

# 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

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

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

It has been some time since we submitted ecclesial news from Hengoed. As we write we wonder if it will be the last. The political, economic and social unrest in the world reminds us that the Return of the Master is very near. Events in the Middle East continue to develop and provide the conditions for the time when Gog will make his grand move for the building up of the Image Empire. We will be taken to the Judgement Seat before then, which makes the Apocalypse of Jesus Anointed feel that much nearer. Are we ready? Are we prepared? Are our lights burning brightly and well-trimmed with oil? Are our loins girt about with Truth? Are we watching (ourselves as well as the political horizon)? We need to think carefully about these questions and make any needed corrections to our lives so that we may be accounted worthy to inherit the Kingdom.

Since our last ecclesial news we have had the company of a number of brethren and sisters who have encouraged us on the path of life. In April (2012), we had the company of Sis. Annetta Jones of the Richard ecclesia who came with Emma Jones (from the Richard Sunday School). We appreciated the visit very much, and as always, the spiritual enthusiasm of Sis. Annetta. We were able to enjoy a study on the ‘Spirit of the Deity’ during that time which was of great benefit to us.

In May we had our bi-annual Gathering which was held in West Wales, and we enjoyed the fellowship of Bro. David and Sis. Dawn Humphreys, Bro. Reagan Rayner, Bro. Glendon Rhoades, Bro. Ben Naglieri, Sis. Victoria Holley, Sis. Marilyn Dobson, and Bro. Stephen and Sis. Vivien Ford. We had 8 studies during the weekend on the Apocalypse which were thoroughly enjoyable and edifying. Everyone felt they had learnt so much from the talks, not only being able to understand various passages of Scripture, but having a better understanding of history relative to the great apocalyptic drama. We were grateful to the visiting brethren for the hard work they expended in preparing for the subjects. A blessing is attached to those who study the apocalypse and we all felt well blessed to be present and consider that last glorious message from “Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth.” “Blessed he that knows accurately, and they who give heed to the words of the prophecy, and observe narrowly the things which have been written in it; for the time is near.”

We would also like to thank all of our visitors for helping with the various chores that a self-catering Gathering requires. A labour of love was

manifest by brethren and sisters in so many helpful and inspiring ways. We pray that when faith and hope are realised, we may continue in that love – the love which binds us together, and which has been bestowed upon us first by our Heavenly Father.

With love in Elpis Israel and on behalf of the brethren and sisters of the Hengoes Ecclesia.

Bro Phillip Hughes

### **MTONDIA, Kenya**

Dear brothers and sisters in the saving name,

It is some time since our last report. This year late August 2012 we were thankful for the visit of Bro. Bob Bent, Bro. John Simiyu, Bro. Epa Wekati, Sis. Agness Kiwalo and a scholar named Fluorine Wasike.

We shared the word of God. The following day we had the memorial service. Bro. Bob delivered exhortation to us on the fellowship and mentioned the chapter Mathew 18: 15- 16. Bro. Epa shared the Lord's table as usual in our fellowship. Then Bro. Fred Omoto prayed to close the service.

After the break we had a lesson where Bro. Epa gave a lecture on Abraham our father in faith he taught about the promises made to him by God as to earth seed or nation and blessing. He explained and mentioned the chapter Genesis 12.1-3 Genesis 13:14-17 Galatians 3:8:16, Romans 1:16, Matthew 5:5, Psalm 115 -16 Psalm 72:9-11. He also emphasized from the gospel that we should believe in the baptism and the commandments as we read from the book of Romans 2:12 and Galatians 3:26-29. Lastly he elaborated on Noah who had three children named Japheth, Shem and Ham. Ham got a child who was called Canaan as we read from Genesis 9:24.

Surely for all the talks were of spirituality uplifting and encouraging. I thank all brethren and sisters who visited us and may God bless them.

We are saddened to announce that our brother Onesmus Mbuvi has isolated himself from the Berean fellowship for a long period, despite our efforts to get him back. Therefore we pray our heavenly Father will guide him to rethink his position and come back.

On Behalf of Mtondia Ecclesia,  
Brother Julius Garama

### **LAS CRUSES, New Mexico**

Hi Brother Fred,

I wanted to let you know that I think some people have our wrong address (an old one)

Our current address is:

Michael and Leslie Morrell  
PO Box 1243  
Mesilla, NM 88046

Would you mind please putting it into the next Issue of The Berean Ecclesial News? Thanks so much.

Love to you all, Brother Michael Morrell

## GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

**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/](http://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](http://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](mailto:craigkiley@yahoo.com)) and we will be happy to transfer the talks to MP3 format and post them.

### As Little Children

*“I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes, for so it seemed good in Thy sight” —Matt. 11:25.*

There are many touching and beautiful references to children in the Scriptures. Among them none is more important or of deeper significance than the one contained in the 18th chapter of Matthew’s gospel.

Christ’s life mission was to provide a way of life and to teach men to walk in it. In this chapter we find the Great Teacher propounding a fundamental lesson with a graphic, unforgettable illustration. He came to teach Truth to a world which had, in the unbounded confidence of its

ignorance, developed for itself an intricate and highly plausible system of philosophic self-deception.

This system, even in Christ's day, was already venerable with age. In fact we find it in full bloom 10 centuries earlier at the time that David lived and wrote, as his 49th Psalm clearly shows. Its keynote is found in v. 18 of that Psalm,

*“Men will praise thee when thou doest well to thyself.”*

This has been man's watchword from the childhood of the race. If a man spends his time benefiting himself, building up wealth and power and prestige, he will be honored and flattered and fawned upon. The same banner of glorious selfishness still waves in unchallenged supremacy today.

So ingrained by centuries of repetition and habit is this principle of predominant self-consideration that it is often unquestioningly taken for granted as a basis of interpreting Christ's teaching, even among the brotherhood.

As this chapter opens, we find Christ's own chosen disciples eagerly crowding around him as each confidently pressed his claim to the honor of preeminence over which they had previously disputed among themselves.

*“At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven?”—verse 1.*

Can we imagine the feelings of Jesus? How utterly alone he must have felt! How overpowering the consciousness that he alone of the earth's millions could see through its headlong folly! How crushing the weight of his single-handed task of instruction and enlightenment!

*“And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them”—verse 2.*

On another occasion the disciples had imperiously forbidden children to bother Christ. The setting up of the kingdom was a work for men, they said. The glorious, majestic Messiah of Israel had no time for children.

He had been very angry on that occasion as he rebuked their proud and misguided zeal. Here again a great and fundamental lesson is to be driven home.

*“Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven?”* they had asked. How they underestimated the privilege of their position and the difficulties of the long, hard road that lay before them! Christ's answer fell with sobering weight on their enthusiastic rivalries. They were

going far too fast. Entrance into the Kingdom was no foregone conclusion as they had hastily assumed. Directing their attention to the despised child in their midst, he said (v. 3)

*“Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall NOT ENTER into the Kingdom of heaven.”*

Here was a new and bewildering viewpoint. The children whom they had thrust away were set before them as examples of the attitude to which they must be converted if they would so much as even gain an entrance to the Kingdom, let alone be greatest in it.

In what way are we to become as children? Mainly in unlearning many of the lessons that the world has carefully taught us. In going back to childhood’s viewpoint that we may learn anew in truth from Christ. How early the world teaches its children selfishness and ambition and bitterness and distrust! This is the sordid legacy that is carefully handed down. Even if it can give us nothing else, it takes infinite pains to teach us this.

This third verse is not merely a pleasing figure of speech. It is not to be contemplated abstractly with a warm glow of sentimental approbation. It is a positive command, an absolute ultimatum.

*“Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child”* (as Luke’s record gives it) *“shall IN NO WISE enter therein.”*

The world regards itself and us as men-wonderful, mature, self-dependent creatures of vast intellect and even vaster importance. And it engages with an amusing, but tragic, obsession in a multitude of pursuits which it describes by various flesh-appealing phrases, such as “getting somewhere,” “being somebody,” “amounting to something” and similar terms. All of which represent, in the main, the accumulation of various amounts of property, prestige and power (often quite useless and always troublesome), each increasing in desirability as it becomes inaccessible and enviable to others less fortunate.

The basis of its operations it terms “self-preservation, the first law of nature,” which, of course, in Scriptural terms, is the mind of the flesh. In all its activities the world worships maturity, adulthood, self-reliance, aggressiveness, ambition, and domination.

How necessary and refreshing is the lesson brought to our attention in this scene from the life of Christ! The world brusquely says, “Adults only.” The gentle message of Christ is, “None but children.”

Before we can receive his blessing we must cast aside these noble, manly, lofty delusions of self-dependence; we must realize the paltriness of the achievements upon which the world has built its

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illusions of grandeur; and we must unreservedly confess our utter and childish helplessness.

In analyzing the qualities of childhood we must use discernment. The Bible does not introduce children to our attention as models of perfection—much to the contrary—but the observing mind will see the lessons that Christ teaches.

There are certain fundamental characteristics of childhood to which our notice is drawn. Their existence is explained by the incomplete development and hardening of the motions of sin, and the limited opportunity that worldly maturity has had to poison the mind and impressions with its false wisdom and cut-throat philosophy. Therefore, the younger the child, usually the better the example.

The first childish quality that is drawn to our attention is humility. This is the basic lesson of the present chapter:

“Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven” —verse 4.

Childlike humility—not a hypocritical or ceremonial self-abasement, but a free and natural recognition of inferiority, unmarred by any tendency either to glory in it or to conceal it. The natural reaction of the normal child before it learns from its elders the questionable worldly wisdom of pride, deception and dissimulation.

Why is humility necessary? Because it is the inevitable accompaniment of wisdom and a clear understanding of our position, and its absence indicates either ignorance or deceit—both equally fatal.

This overlaps another trait of childhood we must possess—naturalness. Society has chosen to lade itself with a thick clay of sham and artificiality. Outward appearance is made the all-important thing. The scriptural lesson is that outward show and inward worth are very rare companions.

To the world’s dull senses, intrinsic solemnity and sincerity have no appeal. It must have the gaudy, mincing pageantry that, to the eye of wisdom, speaks of a sad emptiness within. Paul suffered much from shallow minded men who gloried in appearances and belittled his unreserved heartiness and lack of ostentation.

The unconscious wisdom of young childhood, which makes no false pretense of splendor, knowledge, or importance, is a refreshing antidote to the universal adult practice of attempting to disguise a weak, pitiful, decaying body of sin with gaudy embellishments of dress, deportment and conversation.

Then there is simplicity,

*“In simplicity and Godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God.”*

Simplicity — the word breathes of an indescribable peace and tranquility from the countless unanswerable complexities of existence. The patriarch Job suffered anguish of mind as he sought to plumb the fathomless depths of God’s ways and appointments, but he was taught to find peace in the assurance that in the ultimate all things work together for good, and God is just, and all man needs is simple faith.

Solomon too, in Ecclesiastes, ponders and weighs the inconsistencies of life and experience and he, like Job, learns he must accept it with childlike simplicity: *“Fear God and keep His commandments — this is the whole duty of man.”*

Man’s sole concern and obligation is to learn God’s will as thoroughly as his opportunities permit and, of course, to obey it. Nothing else need bother us. Childlike simplicity and singleness of purpose is the keynote. It is grown men, with idle, speculating minds, that have added all the complications.

\* \* \*

The next example we can glean from the chapter we are considering. Peter (always the first to speak), desirous of applying Christ’s lesson and anxious to catch its spirit, asks: *“Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times?”*

Poor Peter! Who but an adult would think of counting forgivenesses? How noble he felt! Seven times! The Rabbis, we are told, limited it to three.

But again we must turn to the nobility of infancy for an example of Christ’s answer. There is to be no reckoning of forgivenesses. How repeatedly a small child will forgive and forget! How soon are hurts forgotten! How easy reconciliation! What young child would think of the cramped and calculating course of grudgingly numbering these occasions?

It takes a mature adult to properly bear a grudge.

Consider the solemnity of Christ’s final words on the subject. Speaking of the miserable fate of the unmerciful debtor in his parable, he says, v. 35,

*“So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye FROM YOUR HEART forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses.”*

Then there is teachableness. A willingness and ability to learn, a desire for knowledge, a free unashamed recognition of ignorance, frank and open honesty of mind. There is a sad line of demarcation between childhood and maturity, when the fund of knowledge becomes regarded as sufficient, and all inlets are closed. At this point progress and growth stop. Opinions harden. The faculty of fresh, unbiased reasoning withers like an unused limb. Desire to learn ceases. There is no longer any sensation of incompleteness of knowledge. The possibility of error becomes unthinkable. Childhood is over. Maturity has been reached.

\* \* \*

Paul, writing to the Corinthians, refers to another feature of childhood's superiority. "*In malice, be ye children,*" he exhorts them.

What is malice? Enmity of heart, ill-will, spite, a deep-seated bitterness that delights in the misery of perversity, a rottenness of the bones, any state of mind that magnifies unpleasant and meaningless trifles and sows malignant seeds of discord. An ugly thing, is it not?

And do we think we are free from it? Then why do we laugh at another's misfortune or embarrassment? Why do we see humor in things that create discomfort? Latent malice is in every heart—"*In my flesh dwelleth no good thing.*"

Peter, using the same example of childhood, appeals to extreme infancy for his illustration,

*"Laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes."*

Here Peter mentions another attribute of infancy—guilelessness, simple innocence. A broad and intimate acquaintance with facts is not always desirable. If God has condemned a thing, it is much more pleasing to Him if we can accept His judgment as loving children and leave it alone without first having to know all about it.

"Let them go their way, let them see the other side—the experience is good," the foolish world says, "Let them weather the storm—it will teach them self-reliance." But such philosophy is heedless of the tremendous percentage the storm sweeps relentlessly away, and it ignores God's lesson that self-reliance is at best a broken reed.

God teaches that there is neither wisdom nor kindness in exposing tender shoots to a blast that tests the endurance of ill-rooted faith. Christ's prayer was that God should keep His children from the evil that is in the world and man is not wiser than God. When Jesus was urged to unnecessarily expose himself, he replied

*“Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.”*

The parent-child figure is nowhere more strongly emphasized than in relation to God’s fundamental requirement -obedience in simple faith.

*“Be ye as obedient children.”*

No amount of laborious and complicated service and worship and devotion is to be compared with simple obedience. Some men do many wonderful works in Christ’s name but do they pass the acid test of a humble childlike desire to know and obey God’s elementary requirements, regardless of their apparent contradiction of the world’s wisdom? Are their mighty works done their way, or God’s?

“If not,” declares Christ, *“If they do not the will of my Father, no amount of parading their great works will get them into my kingdom.”* Why not? Why shouldn’t a lifetime of noble, self-sacrificing, well-meaning service be rewarded? Because they miss the fundamental issue of the Gospel. It is not of works but of childlike, unquestioning faith.

To enter the Kingdom, a man must be absolutely righteous. The Bride is to be presented *“holy and without blemish, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing.”* Even 99% is not sufficient. But no man can accomplish this for himself. No amount of effort and service can do it. If it were possible, then man could glory.

There is only one way to become wholly righteous. God has promised to cover sin and impute perfect righteousness on the basis of tried faith. If a man’s life and conduct are guided by implicit faith, God will count him righteous.

Here again is illustrated Christ’s declaration that we can only enter the Kingdom as children. We must have righteousness to enter, but it is not the manly, self-confident, self-reliant, earned righteousness of works. It is the faithful, trustful, childlike imputed righteousness of grace.

We are brought to the last and most important childlike characteristic we must evidence. The one upon which the parent-child relation of God and man is primarily based trustfulness—a child’s trust and a Father’s care.

Here is where the example of childhood faces its most difficult task—to teach adult faith to rely on the invisible, immovable Rock, and not the visible, shifting sand. To relax its frantic and worrying efforts to build security out of perishing mammon, and in the serene confidence of childlike faith to feel the assuring strength of the everlasting arms.

Our relationship to God is as children, shaping their characters under their father's care. As such there are things to which we must give heed, and things to which we must not. As a Father to His children, God has said to us,

“Take no thought for temporal things—I shall supply them as they are needed. What you must do in the few brief years at your disposal is to diligently prepare yourselves for the work I have in store for you. You have much to do and the time is short. Be content with what I give you and remember, too, that sometimes I shall give you more than you need to see if you use MY GOODS wisely and faithfully FOR ME, or if you squander them upon yourselves. Later on you must give an account of how you have used your time and opportunities and possessions.”

A true conception of our position as children will lead us to a proper use of our time. Childhood is a limited period, a time of passing opportunity. It is a time for learning and preparing. In it the basis of the future is laid. It is a time of education and discipline—often of necessary and beneficial chastisement.

If used diligently and wisely and intelligently and obediently it will lead to an acceptable and eternal manhood. If used foolishly or thoughtlessly or frittered in pleasure or wasted in ambition, it will, of course, lead to another end just as eternal and inevitable.

If we rely on ourselves, our knowledge, our ability, we lose the strongest incentive to resist temptation when it affects our wellbeing but if we in faith cast aside worldly security and throw ourselves entirely upon God's care, knowing that we shall only be cared for if we are well pleasing to Him, it will be a strong deterrent to doing anything that may forfeit His care and guardianship.

That is, if our whole treasure and insurance and dependence is in heaven in the shape of God's favor and care, we shall be much more careful not to jeopardize it or let it lapse by rendering a faulty obedience.

Let us then—in humility, in naturalness, in simplicity, in forgiveness, in freedom from malice, in purity, in guilelessness, in trustfulness, in heedlessness of worldly cares, in dependence on our Father—be obedient children, worthy of our exalted relationship to Him.

Discernment, we have said, is necessary to profitably extract the lessons of childhood. This is a scriptural warning. There are qualities inherent in childhood which we must resolutely put away. Paul said (1 Cor. 13:11)

*“When I became a man, I put away childish things.”*

It is these things, sadly enough, to which we tend to cling.

The smallnesses, the limited perception, the narrow outlook, the desire for amusements, the petty quarrels, the fussing over trifles, the frivolity, the foolishness, the love of pleasure, the playing of games, the silly talking, the day-dreaming, the lack of ability to face and analyze facts, the fatal attraction of novelty and color, the immature love of bright toys and shiny playthings, the lack of self-control, and of courage to think and to be different—these things, upon becoming men, we must firmly put away.

*“Brethren, be not children in understanding in understanding be men”*—1 Corinthians 14:20.

—Bro. G.V. Growcott

## **Christ The Slain Lamb**

*“Behold The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.”*

We approach this subject with deep and grave humility, and a burning desire to apprehend the divine wisdom that underlies it. Truly, we do not expect to fully comprehend the depth of the wisdom of Yahweh, but there is a limited perception of the divine ways to which we are expected to attain; and when we are invited to partake of the fountain of the water of life freely, it is our duty and wisdom to respond. And where could we find a more pressing invitation than that which has come to us from the prophet Isaiah 55:1, 3—

*“Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.”*

*“Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.”*

But note carefully! This is not a general call to all people, it is only directed to those who thirst after righteousness. That is, those who have an eager desire, or a craving for divine knowledge.

The purpose of this assembly is to stir up our thirst, and to strengthen our faith, hope and courage. We must, therefore, give ourselves wholly to the exercise of our minds and affections to those ennobling and purifying influences that come from Yahweh through His Word.

Therefore, in all sincerity and implicit reverence, let us “*BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD that taketh away the sin of the world*” (John 1:29).

When sin entered into the world through transgression in Eden, it is stated of Adam and Eve that Yahweh “*made garments of skins and clothed them.*” Animals of some kind must have been sacrificed in order to provide an appropriate covering. We would think a Lamb.

Abel offered of the “firstlings of his flock,” but the first specific reference to a sacrificial lamb is found in the record of Abraham’s great test of faith. As he and Isaac approached the appointed place, Isaac turned to his father and said,

*“Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?”—Gen. 22:7.*

Abraham’s answer is remarkably significant—

*“My son, Yahweh will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering.”*

In that particular case, God did provide a lamb; but the allegorical significance of Abraham’s statement is wonderfully greater than it appears on the surface.

The years passed by, until we find the descendants of Abraham seemingly helpless on that anxious and eventful Passover night in Egypt. But the blood of a lamb—a male of the first year without blemish—protected them from the power of the destroying angel when he smote the firstborn throughout the land of Egypt. This was not mechanical; it was based on faith. They had been commanded to slay the lamb, and sprinkle its blood upon the entrance, or the door posts of their homes—

*“And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt”—Exodus 12:13.*

Paul, speaking of these things, says they were “*a shadow of things to come.*” Therefore, it was not to continue indefinitely; but only “*till the day break, and the shadows flee away.*”

In the Law of Moses, Jesus is typified by the ram, goat, bullock and lamb. These are beautiful figures, but among them the lamb excels in prominence and beauty. In the symbology of the Apocalypse, Jesus is referred to 28 times as “the Lamb.” Hence the term represents the only name under heaven, given among men, by which we must be saved.

Let us walk among the shadows for a short time and *“open our eyes that we may behold wondrous things out of the Law of Yahweh.”*

As we approach the Tabernacle, we see the priests slay a bullock, and take some of its blood and put it on the horns of the altar. Following this, the blood of a ram was sprinkled on the altar, as was the blood of a second ram. This was repeated for seven days, after which the altar was considered cleansed and sanctified. They were then commanded—

*“To offer upon the altar two lambs of the first year day by day continually. The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning; and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even.*

*“This shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord”—Ex. 29:38-42.*

Now we see the High Priest leading an innocent lamb to the slaughter. It is killed, and laid upon the altar, where it begins to burn. Then we see the people bring their sin offerings to the High Priest, and watch them as they place their hands on the head of the bullock. Thus they transfer their sins in figure to the animal. But if the blood of bulls and of goats could not take away sin, why were these animals slain? Because everything of this nature under the Law was part of the shadow of good things to come. Therefore, it was a figure for the time then present for the “one offering” that could and did take away sin, even the offering of the body of Jesus.

As these animals were placed on the altar, they came in contact with the burning lamb. One by one they came, until the lamb was completely covered, and it alone bore the sins of the people in figure. But these figurative sin-bearers rest not only on the lamb, but on the altar as well, for both share in this beautiful symbol in the taking away of sin.

As we watch, we hear a voice speaking, and as he speaks the shadows become dim, and when the day breaks the shadows and substance merge as Paul speaks of Christ—

*“But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.*

*“For such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;*

*“Who needeth not daily, as those High Priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this he did once, when he offered up himself”*—Heb. 7:24-27.

Here we see the “continual burnt offering” of the lamb, and the continual High Priest of the order of Melchisedec brought together in this beautiful divine plan.

But we go back to the shadows and view the lamb again. What a beautiful creature, and how defenseless. Its only protection is the shepherd. Other animals will fight in self-defense; but the lamb is always gentle, mild and meek. No other animal could equally foreshadow *“the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.”*

*“He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth”*—Isa. 53:7.

Under the Law, it is notable that not a bone of the slain lamb was to be broken; nor was any stranger to eat of it. This was one of the greatest allegorical transactions recorded in the Scripture of truth. Although it was founded upon facts, and efficacious for the “time then present,” it was only another shadow of greater things to come.

Therefore, says Paul in 1 Cor. 5:7—

*“Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.”*

While Israel kept the feast of the Passover with literal unleavened bread, Paul exhorts the believer in the next verse to—

*“Keep the feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”*

To keep the feast in that manner would seem to indicate that our life after belief and obedience of the Gospel, should be a life of consecration—that is, an active, joyful work of righteousness. In view of what Paul says in Rom. 12:1, there seems to be no other conclusion—

*“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”*

Think of it: reasonable, not excessive, but agreeable to sound judgment.

As we have seen, Jesus was the antitypical Lamb of the feast provided by the Father. Like the typical lamb not one of his bones was broken; but his blood was sprinkled—not literally, but figuratively—

upon the doors of the believer's heart. In the Passover, the lamb was to be eaten. As in the type, so in Christ—only those who are heirs of the Kingdom may eat his flesh—so said Jesus in John 6:53 & 56—

*“Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.*

*“He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.”*

To “eat his flesh,” is to fill our minds with the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus. By digesting these things mentally, we assimilate the mind of Christ, and it becomes a part of ourselves. We are, therefore, no longer our own; for we are *“bought with a price,”* and that price is—as we read in 1 Pet. 1:19—

*“The precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”*

The word *precious* means “of great price or value,” and what word could describe it better? Literally, of course, the blood of Christ shed upon Calvary would be useless to anyone. It fell to the ground, and dried up in the same manner as the blood of the lambs did in Egypt. How, then, can it be called precious? Let us go back to the type.

When the people of Israel killed the lamb, and sprinkled the blood on the doors of their houses, it was truly “precious,” or “of great value.” In what way? Was it not in what it signified and accomplished? Yes, by all means.

Therefore, it was a symbol of faith; and, as it was in the type, so it is in the antitype, Jesus. The believer of the Gospel will be saved by the blood of Jesus when he comes to be glorified in his saints.

When the angel of Yahweh comes to take vengeance on them that know not God, and upon those who know Him but do not obey the requirements of the Gospel, He will see the precious blood of Jesus sprinkled on the entrance of the hearts of those who have been faithful in all things, and will pass over them, and they shall be saved.

Another essential feature of the sacrificial lamb was that it must be “without spot or blemish.” That is, it was to be complete or in perfect condition. If it had a blemish, it would not be accepted, and there could be no substitution, or any excuses.

The allegorical significance of this is unmistakable. Peter likens Christ to a lamb without blemish, and without spot; and Paul says in Heb. 9:14—

*“How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot (or fault) to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.”*

In the type, the perfection must of necessity be a perfection in nature for, in an animal, it could not be otherwise. But in Jesus the words “blemish,” “spot” and “blameless,” could only refer to character, because of the nature he bore.

We are firmly convinced that the flesh of Jesus was identically the same as ours. We make that statement on the strength of evidence appearing in the Scripture of truth. In Acts 2:30, Peter, speaking of David said—

*“Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne.”*

This is confirmed by Paul in Rom. 1:3—

*“Concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.”*

Then in Heb. 2:14, the apostle goes further and says—

*“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.”* (diabolos)

This signifies that the flesh of Jesus was, as we said, identically the same as ours. To fully realize what that means, let us look at ourselves as portrayed by Paul in Rom. 7:15 & 17—

*“For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.”*

What does the apostle mean when he refers to “sin that dwelleth in me”? We will let him answer our question in vs. 18 and 23—

*“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.”*

*“But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law which is in my members”*

We all experience this same problem and mental struggle, after we come to a knowledge of the Truth. As we look at ourselves and realize

how we suffer under trial; and then look at Jesus, we begin to understand clearly the magnitude of his victory, when he said—

*“I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD.”*

To overcome the world, is to overcome *“the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life,”* which things, says John, comprise *“all that is in the world.”*

In John’s day, there were some who maintained that Jesus did not come in the flesh. There have also been some among us who claimed that the flesh of Jesus was the same as ours, except that it did not contain the sin-principle as ours does. Therefore, according to them, the sacrifice of Christ was for purging from moral defilement only. Here is the way it was presented—

“When Paul said that Jesus ‘was made sin for us’ he did not mean that he was made a bearer of our sinful nature, but that he was made a transgressor of the Mosaic Law in being brought, by his Father’s contrivance under its curse. When Peter said ‘Who his own self bear our sins in his own body on the tree,’ he meant that sins were symbolically laid upon him, in the same way as they were laid upon the goats in the sacrifices made under the Mosaic Law.”

This is the doctrine that made it necessary to form the Berean fellowship in 1923, and it has never been repudiated to this day. The issue was real—not a “misunderstanding,” because it is a positive and emphatic denial of what has been written in Rom. 8:3—

*“For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and by a sacrifice for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.”*

There has been a lot of quibbling over the word “likeness” in an attempt to avoid the force of this passage; but, Brethren and Sisters, if the principle of corruption had not permeated the flesh of Jesus, as it does in our flesh; and if there had been no diabolos there, he could NOT have been tempted in all points, like his brethren, nor could sin have been condemned in his flesh as Paul has said.

Jesus was delivered for our offences. That is, he was given over to the powers that be, was crucified, and he was raised again for our justification.

Ordinarily, when we hear the word “justification,” we think of vindication. But believers of the Gospel have no actions to vindicate, or defend; for even after we have done all the things which are commanded, we are still unprofitable servants.

Having established ourselves upon a rock foundation, “*Let us,*” said Paul, “*go on to perfection.*” What does Paul mean about “going on to perfection?” Surely, he knew that only Jesus could do that!

Actually the word in this place means to “consecrate, to finish, to fulfill and to accomplish or consummate in character.” Therefore, to build up a character well-pleasing to God, there must be an undeviating pressing forward, so that we will be transformed by the renewing of the mind.

Unless we are walking in the Truth, we are wasting our time to be talking about purity of doctrine and fellowship. Being a Christadelphian is not only to believe the Gospel, and to be baptized, and then to go on living as we did before. NO! Being a Christadelphian is a new way of life.

There must be a close contact with the living and transforming power of godliness, so that we will show forth the praises of God among the people of this world—all being knit together in holiness and brotherly love

Picking up our theme again, we remark that the Passover was instituted before the Tabernacle was constructed. In fact, the Passover was the means by which the people of Israel were saved from bondage through the shedding of the blood of the lamb.

During all the years of the Mosaic age, there had been many celebrations of the Passover, but the greatest of them was on the night that Jesus assembled with his disciples to eat the last Passover under the Law.

The time had come for the types to be withdrawn. The Aaronic priesthood had served its purpose. They were only qualified to officiate in the animal sacrifices. The whole system was to be folded up like a vesture, and a new and better covenant established upon better promises.

After the Passover, Jesus took bread from the table and said, “*This is my body which is given for you.*” The next day, this was fulfilled when Jesus surrendered himself to the power of Rome; after which he was publicly put to death on the cross.

This excruciating and agonizing tragedy was the means by which sin was condemned in the body of Jesus.

Following the distribution of the bread, Jesus took the cup of wine saying, “*Drink all of you of it, for this is my blood of the New Testament (or Covenant) which is shed for many for the remission of sins*”—Matt. 26:27-28.

But why should Jesus take the cup of wine and say that it was the New Covenant in his blood? Because the pouring out of his blood was the pouring out of his life. We see that in the types, because to pour out the blood of a sacrificial animal was to cause its death.

As we behold the Lamb of God suspended on the cross, we observe his sprinkled blood dripping from his thorn-pierced brow, his hands and his feet. Then a Roman soldier pierced his side, and most of his blood was poured out at the bottom of the cross.

As Jesus was the anti-typical altar, we see the fulfillment of the type under the Law. Therefore, Jesus was purged by the anti-typical blood of his own sacrifice.

You will recall that when Jesus expired on the cross, *“the veil of the Temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.”* This veil, when hung in the Tabernacle, divided between the Holy Place and the Most Holy. Through this veil, the High Priest entered the Most Holy Place once each year to make an atonement for the sins of the people of Israel. This included himself. But why should the veil be rent when Jesus died? Paul gives us the answer in Heb. 10:20—

*“Having therefore, brethren, confidence to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.”*

The veil therefore represents the mortal nature of Jesus before his death. As flesh and blood cannot enter the Kingdom of God, the veil had to be torn asunder to provide a way for the new nature in which Jesus lives, and in which he will administer the laws of the Kingdom.

The secret chamber of the Sanctuary was hidden by the veil. Therefore, says the apostle in Heb. 9:8—

*“The Holy Spirit thus signifying that the way into the Holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while the first Tabernacle was yet standing”*

Just before Jesus breathed his last, he said, *“It is finished.”* The great work God gave him to do was completed in perfection. Therefore, the apostle in Heb. 12:1-2, says—

*“Seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,*

*“Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God.”*

*“He endured the cross.”* Only four words, but, oh, what tragedy and suffering they convey! If we ever feel that it is a great trial to walk in the Truth—to keep ourselves separate from the things of the world—to be holy in all manner of conversation—then think of Jesus. Yes, *“BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD that taketh away the sin of the world.”*

Behold him as he stands before the High Priest (the official representative of the Law) and watch him as he is blindfolded and then struck in the face. Look at him too as they bind him like a criminal, and lead him before Pilate. Listen to Pilate as he tries to release Jesus; but his voice is lost in the cries of *“CRUCIFY HIM—CRUCIFY HIM!”*

Behold him as he is forced to kneel with his hands tied to a post. Yes, his back is bared, and a scourge comes down with force—tearing the flesh, and drawing blood at every stroke. The scourging is over, and he is made to stand, and a crown of thorns is forced down upon his head. Then he is led away to the scene of crucifixion. Here are his own words fulfilled—

*“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.”*

When we think of the great work Jesus has done for us, surely we will not dare to tread him under foot, or despise his agonized sufferings for the cause of purity and holiness by living in any way out of harmony with his precepts.

May the consideration of these things stir up within us a divine fire of enthusiasm for the Truth that will be in our hearts, as a burning fire shut up in our bones.

—Bro. G. A. Gibson

## **Signs of the Times: TV and Kids**

An interesting article in Time Magazine brought out a medical study which documented the amount of TV being watched by children and the effects it was having on the present generation.

“The more TV kids watch in early life, the thicker they get around the waistline and the weaker their muscle strength, a new study finds.

It's no secret that watching TV is linked with some unhealthy outcomes in kids — previous studies have found that children who watch more television are more likely to eat junk food, have trouble sleeping and become obese — but the new study, published in BioMed Central's open access journal *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, establishes a link between screen time and specific measures of physical fitness.

“We already knew that there is an association between preschool television exposure and the body fat of fourth grade children, but this is the first study to describe more precisely what that association represents,” said senior author Dr. Linda Pagani, a researcher at the Sainte-Justine University Hospital Research Center, in a statement.

The researchers looked at 1,314 kids who were participating in the Quebec Longitudinal Study of Child Development. The parents of the kids reported the number of hours they spent watching TV each week: At the start of the study, when the kids were 2.5 years old, they were watching about 8.8 hours of TV per week on average.

Over the next two years, TV time increased by six hours to 14.8 hours weekly on average. By age 4.5, about 15% of the kids in the study were watching more than 18 hours of television each week.

The more time kids spent in front of the TV, the larger their waistlines, the researchers found: Each additional hour of weekly TV logged between age 2.5 and 4.5 was linked with an increase of waist size of slightly less than half a millimeter by the time the kids were in grade school. So, a child who watches 18 hours of television at 4.5 years old will have gained an extra 7.6 millimeters (0.3 in.) around his middle by age 10.

Fractions of inches may not sound like much to worry about, but even small increases are significant on child-size bodies, and over time, these little changes add up. Waist size in particular is known to be associated with overall obesity and also with measures of visceral fat, the type of fat that hides around the organs deep in the gut and is especially risky to health.

“Our study is the first to look specifically at waist measurements,” says lead author Dr. Caroline Fitzpatrick. “The weight around the waist is particularly dangerous in terms of cardiovascular and metabolic health.”

The researchers measured both waist size and another indicator of physical fitness: explosive leg strength. When the kids were 8.5 years

old, the researched gauged their performance on the standing long jump in order to measure their leg-muscle power, a key contributor to sports ability. Kids who watched more TV as preschoolers were more likely to end up in the bottom 5% of long-jump performance: Each hour spent watching TV per week at age 2.5 corresponded to about a third of a centimeter loss in jumping distance.

That's important for all kids, not just those who want to play soccer or basketball. Muscle power is associated with other markers of health and fitness: According to Fitzpatrick, if you have good muscle fitness, you'll also have better cardiovascular fitness and be less susceptible to injuries.

The authors write: "This suggests that for some children, excessive television exposure was associated with the experience of a substantial level of impairment. This finding is of concern given that explosive leg strength is a robust indicator of individual general muscular strength. Eventually, reduced muscular strength that persists into adulthood can predict a number of negative health outcomes."

"Kids who watch more TV are known to be less involved in physical activity and less inclined to play sports, but we found there is actually a potential risk in decreasing their athletic performance with too much television," says Fitzpatrick. "This can influence their health as adolescents and adults."

Fitzpatrick says the findings are concerning since young kids are still undergoing muscular and skeletal development.

"It's a move it or lose it problem," she says.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children over age 2 watch no more than two hours of television per day; younger kids should watch no TV at all. Each hour a kid spends planted in front of the tube is an hour he or she isn't exercising, playing or doing any other constructive activity like reading.

"When it's cold outside, you want a kid to throw on their snow gear and go play instead of preferring to stay inside to watch hockey on TV," says Fitzpatrick."

References from Time.com 2012

Back off, Mom: Parents who hover impede kids' activity

Disney's diet: No more junk food ads on kids channels

Why active video games don't make kids exercise more

Watching TV steers kids toward junk food

Too much TV linked with thicker, weaker kids

## Thoughts for Today – Communication – Part 1

*“Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things”—Gal 6:6*

FOR our brief comments this month we examine the above quotation as it is recorded in the King James version.

Communication has played the large part in the history of man. Today the air is full of the many signals or beams of radio and television which are transmitted via the various methods available, of which microwave and satellite play an important part. We see the long lines of telegraph & telephone wire stretching mile upon mile as we drive upon the highways or ride in a train. In addition to the more modern methods there is, of course, the mailman.

Man has always endeavored to improve his communication with his fellow man, from signals of smoke and beating of drums up to the advanced present-day systems—always striving for a faster and more accurate mode, but constantly forgetting about the first method of communication left on record.

We are all familiar with this account of communication which transpired between heaven and earth, a method which remained for a number of years.

Man, with his pride raging to the forefront, and exercising his knowledge of evil, felt that as the population grew he must decide and devise a way they could continue to commune with each other. The Divine communication was not enough: vanity took over; and the words rebounded from the mountains, “Let US.”

This is the mighty “I” in plurality, which so often is spoken against in the Scriptures. Our thoughts are not God's thoughts,” and the foolishness of man's thoughts is borne out in the case before us. Man decided to plan and make a better type of communication—

“Let US make US a name, lest WE be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth.”

It was as though they were saying, “Divine communication is not enough; we ourselves will build a tower which may reach unto heaven.”

This was the substitute which has been carried down to our own times. It was the tower of worldly wisdom; a god of wood and stone which would become the focal point in their lives. To this mighty

communication center they would turn for news and information and, sadly, the glorification of the “us.”

The plan was to replace God, and poor deluded man has never learned his lesson, but rather has gone from bad to worse. The analogy is clear. Communication with the Father (the only Source of Light, Information and Communication) was about to be broken, and replaced by this man-made institution. The result was disastrous; their “one language” was broken, and man was left to flounder in his own self-chosen stupidity, which we witness today.

Since the departure of Jesus to the heavens, “christians” have turned again from communication with the Father. They have discarded the Master's teaching of “Our Father,” and have proceeded to build another tower whose top would reach unto heaven itself.

The ecclesiastical “Let US make” age quickly developed, and man-made “saints” were built one upon another.

As we write our article we are witnessing a renovation being done on the tower by its builders. These Roman “saints,” men and women who performed miracles and led exemplary lives (or so we were told) being the ecclesiastical tower unto the heavens, now have been called in question.

Communication through this tower has been accepted by Rome and her associates for years—they granted safety to the traveler, killed dragons, gave gifts, & answered prayers.

True it is that confusion of language still remains strong today, but unlike the first tower of Babel, the present-day builders not only defy the God of heaven but continue to work on a tower even though they are unable to understand their own language. Confusion indeed! We ask the question, who has been guiding them and protecting them and answering their prayers, if many of these “saints” never even existed?

We, however, should be ever thankful that we are not burdened down with the multitude of intercessors and confusion of tongues, for we have ONE: him who ever lives to make intercession for us. No tower of confused communication is ours, but it is a tower of strength and salvation, and built by the Divine specifications.

Our house of broadcasting and communication center is the source of all wisdom and knowledge and understanding. The utensils by which we receive this communication are the prophets and the apostles. These are the communication posts we see as we run along the way which leads to salvation.

Along this narrow way is that ever-present line, open at all times, to “plead our cause.” We should never ignore this “open line,” for whosoever “draweth nigh unto God, He also will draw nigh unto them.”

Bro. Roberts brings this idea out beautifully in ch. 14 of “*The Law of Moses*,” and we suggest that the young pick this book up and read this section. It is a short chapter, and even if we only read the first 2 or 3 pages, it opens to us a storehouse of thought. —1969 Berean

## **Meditations – Deity’s Ways No. 36**

WHY such awe-inspiring surroundings? This question arises as one meditates on the record concerning the giving of Israel’s law. It is written that the “people trembled” (Exod. 19:17). “So terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake” (Heb. 12:21). What was God’s meaning in the matter? He was in no rage, neither was He terrifying as an amusement. The explanation is to be found in the revealed object of the law. The law was a ministration of “condemnation” and of “death” (2 Cor. 3:7, 9). It was intended to deprive sinful man of all glory; so arranged that by it “every mouth might be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God” (Rom. 3:19, 20; Gal. 3:10, 11). In view of this, what was more befitting than that it should be delivered impressively and with exceptional solemnity. The arrangement of God, both in the giving of the law and the mode of its deliverance, demonstrated in an unmistakable manner several important truths which human nature is ever inclined to ignore, viz.—the existence, majesty, and might of God; His holiness; the depravity of man, and his hopelessness apart from divine mercy. Although we are not related to Israel’s death-dealing law, let us not forget the history relating to it, nor the truths which are connected with it. In our position of grace, let us heed the Apostle’s exhortation (based on the giving of the law) to “serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire” (Heb. 12:28, 29).

It has been thought that our faith would have been immeasurably stronger had we heard Christ and seen his marvellous works. This conclusion is open to question. Christ’s contemporaries had trials which are foreign to us, and we have advantages which were unknown to them. These two differences make it doubtful whether our position is not one of greater favour. Let us imagine that we are living in Christ’s day, and that we know him as he then was—a poor mechanic, with the humblest surroundings, everywhere despised, of troubled and unhappy

countenance (“He hath no form nor comeliness, and when we see him there is no beauty that we should desire him”). It is difficult for us (who know Christ as he now is—glorified and exalted) to realise the trial that this lowly state of Christ must have been. Let us also consider the blessing possessed by us in the printed scriptures. Christ’s contemporaries had not these in a form in which they might be carried in the vest pocket for reference and strength on all occasions. This advantage can only be estimated aright by those who realise the value of the scriptures as a means of giving and sustaining faith. Then let us take the numberless assurances in the shape of fulfilled prophecy during the past eighteen centuries: the division of the Roman Empire, the existence and evil work of the Papacy, the uprising and decline of the Ottoman Empire, the survival and experience of the Jewish people, etc. We are not ignoring Christ’s miracles as an evidence—they were a powerful evidence; but let us not unduly elevate that evidence by disparaging the proofs that God has favoured us with. We lack nothing in the form of evidence that we can reasonably require, when our condition is looked at beside other generations.

“Be perfect,” said Paul to a first century ecclesia. Let nineteenth century ones obey the exhortation. But what did Paul mean? Certainly not (as some have weakly contended) that each and all its members were to be as Christ was, spotless in character. Even admitting, for the sake of argument, that an individual member could attain to such perfection, how could a community do so, in which recruits are ever being added to its ranks? The perfection of which Paul speaks is attainable, and should be striven for. Perfection is maturity, in regard to the purposes of an ecclesia. An ecclesia, says Paul, is “the pillar and ground of the truth.” An ecclesia which will fellowship error, which will wink at wrong doctrine and practice, which will sacrifice purity and truth for peace, popularity and numbers, is not perfect. A perfect ecclesia stands aloof from the unbelieving and disobedient, and exalts at all hazards the word and its teaching. Perfection shows itself in the ability and desire to enlighten the ignorant, to correct the erring, to strengthen the feeble, to comfort the downcast, and to expel from its midst the elements which will not bend to the truth. The apocalyptic seven epistles may be studied for illustrations of perfection and imperfection. According to these, under the heading of perfection, may be put: patient and faithful labour, intolerance of the evil, proving professors, keeping the faith. Under the other heading: declension from the truth, placing stumbling-blocks and seductions before the brethren, suffering false teachers to influence, profession without godliness, apathy and indifference, little strength, spiritual blindness. Let us be

perfect, and God will then be with us (2 Cor. 13:11.) Let us vie with each other in the matter. Emulation of this sort is good.

The New Testament account of Paul's visit to Athens is pregnant with instruction. To look first at the account itself, what an evidence is it of inspiration. Would man (uncontrolled by the Spirit) have passed over in absolute silence all those smart, interesting and engrossing discussions that must have taken place between Paul and the Athenian philosophers? Impossible. The sacred historian has not burdened us with the quibbles and vanities of these men, but has confined himself to what has been pre-eminently useful for all generations. He wrote (though possibly he knew it not) for posterity. Let us aim at keeping to the front in our teaching and preaching that which is edifying and pre-eminently useful—shunning vain babblings and useless strifes of words (2 Tim. 14–16). Paul preached to the Athenians “Jesus and the resurrection,” and he would adopt towards them the same attitude that he adopted towards the Corinthians. “I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified.” Let us follow the apostle in this. The wise, cultured and philosophic Athenians could only rail and ridicule; their pride and learning blinded them to the simplicity of the gospel. Their case is useful to us, inasmuch as we are sometimes perplexed at the refusal of the great around us to receive the truth. It is important to recognise that the intellect as well as the lower faculties of man's mentality can be wrongly employed under the influence of the flesh. A big forehead or ability to argue is no help if the mind is dishonest. The case of the Athenians is also an answer to those who affirm that God can be discovered apart from the Bible. Although they were the wisest (worldly speaking) people on the face of the globe, yet they had not attained to the first of the first principles that there is but one God. Paul's fact and courtesy in proclaiming the truth on Mar's Hill are also matters deserving of thought and imitation.

*Bro. A. T. Jannaway—1892*

## **The Families of the Saints at the Coming of Christ**

There is not a “*Thus saith the Lord,*” regarding the manner of our gathering together to the judgment seat of Christ, that is, as regards the literal details. The nearest approach to precision is the statement of Paul, that the saints are to be “*caught away in clouds*”—1 Thess. 4:17—(Paul did not say “caught up”).

But this is not specific as to the mode. It has no more force than the words “taken away:” it reveals nothing as to the mode of the taking.

It only tells us we shall be taken, and perhaps carries this additional idea with it, that the taking will be compulsory.

Jehovah said to Israel, when He had brought them out of Egypt (Exodus 19:4)—

*“Ye see how I ... bare you on eagles' wings and have brought you to Myself.”*

Literally, the Israelites marched; but because the marching was accomplished by divine cooperation, Jehovah says He “brought them.” If we had no information beyond the general statement that He bore them on eagles' wings and brought them, it might be argued that He wafted them in mid-air from Egypt to Sinai.

The possession of the narrative of how it was done excludes this speculation, and shows us a process in which, while angels superintended, the subjects of the process had themselves to supply the subordinate parts of preparing, packing, walking, etc.

This shows that we cannot make use of general statements to exclude details that may be involved in them. Jesus said, *“I came down from heaven.”* On this some might argue that he was therefore not born in Bethlehem.

We are to be “taken away,” “caught away,” and “gathered together” when Christ appears; shall we, therefore, say the angels will not come to us? Resting on such statements merely, it would seem we might conclude so; but Jesus says he shall (Matt. 24:31)—

*“Send forth his angels and gather his elect from the four corners of the earth.”*

Therefore, in our understanding of “caught away,” etc., we must leave a place for the coming of the angels. And if they come, it must be for some purpose of practical detail, as in all other cases in which they have been sent. Consequently, it may be that we shall be taken in a natural way.

\* \* \*

If so, what about families? Will they go with us? We are not told, but we have examples.

Noah's sons and wives were saved in the ark, though we hear nothing of their righteousness, but on the contrary, of the wickedness of one of them (Gen. 7:13; 9:23-27).

Lot's daughters, and their husbands and families were invited to escape from Sodom with him (Gen. 19:12).

Whoever feared the Lord among the Egyptians escaped the plagues, and a mixed multitude were allowed to depart with Israel (Exodus 9:20; 12:33).

Rahab's relatives were all preserved, subject to certain conditions, when the inhabitants of Jericho were put to the sword (Josh. 6:23).

It was a usual thing for sons and daughters to be delivered from calamity, because of the righteousness of their fathers—a rule suspended when the wickedness of Israel became great (Ezekiel 14:18-20).

Now, God is the same today as He was in ancient times. Consequently, there is a little light on the subject, though it does not amount to a *“Thus saith the Lord.”* The time is close at hand when the Lord—

*“Cometh forth from His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity”* (Isa. 26:21).

At such a time they are angelically invited to enter into the chamber and shut the door about them for a moment until the indignation be over past (v. 20). Are we not justified in concluding that at such a time families of saints *“brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord”* will share in the refuge from the destroying judgments that are intended only for the ungodly?

If so, how is this refuge to be shared except by departing with the saints to the appointed refuge under the shadow of the Great Avenger in the wilderness of Sinai?

\* \* \*

This expectation is strengthened by another view of the case. The time of judgment on the nations is also the time for Israel's gathering. The saints of the present age are not Jews according to the flesh: but they have become Jews by adoption through Christ—fellow citizens in the commonwealth of Israel. In this position, they are not less Jews than, say, Peter or James.

Now suppose Peter or James were living now and had sons, would not their sons, as Jews, be included in the measures for the gathering of Israel? Nay, would not Peter and James themselves have to do with those measures? If so, would their own sons be less objects of their care than other Jews?

Our children, doubtless, inherit as much as the flesh can give them, and that is, a status, according to the flesh, in the national house of Israel; consequently, we may hope for them a place in the rebuilding of

the tabernacle of David, when the hour arrives for the glorious process to visibly and ostensibly begin.

\* \* \*

But it may be objected that the question to which their parents stand related is—eternal life or rejection at the hands of Christ; and that children having no relation to this issue, they have no standing-ground in the case.

If this were the only issue in the day of wrath about to break, the objection would be a valid one. But it is not the only issue. While there are to be immortal rulers, there are to be mortal nations in the happy day beyond; and one of the questions of the time will be, who among the nations of the earth are to be allowed the privilege of surviving the judgments of the period, and obtaining a place among the mortal subjects of the kingdom of God—a place which will involve the opportunity of obtaining a title to everlasting life at the close of the thousand years?

Because this will be a question of the time, the children of the saints have a standing-ground of hope, apart from the question of eternal life and governorship in the Kingdom to which the saints themselves stand related: for who more likely to be qualified for the privilege of mortal citizenship than children brought up within sound of the Truth, and more or less subjected to God thereby?

Finally, the question is of little practical moment. A knowledge of the details of the crisis in these particulars would be of no value to us till the moment itself arrives; and when the moment does arrive, we shall be duly instructed by the heavenly messengers who shall come to superintend the great and awe-inspiring work of the judgment period.

—*Bro. Robert Roberts, 1878*

## **Balaam the Soothsayer**

**QUESTION:** Who was Balaam, and to what God was it to whom he appealed in his divination against Israel? It is said he went to meet the Lord: where did he go for this purpose? Was there any other place than the tabernacle where Abraham's God was to be approached after the establishment of Jewish institutions?"— E. J.

**ANSWER:** You will get considerable light on the subject in Eur. I, p. 288, under the heading, "The Balaamites." Balaam, a resident at Pethor in Mesopotamia, was a believer in the true God, as is manifest from the narrative contained in Num. 22 to 24.

This need not be matter for surprise, in view of the existence of the true faith in the family of Noah, from which it would descend to some of those who came after, though it might be in a corrupt form.

Traces of it are found in the case of Abimelech, king of Gerar (Gen. 26:26). Melchizedek, priest of the Most High God in the days of Abraham, is an illustration of it in its purity (Gen. 14).

But Balaam was also a soothsayer (Josh. 13:22), a practiser of magical arts, so called, and a pretended reader of destiny. This profession is often referred to in the writings of the prophets, and always denounced as an imposture, and its practisers as false prophets, though some of them might sincerely imagine that the magnetic power which they possessed to influence those subject to them for good or evil (which all men possess in a greater or less degree) was a divine faculty conferring authority.

Balaam had acquired a great reputation in this line of things among the Moabites and other idolatrous nations. Balak shows this in the remark (Num. 22:6):

*“I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed.”*

Balaam used his imaginary gift for gain. Avarice actuated him in his occupation: this is manifest from all the allusions to him. Though he believed in Jehovah as the only true God, he was not animated by the enlightened love and fear of Him, or inspired by a desire to do His will or bless his fellows. Self-enrichment by the exercise of a supposed divine gift was the peculiar feature of his case.

Jehovah had nothing to do with Balaam's natural gift of soothsaying, except as He has to do with all natural power. It was merely the life-energy natural to Balaam's animal organization concentrated and applied in a particular way with results having a certain reality about them, which fostered the illusion that he was divinely endowed.

He might suppose Jehovah in whom he believed had to do with it, and that he was the object of His favor and the depository of His power. The same thing is exemplified in witches and spiritualists in our day, in another form.

When, however, he (Balaam) was summoned to curse a nation who was under Jehovah's protection, Jehovah did speak to him by His angel, to deter him from the enterprise, and afterwards to turn the curse Balaam wished to imprecate for hire, into a blessing.

As for the “*meeting of God*,” alluded to throughout the narrative, Balaam's retiring from Balak would be as when a man retires to pray. He would retire for privacy, and not that there was a particular place or spot where God was accessible. God is everywhere present, and can manifest Himself anywhere; but the man receiving the manifestation naturally withdraws from contact with other objects of attention.

Balaam would not be surprised at the manifestation, because, so far as his perceptions went, it would seem akin to what he was accustomed to. When a man of high electrical power throws himself into a trance for preternatural perceptions, he is subjectively in a state similar to that into which a man is thrown when the hand of God is really upon him by the Spirit.

The difference lies in the impressions made upon him in that state. In natural trances there are no impressions beyond those that come from nature, which are as useless for real prophecy or any other spiritual purpose, as the perceptions of the faculties in their normal state.

“*In the spirit*,” God speaks to the man with a result very palpably different in the nature of the communications he receives. Balaam was in the hand of God, and felt he was powerless to direct his thoughts or speech in opposition to the afflation upon him, but it would not strike him as an extraordinary thing, in view of his ordinary practice of divination, and in view of his belief in Jehovah.

\* \* \*

As for “any other place than the tabernacle where Abraham's God was to be approached after the establishment of the Jewish institution,” the evidence goes to show that God willed to be approached by Israel alone, and by such strangers in other nations as chose to join themselves to the Lord in His appointed institutions established in the midst of Israel (Isa. 56:3-8).

The certainty seems to be that any knowledge of the true God existing among the Amorite nations before the time of Moses, was on the point of disappearing when Israel was used as the sword of the Lord to destroy those nations for their wickedness.

In Abraham's day “*the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full*” (Gen. 15:16). It was four hundred and thirty years afterwards when Israel came out of Egypt under Moses on their way to the land of the Amorites. We may conclude that at that time their iniquities were

“full,” and that therefore darkness covered the limited earth of those days, and gross darkness the people.

In Judah only was God thereafter known, and even among them, as we know from the divine record, the light often came near extinction. Jerusalem was the place where He chose to place His Name. Men seeking Him had therefore to seek Him there.

Nevertheless, when God chose, He spoke elsewhere, as to Nebuchadnezzar by dream, and to Nineveh by the prophet Jonah.

—*Bro. Robert Roberts, 1877*

## **If Ye Forgive Not From Your Heart**

*“If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses”*—Matt. 6:15

*“Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you”*—Eph. 4:32

IN these two passages, we see two aspects of the same divine principles regarding forgiveness.

Jesus' words express the judicial aspect in which we are solemnly warned that forgiveness is extended only to those who from the heart have forgiven. (And we are standing on dangerous ground if we stand on mere “justice” and do not forgive from our heart until we extract “repentance” and “apologies.” Jesus asked forgiveness for his murderers).

The words of Paul deal with the gracious aspect, in which the moral obligation of the already-forgiven one is made clear. We have been forgiven for Christ's sake, not because we deserve forgiveness, but of God's gracious mercy.

Therefore we owe a great debt to Christ for the love he extended toward us when he died for us “*while we were yet sinners*”—thus opening the way for cleansing our hearts and forgiveness of all our trespasses.

Forgiving the few little trespasses against us is a light thing compared to what Christ has done for us. How ungrateful and ungracious we are, then, to insist upon repentances and confessions before we forgive the sins of others. Rather, if we have the mind of Christ, we shall be eager to forgive everything, knowing that extending unmerited forgiveness is the most powerful way to lead to purification and reconciliation.

—*Bro. Oscar Beauchamp*

## 4. The Patient Waiting

The ground of escape from “*the hour of trial,*” which was to be so terrible, was stated to be “*the keeping of the word of the patient waiting for the Spirit.*” The importance of this word may be estimated by the severity of the chastisement for its neglect. The coming of the Spirit-Man is the thing waited for; and the teaching which creates this expectation is “*the word of the patient waiting for.*” Wherever the truth was received as the result of divine teaching, the earnest and joyous expectation of the return of the glorified Jesus became a prime article of faith. This appears from many places in the New Testament. When Paul went to Thessalonica he proclaimed the royalty of Jesus, and his return to rule the whole habitable—that there is another King than Caesar, even Jesus. Many of Caesar's subjects believed him; and, in consequence, threw away their idols, and waited for his coming. In writing to these in after years, Paul said, “Ye turned to the Deity from the idols to serve a living and true Deity; and *to wait for his Son from the heavens,* whom He raised from among the dead, even Jesus, who delivers us from the coming wrath.” This became to them a matter of hope. They waited for it, and were taught to do so with patience and endurance. It is, therefore, termed “*the patient waiting of the hope of our Lord Jesus Anointed,*” in 1 Thess. 1:3. In both these epistles the apocalypse of Jesus occupies a prominent place. It is expressly mentioned at the end of all the chapters of the first with many important accompaniments; and, in 2 Epist. 3:5, he says, “the Lord direct your hearts into the love of the Deity, and into *the patient waiting for the Anointed.*” They had become impatient, supposing that the day of his appearing was at hand. But Paul corrected this error by telling them that it would not come to pass until the consummation of an Apostasy, which would be perfected under the Man of Sin: and that, when this power should be fully matured, then the Lord Jesus would be apocalysped to destroy it, and be glorified in his saints. All who are “taught of God” understand this, and earnestly desire the event; because they know that there is no salvation till He appears. The promises are to those who love his appearing. Paul teaches this distinctly. “There is laid up,” says he, “a coronal wreath of righteousness for all them who love his appearing;” and in another place he says, “*to them who look for him he shall appear a second time without sin for salvation*”—Heb. 9:28. Only those who are watching and prepared will share in this salvation.

*Bro. John Thomas—Eureka Vol. 1 Page 384 Logos edition*

# Hints For Bible Markers

As we bring this section concerning our thoughts and speech to a close we see the reiteration of the ninth commandment in many of the commands about speech. Exodus 20:16 “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.” It points to the prominence that our speech has in the developing new man in Christ. Our speech and thoughts are to be reformed that they may be in compliance with the will of God. Those who refuse to strive to bring their mind and tongue into obedience are in a category of such as shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

At work our boss may require us to be deceitful. Sometimes we may wish to say a little white lie to spare someone pain or that we may save face. This must not be! God demands that we be honest, straightforward, and truthful in our speech. Lying, flattering, and exaggerating are not tolerated by God. Indeed, to keep our tongues pure is difficult, requiring great effort and thoughtfulness on our part. These commands may be a disadvantage to our present comfort and success in this life, but that is unimportant, for we live but a few short years. Especially when we compare our “few days which are full of trouble” (Job 14:1) with what God has promised to those that love him (1 Corinthians 2:9).

No true brother would denounce another brother as mischievous, worthless, a liar, stupid, or dishonest even if the other might be so. Those who would use speech in such a fashion are either ignorant or disobedient of the law of Christ. For James tells us out of the same mouth ought not proceed blessing and cursing. And one of the meanings derived from the Greek word in this verse, translated cursing, is denouncement. Speech should be pleasantly seasoned with grace, mercy, understanding, love, and salted with the truth.

The truth as it is in Jesus teaches us to put off the deceitful, lustful, corrupt and lying old man of our former conduct. To put on in its place the new man of righteousness and true holiness, which is created in the image of God.

*“For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile.”* (1 Peter 3:10) bro. Beryl V. Snyder

## The Commandments of Christ

As collected and organized by bro. Roberts

### VII. CONCERNING YOUR THOUGHTS AND SPEECH

**Speak every man truth with his neighbor; lie not one to another.**

*Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another. (Ephesians 4:25)*

*Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; (Colossians 3:9)*

**Swear not at all: let your communication be yea, yea, and nay, nay.**

*But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: (Matthew 5:34)*

*But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation. (James 5:12)*

**Out of the same mouth ought not to proceed blessing and cursing.**

*Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. (James 3:10)*

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