a peace that

the children of this world know nothing about, because they know nothing of the distress of being at enmity with Him. Their conscience is in that state described by Peter as being "*seared with a hot iron.*" In this state, men have no feeling of distress on account of their separation from God, and therefore, no appreciation of the preferred reconciliation through Christ. When the Word of God comes powerfully home to the mind, distress comes, because we are made to realize our position as mere tolerated sinners, "*alienated and enemies in our mind by wicked works*" (Colossians 1:21). But let the Word of God go far enough, and it brings peace. It is noteworthy how the mere reading of the scriptures can produce the effect of peace in the mind. Peace belongs to God. Peace is the aim of all His work and the end of all His ways. Whether saint or sinner, righteous or wicked — peace, in one shape or another, is the final end...the peace of glory, or the peace of death. "Peace on earth and goodwill among men" will come at last. If a man is at peace with God, he is inside a fortress that protects him in all other directions. He can triumphantly ask with Paul, "*If God be for us, who can be against us?*" or as the Psalmist declares, "*Great peace have they that love thy law; nothing shall them offend.*"

2) Then there is peace with the brothers and Sisters. Jesus commanded this: "*Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace one with another.*" It certainly follows among all who are truly at peace with God, for as John says, "*He that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him.*" If two men love God, however much strangers they may be to one another, you have only to bring them together to have two men who will, (who should), love one another — and love, true love, always brings peace. If we don't have peace with our Brothers and Sisters, then it is a symptom of possibly serious problems and needs to be examined and addressed. We are to love one another, even as we have been loved. This is how it will be when thousands at the resurrection who have never even heard of one another, for in different ages they were conformed to a common divine likeness. How complete, how sweet, how lasting is the peace that reigns among men who are all at peace with God. Give them only a common incorruptibility of nature that will exclude the possibility of weariness or death, and theirs is perfect peace that will never be disturbed.

3) We have not only peace with the brethren, but peace with all men — and peace even with our enemies. "*Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord*" (Hebrews 12:14). This may seem to contradict the statement that "*in the world ye shall have tribulation.*" The tribulation arises from the hostility of evil men towards us; this we cannot avoid and cannot prevent. But our side of the question is how we feel towards them. This is different altogether. Christ was a man of sorrows through the opposition of evil men; but as for his attitude toward them, he prayed from them. "*Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.*" Righteous men suffer at the hands of evil men, but they have none of the vindictive, angry, and vengeful feelings that evil men bear to one another. The righteous do not nurse anger. They do not plot revenge. They are ready even to do good

to them if they get the opportunity. They leave them entirely in God's hands. In this sense, they are at peace with all men. It is indeed a very, very difficult thing to do, but those who do reap an advantage from it, for as it is written, "*The merciful man doeth good to his own soul,*" whereas, "*envy slayeth the silly one.*"

4) There is a fourth type of peace that comes with the Truth, which is also very important: we are at peace with ourselves. This is the meaning of the answer of a good conscience. When a man is enlightened with regard to what God requires of him, and knows that he is daily rendering what is so required, he is at peace in himself. This is a peace, as Jesus said, that the world cannot give. The Truth can give peace, and in this it can preserve a man amid all the troubles and turmoil's of life. Not that we will never know trouble; a righteous man cannot be in this present evil world without knowing trouble, but there is a trouble that is outside and a trouble that is inside, as regards causes. Christ's troubles were great, but they were all outside; inside, peace was his experience - "*my peace*" as he called it. So it will be with his brethren and sisters. They may know trouble among men, but in their own hearts towards God, peace should reign.

"*Come my people, enter thou into thy chamber, and shut thy doors about thee,*" says Isaiah. We see the parallel not only in Israel in Egypt, and in Noah's day, but also in our own. Christ is the "ark of safety"; in him alone is assurance from the deluge that will sweep away the present order of things. When we are together here, remote from the world outside, perhaps we feel safe in the assurance of God's protection; yet when in the world and struggling with life's daily tasks, we find ourselves alone. Temptations beset us, our spiritual courage seems altogether weak. The strength of spirit we have, when we're with others, now evades us. Our peace with God and His Son is difficult to find, and our hearts and minds lose their harmony, and we become troubled in spirit. Do you not think that Jesus felt this too? It is his example we are to follow, and in his darkest hour, when all other avenues of strength and support were failing, Christ turned to God and he found comfort. We should not let God be our last place to go – our last resort – He should be our first.

When the hour was about to come for him to be crucified, John records that Jesus said, "*Now is my soul troubled, what shall I say?*" Have you ever felt so troubled that you were at a loss for words? Christ follows with, "*Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour*" (John 12:27). The conflict in the mind and spirit of Christ at that time was not different fundamentally from the trials we bear. Some would wonder how in the life of the Son of God a struggle of this nature could exist. That it did there is not the slightest doubt. That troubled soul asked, "What shall I say?"

The words of Matthew 26:38, "*My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death,*" a vivid contrast to the majestic words of the prayer of Christ in John 17. There is a contrast between the triumphant serenity that had been seen up to this point and the anguish and distress, which were now apparent. 147

The change has its many analogies in the experience of those who are nearest to their Master in character and sufferings. They too know how suddenly they may pass from confidence and joy to sorrow and distress. In the cross of Christ we see the possible, coming out of the seeming impossible; out of sorrow came joy and peace. Thus we are told *"he learned obedience by the things which he suffered"* (Hebrews 5:8). Yet in his prayer, *"If it be possible"*, we recognize the necessary limits of Christ's nature. In the spiritual world peace cannot be attained except through the appointed and necessary way of obedience and suffering. *"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee."* "Stayed" — implies permanence, consistency, total dependence and dedication. "Trust" — means full faith, and confidence. So to reread the verse, putting some of these words in also...

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is [permanently dedicated to thee and consistently] on thee, because he trusteth [with full faith and confidence] in thee." But only in this way can we ultimately find that "peace which passeth understanding."

What is the application of all of these facts but the one formulated by Paul: *"Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we let them slip."* Let us keep close to Bible things. Let us avoid everything that would hide them from our view. Let us keep clear of things that would weaken our hold on them. Thus shall we preserve the peace of God with which the Truth can fill the heart and mind; and be helped in the attainment of that everlasting peace which awaits the sons of peace in the day of Jerusalem's exaltation *"when sorrow and sighing shall flee away."*

*Bro. Shauywn Smith*

## **With Fear and Trembling**

Again we have the privilege of meeting around the table of the Lord. May we be edified and strengthened together, so we may walk in that straight and narrow path throughout the coming week when we are apart. Lately in our Elpis Israel Sunday School class, as well as our daily readings, the ritual of circumcision has been often the subject of our attention.

I would like to share with you a few thoughts of importance. They are not new thoughts but necessary ones, and within these thoughts on circumcision hangs our eternal destiny. Christ, being a natural born Jew, was circumcised on the eighth day as required by the law, but the lesson we are to get from him is the example he set for us by his life. Circumcision is literally the cutting off of the flesh. Christ has shown us how, and requires that we likewise follow in his steps in carrying out, or in other words "living out" what the literal circumcision represented. Circumcision of the heart, which is by nature desperately wicked and deceitful as the sparks fly upward. This is what Christ accomplished, he cut off these natural desires of the heart and replaced them 148 with the fruits of the spirit which are: Love; Joy; Peace; Longsuffering;

Gentleness; Goodness; Faith; Meekness and Temperance. This is what God requires and this is our goal each and every day.

Though we often fail so miserably, we must never give up. To be circumcised of the heart, to cut off the deeds of the flesh which by nature dwells in each of us and tries untiringly to bring us under subjection to its evil desires, this is what we must do. We must overcome the desire to cut off the faults of others. We must diligently strive to cut off our own faults. We are exhorted: Search out your salvation with fear and trembling. Let us not stop reading this scripture short, let us continue reading after "search out your salvation" and not neglect the weight carried by the last three words of this verse "fear and trembling." With fear and trembling only, will we be able to stand on the day of judgment. Let us look within ourselves. Do we personally have enough fear and trembling within ourselves to please God? He and He only knows. How then, can we possibly judge whether another Brother or Sister is searching out their salvation with enough fear and trembling? We can only pray they are.... God alone knows.... We must point an accusing finger, not at another Brother or Sister, but at our own selves as if looking for the guilty in the mirror. Judge not that ye be not judged but let a man examine himself and so let him eat. Remember the story of the good Samaritan... He that fell among thieves was nursed back to health, not by the priest nor by the Levite but by the lowly Samaritan.

What is Jesus command to us? "Go and do thou likewise." Can we do likewise as the good Samaritan if we have ought against our Brother or Sister? What does the spirit word say to the friends of Christ? "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your father also, which is in Heaven may forgive you your trespasses." the enemy we must overcome is within ourselves. Surely, we must remember what Nathan the prophet said to King David. David, expressing his outrage at the rich man's selfish slaughter of the poor man's only lamb, said: "The man that hath done this thing shall surely die." What was Nathan's reply? "Thou art the man." It is a well known fact that an enemy that can't be seen, can't be conquered. Therefore for us to overcome our own nature we must see our own faults. We must recognize our own shortcomings and pray for the strength to overcome them, to conquer even to crucify the weaknesses of the flesh that everyone of us bares each and every day. How serious are the weaknesses within? To answer this question we will turn to the scriptures, and nowhere to be found is the answer and plainer than it is in Proverbs 6:16-19. Rather than try to think of someone who is guilty of the characteristics listed, let each of us examine our own selves to see if any of these fit us personally.

It is written: *"These six things doth the Lord hate, yea seven are an abomination unto him. A proud look...a lying tongue... and hands that shed innocent blood. A heart that deviseth wicked imaginations...ftet that be swift in running to mischief ..A false witness that speaketh lies.... And he that soweth discord among Brethren...."* Obviously, these things which God hates, are serious enough to keep us out of the Kingdom, if, we do not

overcome them!!! *"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God."* In conclusion let each of us cling to the Word of God and the principles we are instructed to conform our lives to.

The end is growing near when before the judgment seat of Christ we must appear, when we reach the end of the road we travel and the sun of this life is set for the last time, may we, Brothers and Sisters, hear those blessed words of our Lord and Master: *"Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."*

Bro. Dylan Foley

## The Veil and the Most Holy Place

*"Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek,. Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;"* (Hebrews 6:17-20)

In Hebrews 6 we are told that Jesus, having been made a high priest after the order of Melchizedek has passed through the veil into the Most Holy Place.

Brother Thomas puts it this way in Eureka, Vol. iii, page 284-285

"The two places of the tabernacle were the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place, which were divided the one from the other by the Veil. Even so it is with "the holies, the true tabernacle which the Lord pitches, and not man" (Hebrews 8:2). There are the Holy Heavenly State and the Most Holy Heavenly State, divided by the Flesh. The holy must be entered before the Most Holy can be reached; and to pass corporeally from the one into the other, the individual must put on incorruptibility and become immortal; for, so long as he is in mortal flesh he is outside.

The Veil

The flesh is represented by the veil...

*Exodus 26:33, "And thou shalt hang up the veil under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither within the veil the ark of the testimony: and the veil shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy."*

In contrast to the curtain in the front of the sanctuary which was a hanging of fine linen, embroidered in blue, purple and scarlet, and supported by golden hooks on five pillars of shittim wood overlaid with gold and standing in brass 150 sockets...

The veil was a more extravagant curtain, embroidered with cherubim, hung on four such pillars, with silver sockets, dividing the holy from the most holy place. The cherubic pattern spoke of an ultimate manifestation of God in man. It was called the veil, because it hid from the eyes of everyone but the high priest, the inmost sanctuary, where Jehovah dwelt on his mercy-seat, between the cherubim above the ark. Hence "to enter within the veil" is to have the closest access to God; which Jesus does at this time. The Law took men as far as the Veil, as it were, but not into the perfection and eternity symbolized beyond. Everything pertaining to the Law stopped short at the Veil as it separated the Most Holy Place from the Holy Place. The Most Holy Place symbolized eternal fellowship with God. It signified that the Law could not transcend the limits of this mortal life; it could not relate men to immortality.

The higher a man's theocratic rank, the higher were his privileges and the correspondingly more stringent were his responsibilities. For instance, the Levite could minister only in the Court, and the priest could proceed no further than the Veil.

The supreme privilege of access into the Most Holy Place (that is, symbolically, into the very presence of God) was reserved for the High Priest. This ascending scale of values was also reflected in the entrances to each section of the tabernacle. A view of the hangings forming the Gate of the Court, the Door of the Holy Place and the Veil shows this. Here we see, the nearer the approach to God, the higher the value of the metals involved:

The hanging forming the Gate of the Court was suspended on silver hooks attached to brass pillars set in brass sockets;

The hanging for the Door of the Holy Place was suspended on gold hooks, attached to gold-covered pillars of acacia wood, set in brass sockets;

The Veil barring access to the Most Holy Place was likewise suspended on gold hooks and attached like the latter to gold-covered pillars of acacia wood, but these were set in silver sockets.

The veil was only passed by the high priest once a year, on the Day of Atonement, in token of the mediation of Christ, who with his own blood hath entered for us within the veil which separates God's own abode from earth.

On the Day of Atonement, when Aaron was to enter the Most Holy Place, he did not go in as a typical Levitical priest. He put off his distinctive garments and put on special holy garments in their place, to show that it was not the Law as administered by its appointed priesthood, which effected access into the eternal state, which the Most Holy Place symbolized, but another system of reconciliation altogether (Lev 16:4). To bring this point home more emphatically, the Law went to the extent of excluding all of the priesthood from the Tabernacle while the High Priest went into the Most Holy Place as evidenced by the writings in Leviticus 16:17

*"And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and 151*

*have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel."*

"No man", said the Law: the choice of word is significant. Man is mortal, flesh; the Most Holy Place typified immortality, spirit; so that whenever man, as such, was in the Tabernacle, the Veil, as a symbol of the flesh, had to stand as a barrier before him, saying "Thus far and no further". Who then was the officiating priest who could proceed beyond the Veil? It was truly a man, but clearly something more than *man...* "*even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.*"

### **The Most Holy Place**

As previously mentioned, the Most Holy Place was reserved for the High Priest as it pointed forward to those who ultimately attain to that glory, being made like unto Christ, possessing divine nature of immortality.

*1 John 3:2, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."*

The Most Holy Place therefore suggests Glorification, the physical manifestation of God.

It was the innermost of the three sanctuaries. It was half the size of the Holy Place, and formed a cube, which to the Hebrews was a symbol of perfection. There stood the Ark only, with the Mercy Seat over it, overshadowed by the Cherubim.

*Exodus 25:21-22, "And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel."*

"*There I will meet with thee*", said God to Moses. How revealing was this, how emphatic an assertion that God was essentially a moral being; His glory would be revealed from above the Testimony which declared His will in terms of holy living. Yet not from above the Testimony only, for over that was the Mercy Seat, to be sprinkled once yearly with atoning blood that there might be forgiveness for Israel of "all their transgressions in all their sins" (Lev 16). How forcibly this taught the etiquette of acceptable worship showing that no fellowship of man with God was possible except upon the basis of atonement for his sin.

Yet, once such atonement had been effected, fellowship was possible, and eternal fellowship at that, for that was what the Most Holy Place symbolized.

In it everything was of a permanent nature in contrast to the Holy Place which represented mortal life; the oil, coals, incense, loaves and drink offering, all were in need of being replenished or replaced in keeping with the figurative value of the Holy Place as a symbol of mortal Israel in fellowship 152 with God.

**Turning our attention to the ark...**

We see its first and most characteristic feature is its capacity as a container. It was constructed to receive the tables of the law, inscribed by the finger of God: Aaron's rod that budded, and a golden pot containing a sample of the manna with which God fed Israel in the wilderness for forty years.

Taking these items separately, we shall see the most perfect correspondence between shadow and substance. The Christ-body in the largest sense is a container and not merely a society of men and women ignorant of God and interested only in themselves. It is a society with internal contents to make it precious to God and beneficial to man.

First of all, the law of God, as represented by the **tables of stone**, is written in the heart of each believer as they go through the waters of baptism. It is this that distinguishes them from the ordinary run of human beings. It is obedience to divine law that makes a man well-pleasing to God, beautiful to his fellow man, and fit for divine use in the age to come. The purpose is to give the earth into the hands of an order of men who have learned obedience as the first law. Paul testifies that even Christ "*learnt obedience by the things which he suffered,*" (Hebrews 5:8), and Peter describes the accepted members of his body as "*obedient children, not fashioning themselves according to the former lusts in their ignorance.*"

The Psalms are full of examples of this principle: indeed we may say it shines everywhere in the Scriptures: "*The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment. The law of his God is in his heart: none of his steps shall slide*"(Psa 37:30). Christ affirmed of himself that it was his meat and his drink to do the will of Him that sent him.

How happy will the earth be when it is in the hands of men like Joseph who "fear God", and whose controlling feeling towards all forbidden things is, "*How shall I do this great wickedness and sin against God?*"

How different will such an order of men be from the arrogant and merciless possessors of power in the present evil world. When Joseph's brethren rule the world, God, in them, will be seated on the anti-typical throne of His holiness, resting on the anti-typical table-furnished ark, consisting of His manifested sons, on whose hearts the law is written.

This will be the blessedness promised from the beginning for "all families of the earth". The blessing of Moses, the man of God, pronounced upon Israel, will then be applicable to all: "*Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, who is the sword of thy excellency?*" Then may it truly be proclaimed to the ends of the earth of what is written in the 98<sup>th</sup> Psalm:

*"O sing unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvelous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory. (2) The LORD hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of the heathen. (3) He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. (4) Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a* 153

loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. (S) Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm. [6] With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the LORD, the King. (7) Let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof of the world, and they that dwell therein. (8) Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together (9) Before the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.

"**Aaron's rod that budded**" was the next object contained in the ark. This dead stick sprung to life, with its unfading buds, blossom and fruit, serving as symbols of the spiritual life of the Priestly People now at last come to fruition serving as a perpetual token.

It represented a similar but not an identical principle to the one symbolized by the tables of the law. The tables of the law represented the will of God as the rule of life in everything. The budded rod stood for the principle of divine choice and appointment as the basis of acceptable service.

We see this when we consider the history of the rod. It originated in the rebellion of Korah and his company against Moses and Aaron (Num 16:1). They were envious of Moses and Aaron, and accused them of taking too prominent a place and making themselves over-important in the congregation. Turning their thoughts on themselves, they argued that they were equally entitled to the authority of the priesthood, seeing they had equally been the subjects of deliverance from Egypt, and of sanctification by divine choice. "Ye take too much upon you", said they to Moses and Aaron. Moses answered that Moses and Aaron were nothing in the case: that Korah and his company were setting themselves against the Lord's appointment. But Korah and his company were inaccessible to reason, as envious men usually are, and the dispute had to be brought to a divine settlement—which was very effectual. Korah and his company were swallowed up in an hole of the earth which opened under their feet, and closed upon them again. But this settlement, though effectual so far as they were concerned, did not stop the murmurs of their sympathizers in the congregation, who were numerous.

These attributed the overthrow to the power of Moses: *"Ye have slain the people of the Lord."* It was here that the rod came in: *"The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and take of every one of them a rod according to the house of their fathers . . . twelve rods: write thou every man's name upon his rod. And thou shalt write Aaron's name on the rod of Levi . . . And thou shalt lay them up in the tabernacle of the congregation before the testimony, where I will meet with you. And it shall come to pass that the man's rod whom I shall choose shall blossom . . . And Moses laid up the rods before the Lord in the tabernacle of witness. And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds. And Moses brought out all the rods from before the Lord unto all the children of Israel: and they looked, and took every 154 man his rod. And the Lord said unto Moses, Bring Aaron's rod again*

*before the testimony, to be kept for a token against the rebels; and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from me, that they die not," Numbers 17.*

Thus the budded rod (sheltered in the ark of the testimony) stood for the principle of divine appointment as against the voice of the people in the matter of divine service.

It was fitting that this principle should receive expression in the allegorical ark: for it not only lay at the bottom of the whole Mosaic institution as a system in literal use in Israel, but is at the root of the anti-typical Christ institution, and is, we might say, the natural basis of that institution and of all corporate arrangements among men capable of yielding them blessedness.

There is something in the budding of the rod peculiarly appropriate to the anti-typical bearings of the case. The budding showed a resuscitation of life in a dead rod by divine power as proof of a divine selection. Who can fail to see in this the foreshadowing of the kind of "assurance unto all men," which Paul declared at Athens.

God had already given of His purpose in Christ, in raising him from the dead, and which He will again give in the resurrection of His people. Christ was not only the chosen of God, to draw near to him as the anti-typical Aaron, but he was proved to be such, in being brought to life again after being put to death by the murmuring people. The budded rod deposited inside the ark of the covenant seems a prophecy of this.

In the Most Holy Place, everything was of a permanent nature. We see this in the last thing placed in the ark. **The sample of manna**, provided by God in the days Israel sojourned in the wilderness, didn't corrupt.

The significance of this in its application to Christ becomes perfectly plain when we consider the facts of the type and the hints of interpretation that fell from his lips.

The two main facts in the type were that the manna came from heaven, and that the children of Israel were so situated that if they had not received it, they must have perished.

Almost of their own force, they speak of eternal life through Christ. This meaning becomes absolutely certain in the presence of Christ's promise "*to him that overcometh*" of permission to "eat of the hidden manna", for we read in..

*Rev 2:17, "He that hath an ear, let him heqr what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."*

And of his declaration during a conversation on the Mosaic manna that he is the living bread that came down from heaven, whereof if a man eat, he shall not die, John 6:51.

*"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."*

This interpretation involves the doctrine that man is mortal, and will die apart from Christ; and also the truth that Christ is not of human origin, as some may allege, but of Divine origin by the Holy Spirit in the way narrated in Luke 1:35.

*"And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."*

For us, we partake of that living bread each day we read and study God's word in the Bible. A portion each and every day, to strengthen us, that we may overcome. How else could it be done?

### **Concerning the Mercy Seat and Cherubim...**

The cover-lid or mercy seat was all of gold. This is an intimation that the Mediator (who is the anti-typical propitiatory or mercy seat) should be without fault, and would exercise his function as intercessor in the immortal state. Nothing but gold (the costliest of the three metals used in the Sanctuary) was fit to adorn the Most Holy Place. "Blue and purple and scarlet", was the order of the colors used in the yarns (Exodus 35:6); "gold and silver and brass" was its counterpart when it came to metals. The lesson taught by color was also taught by metal.

The over-arching cherubic glory-bearers were also all of gold and of one piece with the mercy-seat. The Cherubim typified the ideal Israel now having achieved its destiny (since from between them shone forth the brilliance of God's glory). It was this sacred place that beckoned Israel forward and stood as the goal of its priestly calling. Here was the very heart of the Sanctuary, the Presence of Yahweh Himself, that condition of perfect and permanent fellowship with Him who had redeemed Israel specifically to manifest His glory in and through them.

This takes us forward to the kingdom when the perfect mediator will also be the perfect ruler of all the earth; for the cherubic figures relate to the day of power.

Yet since the glory to be revealed springs out of the sufferings of Christ, therefore the cherubic figures stand upon and form part of the blood-sprinkled cover-lid or mercy-seat.

The glory shining out between the out-spread cherubic wings and resting on the mercy-seat represents the active participation of the Eternal Father, without whom the whole apparatus would be meaningless, and its whole prophecy impossible of fulfillment.

The ark and its belongings were the allegorical form of God's purposed manifestation among men for their salvation and the honor of His name; but without God Himself, it would have had no power or truth.

Therefore, the apparatus was incomplete as a symbol until the glory of 156 God had taken possession. In it we see God at every stage.

God in creation,  
God in the promises,  
God in the Egyptian deliverance,  
God in the prophets, and...

when Christ appeared God in a more direct and especial form—the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ—Emmanuel -- whose return and enthronement upon the earth will be the pitching of the tabernacle of God with men.

One Eternal Father in glorious manifestation of kindness, wisdom, justice and power.

We today are in the position of the Israelites when they awaited the return of Aaron from within the Tabernacle on the Day of Atonement. Jesus having gone into heaven will as assuredly return. For those who look for him, he shall appear the second time without sin, unto salvation (Heb :24-28).

How, then, does a sinner come to "pass through the veil?" By being "transformed in the renewing of his mind" "by knowledge" (Rom 12:2; Col 3:10); that he may discern and do "that good and acceptable and perfect will of the Deity." In other words, by believing the gospel of the kingdom and name; and being immersed into and upon that name. In so doing, he enters into the Holy Heavenly State. By faith in "the Truth as it is in Jesus," and obedience, he puts on Christ, and is therefore "in Him;" and being in him, he is constitutionally holy or a saint; and sitting together with him in the Most Holy, not personally, or corporeally rather; but by faith. This is his present adoption through Jesus Christ, by which he becomes a son of Deity, of Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac, and a Brother of Christ himself (Gal 3:26-29); and a "dweller in the heaven".

We have considered the things of the Tabernacle today and its various aspects. And we cannot fail to observe the exacting and detailed specifications laid out by God in its development in accordance with divine standards. When we consider the work done, one outstanding feature to note is the faithfulness with which the specifications were observed in its construction. Moses said, "they had done the work as the Lord had commanded." And that is exactly what we are expected to do. Suppose some of them had said, "Why be so particular? Why make fifty loops in each curtain, when forty would do?" Another might have said, "Why make the boards ten cubits long, when they will be easier to handle if they are only six cubits long?" If they had not shown care and attention to the detailed instructions, the result would have been an imperfect Tabernacle, and such an edifice could not have served as a symbol of the Mosaic example, and shadow of heavenly things.

God has given us plans to build our life after the blueprint of the life of Jesus. He is our example. It is sort of like a jigsaw puzzle, on the face of the box you see the completed picture, but then you have to work with patience, constantly referring back to the example, to find the pieces and put them together. If we diligently follow the example given to us in the Bible, we 157

will be able to follow the plans with all its details and we will share in the joy that God has promised and will participate in the building of His kingdom when Jesus returns.

No less than 100% of our effort must be given to God's service. We must love Him with all our heart, soul and might; surrendering to Him the fat and strongest portion of our lives; living by every word that proceedeth out of His mouth; yielding ourselves to the influence of His Spirit; doing all things, however menial, as unto Him and solely to His glory. Then, in His mercy, when Jesus returns and the earth shall be full of His glory, He will be pleased to dwell in us and admit us into that perfect and eternal fellowship with Him and with His Son, our Saviour and our King.

Jude 1:24-25, *"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, (25) To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen."*

*Bro. Leonard Nagliari*

## MEDITATION

Brethren and Sisters of the same True faith,

Allow me to share with you my mind on this subject on Meditation.

To benefit from the food we eat, it has first to be valuable by having the necessary nutrients, be well prepared then be served and eaten in an orderly manner. That is physical food that has to undergo different stages in digestion to be finally absorbed into the body and be useful to us in either building, protecting or energy giving. If it is not well digested and acted upon by the relevant enzymes in the alimentary canal then it will not be useful to us.

A preacher once likened his meditation of the Word of God to eating meat and potatoes. He said, eating meat was like meditating a little over the Word of God while reading the Word of God was likened to eating potatoes.

In the Scripture, Deuteronomy 6 verse 6-7 says, *"These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."* Brethren, we need to read the Word of God to the way a cow eats grass. -- It chews, swallows, brings it up -- chews, swallows, bring it up -- chews, swallows, brings it up.

What the cow eats doesn't become useful food until it enters the second stomach. In the same way, the Word of God only becomes food to us when we have chewed it over "and finally digested it."

For the Word of God to be helpful to us and be spiritual fruits, we must read it, memorize, emphasize and also important, personalize it the same way 158 the servant of God David did. He said, "Psalm 23:1,

1. "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." --(Memorize it)
2. "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." --(Emphasize it)
3. "The Lord is My Shepherd, I shall not want."--(Personalize it)

In many occasions Brethren, many have failed to personalize the Scripture and have seemed to feel that the Word read is intended for those of the times or others of our generation, but not we in persons. The Scripture tells us that the Word become ALIVE when we speak it or confess it. Romans 10 verse 8 says, *"For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."*

Hosea further tells us in Chapter 14 verse 2: *"Take words with you and return to the Lord."* Brethren, we have to learn the Scripture for life situations. We shall only be deemed to be knowledgeable in Scripture by our life style. It is the WORD that can shape us to live a life conducive to God - That is a holy life. *"My God shall supply all my needs according to His riches in Christ Jesus."*

When we meditate according to the W.O.R.D., we grow up in;

**Wisdom** -- James 1:5 says, God gives it free. You only need to ask; *"if any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.."*

**Obedience** --How can we know His commandments? John 14:21 reads, *"Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."*

**Revelation** -- It is the spirit of God that can make us understand His Word -John 16:13 says, *"But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth."* Let's seek to know the Truth.

**Direction** --It is only the Word of God that will teach us the right things to do. Psalm 119:33 says *"Teach me, O Lord, to follow your decrees; then I will keep them to the end."*

Brethren and Sisters of Berean Ecclesias, we ought to be serious in studying the Word of God and be faithful in keeping it to the return of Our Messiah.

With a lot of love and best wishes to all of the same faith in the New Year 2002.

*Bro. Francis Ogama*

## **Principles of Righteousness - To Sisters on Clothing**

Principles of Righteousness - what does that mean? It means the important parts of righteous behavior, or commands that we are given. Sometimes we view these principles as limits to what we can do, or burdensome rules we must obey. How much better and pleasing to God if we see these principles as loving guidance from one who wants the best for us, as well as a chance for us to show our joy and love to our heavenly father by following them. 159

Psalms 35:27 illustrates this thought for us, *"Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant."*

To magnify the Lord with joy, each principle of righteousness should be embraced and gladly made a consistent part of our lives. One part of our conduct that God has lovingly given us guidance on is our clothing. How we dress? Can that really be important?

On even a natural level, we can see that the way people dress says a lot about them. Someone interviewing for a prestigious job is careful to dress in a way that says they are tidy, respectful, and business-like. Someone going to a wedding is careful to dress in a way that shows they realize that marriage is a special occasion. The rich often dress in a way that shows their wealth and position. The rebellious like to dress in a way to shock others. The prostitutes dress in a way to show their bodies are open for use. The famous female entertainment stars often dress in a similar way, and just what does their dress say?

Maybe it is saying "Don't you just wish you could have me? Don't you just wish you could be like me?" And many guys do wish they could have her, and many girls do wish they could be just like her. Many girls dress with the same sense of immodesty, our society's standards of decent clothing go down, and we find that what should be shocking to us is common.

One of the most recent fashions designed to be showy and shocking is a new style of jeans that have a long slender horizontal opening under the beltline in the back, specifically to reveal some curving skin and cleavage from behind. Shocking today, yes! But five years from now, these may be just as common as some of the styles we see today that were shocking not long ago. Recently a 3 year old, pointing to a woman in a bikini, made the innocent observation: "Her naked!" How close to the truth he was. We've got to find a way to draw the line between correct and incorrect clothing, and it cannot be based on what is popular around us.

God graciously gives us help in this area of our conduct. First, we are not to spend a lot of time worrying about how we will get our basic needs of clothing and food. *"Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? " for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."* (Matthew 6:31-33) If God does not wish us to fret over the basic needs of having some clothes to wear, how much less would He want us to strive to have the latest fashions of clothing, complete with all the accessories to match?

Next, let's look at some of the descriptions that God gives us for righteous clothing. 1 Timothy 2:9-10 tells us proper clothing for prayer and gives us plenty to think about; *"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in 160 modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided*

*hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works."*

We are directed to clothe ourselves with modest apparel. This word, modest, may be the best and most important word to describe acceptable clothing. Modest here means decent, proper, moderate, and not showy. The opposite of modest is immodest. Its definitions name such words as forward, bold, excessive, vain, egoistic, boastful, pretentious, extravagant, ostentatious, irreverent. These are ugly words to describe some of the most popular "beauty" fashions of today.

We are instructed to dress with shamefacedness, which means with a sense of modesty, bashfulness, regard for others, and respect. This same original word is also translated as reverence in the Bible. When we learn to trust God's guidance in this aspect, we will be careful to wear only clothing that everyone in the room will see as modest.

Sobriety is the next word to describe proper clothing, which means using self control and moderation. We should be careful not to use clothing to make ourselves look more tempting. The marriage bed is undefiled, but everywhere else requires discretion.

The next three parts of the quoted scripture gives us examples of how not to dress. We are not to dress with broided hair. Broided means embroidered or braided. Surely this represents any excessive care, time, money, or effort spent to beautify our hair.

Then, we are commanded to refrain from dressing with gold or pearls. No definitions are needed here, though I'm sure the terms represent vain or costly jewelry of all kinds. Jewel-like buttons as well as metallic fabric would also fit the category. It is sometimes hard to think of such beautiful things as inappropriate, but we are to realize the true treasures are heavenly and are not displayed *as* body decorations.

And the next thing we are to be aware of is resisting costly array, or clothing. God's money that He has given to us as stewards should be carefully spent. Spending it to make us look more attractive or wealthy is money selfishly spent. Like all stewards, we will eventually have to give account to our master of how we spent His money.

The above quoted scripture concludes with the proper way to adorn ourselves: with good works. Once again we are reminded of true beauty. *"for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart."* (1 Samuel 16:7) Though it may be difficult at first to deny the fleshly desire to adorn ourselves by worldly standards, the spiritual standards will become more and more appreciated as we study and grow in God's Truth.

1 Peter 3:1-6 remind wives to be in subjection to their husbands and once again gives God's instructions on adornment. Adornment is defined as adding to the beauty of something, or dressing with ornaments. ". *Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of* 161

*gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price..."*

Another form of outward adornment that is very popular today is using make-up and nail polish. In a society which pressures us on every side to join the worldwide beauty competition and spend our part of the \$20 billion dollars in American cosmetic sales, we may seem prudish and old-fashioned if we decline to join in. And just what is the definition of prudish? excessively proper or modest in speech, conduct, dress, etc. Proper? Modest? These words sound familiar, don't they? The question we'll all have to come to terms with is this: Do we want to please God or mankind?

With all these helpful guidelines, we still cannot find in the Bible a list of exact details for today's choices of clothing. We may wonder just how much cost is too much, how much skin is too much, and how tight is too tight. Some may try on a piece of clothing and wonder, is this acceptable? If you find yourself wondering, then it is probably not all right. Don't degrade yourself by making excuses and finding loopholes. Let God be magnified through the faithful obedience of his servants.

Let us keep in mind the whole point of the topic: decorate yourself on the inside by developing a spiritual attitude shown by good behavior. Do not decorate yourself on the outside other than with modest apparel in a way that will not attract attention to yourself or promote covetous thoughts among others.

And finally, I end with a note to mothers, grandmothers, Sunday school teachers, and any other Sisters in a position to influence young minds. It is never too early to start teaching to the young ones the importance of proper dress. Of course the best teaching is a good example in our own behavior, but scriptural explanations can help lay the foundation that will have to be strong as the years go by.

## **Titus 1 & 2**

Brothers and Sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ, This morning's study is Titus Chapter 1. There are many exhortations found in this book and many examples to pattern our lives after.

For a beginning, some background of Titus' life. When we understand the background of the person that the letter is directed to, we can understand better the message. Titus' life is a little hard to follow. He is not mentioned directly in Acts, so there is not a chronological list of events of his life.

Titus was convert in the early to middle years of Paul's journeys, for a period of time of over 20 years he is one of Paul's primary helpers. Where we find most of the events of his life mentioned is in the other epistles, which are 162 2 Corinthians, Galatians and 2 Timothy. He was devoted wholeheartedly

to the Truth as we are told in the scriptures. Paul trusted him and gave him responsibility to spread the Truth and try to remedy problems in certain ecclesias and regions such as Corinth and Crete.

Chronologically, we first hear of Titus in Galatians 2:1-3, "Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain."

After Paul's First Missionary Journey, Paul goes to Jerusalem and takes along with him Barnabas and Titus. Although Titus is not mentioned in Acts, going to Jerusalem, the event is confirmed in Acts 15 after some were in uproar in Jerusalem about following the Law of Moses in verse 2," [Acts 15:2] When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and **certain other of them**, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question."

About 5 years later, in Paul's Secondary Journey, Titus is mentioned in 2 Corinthians as leaving for Corinth twice for the problems there while Paul stayed in Ephesus. He is mentioned as forward or diligent as he went on his accord as mentioned in 2 Cor. 8:17. He did not hesitate, when problems arose, he left speedily and was commended later by Paul.

About 10 years later from that point, we hear of Titus again in the epistle written to him. In summary, the epistle was written for Titus and the elders there to seek Godliness. To seek for things above and not below, to pattern our lives after Christ and not the cares of this life, especially for those that are the elders of the ecclesias. He was left in Crete to continue what Paul had started.

The last we hear of Titus, he was in a region called Dalmatia. This is a region of land in the northern portion of modern-day Greece. At first glance in 2Tim 4:10, it appears that Titus is in the company of one (Demas) that forsook Paul. Actually, as we will see tomorrow in chapter 3 of Titus, Paul wanted him to go to Nicopolis, after his first imprisonment to meet up with him and bring others with him in the winter. Dalmatia is close to Nicopolis and that is where we hear that Titus has gone to Dalmatia in 2 Timothy. We can make a lot of assumptions, and people do leave the Truth, but in Titus' case, we can certainly give him the benefit of the doubt that he was following Paul's advice to go to Dalmatia and not forsake Paul.

The epistle and chapter 1 opens with the usual greeting from Paul as a servant of God and Apostle of Christ. Other epistles mention the same type of greeting, but in Titus, he reminds him and us, the hope that we strive for, the Kingdom in his opening remarks. At this point Paul is near to finishing his course. He knows that his death is near and his sights are towards the short pause and then the Kingdom. The epistle to Titus is one of the last ones written from Paul. When we face adversity, we must always set our minds 163

on the things that matter the most and that is the hope of eternal life that God has promised long ago and reiterated time and time again. We must not lose sight of that common hope we share. If we lose hope, we lose faith. Faith and hope are bound together. They mean practically the same thing. Hebrews chapter 11 says, *"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."*

In verse 4 of Titus 1 we have Paul calling Titus "his son." The only other mention of this kind of closeness (At least that I can find) is with Timothy. It seems that Paul had handed out responsibilities to these young Brethren and they performed well. Also with the epistle to Timothy is the greeting, "Grace, mercy and peace", as mentioned in the 2 Timothy 1 *class* this week.

The remaining portion of the chapter has to do with 17 qualifications or guidelines for an elder. Most are common sense and do not need explanation but application. We know what we are supposed to be doing. That is not the problem for Brothers & Sisters, the problem is again, application. Doing what is required of us.

Each one of us has the capability and potential to become an elder, age is not the issue here and is not the definition of an elder in scriptures as we can see in the two examples of Timothy and Titus. The time period in which we live is a probationary period for the Kingdom age. It is a time of preparation. If we are found to be acceptable at the Judgement Seat, our jobs will vary, but the primary purpose of the immortals in the Kingdom age is to be Kings and Priests. An elder is a type or foreshadowing of the state that we hopefully will be in, ruling and praising God eternally in the Kingdom Age.

The two words in the chapter that need the explanation are "bishop" and "ordained". Many churches in the world misuse these terms and made it to their own liking. The phrase, "ordain elders in every city", actually means to appoint elders. Most ecclesias, with some degree of size, have different Brethren that are appointed or usually elected, which would not be much different in the case today. The only difference is that Titus would make sure and oversee that this would happen in a Christ-Like manner. Most ecclesias were set up quickly. Paul, as far as we know, set up the ecclesia at Crete as a stopping point to Rome, for this is the only recorded time that Paul has been to this island. Titus was with Paul up to that point. He was to continue what Paul started in Titus 1:5, "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:"

The term bishop actually means "overseer". This word bishop occurs 5 times in the Bible, which 3 out of 5 are found in 1 Timothy and Titus. Many of the same qualifications for an elder found in Titus are found in 1 Timothy.

The qualification of overseers begins with being blameless. That means put away things of this world that would cause blame and accusation. Another 164 definition would be to stay away from the appearance of evil as

1Thessalonians 5:22 puts it. A mere association can put blame on us and it is so easy to be caught in the phrase "guilty by association". Elders are examples to others in the ecclesia. They may not and should not be the pattern to live our lives up to, that is reserved for Christ. He is the only pattern to live our lives up to. So there is a difference between being a pattern and being an example.

The next group of qualifications are character-based, again following after the pattern of Christ. "Not soon angry", "No striker", "Not self-willed" or selfish. These all have to do with our characters. The word "soon" in "not soon angry" is not in the original and seems like it was put there by the translators to weaken the command.

The next group of qualifications are positive character builders, "Lovers of hospitality", "Lovers of good men", "sober", "just", "holy", "temperate". The first two have to do with love. "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. These are two of the greatest commandments we should follow. Having this love we will become steady-minded, self-controlled, separate from worldly things and just.

Later, Paul tells us primarily why elders should be this way, because of those that apostatize the Truth, the gainsayers, the vain-talkers and the deceivers. These for filthy-lucre's sake corrupt the Truth. It is hard to believe that someone during that day or even now would corrupt the Truth for money sake. Usually, it is for some other reason that the Truth is corrupted, selfishness mostly.

These people, are to be stopped, says Paul and rebuke them sharply. As 2 Timothy tells us, avoid vain babbling and foolish talking. They do not lead to anything but destruction. Making generalizations about people is also wrong and again lead to destruction as Paul mentions about those who generalized the Cretians. Our mouths can be a wonderful tool, such as to spread the Gospel, or it can be a destructive weapon to harm Brothers and Sisters.

If we are pure, we will behave purely. In reverse, those that are not, those that are defiled, nothing is pure. Their very conscience is defiled. We know we are down a dark path when our conscience does not work anymore. When the temptations of this world grab hold on us without even a struggle. A question that we must ask ourselves, is our conscience healthy? This week is a time to purify ourselves, to get away from the world and its problems and be renewed by the Word of God.

But how do we recognize those people that are not pure? Jesus, just like Paul, describes these people the same way, **by their works**. Jesus mentions in Matthew 7, beware of false prophets that come in sheep's clothing. They are again known by their works or fruits.

The theme of the letter to Titus is Godliness. We have looked at the background of a portion of life dedicated to the furtherance of the Gospel. We have looked at some of the attributes of elders and what they should be. 165

We already know these points, we have been exhorted time and time again on these very subjects. The problem is the application or fruits.

Bro. Tim Stinchcomb

## Titus 2 & 3

The epistle or letter to Titus is divided into two parts. In the first, Paul directs Titus to appoint elders in the ecclesias that needed them. To aid Titus in this task, Paul gives Titus a list of qualifications to look for in those he is to consider for the position.

In the next part, chapters 2 and 3, Paul gives Titus another list. This time it is a list of sound doctrines and exhortations that he recommends and foolish questions he warns Titus to avoid in his efforts to strengthen and upbuild the brethren in the ecclesias he is to visit.

These lists are not only relevant to Titus and the tasks that he had to accomplish, but can be extremely profitable to us if we apply them to ourselves and to our own walk and conduct.

To help the discussion, I would like to say a few words about lists in general and three specific lists that may help us to understand the importance of the lists Titus is presented.

First of all, what is a list? Webster's dictionary gives many definitions, but the only relevant one is this: A series of names or related items.

We are surrounded by lists--at school, at home and at work. We are constantly either being given them or making them ourselves. But why? Why do we make lists? When we write a list, it is often because we want to remember the items it contains. Therefore, these items must be of some importance.

Let us briefly consider three lists that I have made or that had some importance to me in the recent past. First, I made a list of things to pack for this gathering at Hye. I wanted to keep my mind and efforts centered on the gathering and not to become distracted and preoccupied with efforts to obtain items that I had forgotten to pack.

We can compare our journey to get here with our journey along the path to the kingdom and eternal life. We are on this journey together, and we all have needs. However, unlike the journey here, we cannot simply load a few suitcases and live out of them until the kingdom. Even though we must eat our bread by the sweat of our face, we must keep the kingdom and the things of the kingdom first and foremost in our hearts and minds. Christ promised if we seek first the kingdom of God all other things would be added unto us.

Secondly, for those of us who flew to Texas, a list that is of great importance to us is the pilot's pre-flight checklist. The pilot checks the

operation of the plane's controls as well as its condition. He does this to make 166 sure that the plane is in good working condition. He wants to deliver the passengers and plane safely to their destination and needs to assess if the plane is up to the task.

We also need to examine ourselves. Are we doing or trying to do what God asks of us? Are we in the condition to make it to our destination or are we going to fall short and miss the mark?

Thirdly, a resume is a list of qualities and experiences a candidate for a job has. Many of us have written resumes. We know the requirements for the job and want to show that we are qualified for the given position.

We all know what kind of people God wants in His kingdom. Again, we must examine ourselves to see if we are indeed in this category, and if not, what do we need to add, remove, or improve in our characters in order to become so.

With this in mind, let us compare ourselves with the lists that Paul gave to Titus, as well as the many other similar lists that we find in the Bible.

Bro. Antonio LaBarbera

## **Thoughts Gleaned By The Way By A Wayfarer**

*"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths" Proverbs 3:5,6.*

To those who understand, believe and accept in faith and love what God has promised, and devote their studies to finding out what God would have them do, and be not forgetful hearers, but doers of the Word; these are God's children, whose lives are directed by His Almighty power.

These are the special objects of His care; they are blessed or chastened according to their spiritual needs. They rely not on their own ideas of what is right and wrong, but what is revealed in His Word. It is *"the man of their counsel."*

What a glorious, comforting thought! That He is always "a God at hand" to all who trust in His Word.

Whatever our circumstances may be, wherever we go, we can still say with the sweet Psalmist:

*"Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."*

*Bro. Oscar Beauchamp - Dec. 64*

## What Does That Mean?

*"If a woman have conceived seed, and born a man child: then she shall be unclean seven days... And she shall then continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days... But if she bear a maid child, then she shall be unclean two weeks:— and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying threescore and six days."*

(Leviticus 12: 2-5)

Why would a woman be unclean twice as long for the female birth than for the birth of a son?

As we said last month the problem addressed here is a type or lesson to "bring us unto Christ." There are two explanations each approaches the subject from a different viewpoint, yet both teach the same lesson in Christ.

The first suggests that the cleansing of the female took twice as much time as the male because, as the bride of Christ we require a two-fold cleansing, where he simply required a single one. Christ was of our nature and required cleansing for the sin-nature that he bore, but he was undefiled in mind and absolutely pure as far as personal transgression. He therefore required no cleansing as pertaining to the conscience. This was the male, the only begotten son, but as for the female (his bride) we see a different picture. Here we have a two-fold process, not only do we need cleansing for our sin cursed nature but there are also personal transgressions that need to be forgiven and removed. This lesson is taught by the time being twice as long.

The second suggestion, *as* did the first, has the female as the bride, natural men and woman, representing us all. We see in the female a repetition of the uncleanness cycle. First one week then a second week, followed by one month and then another month. This teaches that we, of ourselves are only able to repeat the cycle of sin and uncleanness. On the other hand, with the male (Christ) we see the cycle broken and interrupted: *"And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised"* (V.3) The eighth day brought the cutting off of the flesh and an end to the natural un-ending cycle of sin. Christ cut short that curse which we would be condemned to repeat on and on and on. ***"In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; "* (Col. 2:11-13)**

The cycle has been broken by the death and resurrection of Christ. Let us no longer live unto the flesh but cut it off and live unto God.

