

# THE BEREAN CHRISTADELPHIAN 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. Defending the original, foundation principles upon which the Truth was uncovered from darkness and upon which the Christadelphian movement was developed. Opposed to the dogmas of papal and protestant christendom. Upholding the Truth as The Berean Christadelphians since 1923.

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God Willing, The Berean Christadelphian 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**

### **LAS CRUCES, New Mexico**

Greetings in Christ's name beloved brothers and sisters,

We of the Las Cruces, NM, USA Berean Christadelphian Ecclesia extend our greetings to all. This note is to let you know our members' names, meetings times, and initiatives we are attempting here in Las Cruces in order to help others find their way to our Lord and Saviour and join us on the path to Zion.

Our current members are: Brother and Sister Jonathan and Maria Morrell; Brother Malachi Morrell; Brother Michael and Sister Leslie Morrell; and Brother Beryl Snyder. Our Sunday meeting includes Bible class at 9:00 AM and Memorial Meeting immediately following, usually at 10:15 AM. Our ecclesial weekly Bible class is Friday at 6:30 PM. We are currently studying the Book of Proverbs, chronologically, at both classes. These meetings are currently held at the home of Brother Jonathan and Sister Maria Morrell, 5543 Kalahari Lane, Las Cruces, NM 88011-7253

We are starting a mid-week Bible class at the Corbett Student Center of New Mexico State University. This class will be held weekly on Tuesday Evenings from 7:00 - 8:00 PM. Classes will usually be held in the common area of the center on the second floor. There will be signs posted in the building to direct attendees to our location.

All visitors traveling near or through southern New Mexico are encouraged to visit any time. We have overnight accommodations available at the homes of our members and we welcome guests at any time. Our phone numbers can be found in the ecclesial directory.

Please note that our recording brother is Brother Jonathan Morrell, 5543 Kalahari Lane, Las Cruces, NM, USA 88011-7253. Please direct all ecclesial communication, mail, and the Berean Ecclesial News Magazines to this address.

Written on behalf of the Las Cruces Berean Christadelphian Ecclesia, with love in the hope we all share, Sister Leslie Morrell.

**HENGOED**, Wales, Breaking of Bread – 10.45am; Sunday School – 12.45pm; Lecture – 2.30pm; Bible Class and Elpis Israel Class – held alternately in the homes of the brethren and sisters. Children's Evening – held every 2 weeks on Friday at the home of Sis. Alison Hopper at 6.30pm.

Beloved Brethren and Sisters in the bonds of the Abrahamic Covenant,

It is hard to believe that over a year has gone by since our last ecclesial news. Time goes rapidly by and we are very much aware of how much closer we are to the Return of the Master. There is no delay in the Father's plan, but to weak mortal flesh, the time seems long. We need to hold fast in these evil days. As Bro. Roberts once remarked, waiting is a trial of our faith. We need to endure that trial, and be able to say in that Day "This is our Elohim, we have waited for him."

During the past year we have been blessed to have received the company of various brethren and sisters. In April this year we had the company of Sis. Annetta Jones and Amber Jones of the Richard ecclesia (we were so pleased to

hear that Amber has since put on Christ through baptism into his Name). During their visit, we had a study on the book of Malachi. The lessons greatly encouraged us, and warned us of the dangers of half hearted service.

In May we had our Gathering. This year the venue was in West Wales. The theme for the weekend was “Young People of the Bible.” The exhortations derived were of course for all age groups. The presence of a number of visiting brethren and sisters (for some, it was their first visit to the UK) as always, made the gathering around the Word of the Deity so much sweeter. The location in West Wales was a very pleasant environment and one which declared the power and wisdom of the Deity in the evidence of His creative hand all around.

Our visitors in May included Bro. Sonny and Sis. Anne Prado, Bro. Jim and Sis. Donna Snow, Bro. Stephen and Sis. Vivien Ford, Brethren Dale Lee, Brian Lee, Mark Dylla, Lynn Osborne, Gary Stephen and Sisters Carolyn Dylla, Amy Hurst, Marilyn Dobson and Rachel Johnatty-Theaker.

We would like to thank everyone for attending and making the time together a great success. We appreciate the work of everyone in so many ways from food preparation to presiding, reading and offering prayers. We would particularly like to thank the brethren who provided exhortations and studies, and our thanks are extended to Bro. Jim Snow for providing a sobering word of exhortation for us on the Sunday following the Gathering, for which we were grateful.

In September (2010), we continued a study of the Psalms (Psalms 42 to 48) and listened to some of the most sublime poetry in the world – the breathings of the Spirit which has sounded through the centuries reaching our ears with the most pleasant and uplifting songs and choirs. It was a feast of good things, but served with sobering words and heart searching themes. We enjoyed the company of Bro. Stephen and Sister Vivien Ford, and Sis. Rachel Johnatty-Theaker at that time.

May we all avail ourselves of the opportunities to make ourselves spiritually “rich.” The day is far spent. The time is at hand. Let us study to show ourselves approved.

With love in Elpis Israel and on behalf of the brethren and sisters of the Hengoe Ecclesia, Bro. Phillip Hughes

### **MILAM COUNTY, Texas**

Brethren and Sisters of the Lord: Loving greetings in the saving name of Jesus of Nazareth,

Currently, here in Milam County, we are holding our Sunday School classes at 8 a.m. Sunday mornings with Memorial Meeting following. In our Adult Class we are studying Bro. Roberts’ The Law of Moses.

It has been a pleasure to have around the Lord’s Table Sis. Sarah Brown (of Austin) twice in the last few months, with Bro. Seth Brown (also of Austin) accompanying her in October. Bro. Seth consented to give us words of exhortation, by reading one of Bro. Emmitt Banta’s words. It is a blessing, having those of like precious faith join with us in remembering the Lord and his sacrifice. We extend an invitation, to any who may be in our area of the vineyard, to meet with us.

The days are quickly flying. Let us be ever watchful for our Master’s return, vigilant, caring one for another, aiding one another, exhorting one another, and

so much the more as we see the day approaching. With love to each of you in the Lord Jesus Anointed,

Bro. Bob Wolfe, on behalf of the Milam County, TX. Ecclesia.

## Holy Land Trip

Our plans are continuing for another trip to the Holy Land in May, 2011, God willing. We expect more people than we had on our first trip and should have prices firmed up in a couple of months. Instead of going down into Egypt we hope to visit a few places that Paul travelled to: Athens, Corinth and Cenchrea before departing for home.

You may see the complete itinerary at the Richard web site ([richardbereans.com](http://richardbereans.com)). We look forward to the day when we will all assemble at Jerusalem to enjoy that marriage feast prepared for those that are accounted worthy. What a glorious hope we can look forward to. Please contact Bro. Jim Sommerville for further information.

## FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

**LAMPASAS FRATERNAL GATHERING**.....**June 10–12, 2011**  
Bro. Ricky Hurst, PO Box 1381, Goldthwaite TX 1-325-451-4075

**RICHARD FRATERNAL GATHERING**.....**July 1 – July 4, 2011**  
Sis. Christine Jones, RR# 1, Richard, Sask, S0M 2P0, Canada,  
[sc.jones@sasktel.net](mailto:sc.jones@sasktel.net)

**HYE FRATERNAL GATHERING**.....**July 25–31, 2011**  
Bro. Mark Braune, 209 Ranger Dr., Buda, TX, 78610, 512-295-2868,  
[markbraune@gmail.com](mailto:markbraune@gmail.com) Study: “Zechariah”

## The BCAA

The Berean Christadelphian Audio Archives, or BCAA for short, has made available a large selection of talks on MP3 online. The address is [www.bcaudioarchives.blogspot.com](http://www.bcaudioarchives.blogspot.com). Please check this link as we will be updating with new material as much as possible.

The purpose of this site is to restore and make available lectures, exhortations, and study classes. Some of these talks are decades old and have seldom been heard.

We are always looking for tapes, and if you have some talks that you would like to share, please email either Bro. Craig Kiley ([craigkiley@yahoo.com](mailto:craigkiley@yahoo.com)) or Bro. Noah Brown ([sbsugar@gmail.com](mailto:sbsugar@gmail.com)) and we will be happy to transfer the talks to mp3 format and post them.

## Thy Speech Bewrayeth Thee

*“If any man among you SEEM to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, that man’s religion is VAIN”*—James 1:26

The Scriptures have much to say about our speech. The importance of its relation to the way of life or the way of death could hardly be overemphasized. The Spirit through Solomon declared (Prov. 18:21)—

*“Life and death are in the power of the tongue.”*

By the medium of speech, Eve was persuaded to transgress the law of God. By the same medium, countless since have been deceived into the way of death. By it, too, many have been led into the way of Truth and Life.

And not only is our course directed by the influence of speech from without, but our own faithful or unfaithful use of this great power will determine our eternal destiny, for here is the key to a man’s character and heart. Jesus said:

*“Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.”*

If the Truth is uppermost in our hearts, it will be uppermost in our speech. We all know brethren and sisters of whom this is true, and we know brethren and sisters of whom it is not true. Here is one of the most searching tests as to whether we truly are “in the Faith.” Of course, some talk a lot about the Truth who do not have the true spirit of the Truth—talking is not everything—but we can be sure that those whose conversation is always about other things are certainly not “in the Faith.”

And it is not just the subject matter of our conversation that determines our heart—it is the spirit and character. The Truth can be used in conversation as an instrument of abuse and antagonism to gratify pride and the perverse, evil reactions of the flesh within us. Solomon says—

*“There is that speaketh like the piercing of a sword, but the tongue of the wise is health”* (Prov. 12:18).

We know of course, that the pure Spirit-Word is sharper and more piercing than any sword, but it must be wielded in meekness and wisdom and love, to purge and purify, but not to condemn and destroy—

*“If a man be overtaken in a fault, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted”* (Gal. 6:1).

And again (2 Tim. 2:24-25)—

*“The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves.”*

*“Speak evil of no man, but be gentle, showing ALL meekness unto ALL men”* (Tit. 3:2).

The supreme importance of the proper control and use of the tongue is vividly illustrated by Jesus’ solemn declaration:

*“By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned”* (Matt. 13:37).

And David says in Psalm 34:12-13—

*“What man is he that desireth life? Keep thy tongue from evil and thy lips from speaking guile.”*

James’ short epistle devotes a whole chapter to the power of the tongue—to what a tremendous influence it wields, and how difficult it is to control. It is among those things of which Jesus says,

*“With man it is impossible, but with God, all things are possible.”*

In this matter, we must confess our helplessness, and earnestly seek God’s help. James says (3:2)—

*“If a man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man and able to bridle the whole body.”*

If we can learn to control our tongue, we can overcome and control all. James remarks that the same tongue will pour forth blessing and cursing—blessing God with a great show of reverence and love and then turning around and cursing men, whom God hath made in His own image and all of whom He would desire to have taught and led in the loving way of life and Truth.

It is the lesson of the unmerciful debtor, and we all need to take it to heart. Who are we—weak, sinful creatures dependent upon God’s love and mercy—who are we to take it upon ourselves to berate and condemn others? It is a natural, evil tendency of the flesh to criticise and find fault. James searchingly and decisively sums up the vital importance of our speech when he says (1:26)—

*“If any man among you SEEMETH to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, that man’s religion is vain.”*

The Scripture gives much detailed instruction regarding this essential bridling of the tongue. Let us consider this instruction together, and then all search our hearts to see whether by failure to properly use and control this member we are making our religion vain. The Scriptures refer to at least twenty different aspects of the use of the tongue in which we can manifest the vanity of our religion. Some—such as lying—we may at first glance feel constitute no problem or danger as regards the brethren of Christ, but if we look into each more deeply—remembering how the law of Chris

t searched right down into the dark and sometimes unsuspected roots of our inmost thoughts and motives—we shall realize that all are matters of real concern for each of us. As James says, in alerting us to the dangers of the evil motions of the flesh within us—

*“Do you think that the Scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?”* (James 4:5)

Take then, this matter of lying. Paul says, speaking of the new man, created after God in righteousness and true holiness—

*“Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor”* (Eph. 4:26).

Jesus promised in Matt. 5 that the pure in heart, and they alone, should see God. The Spirit through Jeremiah declares that the natural heart of man is deceitful above all things. Any deceit is lying. The purifying of the heart is a life-long task. Who of us can say we have never shunned to declare the whole truth, regardless of embarrassment or personal disadvantage? Surely none of us who have embraced the Truth would consciously tell a lie, but how easy to keep silent or cover up a mistake or give an incorrect impression, or allow a

misunderstanding rather than openly face the consequences with a fearless purity of heart!

The full stature of the perfect man in Christ Jesus is an infinitely high ideal. Blessed are the pure—the completely, guilelessly pure—in heart, for they alone shall see God.

\* \* \*

Evil speaking, backbiting and talebearing comprise another manifestation of the evil of the flesh that finds vent through the tongue—a very common evil that only the power of the Spirit can control. Unless we are constantly careful, and unless we are purely motivated by love and the mind of the Spirit, we shall find that much of our conversation about others, when honestly evaluated by divine standards, comes under the heading of gossip and backbiting.

True, there are times when it is necessary to speak of the faults of others. But unless it is truly necessary, and done in the scriptural way, and in the proper scriptural spirit, we are running a grave risk of divine condemnation. The Spirit through Solomon declares—

*“The words of a talebearer are wounds and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly”* (Prov. 26:22).

The immediate reaction of the flesh, on reading this passage, is to be struck with how remarkably it fits someone else. But let us, for the time being, curb this evil reaction and consider how remarkably they fit ourselves—how many times we have allowed the natural malice, of which we all have a share, to lead us into this flesh-gratifying sin. *“The words of a tale-bearer are as dainty morsels”*—how searchingly true this divine analysis!

The way of the Truth is the way of love—in all relationships. If our feeling toward our brethren and sisters is not pure love, regardless of their faults and weaknesses, then we ourselves are not the children of God, but are of the world. Love is kindness and gentleness and a desire to help and strengthen. Solomon records again (Prov. 17:9)—

*“He that covereth a transgression seeketh love, but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends.”*

This does not mean a glossing over or condoning of what is wrong, but a proper, pure-hearted, sympathetic, loving approach with a desire to build up. Let us take heed that we do not stand at the judgment seat exposed before all as what Paul describes as “tattlers and busybodies” (1 Tim. 5:13). It is a very easy and common sin. *“Speak evil of no man”* is the command. Even in our proclaiming of the Truth, let us take heed. We are not judges or executioners, but humble messengers with good tidings of light and love and divine compassion and long-suffering.

\* \* \*

Foolish talking is another universal failing of the flesh. “Foolish talking and jesting,” says the apostle, are “not convenient”—not fitting—not in harmony with the holiness and solemnity and beauty of our calling.

It is sometimes hard for us to see the point in this, especially if we are young. It seems a crabbed and sour outlook. Joking seems so harmless and good-natured and pleasant. But as the mind grows in spiritual values, light, foolish talking is seen to be empty and shallow and false. The real, abiding joy of the Spirit is gradually realized to be deep and permanent, while humor is so transitory, and basically unsatisfying, with no lasting power. How well is it summed up in Ecclesiastes!

*“Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth. It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise than for a man to hear the song of fools. For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool: this also is vanity”* (Eccl. 7:3-6).

\* \* \*

For God’s children there is never any place for angry words—

*“Let ALL bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, be put away from you, and be ye kind”* (Eph. 4:31-32).

Solomon says (Eccl. 7:9)—

*“Anger resteth in the bosom of fools.”*

An angry parent cannot be creating a godly child, for godliness is self-control and anger is an immature lack of self-control. How can we be teaching what we are denying by our actions? Do we realize the seriousness of angry words? Jesus clearly warns us (Matt. 5:22)—

*“Whosoever shall say, Thou foul, shall be in danger of Gehenna fire.”*

In the final twenty one verses of the book of wisdom’s way entitled Proverbs, there is a description of the ideal woman—the ideal wife—her price far above rubies. This beautiful picture is both literal and spiritual. In its fullest sense it represents the Bride, the Lamb’s wife, and as such it has a message for all who aspire to membership in that glorious community. Verse 26 says—

*“She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.”*

*“In her tongue is the law of kindness.”* At all times and under all circumstances, otherwise it would be meaningless.

Here is the essence of ideal womanhood.

\* \* \*

Some more than others, but all of us quite often, are guilty of the fleshly folly of just plain talking too much—

*“In the multitude of words, there wanteth not sin.”*

This is bound to be true, for a loose tongue cannot be a carefully disciplined tongue. It is the sign of a shallow mind:

*“A fool’s voice is known by multitude of words”* (Eccl. 5:3).

Let us, when we find ourselves chattering, remind ourselves that we are manifesting our folly, and sinning before God. Of those who aspire to the eternal joys of fellowship with Him, He requires constant reverence and circumspection—

*“God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few”* (Eccl. 5:2).

Jesus warned, regarding a similar abuse of the tongue—

*“Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment”* (Matt. 12:36).

Some, feeling this to be “an hard saying,” have tried to change its meaning by interpreting “idle” as “evil,” but when we look honestly into the true meaning of the word, we find it does really mean “idle”—“vain”—“profitless”—and it is a sober warning against a very common weakness. The mind of the Spirit is a consistent way of life, and idle, profitless words are no part of that way. The Proverbs express the issue with striking plainness (13:3)—

*“He that keepeth his mouth, keepeth his life, but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction.”*

There is a related error of which the Scriptures speak—the tendency to let talking and proposing take the place of working and accomplishing—

*“In all labour there is profit, but the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury”* (Prov. 14:23).

This is equally true in the spiritual as in the natural. It is so easy to wish and to propose and to discuss, but the persistent and consistent effort that is required to get things done does not come so readily and easily to natural man.

\* \* \*

Proud-talking is especially offensive to God—

*“In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride”* (Prov. 14:3).

Anything we say that is intended, directly or indirectly, to reflect credit upon ourselves and to impress others, is a form of this folly. If we honestly examine our conversation, we shall find that this is often the motive of our remarks even though, unless we stop to think especially about it, we are hardly conscious of any such motive. The pride of the flesh is so ingrained that it colors our speech without any conscious effort.

In fact, any talk about ourselves unless it has a specific and necessary purpose, comes in this general category. Let us beware of the natural tendency to make ourselves and our affairs the center of conversation.

The ungodly say (Psa. 12:4)—

*“With our tongues will we prevail: our lips are our own. Who is lord over us?”*

If we allow our conversation to follow our natural inclinations, and do not consciously bridle our tongue according to the instruction of the Spirit, we are

in practice adopting this proud foolishness of the ungodly, and denying our subjection to any control.

\* \* \*

There is another weakness of the tongue of which we find sad examples in Scriptures, even in righteous men. Prov. 29:20 says—

*“Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? There is more hope of a fool than of him.”*

To be habitually hasty of speech—rashly blurting out the first reaction of the flesh, in excitement or annoyance—is truly hopeless, but none are entirely free from this danger.

The great example here, of course, is Moses, the meekest of men, who—under great provocation—spoke hastily and inadvisedly with his lips, and was as a result denied his life’s crowning desire. The quick sharp retort is usually regretted, but it can never be recalled, therefore—

*“The heart of the wise studieth to answer, but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things”* (Prov. 15:28).

And James solemnly counsels (1:19)—

*“Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak.”*

\* \* \*

Contention is another abuse of the great power and privilege of speech. Paul says to Titus (3:9)—

*“Avoid contention, for it is unprofitable and vain.”*

And the wisdom of the Spirit in Proverbs tells us—

*“A fool’s lips enter into contention”* (18:6).

Contentiousness is one of the basic natural evils of the flesh. See how children will squabble and quarrel over the most trivial things, just for the sake of squabbling. Paul told the Corinthians that strife among them proved they were still carnal and fleshly-minded spiritual infants. Any strife in an ecclesia indicates there is a wrong spirit on both sides, for the spiritually-minded will not be drawn into contention but will comport themselves with gentleness and meekness and love toward all. The Proverbs declare—

*“It is an honor for a man to cease from strife.”*

There is indeed such a thing—a noble and dignified and profitable thing—as “contending earnestly for the Faith,” but the spiritually wise will distinguish it from fleshly contention and the natural human spirit of contentiousness. Often, because of the deceptiveness of the flesh, contending for the Truth takes on the evil spirit of fleshly contention. In any difference of opinion we must be on guard against this subtle danger.

\* \* \*

Peter says of Jesus, in warning against another misuse of the tongue (1 Pet. 2:23)—

*“When he was reviled, he reviled not again.”*

When, in his suffering, he was mocked and reviled, he did not retaliate, or allow it to disturb his peace in God, but he looked upon his revilers with pity and compassion and prayed for them, realizing that their evil spirit was only destroying themselves.

To revile is to address or speak of with abuse or contempt. We must take care that this spirit does not creep into our zeal against evil and sin. We are but Gospel messengers—God alone is the Judge; He alone has the right to condemn.

\* \* \*

The opposite of reviling is equally condemned in Scripture—flattery. In fact the Scriptures speak much more vehemently against this than we would ever expect, and this should lead us to some searching thought on this matter—as to why it is so evil, and wherein we are in danger of transgressing. The Spirit saith.—

*“A flattering mouth worketh ruin”* (Prov. 26:28).

*“Meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips”* (Prov. 20:19).

*“The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips”* (Psa. 12:13).

*“Their throat is an open sepulchre . . . they flatter with their tongue”* (Psa. 5:9).

*“He that blesseth his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be accounted a curse to him”* (Prov. 27:14).

To flatter is to praise with a view of gratifying pride, in order to seek some advantage. It is very common in the world, in business and in social intercourse, and is considered part of the necessary apparatus for gaining our ends with people. But God hates it, because it is false and hypocritical and it caters to the pride of the flesh. It is directly opposed to the divine principles of sincerity and the humbling of the flesh.

If we are not careful, we shall often slip into it, for it is very easy and pleasant and has present advantage, and seems to make things easier without apparently doing harm. But let us remember that it is false, and God hates it. We must get the pure, high viewpoint of the Spirit.

\* \* \*

On another point, the Spirit warns (Prov. 27:2)—

*“Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth.”*

If we do not set a spiritual guard upon our lips, we shall find that much of our conversation is subtly flavored with the element of self-praise, self-commendation, and self-glory.

We instinctively seek to impress others. If not by direct boasting, then by little casual hints and references, we try to make sure others get to know all the “good” or “clever” things we have done.

If we could have a recording of our day’s conversation, and then carefully study it over at the end of the day in the light of God’s Word, what a sad show it would often make!—How much chaff! How much worldliness! How much juvenile self-glory! How much foolishness! How much out of harmony with the pure, gentle mind of the Spirit!

\* \* \*

The Proverbs are our guide in another matter concerning the tongue. How often we find our inner weaknesses mirrored and exposed by these searching Spirit-words!—

*“A fool uttereth all his mind, but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards”* (Prov. 29:11).

Who has not many times regretted his failure to remember these words of divine wisdom?—

*“Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.”*

There are some who seem to have no ability to keep anything to themselves; they must of necessity *“utter all their mind.”* Let us take care we are not among them, for the weakness is much commoner than we are liable to suspect. Many never grow out of this habit of childhood.

\* \* \*

Paul says, counselling against another evil (Eph. 4:29)—

*“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth.”*

Here again, let us not just take a shallow view and brush this off as a quite unnecessary caution in our case. True, we are happily free from the coarse and lewd conversation that seems to be the principal obsession of this degenerate, Sodom-like generation.

But what constitutes a “corrupt communication” in God’s sight? The contrast in this passage is—

*“But that which is good to the use of edifying.”*

—implying that what is not good to the use of edifying is corrupt. We are impressed again with the broad principle—

*“ whatsoever is not of faith is sin ”* (Rom. 14:23).

Even among our words, there are no neutrals. Either we are consciously and purposely edifying, or we are corrupting and breaking down, whether it be intentional or not.

And what are we to do as to the “Filthy conversation of the wicked?” We must be ever on guard not to be drawn into the world’s foolish talk, for it so often turns to filthiness or godlessness, and we find ourselves in a humiliating and compromised position as a part of their corrupt picture.

Even silence is hardly a sufficient witness, for chattering buffoons thoughtlessly take it for consent. Gently but very firmly we must make our abhorrence of corrupt communications clear.

\* \* \*

On another aspect of the use of the tongue, Jesus says—

*“Swear not at all . . . Let your communication be, yea, yea; nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil”* (Matt. 5:34).

Whatsoever is more than a simple yea and nay, cometh of evil. Any ritual or contrivance to make our statements seem more emphatic or trustworthy *“cometh of evil.”* How does it? What does Jesus mean?

There is a deep lesson here, and a deep principle involved. Jesus in the early chapters of Matthew portrays the ideal of perfection—

*“Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.”*

Jesus sweeps away all oaths by making every word holy and pure, just as he swept away the shadowy sabbath by making every day holy and pure. A sabbath set apart implies common days that are not set apart. If every day is lived wholly unto God, what room is there for a sabbath?—

*“When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.”*

So with our speech. There are no degrees of truthfulness. When Jesus put away oaths, he raised common every day speech to the high ideal of divine perfection.

*“Let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay.”*

Picture a man whose every word is sober and pure and carefully weighed in the divine balance before utterance—a man whose speech is patterned upon all the beautiful instructions of the Spirit. Would it not be incongruous and superfluous for such to bolster his word with an oath?

We must learn to speak as if every word were uttered upon a solemn oath before God. Though we fall far short, can we not see the infinitely desirable beauty of this ideal?

But some will say, *“Has not God Himself confirmed His Word with an oath?”* True. But we are not God. A different purpose is to be served, and a different principle applies. For one thing, God is not upon probation in the way of righteousness. God is not being trained regarding holiness of speech. For another, God is dealing with men—the infinite with the finite—and in gracious condescension gives them added assurance because of their weakness.

God’s Word does not need an oath to make it sure. It is no surer with an oath than without, and the more clearly we can perceive this, the better God is pleased. We are told in Proverbs 30:5—

*“EVERY WORD of God is pure (RV: tried, proved true).”*

Consider how Jesus marvelled at the deep perception of the faith of the centurion (Matt. 8:8)—

*“Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.”*

—the simple, pure, unattested word—What faith! And Jesus’ gentle rebuke to Thomas embodies the same principle:

*“Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.”*

There is another aspect in which oaths are not fitting for men, that does not apply to God. Jesus says further—

*“Swear not by heaven—it is God’s throne; Nor earth—it is God’s footstool; Nor Jerusalem—it is God’s city.”*

All is God’s, and only God can swear by it. Puny man has nothing and is nothing. He dare not even swear by his own head, for he cannot even change the color of one single hair of that head, says Jesus. How vividly the Master emphasizes man’s utter helplessness! Who is he to swear by anything, as if he could control it, or his own destiny? A passing vapor—dust and ashes—

*“Let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.”*

There is a further serious thought concerning this matter of oaths and yea and nay, into which we easily tend to slip through thoughtlessness. The world is full of subtle substitutes for oaths, so that the flesh may violate the spirit of the command while observing the letter.

If we examine all the common ejaculations of surprise, or excitement, or anger, or even just common emphasis, we shall usually find that they are disguised oaths, and concealed ways of taking God’s Name in vain.

Consider such [all too common] expressions as *“Good gracious,” “For pity’s sake,” “My Goodness,” “For Goodness’ sake,” “Goodness knows.”*

If we have any doubt as to what these expressions mean, and where they are derived from, we need only to consult a dictionary—Webster defines “Goodness knows” as—“An exclamation equivalent to ‘God only knows.’” Similarly we find many exclamations that parody curse words. “Darn,” says Webster, is a euphemism for “damn.” “Gee whiz” is patterned after “Jesus.” “Golly,” Webster tells us, is “a substitute for God.”

Divinely acceptable use of the tongue is a far more serious and searching thing than we are apt to realize.

\* \* \*

Murmuring next comes before our attention. It is very natural to complain, find fault, and be dissatisfied like spoiled children whenever things are not just exactly as we think we would like them to be. But do we realize that we are speaking against the love and providence of God?

Even small and passing annoyances and dissatisfactions are manifestations of carnal thinking and evidences of lack of any real faith, for the promise is (Rom. 8:28)—

*“ALL things work together for good to them that love God.”*

Either we believe that FULLY, or we do not believe it at all. There is no middle ground. How beautifully Job expresses the attitude of the spiritual mind—

*“Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord and shall we not receive evil? Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him!”*

We may feel that we could rise to this height in some great disaster, but often a more searching test of our character comes in the little daily disappointments that catch us off guard in our natural state when we are not heroically steeled for a great and showy display of patient resignation.

But let us remember that for murmuring under trials far heavier than we have to face, Israel (says Paul) were “destroyed of the destroyer,” and this, he says, was an example for us. Therefore, let us—

*“Do ALL things without murmurings”* (Phil. 2:14).

\* \* \*

Isa. 29:13 expresses a complaint God had against Israel—

“This people draw near Me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor Me, but have removed their heart far from Me.”

Lip-service. Are our heart and mind always fully with our lips in all our praise—in all our singing of hymns and attending of meetings and breaking of bread and doing of daily readings? If our minds tend to wander, then it is only an offensive mechanical lip-service that we are offering to the Great Creator upon whom we depend for every breath.

It is so fatally easy to slip into this, especially in matters like meetings and hymn singing, that have the character of repetition and familiarity.

To the prophet Jeremiah, even in the midst of his Lamentations for the destruction of his people and desolation of the land, God’s mercies were seen with marvel and awe, as *“new every morning”* (Lam. 3:23).

We must perceive the mercy of the Creator with the same continual freshness and vividness and give all our heart and soul to His service, or we shall fall into the rut of lip-service. The only way to keep our minds from wandering to other interests, is not to have any other interests—to shun everything that does not properly fit into that pattern.

\* \* \*

Harsh words call for special mention—not necessarily angry words, but just habitually, often thoughtlessly harsh words. The flesh is a harsh, coarse, irritable thing. Graciousness and gentleness do not come naturally. They are spiritual qualities.

Let us not make the sad mistake of thinking that contending for the Truth or raising children call for harsh words at any time. Gentle words can do the job much better, much more impressively, much more lastingly, and with much deeper and sweeter results in the recipient.

In both fields discipline is often required to maintain faithfulness, but harsh words are no fitting part of it. Harsh words are ALWAYS an ugly manifestation of our own inner flesh: we must face this fact if we hope for healthy results.

It is particularly on occasions requiring discipline that solemn, gentle, well-weighted, impressive, Spirit-guided words are so essential. Harshness can only shrivel and blight, and breed harshness in return.

The true meekness and gentleness of Christ must be consistent on all occasions if it is to be part of our real character and not a cloak of convenience.

*“The words of a wise man’s mouth are grace”* (Eccl. 10:12).

True, Christ, as the mouthpiece of God, spoke scathing words of judgment that were Spirit-inspired, but we are not called to be so used and so inspired, and the pattern laid down for us is clear—

*“Meekness toward all” . . . “Speak evil of none.”*

Expose the whole, dark, worldwide fabric of sin and error in clear and unreserved terms, by the searching light of the Spirit Word—keep carefully separate from it all in faithfulness to divine command—but always in gentleness and mercy and hope, for who are we to pronounce another’s judgment?

\* \* \*

We have considered the many warnings and instructions concerning the spoken and written word (for the instructions apply equally to both). Let us in closing glance at its powers and benefits and beauties.

First we think of the Word of God.

*“In the beginning was the Word.”*

*“By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made.”*

And by that Word the gracious, glorious message of life and hope came to perishing man.

And in the fulness of times the Word was made flesh. All that marvelous message and purpose was focused in the Son of God—

*“And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”*

And when he began his ministry of love and sacrifice among men, those who heard him—

*“. . . Wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth”* (Luke 4:22).

The Word of God is our great treasure—able to make us wise unto salvation (2 Tim. 3:15). Counsel concerning preserving its integrity is solemn and frequent—

*“Hold fast the form of sound words”* (2 Tim. 1:13).

*“To the law and to the testimony, if any speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them”* (Isa. 8:20).

*“If any man speak, let him speak as the Oracles of God.”*

What a vast range of good is in the power of the tongue! Toward God—praise, worship, thanksgiving, confession, intercession, entreaty. Toward man—preaching, teaching, exhorting, comforting, encouraging, warning and rebuke—

*“The lips of the righteous feed many”* (Prov. 10:21).

*“The mouth of a righteous man is a well of life.”*

*“Death, and life, are in the power of the tongue.”*

Let us then, with firm determination, make the words of the Psalmist our own—

*“I am purposed that my mouth should not transgress . . .*

*“I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue . . .*

*“I will keep my mouth with a bridle . . .*

*“Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth . . . keep the door of my lips.”*

*—Bro. G.V. Growcott*

## **Rules of Order 4** **FOR ECCLESIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS**

*“Let all things be done decently and in order”—1 Cor. 14:40*

### **6. RECORDING BROTHER’S DUTIES**

RB can take full part in the discussion, but it's best for him not to be too prominent. He has authority and responsibility all the time, and therefore at ecclesial business meetings, he should yield as far as possible to the initiative of others.

However, he is not just an ecclesial servant and record keeper. He has a responsibility to guide the ecclesia to the best of his ability, but indirectly by example and persuasion rather than by exercise of position. He must keep a balance. He has been chosen as the most suitable for the position, and he must by wisdom justify that choice, and be perceived by the Body to do so.

His very job and position appears to make him dictatorial: this is inevitable, and all RBs must recognize and accept this fact of life philosophically. But he must wisely be cautious not to add to this impression. The ecclesial business meetings are opportunities for all to speak up and take part, and feel that they are a part, and a wise RB—within the limitations of his responsibilities to see that things are right—will sit back and give this opportunity of the Body full play.

It should be emphasized that rules are only servants, never masters. They should be adopted when a useful need for them is felt. And as long as they are in force, they should be followed, and when they are seen to be a hindrance and not a help they should be changed or rescinded in the properly agreed way.

#### **a. Prepare Agenda.**

**b. Record all done or passed. Record motions as made.**

Keeping the records of the meeting properly, and being able to answer all questions on them promptly, is almost a fulltime job in itself. If this is a problem, he can have someone keeping the records for him (motions, votes, etc.), so he is more free to give his time to the business.

Records should be as complete as possible. They are very useful for future guidance. In anything of lasting importance, a record of the numerical vote for and against is desirable. It is only necessary to record what is decided: not everything that is suggested. But if something is discussed by common consent, it is good to make a brief note in the minutes that it was discussed, even though no decision is reached.

It's good to have important matters passed by a large majority, and so recorded. Try to work by consensus, not close votes. Where possible without detriment, put off important decisions where views are sharply, or strongly divided. Unity and harmony and a feeling of fairness and consideration for one another are often more important than specific decisions.

It's better if suggestions and motions come from the Arranging Board as a whole than the RB as an individual. By the very nature of his position, a RB is bound to give the impression at some times and to some individuals of abusing that position. If he is conscientious and active and takes his duties seriously, he cannot avoid this occurring, and he has to live with it. But he should try at all times to follow a course that will minimize it, and keeping a low profile where possible is therefore desirable.

But he is not just an ecclesial servant and record-keeper. He has a responsibility to guide the ecclesia. He must keep a balance between compliance and active influence. He has been chosen as the most suitable for the position, and he must by his leadership justify that course, and while he is in that position all must give him the fullest understanding and support, for it is a difficult position to do to everyone's satisfaction.

Like the PB, he must make every effort to be impartial and objective, as far as personal preferences are concerned. But he must have strong views on what is best for the Ecclesia and for the Truth, while suppressing any personal desires. The more he can conscientiously leave initiatives and decisions to others, the easier will be his job when he has to take strong positions and express strong views.

**c. Read minutes (4b).**

**d. Answer questions on Constitution, rules and records (may need notice).**

**e. Introduce items of business (4e).**

**f. Arrange for carrying out decisions of meeting.**

**g. Chairman pro tem in cases of appeal (42).**

**7. CORRECTING MINUTES.** Minutes may be corrected whenever error is noticed. However, after acceptance of minutes, correction requires 2/3 vote, unless previous notice is given.

This, of course, will be very rare. But, all being human, it does happen, and it is desirable to have machinery to handle it smoothly. The minutes are a permanent record for future guidance, reference and decision, and should be as accurate as humanly possible, so all can have full confidence in them.

### **SPEAKING PROCEDURE (8-14)**

**8. ORDER OF SPEAKING.** A brother desiring to speak attracts PB's attention by nod or raised hand. PB lists him, calls on him in order (13, 14, 15, 19).

It is very important that the PB keep on his toes as to who wants to speak. This is one of the best ways to keep the meeting harmonious and efficient. If he gets engrossed in the subject itself, or his own thoughts on it, he is likely to neglect this primary and vital duty. He must always remember that his primary job is to orchestrate the meeting fairly and smoothly and in a pleasant manner, so it is profitable and productive and all enjoy it and none are frustrated. He must continuously try to sense the spirit of the meeting and follow its collective desires. He will have little time for his own views.

It is a good idea to have a time limit for speakers (of, say 2 or 3 minutes), and keep pretty well to it. In this way brethren gradually get trained to say what they have to say concisely, in an orderly way, without repetition.

However, its enforcement should be mostly voluntary and self-imposed. The PB may occasionally have to give a general reminder, and if he does it at the right time, it will be pointed enough without being too pointed. All should study to be as brief and clear as possible; realizing that all have plenty to do, and everyone's time is valuable, and too much talking is counter-productive. The less we say, and the briefer we make it, the better attention we shall receive.

It is not desirable for the PB to make a specific enforcement of a time limit, unless there is a serious problem and time is a factor and the general comfort of the meeting requires it. A PB must feel his way for what is most harmonious.

The limit would not apply to anyone giving information by request, but even then, conciseness should be practiced and repetition avoided.

**9. WITHOUT PERMISSION:** following may be said without waiting—

- a. "I have a motion" (16).
- b. "I second the motion" (18).
- c. "I withdraw my second" (18).
- d. "I withdraw my motion" (20).
- e. "I take up the motion" (20)
- f. "I desire to change my motion" (21).
- g. "I object to changing the motion" (21).

- h. “I request a secret vote” (23).
- i. “I accept the amendment as part of my motion” (26f).
- j. “I move to close discussion” (32).
- k. “A Point of Information” (39).
- l. “A Point of Order” (40).
- m. “I object to consideration” (41).
- n. “I appeal the decision of the presiding brother” (42).

(No one shall say more until given the floor).

These are very useful. In courtesy, they should be said between speakers, and if all speakers study to be brief and concise, there is rarely need or justification for a speaker to be interrupted. However, sometimes it saves time to have a speaker interrupted by them. It must be done courteously. All speakers should be facing the meeting. A brother then should, if possible, indicate by a raised hand to the speaker that he wants to interrupt, and the speaker should pause.

For instance, if someone is speaking against a motion, it saves time and offends no one if he is interrupted by ‘I withdraw my motion.’ Often this is to everyone’s satisfaction. A motion that has obviously little chance of support is better withdrawn as soon as that fact becomes obvious, so the meeting can get on productively, and give its time to something more useful.

Furthermore, if there is discussion without a motion, an interruption of ‘I have a motion’ is always desirable, even for the interrupted speaker’s sake. He should be allowed to resume as soon as the motion is on the floor, and now he has something specific and constructive to speak to, and business moves along.

When the interruption changes the course of the meeting, the interrupted item can be resumed when the interruption has been dealt with.

Insert between j and k: ‘**jj: I move the matter be deferred to Other Business.**’

It should be noted that normally the above interruptions would take over from the interrupted speaker (to his satisfaction) and supersede him. But in some cases he would resume after the interruption. This would be partially at the PB’s discretion. Courtesy and commonsense must rule. He should be allowed to resume, say, after a & b (which go together), e,f,g,i,k,l,n (and j & m if they fail).

**10. INTERRUPTION. No one shall be interrupted by any but the PB (except by 9, and then only when unavoidable).**

**11. ALL REMARKS ADDRESSED TO PB and the meeting generally.**

In a larger group, this is essential. In a smaller group it is very desirable, though not absolutely ironclad. It is best to always speak impersonally to subject itself, and avoid personal exchanges. One can then speak more directly without the appearance of personal opposition or confrontation.

## **12. ALL STAND while speaking.**

This, too, becomes increasingly important in relation to the increased size of the group. But unless the group is very small, observing this rule helps to make sure all in the assembly hear everything, and know who is saying what. Nothing is more frustrating than a personal exchange that the whole meeting doesn't get the sense of, or hear properly. Brethren should be sure to speak up so all can hear. The PB should not hesitate to ask them to do this. In fact, he should be watching for it, and make sure all are hearing comfortably. Some hesitate to complain when they cannot hear, but the meeting is spoiled for them. It is desirable to turn to face the meeting when speaking.

## **13. NONE SPEAK TWICE until all who desire have spoken once.**

## **14. WHEN SUBJECT IS CHANGED, all already on list may speak first (must speak to new subject).**

I considered qualifying this, but on thinking it over, I believe we found by experience that it is best to stick to this in all cases, even though the subject was completed and settled, and an entirely new consideration has begun. It seemed to work out with more of a feeling of fairness. Otherwise some seemed to be sometimes repeatedly cut off by being left on a list when the subject is changed and a new speaking list begun by the PB. Some expected their turn on the basis of the old list, and did not re-signify.

(To be continued, God willing next month.)

—*Bro. G.V. Growcott*

## **Encouraging Words No. 14**

THE disbelievers in the divine paternity of Christ, having made a free and wanton use of their scissors upon the New Testament, next turn to the Old Testament, and ask, Where in all these writings is anything to be found which supports this doctrine? By way of reply we quote the second Psalm: "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Our friends rule this passage out of the argument because of its application by Paul to Christ's resurrection. Our friends, however, must not hurry us away from the passage in this manner. Why was Christ constituted God's son by a resurrection from the dead? For, of necessity, he had an existence prior to his resurrection. Who and what was Christ before this event? Very much hinges upon the answers to these questions. Christ's resurrection was neither meaningless nor arbitrary. It was the outcome of his perfect obedience to God's will. Do the scriptures warrant us in expecting a perfect obedience, such as Christ rendered, from any ordinary member of the human race? No, upon this matter they are decisive: "There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not." Clearly the Messiah—though the seed of the woman, of Abraham and of David—was to be one by himself in relation to character. He was to occupy the unique position of being "righteous," able to "justify many," and to "heal transgressors." His life was to be deemed by God an acceptable "offering for sin," and to him was to pertain the singular

characteristic of so “loving righteousness and hating iniquity” that it would be possible for God to anoint him with the “oil of gladness above his fellows.” Do the scriptures warrant us in attributing to God Christ’s ability to overcome sin? Undoubtedly. It is written, for instance, “Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened.” The Coming One was to possess an “open ear” and a “quick understanding in the fear of the Lord,” such as no son of Adam had ever shown. Do the scriptures offer any explanation of how this came about? Yes, they are very explicit: “I have formed thee from the womb . . . to be my salvation unto the ends of the earth.” Is it strange that the One so formed—and for such a purpose—should be from birth both Son of God and God with us—Immanuel?

With the Old Testament presentment of Christ, Paul was at one. He did not, as do our Josephite friends, cut Christ in twain. He taught that he was first a Son of God in weakness, “made of the seed of David according to the flesh,” and then a Son, with power, “according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead” (Rom. 1:3, 4). Christ was “the righteous Branch” raised up unto David—“the Son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself.” On the basis of New Testament facts and Old Testament predictions we say that this process of strengthening commenced ere Christ was born. A naturally begotten Zulu could never have developed into a Jesus of Nazareth—a moral vanquisher of sin—neither could a faithful Moses nor a naturally begotten son of Joseph. In the purpose of God it was necessary that one should be formed by Him “from the womb,” that he might have an “open ear” and “a quick understanding.” Ability in a high degree to receive divine instruction was the beginning of Christ’s God-given strength, but it was by no means the end. God was with him—he wakened his ear “morning by morning.” He perfected his character (by trial and suffering), and never left him until Christ could say, “Death hath no more dominion over me.” In the resurrection process the strengthening was finished, he was then “made strong” in the fullest sense. None the less the physical strengthening was preceded by the moral, and in connection with this, Christ was given unlimited scope to work out a real triumph over sin. God made the obedience possible, and Christ made the possibility an accomplished fact. When the inspired writer speaks of Christ being begotten on the day of his resurrection, he does not exclude but includes all God’s operations that led up to this event, not excepting his being brought into existence by the power of the Holy Spirit.

*Sis. C.H. Jannaway—1908*

## **Meditations – Deity’s Ways No. 14**

If a man only possessed at birth the observation and reflection that belong to after years, what a dreadful place the world would appear on first casting his eyes around. He would behold the nations, the most civilised especially, armed from tip to toe. If he were to enquire “What for?” the

reply would be, “For the preservation of peace!” How readily would such a man endorse the Bible comparison of men to beasts—wild beasts: lions, tigers, leopards, wolves, foxes, etc. In every direction he would behold, too, sin in all its horrible forms: oppression, corruption, poverty, vice, filth, disease, etc. He might ask, “Is there no government!” but he would only do so to receive the sad reply that government was futile, and always had been, to alter or remedy affairs. Man has become so inured to evil that he fails to realise its enormity. That the world is under a curse, and that few obey God is indeed a terrible fact. It is profitable to know and feel this. The evil that obtains is capable of yielding many good lessons. It is on record that this evil, vanity, or sore travail, “God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it.” It quickens the desire for deliverance; it enkindles gratitude for the prospect of it; and it makes manifest the utter folly of rebellion against God.

To be without chastisement is to be without God. This is the argument of Heb. 12:5–8. Chastisement is an indispensable item in our preparation for the Kingdom of God. Chastisement is productive of much good; “it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.” Christ forcibly expressed in figure the working of chastisement—“Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, *that it may bring forth more fruit.*” How easy is it to recognise this in theory! but how difficult to do so in practice. How many have taken umbrage when God has put His method into operation! Let us endeavour to succeed where others have failed. Let us not forget the Scripture which says; “*If ye endure chastising God dealeth with you as with sons.*” We should not faint under chastisement, for God is as pitiful with us as a father is with his children. In receiving correction, as in everything else, we want to exhibit Christ’s spirit. As evil crosses our path we require to feel that it either comes from God or is regulated by Him for our highest good. We should be able to say as calamity arises: “Thou couldest have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above.”

“Judge not that ye be not judged.” This command can be infringed in several ways: by attributing a wrong motive to another without sufficient ground; by condemning another for an act for which he may have been truly sorry; by deciding in our minds (apart from the Word) as to who and who will not be saved. James also characterises evil speaking as judging. (4:11.) It is the easiest thing in the world to be disobedient in this matter. Let us be cautious. Let us not be backward in giving another the benefit of a doubt. Let us not forget that we are all erring. God has said, “I will judge.” But although prohibited from judging in the manner stated, we are called upon to decide between right and wrong. Paul writes, “withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he

received of us.” Christ has told us how this obligation can be fulfilled—“By their fruits ye shall know them.” Manifest lying, manifest drunkenness, manifest covetousness, are not to be condoned. Let us not hesitate to condemn the unfruitful works of darkness, but let our condemnation be directed against the wrong deeds rather than against the brother. Let us keep in view the brother’s reclamation. Let us correct with love, meekness, gentleness, and forbearance. If the commandments of Christ call for us to withdraw or stand aside from others, let us do it, not in the spirit of “I am holier than thou” but in humility and sorrow.

We are not to love the world; on the contrary, we are to hate it. The world is radically bad: it is opposed heart and soul to God. And this character it will retain until Christ come to reform it. Our duty in regard to the world is plain: we are to keep ourselves unspotted from it—Jas 1:27. Unless we do this we are not brethren or friends of Christ—our profession is a farce. To preserve this purity is a mighty task: it is a killing one. But with God’s help it is one that can be accomplished. God’s help comes only to those who tremble at the World—not to scorners. Those who sneeringly say that it is necessary to quit the world in order to obey the divine precepts in regard to it shut themselves off from help, and therefore from success and reward. Such are blasphemers—mockers of God—though they may not think so. Glory is only to be reached through tribulation, and tribulation is the outcome of a recognition of and an earnest endeavour to observe the divine conditions. The truth would, doubt less, be more congenial if dis-united from its stringent requirements. But God has good reason for enforcing these requirements. He has made salvation contingent upon our keeping ourselves separate from the world, and this it is folly to ignore. The matter resolves itself into a very simple question: will we or will we not comply? If we will, our course is plain—we must keep our eye upon Christ and follow in his steps.

“What I say unto you I say unto all, watch.” Such is Christ’s command to everyone who comes within the sound of the truth. Paul reiterates the mind of Christ—“Let us watch.” What is it to watch? It is not a mere passive looking, as a man looks from a window. It is a looking coupled with activity—it embraces waiting, expecting, preparing. If Christ were to intimate that he would return in a month’s time, what industry and zeal would be manifest—what a putting of our spiritual houses in order! We do well to remember that this is the attitude that Christ has bidden each of his servants to always maintain. They are ever to be on the alert—in a state of readiness. The day of Christ’s return is undoubtedly fast approaching. He may be here within a month, within a week! Are we ready for him? “Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.” If Christ at his coming should find us on our knees sincerely praying, “Thy

Kingdom come,” he will find us watching. But equally so will he find us watching if we are at work in the shop, office, or home, diligently shaping our ways as in his sight. If, however, we are *en-rapport* with the world, delighting ourselves in its entertainments, or in the close companionship of Christ’s enemies, or under the benumbing influence of strong drink, or absorbed in the cares and anxieties of this life, he will not find us watching but sleeping. Of such it is said, “The Lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.”

*Bro. A. T. Jannaway— 1888*

### **Children in Relation to Prayer**

H.P.—It is our duty to “bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;” for so Paul commands, and so common reason dictates. Over whom can we have such influence in bringing to the way of truth? Now, it is the most elementary principle in Scriptural instruction that we are to love and fear God, and pray to Him; and we cannot teach the children godliness, without teaching them this. But you ask: how can we teach them to say “Our Father,” when God is father only to his sons, viz., those who become such by adoption through Christ? It is obvious that in the perfect sense, they cannot use these words; but there is an imperfect sense illustrated in the Scripture statement, that God is the Father of all, and the Saviour of all—(Mal. 2:10; Eph. 4:6; 1 Tim. 4:10). In this imperfect sense, they are creatures having their existence in God, and dependent upon Him for the continuance of their being: for God giveth to all life, breath, and all things. This creature dependence is a fact which God is pleased to see recognised, as evidenced in the case of the Ninevites. This recognition will not be displeasing to the Father of all when accorded by the children of His own servants; and it will be a wholesome exercise for them. It is only when this recognition is linked with the assumption of an eternal relationship and heirship of salvation which do not exist, that the recognition in question is out of place and unacceptable. When the true position is discerned, it is far otherwise; especially in view of the standing invitation there is to our children and to all men to ascend a stage higher, and become “the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:26). Our children stand specially related to this invitation in so far as they are under our direct influence, and their wills are in subordination to ours. That they should consort with us in all spiritual exercises is reasonable and good, as in the case recorded in Acts: “They all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city; and we kneeled down on the shore and prayed” (21:5). There is more likely to be harm in barring off the children than in admitting them

to association in spiritual things so far as their case allows. It is only in the case of strangers coming into our assemblies that there is danger of compromising the truth; and even then, the danger is due to the ascendancy of the falsehood that all men are children of God and acceptable worshippers in Christ. If there were no such view, the case would be easier. If the public recognised that they are unwashed sinners of the Gentiles, "having no hope and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:12), there would be little fear of creating misunderstanding by our advances to them. But we countenance a falsehood in asking the indiscriminate public to approach God as children. Our own children, whom it is our duty to teach the knowledge of God in all its bearings, and for whom, on account of our complete control over them, we are responsible, are in a different position. We may teach them to acknowledge God as the author of their being, while leading them to discern that as regards eternal life and fellowship with God, they have no relation or hope out of Christ.—EDITOR.

### **The Use of Instruments in Public Worship**

D.D.—Musical instruments came into use in the meetings of the brethren from the need felt for aid in their vocal efforts in their weak beginnings. When voices were few and poor, singing was found to be a painful exercise instead of a source of edification. A backbone of correct musical sound gave the voices something to rest on, and left the mind more at liberty to rise on the wings of the sentiments expressed. Thus it was exactly to "assist the devotions of his people" that this feature came to exist. Doubtless, in many cases, musical instruments could now be dispensed with, though there is no particular reason why they should. Your remark cannot be substantiated that instrumental music was "prescribed as part of the Mosaic service, and was removed along with the other peculiarities of that service." There is no evidence on the one point or the other. David was a lover and an inventor, and an expert performer on musical instruments, without Mosaic authority. The psaltery and harp were not "prescribed." They were the free-will offerings of David's ardent joy in God. That we are not under the law does not prove that we are not at liberty to imitate David in this particular, for singing also was practiced under the law, and, if the mere fact of the abrogation of the law proves the abrogation of all things associated with it, it would prove the abrogation of singing and prayer, which would be proving quite too much for your contention. In such things there is a margin left for the good sense of wise and loving men. General rules are given them:—"All things to be done decently and in order;" "All things to be done for edification," and such like, but the particular form of things on many points is unspecified. Where we shall meet, at what hour, in what order conduct our exercises, what kind and quantity of wine to use, what psalms to sing,

what words to employ, whether all to sing together or to sing one by one, whether to sing in one key or in discord, whether in parts or in unison, whether with instrumental assistance or without—all this is left for the loving agreement and decision of the assemblies of the Lord's friends. There were instruments in the past; there will be instruments in the future, and there may be in the present if it is found to help the cause of edification. It is wide of the question to say the apostacy use instruments. This is not a sufficient condemnation of anything. They use Bibles, as well, and have collections, and sing, and preach. Shall we discontinue these things for such a reason? The question is, is a thing *right*, and good, or even, is it not wrong, and good? "Let all things be done unto edifying." This simple rule settles much.

—*Bro. Robert Roberts—1883*

## **God Manifestation**

"If the question be asked, how came it that Christ's will always acted with the Father's as no other man's ever did, it is here that the object of God's manifestation becomes apparent. There never could have been such an obedient man if God had not produced him and made him what he was; but God does not stultify Himself in any part of His work. Therefore, though God, in Christ, produced one who was righteous under all trial, He did not tie or force His will, but gave him that complete independence of volition, and that ample opportunity of disobedience which gave acceptability to his obedience, and value and force to it as an example to us. The principle involved in God's procedure towards man absolutely required this.

The object aimed at throughout is the voluntary consecration of independent will to His glory. It is for the development of this result that all these ages of evil are allowed. The prevalence of evil is the necessary foundation of righteousness. If it were not for this element of the work of God, the world's history is without an explanation. Take it away, and we are in darkness. The long reign of evil is the measure of the value God attaches to the voluntary obedience of independent will. The evil has come through the impartation of this power of independent will. Man has misused it, and hence the reign of evil; but the gloriousness of the obedience of a multitude who will come out of this great tribulation, is so great as to be more than a compensation for the night that broods over the world."

—*Bro. Robert Roberts summary in Phanerosis*

[We must pray, that one day, all our trials in this evil world will have been worth it.]

## **Analecta Apocalypticae (54)** **Babylon of the Apocalypse is Rome**

In the 17th and 18th chapters of the Apocalypse, we shall find ourselves very closely face to face with the subject of Rome. You may think we have had very much of this subject already. No doubt we have. It is a matter of surprise with some people that there is so much about Rome in the interpretation of the Apocalypse. It is certainly the fact that we are never well away from her in the course of the interpretation. It is really no matter of marvel when the relation of Rome to the history of the divine purpose is realized. We may fail to realize this if we live too closely in the narrow circle of our own affairs. Most people never get out of this circle. To them, their own affairs, their own street, their own acquaintance, their own town — is the measure of their estimate of what is valuable and important. Their own country is the widest stretch of their horizon. The present hour is the only reality with them, and only that within the circle of their senses. Europe, even of the present hour, is to them a misty abstraction — a something in which they feel no interest: as for Europe of the past, it has no existence for them. To such, the Apocalypse is in the same position and worse — not only a dark riddle, but a riddle of which they never heard.

However, we are not here to discuss their doleful case. Your knowledge of the truth is a guarantee that in some measure, you have ascended from their low lying plane of life, and mounted to some height in the nobler life which consists, among other things, of a knowledge of the past in its relation to the present and future well-being of man in the highest sense. In this position, you are able to realize why it is that Rome occupies so large a place in John's prophetic vision of what was to occupy European history between the first and second advents of Christ. She fills so large a place in the vision because she was to fill so large a place in the history. We cannot look back in the most cursory manner without seeing how large her place in the past has been. She was the destroyer of Christ, the slayer of the apostles, the enemy of the faith, and then the professor and champion and corrupter of the faith. She has been the leading influence in the European economy, and continues to affect the principles, and control the actions of millions in every country. She is so large and powerful an institution to the present that, notwithstanding the fall of the temporal power, and the circumscription of the power and wealth of the Church in all countries, statesmen cannot leave the Vatican out of account in their combinations and calculations. No wonder then that Rome should be in sight, so to speak, in nearly all the scenes exhibited to John in forecast of European events.

Some people have a difficulty in realizing that we are with Rome in chapters 17 and 18, because we read a deal about Babylon and nothing about Rome. Rome, say they, is not Babylon, and Babylon is not Rome. Well, if we are dealing with a literal book, their remarks might have some force; but, as has already abundantly transpired, we are dealing with a book of figures and symbols — symbols confessedly such, yet symbols not wrapped up in utter obscurity — symbols whose significance is allowed to appear here and there in a manner that supplies clues and keys, putting it into our power to trace and unlock the hidden meanings. Babylon is no exception to this. We read much about Babylon in chapters 17 and 18; and

if we had nothing more than the name we should be at a loss. But we have more than the name. We have it in associations that guide us to its application. When we ask, to what and to whom the term is applied, we find ourselves in the presence of the interpretation at once. For example, there are rejoicings at the downfall of Babylon. Among others, we find the apostles commanded to rejoice (verse 20); "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles". Why were they called upon to rejoice? "For God hath avenged you on her." From this, it follows that the Babylon of the chapter was the murderer of the apostles. We have only to ask, "Who killed the apostles?" to find out what is meant by Babylon in the Apocalypse. It was not Babylon on the Euphrates — nor the Babylon of Nebuchadnezzar and Evil-Merodach — that put the apostles to death. It was Rome on the Tiber — Babylon of the seven hills. This identifies Babylon with Rome at once.

The result is reached in another way. There is a certain symbol, labeled "Babylon". The label is this: It is in the 5th verse of chapter 17, "Mystery; Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." To what is this label affixed? Not to a city, but to the woman. It is a writing on the woman's forehead: "I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast ... And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, BABYLON ..." This shows the name is not used plainly. It is used in "mystery", with a hidden and not a plain meaning; and it is in the first instance applied to a woman, and not a city. But this woman stood for a city. So John was told (verse 18): "The woman which thou sawest is that great city that reigneth over the kings of the earth What great city reigned over the kings of the earth in the days of John? When this is answered, Babylon is identified, and the woman's name becomes the name of the city. There is only one answer. One city was "great", reigning over the kings of the earth, and that city was ROME.

When to these two simple and unquestionable modes of identification you add the fact that Rome, in her political and ecclesiastical relations, has been the one eclipsing figure on the historic stage in all the eighteen centuries that have elapsed since Christ's departure, the conclusion is established beyond the reach of objection or doubt. Babylon, apocalyptically, is Rome, just as France is "the street of" Sodom (chap. 11:8). It is impossible to go forward in the understanding of the Apocalypse without having that conclusion forced on conviction. The woman named Babylon was seen "sitting upon many waters" (17:1) — What is signified by the "many waters"? Verse 15 answers: "The waters thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." Literal Babylon has sustained no such relation to the population of the world since Christ went away. Literal Babylon has ceased to exist at all, in accordance with the prophecy of her downfall, which said: "Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be dwelt in from generation to generation" (Isa. 13:19-20). "It shall no more be inhabited ... from generation to generation". (Jer. 50:39). But Rome has answered to the

prophecy exactly. She has brooded upon all nations: she has sat on the many waters.

But her seat had a particular shape (and here, again, Rome is forced upon our attention). She sat on "a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns" (verse 3). What may be the meaning of this hideous piece of heraldry? The angel gave a word of explanation to John (verse 9), prefacing the words, "Here is wisdom," which is an intimation that it required discernment to penetrate the meaning. "The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And (in addition to that, there is this further meaning :) there are seven kings (or sovereignties — forms of government) — five are fallen; ONE IS, and the other is not yet come." Rome, as built on seven hills is notorious; but here is a further explanation, which connects the seven-headed symbol with a form of government actually existing in John's day, and whose five predecessors had passed away. "Five are fallen; ONE IS." Such was the fact concerning Rome. The city of the seven hills had passed through five forms of government, viz., 1, the Regal; 2, the Consular; 3, the Dictatorial; 4, the Decemviral; 5, the Tribunitial. The sixth was the IMPERIAL, which was in the fulness of its power when the Apocalypse was angelically communicated to John. This was the political structure upholding the Babylon of the Apocalypse in her place in history. We look at history, and literal Babylon is nowhere to be seen; while Rome is, in all the exact relations prefigured by the symbolism.

Furthermore, the Babylon of the Apocalypse is contemporary with the Lord's re-appearance in the earth. She meets her doom at his hands, as was evident from the things we had to look at in the 16th chapter last Thursday evening. After the Lord had come as a thief (16:15) "great Babylon comes into remembrance before God to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath." It is further proved by the song of the redeemed when the triumphs effected by Christ are celebrated: "Hallelujah! salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments: for He hath judged the great whore which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand" (Rev. 19:1-2). This proves that the Apocalyptic Babylon has a long career before the Lord's coming, and receives the retribution of that career when he comes. The inapplicability of this to literal Babylon is evident at a glance: its suitability to the case of Rome is complete.

Finally, the image-vision of Nebuchadnezzar, divinely interpreted by Daniel (Dan. 2), taken in connection with the vision of the four beasts shown to Daniel himself (Dan. 7), shows that Babylon, the destroyer of the saints, corrupter of the earth, the queen of many waters, must be Roman; for, by these visions, it is shown that it is the Roman iron and clay that receives the shattering blow of the stone; and that it is the Roman, or fourth beast, with Papal little horn and companion kings, that is given to the burning flame by the Lord at his coming. The Apocalyptic Babylon must be in the feet of iron

and clay, and in the Roman monster of the night visions. We look at Europe as it is now, in the light of these symbols; and it requires no dogmatism to say that Babylon is there. The Roman habitable is sub-divided, as Daniel's visions require: it is cut up into a number of separate, yet connected sovereignties; and prominent among the elements constituting this fourth beast dominion is to be seen an ecclesiastical Babylon — an ecclesiastical woman — MOTHER CHURCH — focused in the city of the seven hills, borne on the back of the political system subsisting in all the kingdoms of Europe. The evidence is complete, and the conclusion is very important; for Rome being Babylon, we are enabled, in the things said of Babylon, to see Rome as God sees her, and to gauge our relations to the present time accordingly.

In what aspect, then, is Rome presented to us in the chapters under our consideration this evening? The answer is very interesting. She is introduced to us in the aspect in which she appears at the time of the end. The symbolism of chapters 17 and 18 relates largely to the day in which we live. This will be evident from a consideration of who it was that exhibited the matter in these chapters to John, and what he said. It is "one of the seven angels which had the seven vials" that said to John, "Come hither: I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore." The seven vials belong to the end, and for one of the seven out-pourers of these vials to show John what is recorded in chapters 17 and 18, is as much as to intimate that what he exhibited appertained to the vial era, or time of the end. This is more evident from the nature of his communication. For John to be shown the "judgment of the great whore," was to be taken to the time of the end, when that judgment is to be inflicted. It is under the seventh vial, as we have seen, that "Great Babylon comes into remembrance before God, to receive the cup of the fierceness of His wrath." Therefore, for a vial-angel to say, "Come hither, and I will show thee the judgment of the great whore," is as much as saying he would show John in fulness and in detail what is only hinted at under the seventh vial. This judgment is after the coming of Christ, as shown by its position in the vials. The coming of Christ is under the sixth vial (see 16:15), and it is between the first and second parts of the vial. Under the first part there is a "preparation" for the gathering of the nations to Armageddon: then there is the thief-like coming; then there is the gathering to Armageddon, the locality of which is made certain by Ezek. 38 and Joel 3. Christ's coming is between the preparation for the gathering, and the gathering itself; and after the gathering and overthrow of the armies, occurs the final judgment on Babylon. The preparation is the drying of the Euphrates and the activity of the frogs. These have been the conspicuous features of the situation for many years. This is why we entertain the expectation of the coming of Christ at any time.

"He carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet-coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns." John observed that the woman was richly arrayed and intoxicated. His attention was earnestly aroused. The picture

before him was the symbol of the system of things in the Roman habitable, upon which the destroying judgment of God was to be poured out under the seventh vial. It is the same system that has existed in all the ages that have elapsed since Christ's departure, but with modifications from time to time. The seven heads and ten horns identify it inseparably with historic Rome; but the particular scene, witnessed by John, exhibited the constitution of Europe at the coming crisis of judgment. We look at the European system of to-day; and we ask, Is there any correspondence to this symbol? Is there a confederation of powers on the Roman basis, independently sovereign, and yet combining to sustain among them an ecclesiastical system enthroned on the seven hills, historically reeking with the blood of heretics? Everyone knows that this is just the situation of affairs. The scarlet-bodied beast is the body politic of Europe; its colour is the symbol of sin — ("though your sins be as scarlet" — Isa. 1:18) — showing that, in divine estimation, European society, which, considers itself Christian and holy, is steeped in wickedness. The "names of blasphemy", with which the body is said to be full, are the great and swelling titles, ecclesiastical, military, and civil (from the "Holy Father" down to the meanest "Rev.") with which the system abounds, which gratify the carnal ambitions of the wearers and rob God of His due, for God only is great, and His name only to be had in reverence, as will be the case in the age about to succeed the present, when "the lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of man is brought low, and the Lord alone is exalted in that day."

John wondered at the spectacle, and the angel said he would tell him the mystery — that is, the concealed meaning — of the woman and of the beast that carried her (verse 7). The angel then proceeds to explain various particulars, at which we have already looked. They lay hold of historic features; that is, of things that have transpired in ages past. This may seem to conflict with the idea that the picture seen represents the constitution of Europe at the crisis of the advent; but this feeling will disappear, if we realize that you cannot look upon the system at the present moment without looking upon much that is historic. You look at the Pope, for example; he is not the creation of to-day. His position and pretensions require centuries for the explanation of their existence. So with the confederated sovereignties, and the names and titles of the European system: you are looking on history when you look on these; and if you suppose a friend showing and explaining to you the system as it is to-day, you will easily realize how much of this explanation would relate to long-past accomplished things. So it is with the angel's explanation to John. It goes back in the history of the beast and the woman, while dealing with the system as it appears in the time of the end, at the crisis of its destruction.

The angel made to John this curious statement: "The beast that thou sawest was and is not ... and yet is." There is something like an explanation of this puzzle in the words that immediately follow. First as to the "was" (verse 10) — five *are fallen*; second, as to "IS" — one is; third, as to "IS NOT" — *the other is not yet come*. This is said in explanation of the seven

heads of the beast. The seven heads cover the whole period of time in which the beast having the heads appears in various forms. When we recognize that the things here spoken of are all aspects of the one Roman system which has had an unbroken history of over 2,000 years, and that these aspects at the moment of their existence were to be seen only one at a time, and yet were the same thing in different forms, we may understand the obscure and apparently contradictory statement made by the angel. The beast (the body politic of Europe in its Roman constitution), was before John's day: it had already filled a large place in accomplished history: yet in the particular latter-day phase exhibited in the symbol shown (viz., organized as a church militant upheld by a concurrence of separate sovereignties into which Rome was to be split up), it was not: it had not come: this phase was a something not to appear on the historic stage for centuries; yet, in the existing Roman power that in John's day bore rule over all the earth (upon which, afterwards, a false profession of Christianity was to be engrafted, with the result of developing the final phase), the beast could be said to be.

There is a further apparent obscurity, which disappears with all the facts in view, viz., the statement: "The beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition". The Roman beast, at the crisis of its destruction, is the Papal phase of the beast; and therefore the eighth in the history of the changes in the forms of government that the Roman system has passed through. It may be well here to repeat the enumeration, gone through a little way back, for another purpose: — 1, Regal; 2, Consular; 3, Dictatorial; 4, Decemviral; 5, Tribunitial; 6, Imperial; 7, Gothic, kingly; 8, Papal. Now, suppose these phases of Roman power were represented by separate beasts, as is done in several similar cases, the Papal phase would be the one that goes into perdition, seeing that it is under the Papal phase that the fourth (Roman) beast of Daniel's vision is to be destroyed. But "he is of the seven": what are we to make of this? The healing of the wounded sixth head gives us the answer to this. I will not repeat what was said on this; but you will recollect we saw that the establishment of the political Papacy in Rome was the restoration of the imperialism that had been killed there by the sword of the Goths, and therefore the healing of the sixth head. The Papacy is, in reality, the ancient Pagan constitution of Rome revived and reproduced with Christian names and superstitions. Therefore, although the eighth, he is "of the seven and goeth into perdition."

Before passing from this point, it is well to notice the solemn implication of verse 8, as to the position of those before God who sympathize with the Roman system. "They that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is." What is this but a declaration that the sympathizers with the Roman system, in all its ramifications, are outside the pale of divine regard. The cry of uncharitableness will not scare away an earnest mind from the recognition

of divine truth so plainly enunciated. It is either true or not true, that all who admire Papalism and its offshoots are unwritten in the book of life. If true, should we not be very careful to recognize and proclaim the fact? If not true, what are we to do with the Apocalypse and the Scriptures, of which they are an attested part? To attempt to displace them from their position of self-evident authority and truth, is to attempt an impossibility. There is no alternative but to recognize their teaching, however out of accord it may put us with our day and generation.

Arranged from the writings of Bro. Robert Roberts by Bro. Bob Widding

## **Hints For Bible Markers**

In developing our characters we should realize the importance of our calling in Christ, and the hopelessness of a self satisfied, worldly minded way of life. Put on therefore bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering: Creating a character essential to our acceptability to Christ. Paul uses the term “bowels of mercies” in the same manner that we would say “gut feeling.” Paul is declaring to the Colossians, and to us as well, that our mercy, our compassion should well up from deep within us, from our inner most part of our hearts and minds. As well as “kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering. We cannot tire of doing it, especially when it is not reciprocated, as we are wont to do. “But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.” (2 Thessalonians 3:13) What is this but love, as of the Godly sort. The temperance and sobriety of Titus 2:2 has more to do with the mind than the body. Paul is commanding us to have an honest mind, use discretion, control our emotions, we need to be sensible, and also, we should not think highly of ourselves, putting our hearts and minds to the abundant work in the truth. When we work, what ever it is we are doing, it is essential that it be done with Yahweh in mind. Done not as to please men but to the glory of our Heavenly Father, to the end that the world might know “what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

—Bro. Beryl Snyder

## **The Commandments of Christ**

As collected and organized by Bro. Roberts

*Continued next month if the Lord wills*