

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 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.

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Ecclesial News

CAROLINAS and FLORIDA

Dear brothers and sisters,

The brothers and sisters of the Carolinas and Florida are happy to announce that, pursuant and subsequent to an interview which established that we were of the same mind concerning the BASF, the Berean Restatement and the doctrine of fellowship, we welcomed into the Berean fellowship today Bro. Mike and Sis. Vikki Jasionowski of Howey-in-the-Hills, Florida. Bro. Mike and Sis. Vikki have been correspondents, not only with the Lees, but with other Bereans over recent years. At one time they dialed into the Boston ecclesia's Friday evening Bible class.

They have two children, Emmaline and Mike. The Jasionowskis were once members of the Advocate fellowship (Unamended) but have been unaffiliated with any fellowship for the past several months. They are well prepared to engage in that mutual upbuilding of faith which is required for our walk Zionward. We are fully confident that the Berean fellowship will be a strength to them and that they likewise will strengthen the fellowship. As they are presently involved in a move, their contact information for the present is limited to the following:

Phone: (352) 250-8830

email: mjasionowski@gmail.com

On behalf of the Berean Christadelphians of the Carolinas and Florida,
Bro. Dale Lee

GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

CANTON ECCLESIAL PICNIC..... **Aug 25–26, 2012**

Bro. Don Miller, 6695 Carriage Lane, North Canton, OH 44721 1-330-494-7717

TENNESSEE FRATERNAL GATHERING.....**Oct 6 –7, 2012**

Bro. Jim Rankin, 115 Sherwood Dr., Camden, TN 38320 USA, 731-584-6039,
email jrankin@bentoncountycable.net

GOLDTHWAITE FRATERNAL GATHERING.....**Nov 23–25, 2012**

Bro. Curtis Hurst, 250 CR 517, Mullin, TX 76864. 325-985-3868.

Information available at: www.christadelphian.com/gw/gathering/

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. Please check this link often 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 Bro. Craig Kiley (craigkiley@yahoo.com) and we will be happy to transfer the talks to MP3 format and post them.

Mortify the Deeds of the Body

“They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. To be fleshly-minded is death, but to be spiritually-minded is life and peace...If ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” Romans 8:13

PAUL makes it very clear in these words that there are 2 ways of living, 2 kinds of character and disposition—the natural and the spiritual; and further, that one leads to death and one to life. One way takes no effort, no knowledge, no ability. It is just acting naturally, pleasing ourselves, doing what we want to do, following nature. Because men's interests and capacities and backgrounds differ, the way of the flesh takes a wide range of courses, some far worse than others; some, in fact, very good and commendable from a natural point of view.

But all come under the general heading of the will of the flesh, and all end in eternal death at last. The other way is to realize, from the Word of God, that the whole range of the way of the flesh, from worst to best, leads only to death, and to thankfully accept the life-giving way of the Spirit. This way involves setting the whole life to the task of learning and applying the instructions God has given, and constantly seeking His help in absorbing and fulfilling them—constantly examining ourselves: our hearts, our motives, our desires.

The greatest enemy to our salvation is taking it for granted, being satisfied with ourselves, seeing nothing wrong. Baptism, and membership in a Christadelphian ecclesia, is no passport to final acceptance. They are just the barest beginning.

We are warned that the way of life is narrow and hard and mortifying to the flesh, but that in the infinite mercy of God it is within the reach of all who give their whole lives and energies to obtaining it. Berean 2012-288

God does not mock men by requiring impossibilities, but—neither does He permit men to mock Him by presumption and complacency. He presents Himself as infinitely tender and eager to help where His help is sincerely and wholeheartedly sought, but a consuming fire against the double-minded, the careless, the worldly and the insincere. He is a terrible,

destroying God, and a wonderful, loving, compassionate God. And He is no respecter of persons.

The Christadelphian name will awaken no response and recognition with Him, if the Christadelphian character—the mind of Christ—spiritual-mindedness—is not present.

* * *

WRITING to the Galatians, ch. 5, Paul gives 2 lists of characteristics which are in direct contrast to each other—the “works of the flesh,” and the “fruits of the Spirit.”

We need not dwell on the first list. They are the negative, natural aspect. They do not come under the description of “whatsoever things are lovely, pure, of good report,” etc., which we are exhorted to meditate upon—to feed our minds upon. If we concentrate on absorbing and developing the beautiful fruits of the Spirit, the works of the flesh will be choked out and put to death.

Let us then briefly once again consider the fruits of the Spirit, one by one, remembering that the apostle is here spelling out the ‘living according to the Spirit’ which is essential to obtaining salvation.

Let us constantly remember that these are not just beautiful and desirable and pleasant to think about things. The Scriptures warn us repeatedly that they are vital and essential things—not just hazy ideals but definite requirements—that there is NO HOPE OF LIFE without this spiritual character. Let us call to memory the very striking and searching expression of the Spirit to Ezekiel, concerning those who crowded to hear him—

“They sit before thee as My people, and they HEAR thy words, but they will not DO them, for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.

“Lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not”

They got so much satisfaction and enjoyment and relief from sitting piously before Ezekiel and listening to all his teachings and warnings that they could go out for another whole week and live according to the flesh before they needed to come back and ease their conscience by dutifully sitting and listening to him again.

They would have been terribly hurt and offended to hear the Spirit's evaluation of them. They would say, as so many of the flesh say when presented with the true facts, “How discouraging!”

James gives the same picture when he speaks of a man looking at himself in the searching mirror of God's perfect law, and then going right out and forgetting what he saw. Forgetting is our great problem. We see everything so clearly and beautifully when we sit listening to an exhortation, and then we go and straightway forget and act like the rest of the natural, fleshly human animals of the world. We need help to our memory.

We need systematic daily—even hourly—reminding. At the turn of each hour we should stop for a quiet moment and get our spiritual bearings—check up on where our minds and interests and attitude have strayed.

* * *

THERE are 9 of these fruits of the Spirit that Paul lists in Gal. 5:22-23—three threes. That's a simple, easy pattern to remember—

Love, Long suffering, Faith, Joy, Gentleness, Meekness, Peace, Goodness, Temperance.

The last should be, more properly, not “Temperance” but “Self-Control.” We should memorize this list (as we should many important lists in God's inspired Book of Life)—go over it often in our mind—check our characters and actions repeatedly on each item in order. This is a matter of LIFE and DEATH, like finding the way out of a burning building while precious seconds remain.

Aid the memory by some phrase using the initials, as—

“Let Joy Prevail: Let God's Grace Fill My Thoughts.”

When Jesus came to the fig tree and found no fruit when there should have been fruit, he cursed it, and it shriveled to the roots, as a terrible and impressive lesson to all his professed servants. When the divine husbandman in the parable came seeking fruit on his tree, and found none, he said—

“Cut it down! Why cumbereth it the ground?”

And when the vine-dresser examined the vine and found branches not bearing fruit, he cut them off, and had them gathered and cast into the fire and burned.

All will depend in the end upon whether or not we are found bearing fruit: these Fruits of the Spirit.

Let us then, with sober earnestness, realizing the dreadful issues involved; constantly check ourselves against this list of spiritual fruits on which our destinies depend. Peter says that if these things be in you AND ABOUND, they make you that ye shall be “neither barren nor unfruitful.” If these spiritual qualities do not 'abound' in us—that is, not just be present,

but overflow and dominate our whole being and course of life—then we are guaranteeing our own rejection as surely as if we were writing our death-warrant.

LOVE

LOVE is the first and greatest. It is the power and spirit of them all. It must radiate like light from us toward everyone and everything. In defining what love is, and how it acts, John lays the very clearly-defined foundation which we must constantly keep in mind—

“THIS is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.”

If we get away from the commandments, we are not loving in the scriptural and acceptable sense, however affectionate our feelings or good our intentions.

There must be a careful adherence to divine commandments to keep love in a sound and healthy path. But there is far MORE to love—infinity more—than a cold, technical compliance to command.

In our necessary opposition to the wishy-washy sentimentalism of the world's religion, we may tend to lose sight of some of the immeasurable depths and beauties of love.

Love is far more than any technical definition can encompass. Love is a transformation of the mind from the cramped self-centeredness of the natural man to the universal beneficent goodwill of the man of God. Love is complete and glorious newness of life.

In our defense of sound doctrine, in our condemnation of evil, in our opposition to looseness and laziness and compromise and declension, let us never —NEVER—belittle or betray love.

Let us never crush love, or cast it aside, even momentarily, on the pretext of any other virtue or necessity. What cannot be done in love and kindness should not be done at all. It is so easy to let self-righteousness and natural antagonism and contentiousness trample love underfoot on the pretext of duty.

JOY

THE second fruit of the Spirit is Joy. The command to rejoice is repeated over and over. It is a vital ingredient of godliness. It is essential to pleasing God.

It may at first thought seem strange to be commanded to rejoice, for we think of joy as something that comes naturally as a result of joyous things and events.

But deeper thought will reveal the wisdom and necessity of the command. The brief spontaneous giggle of a temporarily pleased and

gratified infant has no relation to the steady, unchanging, intelligent, spiritual “Joy” here referred to.

We are commanded to rejoice in EVERYTHING in our lives, good or bad, for all is of God and all is for a wise and loving purpose. We rejoice in the fundamental, unchanging realities that God is good, and that God is great, and that all things work steadily forward toward eternal joy.

A sour, complaining, self-pitying attitude is purely of the smallness and evilness of the flesh. If we are not fundamentally, basically joyful, we cannot please God—rather we insult and dishonor Him.

Paul “rejoiced in tribulation.” The disciples rejoiced that they were considered worthy to share in the sufferings of Christ. Jesus said, “Rejoice and be exceeding glad when men revile and persecute you.”

The infinite goodness of God and His purpose must overwhelm and overshadow every other consideration in our mind. Paul had the sound, sensible, balanced perspective when he said—

“Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

Paul realized the vital importance of this spiritual fruit of thankful joyfulness if we are to be of any constructive use in God's purpose. Nehemiah exhorted the rebuilders of Jerusalem, at a time of trouble, and in a day of pitifully small things—

“The joy of the Lord is your strength.”

All who are sorry for themselves or difficult to please or given to complaining or always wanting something they haven't got, or in any way dissatisfied with their lot are barren of this spiritual fruit, and are not only making themselves and others unnecessarily unhappy in this life, but are cutting themselves off from the life to come.

PEACE

PEACE is the 3rd fruit of the Spirit. Jesus said, on the last night, as he went forth to suffering and death (John 14:27)—

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

Throughout the Scriptures we are invited to peace, to—

“Cast all our cares on God, for He careth for us.”

Do we really believe in this promise? Have we a real and assuring faith in God's constant care? Paul, writing to the Philippians, gives a clear, specific formula for peace. He says—

“Rejoice in the Lord always: again I say, Rejoice! Let your gentleness be known unto all men. Be careful for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.”

The 5 essential ingredients of peace which he here lists are: Rejoicing, gentleness, casting all care and worry and anxiety upon God, prayer, and thanksgiving—a healthy, spiritual, beautiful frame of mind.

And the assurance he gives, if this formula is followed in loving faith, is—

“The peace of God which passeth all understanding SHALL keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

The commands of God are all designed to purify and beautify our characters and make our lives fuller and richer. They are the loving instructions of infinite wisdom for controlling and curing mankind's worse disease—SIN-IN-THE-FLESH.

All natural mankind are deathly sick of this disease. It has filled the world with sorrow and suffering and inequality and oppression and hatred and confusion.

Let us have the wisdom to carefully follow the instructions of the Great Physician, and enjoy the glorious spiritual health and joy that these fruits of the Spirit portray.

Paul says that Christ is our peace, and in all his salutations to his brethren he speaks of peace as a blessing from God, and prays that his brethren may receive it abundantly.

Are we sincerely concerned with the spiritual peace of our brethren? If we are, we will be very careful to do everything that will contribute to their peace, and avoid everything that will disturb it. Then we can with Paul, sincerely pray to God that His peace may be on them.

It is hypocrisy to pray for their peace while willfully disturbing them.

LONGSUFFERING

THE 4th fruit is long-suffering—patience toward others. This is the first and basic aspect of love that Paul enumerates in 1 Cor. 13—

“Love suffereth long.”

This is certainly the most important aspect of love, and for most of us it seems to be the most difficult. How often does our “love” break down at this first testing point! Love—true, divine love—suffereth LONG, and is kind.

We may find we can make quite a fair show of our spiritual fruit if we are allowed to display them in attractive and pleasing circumstances at our

own convenience, but the enumeration of “long-suffering” faces us with the problem of irritations, obstruction, opposition, provocation.

How does our long-suffering stand up? Our patience and long-suffering are the measure of the depth and sincerity and spirituality of our professed love for others. If our works are marred by impatience and irritation, then our motive is exposed as not spiritual love but fleshly self-gratification.

GENTLENESS

THE 5th is gentleness. That is, mildness, sweetness of character. James says the wisdom from above is “gentle and easy to be entreated,” quick to adjust and conform and conciliate where comfort or convenience or the desires and well-being of others is concerned. Never harsh, or abrupt, or willful, or selfish. Jesus said—

“Blessed are the peacemakers...agree with your adversary quickly.”

And the Spirit through Paul instructs us to be at peace with all men, to the fullest extent that is possible in harmony with faithfulness. Some bearing the name of Christ glory in conflict and harshness and antagonism to mankind, thinking thus to manifest their “zeal for the Lord.” But the Spirit of Christ is the spirit of gentleness.

This “gentleness” is the same word Jesus used when he said—

“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you Learn for me, for I am meek and lowly...My yoke is easy.”

“Easy” here is “gentle.” His yoke was gentleness—a loving, but all-powerful yoke. Paul, who had full authority to condemn, appealed in love to the proud and self-satisfied Corinthians—

“I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ.”

And God said through Hosea, of backsliding Israel—

“I drew them with bands of love.”

GOODNESS

THE 6th fruit is goodness. Jesus himself disclaimed the description of “good,” saying—

“There is none good but God.”

This shows the height to which this spiritual fruit points. Here is Godlikeness—complete devotion to truth and righteousness and purity and holiness absolute sincerity and integrity—hating anything that in the slightest degree deviates from truth and wholesomeness. Here is the preserving salt of incorruptibility that gives all the other spiritual fruits soundness and purpose. Jesus said—

“Truth shall make you free.”

Only perfect truth can give freedom from corruption. Paul's words concerning the flesh make a striking contrast to this most exalted of the fruits of the Spirit—

“In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth NO good.”

And James declares that all goodness and perfection are gifts from above.

FAITH

THE SEVENTH is Faith. Faith is the channel by which everything is accomplished. Faith is our link with the divine purpose. Faith is the unshakable conviction of the universal power and reality of God that turns weakness into strength and overcomes the world—

“This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith!”

Jesus made everything hinge on faith—

“All things are possible to him that believeth.”

In view of the magnitude and immensity of the divine relationship to which we have been called, we exclaim with the disciples—

“Lord, increase our faith!”

But there is a vital part in the process that WE must do—

“Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.”

Our duty is to increasingly build the power of our faith by constant study of the Word.

How clear is the majestic picture faith is portrays, compared with the pitiful confusion and speculation of the world's—

“Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God.”

MEEKNESS

THE 8th fruit is meekness. The word for meek literally means 'tame,' not wild. It is somewhat related to gentleness, which comes before, and also to the final fruit, self-control, which follows.

While gentleness carries more the idea of consistent kindness and courtesy toward others, meekness refers rather to the wisdom of true humility and lowliness. “Learn of me,” said Jesus—

“For I am meek and lowly, and ye shall find rest to your souls.”

The opposite of meekness is pride and self-satisfaction and desire for praise and admiration. Meekness is true wisdom. It sees all the foolishness

of mortal pride and glory that brings no real happiness and satisfaction and only ends in death.

TEMPERANCE

AND finally, Self-control—the full control of the scripturally-enlightened mind over all the desires and reactions and impulses of the flesh—what a glorious, worthwhile culmination!

What a wonderful promise that if we will do our part, *God will work in us to do and will of His good pleasure,*” that we may be gloriously transformed in the spirit of our mind, given power to overcome the flesh!

Following the list of these 9 beautiful fruits of the Spirit, the apostle continues—

“And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. LET US ALSO WALK IN THE SPIRIT.”

—*Bro. G.V. Growcott*

Lessons From Gideon

Throughout the book of Judges, we read of the rollercoaster ride of service that the nation of Israel has for Yahweh. They serve Him, then over time they allow the nations around them to persuade them to serve their gods, and so Yahweh punishes them. Once punished, they then cry and pray to Yahweh to save them from their persecution at the hands of the other nations.

Over time, Yahweh sends them a savior, whether it be, Ehud, or Deborah, or Samson, or Gideon, there are of course others as well. Their savior then saves them from their persecutor at which point, they vow to serve Yahweh, but again, after time passes, they fall away and the cycle begins again.

This is where we find Israel at the beginning of chapter 6. They are in need of a savior because they have again fallen away, and sought after strange gods. Verse 1 doesn’t give a lot of details, but is very succinct as to what has happened. *“the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD: and the LORD delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years”*

We aren’t told exactly what evil they had done until verse 25 where Gideon is told to *“throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the grove that is by it”*

So, we see that they are obviously worshiping false gods. In particular it says they are worshiping “Baal”.

Baal actually simply means “Lord”, so we are not actually told which god they are worshiping. Other places in scripture, we are told of more specific gods like “Baal-Berith, Baal-Peor, Baal-zebug” etc.

It is very possible that this god is “Baal-Berith”, because right after the death of Gideon, despite all that he did for Israel, they return to worshiping of idols, and Baal-Berith is specifically mentioned. Judges 8:33 *“And it came to pass, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel turned again, and went a whoring after Baalim, and made Baalberith their god.”*

Baal-berith means “Lord of the covenant”, berith obviously meaning “covenant.”

It is unfortunate that they would not only turn their backs on Yahweh, but his covenant as well, as they worship a false god of covenants.

There is another interesting component to covenants that is seen in this first part of the life of Gideon. We see that in verse 1 of chapter 6 that Israel suffers under the hand of the Midianites for 7 years before Yahweh decides to put an end to it through His servant Gideon. And, in another place in this chapter, Gideon is told to make a sacrifice offering with a 7 year old bullock. Seven is the number associated with a covenant, it is an important number in Scripture. It also represents perfection. But of course any covenant with Yahweh is a perfect covenant.

The most obvious covenant being the covenant He made with Israel after their delivery out of Egypt.

They were also told if they broke that covenant they would be punished “seven times more for their sins” Lev. 26:14-18

“But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments; ¹⁵And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant: ¹⁶I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. ¹⁷And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you. ¹⁸And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.”

The unfortunate part of the covenant Yahweh made with Israel is that it was impossible for them to keep. But the purpose of it was not to be kept, it was to act as a schoolmaster until it would one day be fulfilled by Christ.

And after that there would be another covenant, one that has yet to be given to Israel, none of us have been given it, but we know that it will one day be given, and its our hope, as Gentiles who have been grafted into the family of Israel, to be a part of that covenant.

Let us look at that in Jer. 31:31-33

“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: ³²Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my

covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: ³³But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

This original covenant was given to them upon leaving the land of Egypt and they have followed it ever since, though we know that today their adherence to it is somewhat different than what was originally given to them in the wilderness. They have molded it so as to make it man’s law rather than Yahweh’s. They have changed most of it so as to give it a more modern appeal over the ages.

This is, of course, no different than the way that Gentile “Christians” have changed the law of Christ through the ages. From the days of the Roman Empire to today, it is constantly changing to fit the “modern lifestyle”. The most important and obvious reason it has changed is to increase the riches of the church and its leaders.

Ask either a Jewish leader, or Christian leader why they have changed, and the response is probably, “that was 1000’s of years ago, you don’t expect us to follow the same rules now as were given then!”

What they don’t understand is 1000 years is as a day to Yahweh, so what we do today that differs from any commandment given then is wrong in His eyes.

Things have really not changed much today as it was in the days of the Judges. As it says in the very last verse of Judges 21:25 *“In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.”*

With every man doing what was right in their own eyes, we can see why the relationship of Israel with Yahweh is consistently up and down throughout the history of Israel and especially throughout the book of Judges.

They really had a simple choice to make, follow the law and commandments of Yahweh and be rewarded, or if not be punished. Unfortunately too often they could not resist the lure of the nations around them, and they were punished for it. The flesh is weak, and the law was impossible to follow for any man, except one.

The covenant given to Israel upon leaving the land of Egypt was one in which the national wellbeing of Israel was dependent on their ability to follow a law which was impossible for any man to actually keep. Of course throughout the early history of Israel, some generations were more obedient than others, and the more obedient ones were rewarded, but none of them were ever able to completely follow it. They could not and Yahweh knew that they would be unable to do it before even making the covenant. And it is very obviously seen throughout the book of Judges, and at the beginning and end of the account given to us of Gideon.

We should point out here, that it was not the law that was wrong, it was man. As we know, the law was “holy, just and good”, it was after all given by Yahweh, but man however is just the opposite. The flesh is full of sin and incapable of following all of Yahweh’s commandments until that sin is removed. Outside of Christ no man has ever been able to resist the urges of the flesh throughout his lifetime.

And so the question of Galatians 3:19 is asked “*wherefore then serveth the law?*”

Despite its inability to be followed, Yahweh had a purpose with the law, and it was ultimately fulfilled in Christ. As Paul answers his question “*It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made;*”

As we have said, the law could not take away sins, but there was a need for it so that the people could cover their sins. And so, they followed the necessary requirements by sacrificing animals until the one true sacrifice of Christ.

Keep in mind, the state of the earth at the time of the flood. The world was filled with wickedness, to the point that there were only 8 who served Yahweh. So, as Paul says, it was added because of transgressions, because of the wickedness of man, it had to be controlled. Yahweh did not feel the need to control all nations, but he was going to at least see that His people had a guide to follow.

They may not have been able to completely follow it, but at least there was a guide. Men left to their own devices would only lead to a repeat of the time of the flood. That being said, we know that in the last days before Christ’s return, the world will be in a similar state as the days of Noah. So, for us as believers living in what appears to be the days of Noah, we should all be watching and waiting eagerly for the return of Christ and hope that we will be allowed into that ark of salvation. We’ll see this important point, as we consider Gideon’s army, in a few minutes.

We might also add, that the law, as a schoolmaster, also teaches the truth. For those who choose to seek it out, there are many lessons to be learned from the Law. Practically, it taught Israel to constantly look to God in their daily lives. They were to offer sacrifices at the tabernacle, celebrate feasts in remembrance of His glory and provision for them, and they also followed laws given by Yahweh on a daily basis. They knew that to break those laws meant punishment.

We are told, our example in Judges 2:10 that one generation would know of Yahweh, but the second would not. “*...there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.*”

Despite their lack of “knowing”, they were still punished for their sins. This is perhaps where we find Israel at the time of Gideon, they were a generation that “knew not the Lord”, however He was not completely out

of their minds because we know from verse 6 of chapter 6 “*the children of Israel cried unto the LORD*”

So, they knew him enough to finally turn to Him for help, and their prayers were finally answered with the help of Gideon. But first they were visited by an unnamed prophet.

This prophet was not there to help them, but to deliver a message from Yahweh, a reminder that this generation of Israelites had obviously forgotten.

-starting in verse 8 “*...Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage; ⁹And I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppressed you, and drave them out from before you, and gave you their land; ¹⁰And I said unto you, I am the LORD your God; fear not the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but ye have not obeyed my voice.*”

Think about the 4 things that this prophet reminds them of, and how they can actually relate to us.

1. He brought them out of Egypt.
 - We are delivered from the darkness of this world, which is an obvious type of Egypt.
2. He brought them out of the house of bondage.
 - He has brought us out of the bondage of sin.
3. He delivered them from their oppressors.
 - He has delivered us from the oppression of death.
4. He gave them the land of promise.
 - Through Christ we will be able to inherit the same promised land.

So, just as Israel has a history of deliverance, so do we, spiritual Israelites. And just as Israel consistently disobeyed Yahweh and followed the nations around them, so do we. It’s a lesson we should all have at the forefront of our minds every day.

They are told that it was Yahweh who has delivered them once from their enemies and will certainly be able to do it again. Not once had any of the idol gods they have been worshiping delivered them from anything, it is Yahweh who they should be seeking out and Him alone.

So the first thing Gideon is told to do is to destroy those idols. Yahweh will do nothing for Israel as long as they continue to serve the false idols.

The first mention of Gideon is when an angel approaches him to prepare him to defeat the Midianites. At this time the angel calls him a “mighty man of valor”. This is obviously a title describing his work to be done in the future. Even Gideon doesn’t believe the Angel. He is very humble and hardly considers himself a mighty man of valor, he tells the

angel in verse 15, *“Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father’s house.”*

It is interesting to consider the characteristics that God seeks in His followers. We know for example that the *“meek shall inherit the earth”*, and *“God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble”*(James 4:6). Humbleness is a characteristic that is an important one for servants of God, but not necessarily for leaders. But, God knows the hearts of all men, and can see that leadership can be found in even the most humble. Moses for example was a very humble man, yet he was perhaps the most important leader the nation of Israel has ever had. Consider, for example his response after being told to lead Israel out of Egypt. Exod. 3:11 *“And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?”*

This is the same type of man that Gideon is, he is both humble and very apprehensive. Many times he asks for a sign to be sure he is doing the right thing.

But yet, there is perhaps another side to Gideon that is not seen. It is interesting that the men of the city knew right away that it was Gideon who cut down the groves. Verse 29 says *“And they said one to another, Who hath done this thing? And when they enquired and asked, they said, Gideon the son of Joash hath done this thing.”*

We don’t know who they “enquired and asked”, perhaps it means they discussed it amongst themselves and asked each other, but they determined very quickly that it must have been Gideon. So, we have to ask, why would they think that?

He must have spoken out against them in support of Yahweh already. Perhaps, when it comes to his service to Yahweh, he is not humble at all, but maybe rather assertive. Being that, it seemed he was alone in his support of Yahweh; at the time it must have been a very difficult thing to do and something that would have demonstrated the reason for his title, “man of valour”.

We hope to one day be among the saints who will fight against the nations, but do we stand up for the Truth enough to be called a mighty man of valour today?

Gideon was given this title even before he fought against and destroyed the Midianite army with a mere 300 men. Yahweh knew what was in his heart, so that was really enough to be described that way. With that in mind, all of us can be considered mighty men of valour. We don’t have to actually earn it on the battlefield. We earn it by where our heart is, and what we *would* do if we are put in a similar situation.

We might also consider that perhaps this title was well deserved for Gideon for reasons other than what he would do in the future. Perhaps he had already performed certain deeds worthy of the title. After all, he was known enough by the men of the city to be thought of right away as having taken down the idols. Standing alone, even when his family didn’t stand

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along with him, in his service to God, must have been very difficult, but yet certainly valor is a characteristic required to do it.

Suppose, for example, a monument celebrating something opposed to the Truth were erected in our own town. Maybe they have decided to create a statue of the Pope, or maybe Darwin, or something similar. Obviously something like that would be despised by Yahweh.

As believers today, we aren't required to tear down things like that, if we were, we would no doubt feel obligated to bring down the Vatican, or destroy the Dome of the Rock. We know that one day all of those things will be destroyed and we hope to be a part of it, but for now we have to be small lights living in an age of Gentile darkness.

But to get back to the point, if one of those monuments were to be torn down, the question we should ask ourselves is, would the people we know blame us? Would they quickly enquire among one another and then blame us in the same way the people quickly blamed Gideon. Do we stand up for the Truth even when we are alone? Do the people around us know of our convictions, even when they are different than everyone else's?

It is certainly not an easy thing to do, but it is a requirement of true believers. We don't want to be found among the idol worshippers as Moses found the Israelites worshipping the golden calf. There may have been some who opposed it, but from Moses' perspective they could not be seen, he only saw a sea of idol worshippers. When we see wrong doing, we have to be seen and heard.

As 2 John 10,11 says *"If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: ¹¹For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."*

We don't want to be partakers of their evil deeds, we must stand apart. And standing apart means standing up for what we believe, and telling others and separating ourselves from evil. It takes the courage and valor of Gideon to do it, but we have him as our example, as so many other men and women in Scripture who have shown us how to serve God. So, as Paul says, we should use them as examples in our own lives.

Gideon had great courage, but he actually didn't have to display it to the people that morning. They went to the house of his father expecting to find him, but instead they spoke to his father, Joash. Joash, must not have stood out like Gideon did previous to this, because he is not even considered as the perpetrator, they only wanted Gideon. But, Joash, does show a certain amount of courage and valor himself as he stands before the crowd and tells them "if Baal is really a god, let him handle matters on his own, why did they, mere mortals, need to protect a mighty god?"

Of course Joash knew Baal was merely a false idol, a man-made statue, but his point was a good one, and it was one that the people couldn't refute, and so they left, probably waiting for Baal to avenge himself against Gideon. But of course, it never happened, and so, the combination

of Yahweh's instruction to tear down the idols, and Joash's point to the people, was able to actually convert most of the people to Yahweh.

Gideon became famous for what he had done, and they even gave him a name, "Jerubbaal", which means "let Baal plead for himself", a reminder, as long as Gideon was alive, that Baal could not protect himself, and thus, that he was obviously not really a god, there was only one god, and that was the God that Gideon served, Yahweh.

This was a very important turning point in the life of Gideon, he was no longer the outcast, he had instead become a leader, the man who the people saw as both a destroyer of Baal, and also an important servant of Yahweh. So, if they were to battle the Midianites and end their oppression, they would need the help of Yahweh, and so they looked to Gideon to lead them to that end.

Let us move on now, further into the future as Gideon's role as a leader has greatly increased. He was now in charge of an army. And they were to prepare to destroy the Midianites, and finally end their oppression. But, Gideon knew if they were to defeat the great Midianite army, they would not do it without the help of Yahweh, and so he follows His instructions in preparing that army.

In verse 2 of chapter 7, we see the first words of Yahweh to Gideon, and they are very important words, he says: "*The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.*"

It has been the history of not just Israel, but man in general, to be proud of their own accomplishments. Many times, even with the help of Yahweh, men have allowed their own pride to control their thinking.

As Paul says from I Corinthians: "*He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*"

All glory should always be given to Yahweh. All things are given to us by Him and also taken away. This is what He wants from His servants. If we are to be true servants, we cannot glory in our own accomplishments, no matter what they may be. Hopefully one day we will all be allowed entrance into His Kingdom, and when that day arrives, all those who do enter will do so with the sole purpose of giving glory to God. That is of course His eternal purpose, as Bro. Thomas says, human salvation is only incidental.

While that is His ultimate purpose, His desire for His people Israel in this age, and throughout their history, has always been the same, for them to give glory to Yahweh as well. This is why for example we see the lowly donkey as a representative of Israel. The horse represents the nations around them, because they took pride in themselves and their strong, fast, and powerful horses in battle, but Israel was to take pride in only one thing, their God.

Yahweh tells Gideon that his army is too large. As we know, there is strength in numbers, but Israel was to have strength in Yahweh and nothing else. That is a lesson for us as well. Sometimes we can feel comfortable in our positions on things, particularly if the majority believe the same way, but that should never be a reason for believing it. Consider our fellowship. The Bereans are very small compared to other fellowships, and certainly other religions, but we have important beliefs that none of us are prepared to compromise for the sake of numbers.

Of course Christadelphians as a whole are minute compared to Catholics or Protestants. Bro. Thomas left the Campbellites because he felt firmly in his beliefs and cared nothing for how the majority felt, he followed his convictions, and none of us would be here today had he not.

This is the thinking of Gideon as well, he does not concern himself with the giant army just over the mountain to his north, he follows the orders of the true leader of their army Yahweh, and has faith that it is not numbers that will win the battle, but Yahweh.

The first way that the army was divided was simple, those who were afraid were allowed to leave, and apparently there were many who's faith was not strong enough because many did in fact leave, 22,000 to be exact.

After the 22,000 left, that left 10,000 to battle the Midianites, but that still was too many in the eyes of Yahweh. It still could have perhaps given cause for some of the men to have pride and faith in their numbers and their own feats in battle as opposed to Yahweh.

Gideon is told to take the men to the water, and they would be further divided there. He is then told to allow the men to drink and to watch them drink, because he was to divide the men based on how they drank the water.

The men who picked up the water with their hands and brought it to their faces and lapped it were to be put in one side, and the men who bowed down on their knees and drank the water face down, were to be put to the other side.

After this was done, the men who brought the water to their faces with their hands and lapped it were only 300 men. These were the men that Yahweh wanted to battle the Midianites. You can imagine the strength of faith required at this point for both Gideon and the 300 men after seeing the 31,700 men depart leaving only them to prepare for battle.

A group of 32,000 men that they started with would have been so many they would have been able to look all around them and only see their army in all directions, but 300, isn't that many more than the total we have here at Hye this week.

But Yahweh had a purpose in how he chose these men. Firstly, the first paring down was obvious, those who were afraid had no faith in Him and so he had no need for them anyway. And practically speaking, they probably wouldn't follow orders as they would have needed to because

they would have been more concerned with their own survival, than the success of the army.

The second paring down of the men was an important one.

Let us consider the practical first.

Remember they were camped at the Mount of Gilboa, a location that gave them the ability to look down at the Midianite army in the Plain of Jezreel. However, you'll notice in verse 4 it says they went "down" to the water. That is because the water would have been at the foot of Gilboa on a level plain with the Midianites, a very dangerous location for an army as small as they were in comparison to the enemy.

Any smart soldier would always keep his eye on the enemy in case of an ambush. That being the case, they did not put themselves in the vulnerable position of bowing down with their faces in the water. They instead stood up watching as they drank.

The other reason for rejecting these men was that at that time of great idolatry in the land it was a tradition to place the idols of Baal by areas of water like this one. The reason for that was anyone bending over to drink from the water was basically bowing to Baal.

If this was the case, the 300 men who were accepted refused to bow to Baal, they drank standing up bringing the water to their faces.

To this point, the army is down to 300 men. That's less than 1% of those who heard the call of Gideon's trumpet.

-Those who were rejected were rejected for lack of faith, lack of self-control, bowing to idols, not watching or maintaining their focus.

-Those who were accepted were accepted for their faith, their desire for the protection and success of the army and their service to Yahweh.

It is an important lesson and type for us. What else could this paring down of these men represent but the paring down of those in Sinai at the Judgment seat; after all, many will be called, but few chosen? That's the case for Gideon's army, and for those who will be accepted into the Kingdom of God.

The first division was based on those who were afraid and those who were not. We can certainly see how those who live their lives in fear of the world will not be accepted by Christ at the judgment seat.

We can never allow our fears to control our service to the Truth. It is not easy of course, but it wasn't easy for Gideon and his army as they stared down the giant Midianite army in front of them, but they had faith, as we should have faith. That faith can give us strength, and not only that, but much like the army of Gideon, they had each other, just as we have each other. We should be there to support our brethren and we should expect our brothers and sisters to support us when we need them, we should never be alone in our battles with the fiery darts of the wicked.

Let us consider Philippians 1:27-29 *"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else*

be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; ²⁸*And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.* ²⁹*For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;”*

We should be “*striving together for the faith of the gospel*” Christ is building his army, just as Gideon did, and he is dividing it as well, making sure only the best are allowed to serve in it. Those who not only can’t stand up against evil, but who can’t stand together with each other to fight for the faith of the gospel, will not be allowed to serve. If we can’t work with each other in this age, how could we be expected to work together as one true body in the age to come? That is how a truly perfected army is built.

The second dividing of the army of Gideon, percentagewise, was an even larger division. The final 300 was tiny compared to what it was to start with. So, again, in this we can see a type of the judgment seat at Sinai. Only the very few will be allowed entrance into the kingdom of God. Only the true servants who have circumcised their hearts and as the men of the army of Gideon did, refuse to bow to anyone other than Yahweh.

Now that Gideon’s army is complete they now focus on their task at hand, to defeat the Midianite army. Gideon first divides his army into 3 groups, one hundred in each group, and he gives each man a trumpet, a lamp, and a pitcher, which was really more of what we would consider a vase. The lamps were put into the vases so as to conceal the light until the time was right.

The three groups then surrounded the camp of the Midianites. It was night, so most of the men were sleeping. In fact we are told more specifically that they purposely did it at the beginning of the “middle watch”. This was a perfect time because it was probably a time of most confusion as the first watch had gone to bed and the new watch was just settling in to their positions.

At this point, the 300 men broke their pitchers, instantly revealing their lights surrounding the camp and each of the 300 blew their trumpets and also screamed “the sword of Yahweh and of Gideon.”

We should consider that it was only one trumpet that was necessary to call together the entire nation of Israel during their wondering in the wilderness. The trumpets that they used, which are actually “Shofar” in the Hebrew, were not the musical instruments we know today, it was much louder, and in this case there were 300 of them sounding all at once, while at the same time the previously black night was suddenly enlightened by the lamps of 300 men all around the camp. And not to mention the yelling of the important phrase “the sword of Yahweh and of Gideon.”

This caused a great deal of fear and confusion, the Midianites then began to actually turn on each other, not knowing friend from foe. They

saw the lights, the ear piercing sound of the trumpets and the name of Yahweh, being used. They would have been familiar with the Israelitish God, just from their time in dealing with Israel. They probably even knew of the cries of the Israelites to Him, so perhaps at this point they would have thought those cries were being answered, striking even more fear in them. Of course, as we know, those cries were in fact being answered, and Yahweh was using Gideon and his army as his medium for answering them.

Verse 10 of Chapter 8 tells us there were a total of 135,000 men in this camp, and 120,000 of them end up perishing in all the confusion. Obviously the hand of Yahweh was seen in all of this.

300 men do not destroy an army of that size without His help.

The final 15,000 who do escape, are tracked down by Gideon and killed as well. Thus an army of 300 is able to completely destroy the army of 135,000. It was, without a doubt, accomplished through the power of Yahweh, and would have forced all of Israel to give all glory to Him, as they obviously should do anyway.

I'd like to conclude our comments with the very important type that we have only really touched on, that is of both Christ and his Multitudinous army in comparison to Gideon and his army.

Let us start by turning to Apoc. 4:5-7,

*⁵And out of the throne proceeded **lightnings and thunderings and voices**: and there were **seven lamps of fire** burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. ⁶And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. ⁷And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle."*

The "lightnings, and thunderings, and voices...and lamps of fire" are certainly very similar to our account in Judges.

Typically in Scripture, lightnings and thunderings are representative of judgment and war. We could even go back to Exodus when Yahweh manifested himself to Israel at Sinai through "lightnings, thunderings, and the voice of a trumpet." At that time Israel submitted to Yahweh and promised their obedience to Him... just as some nations will do the same after seeing the manifestation of His power at Armageddon. Some of course will not, and they will be destroyed.

You'll notice there are 7 lamps of fire in verses 5 and 7 representing the one spirit, or the Saints representing the one multitudinous Christ.

As we have talked about before, Gideon's army was of one mind, unified in purpose. They all had lamps in pitchers, which when they broke them had to have appeared as one light as all 300 glowed.

The voices that the Midianites heard were saying the phrase “*The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon*” - this brings us to the beasts from verses 6-7 of Rev. 4.

The term “beasts” is from the Greek “zoa” which means “living ones”, they are the same as the “living creatures” from the Hebrew “chayoth” from Ezekiel’s description of the Cherubim in Ezek. 1.

This is particularly interesting because, and I’d like to quote Bro. Thomas on this in Eureka Vol. 2, pg. 54, “The etymology of the word is regarded as obscure. In view of this, I would suggest that we may take the root *charav*, as having been the same with *kharav*, to waste, to destroy, from which comes, *kherev*, a sword. This derivation is suggested by the text where *kheruvim*, or *cherubim*, first occurs in the scriptures; as, “Yahweh Elohim placed at the east of the garden of Eden the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned itself to guard the way of the tree of the lives.” By rendering *wavy* by *even*, instead of “and,” it would make the flaming sword expletive of the cherubim; as, “the cherubim, even the flaming sword”

So, basically, Bro. Thomas is saying that the Hebrew for Cherub and Sword are so similar in some cases (like the one in Genesis) they could be the same thing. Which helps us to understand the phrase that the army of Gideon cries out, “The sword (or Cherub) of Yahweh.”

The trumpets, broken pitchers, shouting, and lights- may have been enough for the Midianites to believe it was the Cherub of Yahweh, as we are able to see described in Ezekiel and the Apocalypse.

It would have been a fearful thing for them, just as it will be a fearful thing for the nations of the world that do not bow to Christ and his army at the time of the end.

Gideon’s army was whittled down to 300, and those 300 had to have been a very special group, one that chose to stay and fight because they believed in Gideon and had great faith that Yahweh would deliver them. They worked together as one and did exactly as they were commanded. This is of course the perfect description of those who will be a part of the army of Christ in the age to come. Only those who perfectly fit his army will be chosen.

We must test ourselves as the 300 were tested. Firstly, do we fear the world? Are we afraid of standing up for ourselves, or do we prefer to be counted among those who do not want to stay and fight?

Secondly, do we bow down to the water to drink and allow the world around us to overtake us because we are not paying attention? Or do we want to be found standing, watching and waiting for the return of Christ so that we will not be caught unawares?

We must be able to pass the test, just as Gideon’s army was to pass theirs. It is our hope that we will all one day be accepted into that army, ready to stand by our Lord and Saviour as one body.

Thoughts for Today - Attics

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt” Matt. 6:19.

ATTICS

THESE words of the Master recorded by Matthew are well known to all of us, and we know that he was referring to worldly wealth, but for our article this month we will be isolating the words "lay not up treasures."

Our remarks we may add, were prompted by a letter we received from a young brother in Boston which told us he had received some old Bereans which had been stored in his grandparents' attic.

The age of homes with large attics is almost gone, those which are being made today are extremely small and some of the import of the lesson is lost.

At one time people stored furniture, clothes, dishes and many more things that were useful but unused at that particular time.

Over the years some of these things were forgotten and they became covered with dust and some gradually deteriorated.

As one generation passed away the items in the attic would lay gathering more dust and the generation following would be unaware of their presence.

Perhaps eventually the house would be sold and possibly wreckers would find the treasures in the attic and destroy some and sell others.

Today, many of the "treasures" in museums and historical buildings consist of articles taken from the attics of the past—their elegance and beauty has now taken on a more radiant nature, and in some cases these exceptional articles are priced far above their original price.

Bringing our thoughts once again to our brother's letter, we look quickly at the natural in an endeavor to bring out the spiritual; then at the spiritual to return to the natural.

NATURAL BRINGING OUT THE SPIRITUAL

As in the case mentioned above, articles are placed in attics and unless a constant housecleaning is done, they become covered with dust and "moth and rust begin to corrupt."

In our spiritual house—the house we should be building—our minds can become very much like the natural attic. We may store things in it and eventually forget about them simply because we do not refer to them frequently.

How often we read things and think to ourselves that we have found a useful piece of information and that we must "remember" it. Years pass, and we are confronted with a question that needs the answer we had read about.

Now comes the test—was the answer stored away in some dark dismal corner of the mind which is not exercised?

Rather than storing things away in an unused place, we should endeavor to keep all things active and useful, always “girding up the loins of our mind”

An example of how dull the mind can become is evident when we try to answer the questions which have been appearing recently in the Berean. How many we cannot answer!

And is it because we have not been heeding the injunction of Paul to “renew your minds” or restoring, reviving, refreshing, rejuvenating and replenishing the mind? We must keep it active lest it become dusty like the old attics.

Casually glancing over these questions will not “renew” our mind. Those that we cannot answer should be searched out—go to the attic and house clean!

SPIRITUAL RETURNING US TO THE NATURAL

Very closely associated with the above is the case of the grandparents giving the magazines to the young brother. It is a pity that books on the Truth find their way into boxes in the basement or the attic.

We remember hearing of a brother who found a set of “Eureka” in a 2nd-hand bookstore.

Such should never happen to the older Christadelphian works, and while our articles are written primarily TO the young, this month we appeal to the older ones on BEHALF of the young.

We urge brethren and sisters who have in their possession duplicate books, or books and magazines which they can do without for a time, to share them with the sincere young ones. Do not “lay up treasures” to collect dust. We ask that you circulate them.

If the idea of giving them away does not appeal to you (and it is understandable if it doesn't), perhaps a library type of system could be worked out even if it means the lending of them for a set period of time.

We realize that lending books can be a sorry experience when the book is not returned, but we feel that a previous agreement stating the date for return would eliminate any embarrassment in asking for the book back should one forget.

To the young, we cannot stress too greatly the necessity of treating these treasures with the greatest of care. The books and the messages contained therein are without value and without price, in many cases they are irreplaceable.

If a book should be lent to you return it promptly and in the same condition you received it. If this is not done then there will be a hesitancy to lend you further books.

Copy out interesting sections you read and this way you can refer to them at a later date. The availability of books for the library of the younger

members is indeed small we admit, but there is a publishing house in Australia which has reprinted, and we understand are reprinting, the works of the older brethren in their original form and we suggest that you make a purchase of these while they are available.

Great caution should be exercised when ordering books that have been published in Birmingham, for while some of the older books have been reprinted, they are original in TITLE only—the contents have been altered.

Tampering with the writings of Bro. Thomas and Bro. Roberts has been done by way of deletions, changes, & even omitting complete chapters. An example of the type of “reprinting” can be found in the “Law of Moses” by Bro. Roberts where we have found over 40 changes between the 1899 copy and the fifth edition published in 1946.”

Let us all then, young and old alike, take great care that the temple we are building is both useful and clean, let there be no hidden and forgotten treasures placed or buried in in any isolated place.

Let us “take the candle and give light to the whole house” and let us endeavor to share with others our “treasures,” be they treasures of the mind, or treasures in the form of books.

—*Bro. J. Jackson*

Meditations – Deity’s Ways No. 35

“GROW” (2 Pet. 3:18), “Abound” (Phil. 1:9), “Increase” (1 Thess. 4:10), “go on” (Heb. 6:1), “add to” (2 Pet. 1:4–8), are terms which express our duty in regard to divine knowledge and strength. We are not to be content with being babes, but are to pass on to youth and manhood (Heb. 5:12; 1 Cor. 3:1–2; Ephes. 4:13–14; 1 John 2:12–14). Like good seed in good soil we are to take root, grow and bear fruit (Mark 4). There cannot be a stationary condition in the truth: we must either develop or waste. Babes cannot continue babes even if they would; neither can the seed when sown remain seed. It is a question either of going on to maturity or of pining and perishing. Knowing how matters stand, let us adopt those measures which will ensure growth. We are told what they are—“I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up” (Acts 20:28); “Long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation” (1 Pet. 2:3, R.V.); “Watch daily at Wisdom’s gates, and wait at the posts of her door” (Prov. 8:34). Let neglectors of Bible reading, and willful absentees from the edifying Bible meetings of the brethren, consider these exhortations and reform. There are many incentives to faithfulness. The advantages of a well-stored and established mind are incalculable, even apart from the salvation which it brings in the end. It enables us to strengthen others by opening up to them the Word. It enables us to deal promptly and efficiently with questions and situations as they arise. It gives us boldness and assurance in the things of God, and exempts us from the dreadful curse of uncertainty and doubt.

How Christ towered above the ordinary run of mortals! He was a miracle, and as such an enigma to the natural man. His authority, wisdom, power, goodness, and holiness, were more than human. Never man spake like Christ; never man worked such astounding deeds as he; never man fearlessly laid down the challenge, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" Christ was truly divine. Some said that he was an impostor, but others pertinently retorted by saying, "How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?" Thus stood Christ a mystery in the midst of his contemporaries. But what a glorious explanation of himself had Christ for such as would receive his teaching. To such what an overwhelming evidence was he of the existence and estimable character of the invisible God. Let us hear Christ—"I am the Son of God"; "the Father sent me"; "I am not alone"; "I am in the Father, and the Father in me. The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works"; "I do always those things that please him"; "He that seeth me seeth him that sent me." Let us contemplate (in view of this) "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." How beautiful is the sight! How enlightening, assuring, comforting, inspiring! Christ, the manifestation of the Father, appearing not to terrify, but to cheer; not to avenge, but to forgive; not to please himself, but to labour and suffer for our sakes; not to destroy men's lives, but to save them. With Christ before us, shall we deny or dread God?

Science, like many other useful branches of learning, is very secondary in relation to Bible knowledge. The one is not essential to salvation, the other is. To encourage the discussion of scientific questions in ecclesial meetings is very unwise. It will surely lead to vain and unprofitable disputations. There are sufficient Bible truths to elucidate and enforce, without running after science. The greatest service we can render to our generation in this day of darkness, is to open-up and keep alive the deep and inexhaustible treasures of God's word. Those who have the ability to do this are too few, and their spare moments likewise too few to allow themselves to be absorbed in unimportant work, especially in the scientific fumblings of the present age. How little did Paul trouble himself about science? The same may be said of Dr. Thomas. What has science done in upbuilding or consolidating any man, or company of men in the truth? It is significant that God should have saved His children the toil of scientific research by giving them direct information regarding the greatest scientific questions—to wit: the subject of God, the earth's origin and destiny, the nature of man, &c. God seems in this to have had a merciful regard for the long-houred avocations and humble education of His children. It is also significant that although God endowed Solomon with superhuman information which enabled him to discourse upon trees, birds, beasts and fishes (1 Kings 4:29–34), yet he has not handed down to us the information that Solomon penned. It appears to say that not now, but by and bye is the time for the children of God to concern themselves with these things. The

Kingdom will afford ample scope and opportunity for revelling in this knowledge.

The business of our life should be to glorify God—”Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31; 6:20). It matters not whether our enterprise be ecclesial, commercial, or social, this is to be the guiding motive. Are we obedient? That we shall fail oftentimes is natural and is expected, but do we regard it as our duty, and is it our endeavour to obey? The flesh insinuates that the command is too hard, and that it is calculated to make our lives a misery. Away with the suggestion. It is not true. The command, first, is reasonable. We are not creatures of our own creating. God made us for His pleasure; and for us to forget or ignore Him cannot yield this pleasure. If we had made the race we should object to be left out of account by it. Even as parents we are displeased if our children forget us or act contrary to our will. It depends upon ourselves as to whether the command will make us miserable. If we heartily comply it will not, but if we arrange only to render a partial obedience it will. To endeavour to serve God and self is naturally a very irritating exercise. Let us take the reasonable view, and we shall soon experience, more or less, the Psalmist’s mind. He had no desire to run away from God—”Oh, my God be not far from me” (38:22). “Oh! how I love thy law, it is my meditation all the day” (119:97). “How precious also are thy thoughts unto me” (139:17). God is no tyrant, that we should flee from Him. He is our best Friend—abundant and marvellous in kindness. Every good thing that we enjoy is of His bestowing, and it is to Him that we have to look for an endless and joyous existence. Shall we grudge to give Him glory?

What! Question the teaching of Paul! May we be preserved from the men who would be guilty of such consummate folly. To question the verity of Paul is to insult Christ. Has not Christ introduced the apostle to us in words which guarantee his absolute reliability? Listen. “He is a chosen vessel unto me.” And again, “I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.” There is a growing tendency to lower Paul’s authority and to challenge his unerring testimony. Let us fortify ourselves against this sin by refreshing our minds from time to time with the apostle’s own references to himself. Paul informs us that he was set for the defence of the gospel (Phil. 1:17), and that he was an apostle by direct appointment of Jesus Christ and God (Gal. 1:1); that he was such in “faith and verity” (1 Tim. 2:7); that the signs of his apostleship lay in “signs and wonders and mighty deeds” (2 Cor. 12:12), such as the blinding of Elymas (Acts 13:9–11), the raising of the dead (Acts 20:9–10), and the imparting of spiritual gifts (Rom. 1:11); that what he officially spoke and wrote was to be regarded as the word and commandment of the Lord (1 Cor. 14:37; 1 Thes. 4:2, 15; 2:13); that his teaching was to be held fast (2 Thes. 2:15; 2 Tim. 1:13), and the men withdrawn from who would not submit to it (2 Thes. 3:6, 14); that the Spirit was present with him to guide his tongue and pen (1 Cor. 2:13), making his letters weighty and powerful, and his presence a terror to the

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disobedient (2 Cor. 13:2, 3; 2 Cor. 10:8–11); that his authority extended to the ability to hand men over to the adversary (1 Tim. 1:20), and to otherwise use the rod (1 Cor. 4:21). Let us not whittle away this true testimony. Let us rather enswathe ourselves with it, that we may be proof against the faithless insinuations which are current in our day. If we do this we shall please Christ, and rejoice Paul himself in a day that is fast approaching.

Bro. A. T. Jannaway— 1892

Jephthah's Vow

THIS vow is recorded in the eleventh chapter of Judges, in the following words: "And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, If Thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, then it shall be whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of mine house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering."—(ver. 30, 31.) The narrative states that Jephthah's daughter was the first to meet him on his return. Hence it has been concluded by some that the strict fulfilment of the vow required that she should be offered up as a sacrifice. But as this would have been a direct contravention of the Mosaic law (Deut. 12:31), such a proceeding could not have been permitted. Moreover, Jephthah, being one of those who "wrought righteousness" and "obtained a good report through faith" (Heb. 11:32, 33, 39), would not have sanctioned anything of the kind. And it is very improbable that one so devoted to Jehovah would make a vow which might require him to offer up a human sacrifice, or even an unclean animal, which was expressly forbidden.

Hence Hebrew scholars have scrutinised the text to ascertain whether it be not capable of an improved rendering. This has resulted in the conclusion that the word rendered "it" in the last clause of the vow may with perfect propriety be rendered "him," thereby making it read: "Shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer Him up a burnt offering," meaning that a sacrifice should be offered up unto the Lord. The marginal rendering also makes the vow more clear by substituting "or I will offer" for "and I will offer;" which represents Jephthah as promising either to devote the living soul that should meet him unto the Lord, or offer it up as a burnt offering. By an alternative such as this, Jephthah would avoid the sin of offering either a human being or an unclean animal. And that these were the terms of the vow, would appear from the account given of its fulfilment. Both the father and the daughter lamented the consequences of it: the former said, "I have opened my mouth unto the Lord and I cannot go back" (5:35), and the latter said, "Do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth."—(5:36.) To this the narrator adds, that "her father did with her according to his vow which he had vowed: and she knew no man."—(5:39.)

In lamenting her misfortune, Jephthah's daughter did not bewail the loss of life; she simply bewailed her "virginity." From this it would appear that in being devoted to the Lord, she had to remain unmarried all her life. This deprivation was considered a great calamity in the East, especially among Jewish women, many of whom indulged in the hope of being the mother of the promised prophet like unto Moses. Hence the sympathy shown by Israelitish women with Jephthah's daughter; for it is recorded that "it was a custom in Israel that the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah, the Gileadite, four days in a year."—(5:39, 40.) The marginal rendering substitutes "talk with" for "lament;" and this is more in harmony with the points in the narrative to which attention has been called. To lament implies the decease of the Jewish virgin, but to "talk with" necessitates her existence, and is in accordance with the statement that, as the result of fulfilling the vow, "She knew no man."—(5:39.) Thus a full consideration of all the circumstances connected with this touching incident in Jewish history, deprives it of that extreme, repugnant aspect in which it has sometimes been presented, and at the same time harmonises it with divine law and human reason.

Christadelphian 1875

Bro. Roberts Later Words From The Law of Moses

But there were circumstances in which the law of redemption was suspended. "No devoted thing that a man shall *devote unto the Lord* of all that he hath, both *man and beast*, and of the field of his possession shall be *sold or redeemed: every devoted thing is most holy* unto the Lord. None devoted which shall be *devoted of men* shall be redeemed: *it shall surely be put to death*" (Lev. 27:29).

This at first sight appears to be inconsistent with the liberty of redemption provided in the other cases. The inconsistency disappears when the difference between the two words — "sanctify" or consecrate and "devoted"—is realised. They are different terms in the Hebrew—KADESH (sanctify), meaning *to separate or set apart*; and CHARAM (devote), *to hand over without reservation*. It would seem as if a man, in the ardour of his loyalty, was at liberty, if he chose, to surrender the option of redemption, in the act of giving a thing to God. This appears to be the difference between sanctifying and devoting a thing to God. A separated thing might be redeemed, but a devoted thing was God's forever. Samuel was an illustration of the two combined (1 Sam. 7:26–28). He was "lent to the Lord," and therefore could not be taken back, but he was not a "devoted thing," and therefore the law requiring death was not applicable. In the case of Jephthah's daughter, it was a case of utter devotion (Jud.

11:31), and came under the law of Lev. 27:29, as Jephthah recognised in the verse referred to.

It is a matter provoking enquiry, why there should be this difference between things “sanctified” and things “devoted.” Why should death be required in the latter case and not in the former? It is permissible to seek a reason in a system of things which, besides being “a rule of national and individual life” was “enigmatical enunciation of divine principles and purposes.” Perhaps we see the reason in the difference between life in mortal flesh and life in the incorruptible nature of the spirit? It is possible to sanctify mortal life to God, but this is a merely preparatory, tentative, probationary thing, and never, in its blemished and ineffectual character could be a finality. It may even be taken back by the offerer in a practical apostasy. The only service that can be truly fit and final is the service rendered in the power, perfection, and glory of the spirit nature. This is a life of pure devotedness to God, both as regards entirety, acceptability, and undistractedness by other occupations. But to reach such a life, the devoted man must die to this present life—either by the process of consumption by spirit power at the appearing of Christ if alive, or by death, resurrection, and change in the same way and at the same time. There are several dim hints in apostolic allusions at this difference. Thus Paul says concerning Christ, “In that he died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth, *he liveth unto God*” (Rom. 6:10). And again, “Though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by *the power of God*” (2 Cor. 13:4). And again Peter (1 Pet. 3:18; 4:1–2), “Christ hath once suffered for sins . . . being put to death in the flesh but *quickened by the Spirit*. . . . Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind, for he that hath suffered in the flesh *hath ceased from sin*, that he should no longer live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.” Again Paul (Rom 6:7), “He that is dead is *freed from sin*.” In the Apocalyptic exhibition of the final perfection, there is the same suggestion of a true service being only possible in the spirit state: “A pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. . . . And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and *his servants shall serve him*. And they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there. . . . Therefore are they before the throne of God and *serve him day and night in his temple*: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them” (Rev. 22:1–5; 7:15).

For what other reason should things devoted to God be put to death under a typical system except to intimate that God can only be fitly served in the state that comes after “this mortal,” and that all our present sanctifications are but preparatory and provisional.

On the face of it, it might seem as if the special consecrations sanctioned and almost invited under the law we have been considering, inferred that, apart from these “singular vows,” Israel were at liberty to live purely secular lives like the Gentile communities of modern “civilisation,” and that only persons under these “singular vows” were holy or religious persons. How far this was from being the case is well known to those who know the Scriptures. Israel as a whole was “an holy people unto the Lord their God” (Deut. 7:6). How often is this urged in the course of the law as a reason for the various observances prescribed. “Thou art an holy people. Be ye holy for I am holy” (Lev. 11:44–45). The life of every Israelite was “holy to the Lord” from the first moment of his existence. He was introduced to the national covenant with God by circumcision on the eighth day. He was presented to the Lord on the day of his mother’s ceremonial cleansing. He was to be instructed daily from his earliest childhood in the history of their origin, and in the divine commandments and institutions, upon their conformity to which the continuance of God’s favour depended. He required no special dedication to come under the obligation of holiness. He was to keep himself aloof from all the practices of the surrounding nations, and to make no alliances with them for fear of infection with their principles and their ways, which would lead Israel away from God. The unclean practices that were rife among the Egyptians and among the Canaanites whom they displaced in the land were not to be known or spoken of among them. Lev. 18 specifies these abominations, commencing at verse 6, and concludes with this strong admonition: “Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things, for in all these the nations were defiled which I cast out before you, and the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it.”

The individual sanctifications, therefore, which we have been considering in connection with “singular vows” were in the nature of special holinesses, supplemental to the general holiness of the nation: like the introduction of special plants into an already well-kept garden. The nation was a typical nation in this respect—a prophecy of things to come, as well as a teacher for the time then present. God’s purpose is that human life upon earth should be a thing of holiness and therefore of beauty and joy in all lands. The Gospel is the glad tidings that He will bring this about. He has been working towards this result in all He has done hitherto. There has been no waste time, though there has been much apparent failure and confusion—comparable to the disorder caused by clearing the foundations for a house, or burning down the bush to bring the land into cultivation. There has been steady progress all the time towards the day now near at hand when “every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness to the Lord,” and when the very “bells of the horses” shall be inscribed with the words that appeared only in the golden plate of Aaron’s mitre: “Holiness to

the Lord.” Israel under Moses was an important step towards the goal: Israel under Christ will show us the goal reached, and all the earth invited to “worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness”: “Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name. . . Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved. He shall judge the people righteously. Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad: let the sea roar and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful and all that is therein. Then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord, for he cometh to judge the earth; he shall judge the world with righteousness and the people with his truth” (Psalm 96:8–13).

Law of Moses 1898

Worldly Societies and Our High Calling

QUESTION: “Is it right for brethren to join the Good Templars? It is a good cause, and we think it might lead to our lending them books on the Truth.”

ANSWER: It is sufficient for the disciple that he be as his master. When we can imagine the Lord presiding at a Good Templars' meeting, it will be time to discuss whether his brethren should be members.

The calling to which brethren are called leaves no room for such a thing.

They are called to “*set their affections*” on Christ and all his affairs (Col. 3:1-4); to give themselves **wholly** to them (1 Tim. 4:15) **to always abound in the work of the Lord** (1 Cor. 15: 58); to be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers (2 Cor. 6:14); to have **no** friendship with the world, which is the enemy of God (Jas. 4:4; 1 John 2:15).

Now, to join with Good Templarism, or any other worldly-ism, is to unite with the world in bonds of a bootless and godless enterprise. It is bootless, because the world can never attain the “good” it seeks, but must ever find all its efforts end in “*vanity and vexation of spirit.*”

It is godless, because God is not the basis of operations, or the source of hope in the case. It is a human invention, a fig-leaf contrivance; a “clubbing” together of mortals to work out “good” on their foundation by their own arrangements.

It is all very well for those who knew not God and stand not in Christ: but for such as have accepted God's plan and laid hold of His work in Christ, it is a degradation not to be thought of. For such an one to become a member of any such worldly organization, is almost like a case of putting the hand to the plow and looking back.

God demands our supreme and exclusive allegiance. Alliance with the world is a dangerous thing. Under the specious deception of taking part in “a good cause” a saint is insensibly drawn into fellowship with the

ungodly, and through their friendship and intercourse becomes inoculated in their principles, and cooled and deadened towards the things of the spirit, which are very unpopular in all worldly societies.

Let the dead attend to the dead; let the dead wash the dead; let the dead dress the dead and make them comfortable, and at last bury the dead: but go thou and preach the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Do not go off your ground as a brother of Christ and a Son of God to do God's work. If books cannot be lent without joining an association of sinners, let the books stay home.

“Do not do evil that good may come.”

This is a hard saying, perhaps God's ways have always been difficult and “narrow” to such as are after the flesh; but *“they are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.”* (Prov. 8:9)

—*Bro. Robert Roberts, 1873*

The Believing Devils

QUESTION: “Who were the believing devils that trembled to which James refers in 2:19?”

ANSWER: The devils (demons) of Jas. 2:19 who *“believed and trembled”* were the men who were the subjects of demoniacal possession (as popularly estimated) who had knowledge enough to recognize Christ and fear him, but were incapable of carrying out their faith savingly by good works, which is the subject of James' discourse. Mark 3:11 informs us that—

“Unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God.”

That is, men having unclean spirits fell down before him, etc.—the unclean spirit and the man having it being used interchangeably.

So, demons, and men having demons, were, in the language of James, the same thing—the first being the shorter and elliptical mode of description.

Demons were nothing in the abstract (compare 1 Cor. 10:20 with 1 Cor. 8:4; also Deut. 32:17 and Psa. 106:37). They were imaginary beings believed in by the Gentiles, whose belief furnished the nomenclature of mental disease with the circulation of the Greek language, without, however, carrying with it the sanction of the belief in which the nomenclature originated.

The powers of nature which the heathen ascribed to demons were real: the diseased condition or uncleanness of spirit that lay at the root of madness was a reality. But in neither case was the reality such as the pagans had imagined to themselves. The powers of nature are not separate

intelligences but the institutions of eternal power existing in one God, the Father, of Whom are all things.

Madness is not due to the presence of a personal entity—good, bad, or indifferent—but to derangement of the machinery of thought—fearfully and wonderfully made—which God has constituted to work in certain ways, the violation of which results in aberration and hallucination, as in dream, when the latent normally produced impressions of the brain are set loose from their relation one to another.

—*Bro. Robert Roberts, 1889*

5. I Come Quickly

“Behold, I come, *tachy*, quickly,” or *soon*. This does not refer to the “coming in clouds” of ch. 1:7; but to the coming to execute the threatening of the previous verse. “I, the Spirit-man, will come soon to bring the hour of trial upon the whole habitable.” In ch. 2:5, he threatened to come quickly to the Star-Angel of Ephesus, if they did not resume their original position, and take from them the gifts, by which their darkness would become complete. Nor is it the coming quickly, though it may be typical of it, indicated in Rev. 22:12. This has reference to our future, and not to a past time. I conclude thus, because in this text the time of the coming is marked by the bringing of the reward, and the giving every man according to his works. Then will be the time for the prostration of all the Satanists and spurious Jews at the feet of the Philadelphians. They will then know that these are the beloved whom they have long despised and abused. If it be a quick, or soon, coming at the fall of Babylon the Great, it was certainly a quick coming at “the hour of trial” in A.D. 248.

The Philadelphians were exhorted to “*hold fast what they had.*” They had the word of the kingdom and name. They were to hold fast to this, or, if they did not, they would lose their crown. Every reader can understand this; and he may easily know if he have any claim upon this crown, by examining himself and seeing if he be in the faith. If he be ignorant of the doctrine of the kingdom and name, he has nothing worth holding on to; and, though he may know all mysteries, if he have not been immersed into Christ, he is not in the faith. This is the condition of “the religious world” at this day. In the time of the Philadelphian Star Angel the Christian community, the religious world of that day, had the word of the patient waiting for the Spirit- Man; and was then in a position to hold fast or let go. Many now have a traditional idea that Christ will come again; but of “*the word*” which teaches how to wait, and how to be accepted of him as holy, unblameable, and without rebuke at his appearing, the clergy and their peoples have not the least conception. They can not therefore “hold fast what the Angel in Philadelphia had;” and consequently have no right or title to the coronal.

Bro. John Thomas—Eureka Vol. 1 Page 385 Logos edition

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Hints For Bible Markers

We are commanded to control our speech, one of the most profound and difficult of Christ commands. James tells us (3:58) "But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life far more often than not expressed by this deadly little member.

The man who is truly striving to overcome will let his "speech be always with grace." The archaic meaning of grace is mercy or pardon. While the current definition is quite similar: disposition to or an act or instance of kindness, courtesy, or clemency. In this command one can see how the truth is to manifest itself in the actions of those who have been illuminated by it. We are to use our speech for that which is good and for edification, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. The speech of a man of God will provoke love and good works. Is our tongue used to strengthen the heart, incite diligence, self-control, purity, and fear God?

It is simply too easy for the mind of man to grab a hold of our tongue, using it for self-pleasing gratification, such as to browbeat, condemn, cause contention, or rudeness in speech making one feel superior and better about themselves. Christ said to, "love your enemies, do good to them which hate you." This is illustrated and confirmed in the example of the patriarchs, the prophets, the apostles, and especially in the example of Christ. They practiced what they taught. The speech of Christ was pure, his love was pure, and when he denounced the things of this world it was without a malevolent spirit.

"The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things:" (Psalm 12:3)
bro. Beryl V. Snyder

The Commandments of Christ

As collected and organized by bro. Roberts

VII. CONCERNING YOUR THOUGHTS AND SPEECH

Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt; let no filthy communication proceed out of your mouth, but sound speech, with gravity, and sincerity and simplicity.

But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil. (Matthew 5:37)

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. (Ephesians 4:29)

But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. (Colossians 3:8)

Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man. (Colossians 4:6)

In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, (7) Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you. (Titus 2:7 – 8)

If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God.

If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 4:11)