

# 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

## **BOSTON, Mass.**

Dear Brethren and Sisters,

Greetings in Christ,

Kathy and I, along with three of our grandchildren, James, Katie and Rachel, had a very nice visit in Texas where we attended the youth study weekend in Lampasas and visited with the brethren and sisters.

After we arrived home Jan 6, I received a request from **Alisha Revotskie** asking to be immersed. Alisha has been attending our ecclesial functions for the past year and has been an active student in the Sunday School class that I teach.

On Sunday, January 12, 2014, Alisha confirmed her knowledge and beliefs in the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ and was baptized into Christ's saving name. We then had lunch together and held our memorial meeting that afternoon where she received the right hand of fellowship. We rejoice with her and wish her God's blessing in her new life in Christ.

If you would like to contact our new sister you can do so by e-mailing her at: [arevotskie@gmail.com](mailto:arevotskie@gmail.com) or letters/cards of welcome and encouragement can be sent to her at:

Alisha Revotshie c/o Jim Sommerville,  
34 Birch hill Rd. Northborough, Ma 01532.

On behalf of the Boston Ecclesia,  
Your brother in Christ,  
Jim Sommerville

## **LAS CRUCES, New Mexico**

News from the Berean Christadelphian Ecclesia at Las Cruces, New Mexico.

We are meeting at 5494 Monte Luz St. Las Cruces, NM 88012. We meet each Sunday at 10:00 AM for Bible Class and at 10:45 AM for our Sunday Meeting. (Memorial Service). We also meet each Thursday Night at 7:00 PM for our Living Room Bible Class. Our Current topic is Romans — chapter by chapter. Any mail can come to this address.

We were thankful and glad to welcome home brother Jonathan Morrell from his work trip to the Middle East.

We greatly enjoyed a weekend visit from Bro. Dan and Sis. Sandy Jackson and Bro. Terry Readman on their way back home after the New Year's gathering in Texas. We very much enjoy visits. We are about 25 miles North of the border of Mexico here in Las Cruces, New Mexico. There are many interesting things to see here if you have a day

or two to visit. Route 10 which crosses the United States from California to Florida. Many of you may pass right through our city without knowing. We would like to see you.

The Key Bible Lesson campaign continues to help many Bible students around the World. The number of students varies from week to week as people complete their 30 lessons and others start each month. Currently we average around 2,200 people doing the Key Lessons with more signing up each day.

Anyone who is interested in helping to set up their own web sites for promoting the Truth, it is one of the easiest and quite effective ways to introduce the Truth to strangers and friends. Please contact me via email at [mgorrell@me.com](mailto:mgorrell@me.com) for more information.

For those of you who already have web pages of ANY kind, you can advertise the page to sign up for the Key Bible Lessons. The URL to use is <http://www.keylessons.com>. People sign up with their email address only. It is all Free.

Love,

Bro. Michael Morrell

## GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

**HOUSTON FRATERNAL GATHERING..... April 18–20, 2014**

Bro. Bob Lorquet, [boblorquet@hotmail.com](mailto:boblorquet@hotmail.com)

**UGANDA FRATERNAL GATHERING.....Apr 3-6 2014**

Bro. Bob Bent, [eyeglassman39@yahoo.com](mailto:eyeglassman39@yahoo.com). Epa Wekati, [epawekati@yahoo.com](mailto:epawekati@yahoo.com)

**HENGOED FRATERNAL GATHERING.....May 30- Jun 2 2014**

Bro. Steve Male, [malesinwales@btinternet.com](mailto:malesinwales@btinternet.com)

**LAMPASAS FRATERNAL GATHERING.....June 7–8, 2014**

Bro. Ricky Hurst, PO Box 1381, Goldthwaite TX, 325-451-4075

**HYE FRATERNAL GATHERING.....July–21-27 2014**

Bro. Mark Braune, 209 Ranger Dr., Buda, TX, 78610, 512-577-1119, [markbraune@gmail.com](mailto:markbraune@gmail.com) Study, "Minor Prophets"

## 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.

## Consider the Heavens

*“The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, night unto night showeth knowledge”*—Psalm 19.

THE FIRST point to be noted is that the heavens DO declare the glory of God. God has given abundant evidence of His reality and power. There is no excuse for any denying Him. Paul said to the Romans (1:20):

*“The invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity, THAT THEY MAY BE WITHOUT EXCUSE.”*

This is GOD'S view of the matter—that He has given plenty of proof of Himself and therefore, as the Psalms declare (14:1), only the fool can say, *“There is no God.”*

This solves the problem of how to deal with those who believe in evolution and choose to ignore and deny the obvious evidence of creative wisdom in every aspect of the universe.

*“Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words”* (Prov. 23:9).

\* \* \*

THE “glory of GOD” which the heavens declare is not just wisdom and power, but also **character and purpose**. When Moses asked to be shown God's GLORY, God said (Exo. 33:19):

*“I will make all My **goodness** pass before thee.”*

And it is recorded—

*“The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, Yahweh, Yahweh Elohim (He Who shall be Mighty Ones), merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth”* (Exo. 34:6).

**The beauty of God's goodness is the glory that the heavens declare.**

The whole range of creation—from the infinitely vast universe to the microscopically small—reveals God's love of beauty and order, and the highest form of beauty and order is the beauty of holiness, perfection of goodness, oneness with the perfect Divine mind.

\* \* \*

*“The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork.”*

These 2 thoughts are parallel, but there is a distinction in that in the **heavens**—the infinity of space—we see the broad and eternal picture of the **glory**.

In the **firmament**—our own atmospheric surroundings—we see a marvellous and detailed allegory of the actual working out of God's **handiwork**—His purpose with mankind.

All the elements combine in a harmonious picture—earth, sea, clouds, wind, rain, dew, hail, snow, storm, lightning, thunder, rainbow, etc., portray in their interworking and relationships the fulfilling of the everlasting covenant to fill the earth with God's glory and bring blessing to all mankind.

\* \* \*

THE subject begins with the first verse of Genesis—

*“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”*

The first picture presented to us is total darkness over an empty, formless, unbroken expanse of water.

*“And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, LET THERE BE LIGHT.”*

Here are presented the 2 fundamentals of life — water and light—plus that which energizes and motivates all— the Spirit of God.

*“And God saw the light, that it was good, and God divided the light from the darkness.”*

Let us discern the spiritual parallel, for the heavens are here beginning to declare God's glory, and the firmament to show His handiwork—light is good; and light must be separate from darkness.

As we consider the first chapter of Genesis, we should lay beside it the first chapter of John's gospel, where this coming of the True Light is revealed, which the darkness comprehended not—

*“And we beheld His glory, full of grace and truth.” And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light. . . LIGHT IS COME INTO THE WORLD . . .”*

\* \* \*

LET us then consider together the various elements of the heavens, in order, endeavouring to trace their spiritual significance and their relationship to each other in declaring God's glory.

First is the Sun, a vast sphere of power and fire, the source of all natural life and energy on earth. The Psalmist declares in this 19th Psalm—

“In them (the heavens) hath He set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, rejoicing as a strong man to run his course.

“His going forth is from the end of heaven and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.”

The meaning is beautiful and unmistakeable. Here is the “Sun of righteousness” of which Malachi speaks (4:2) who rises with “healing in his wings” for all who fear God's Name.

The rising of the Sun is the end of night and darkness, the beginning of day and light. Our Sun of righteousness is seen in 2 symbolic risings—

The **first** is when he arose from the tomb and turned the darkness of sorrow and despair and death into the light of joy and hope and everlasting life. This rising of the Sun is God's assurance unto all men that—

*“He has appointed a day when He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained.”*

The **second** rising of the Sun is when he comes to dispel the darkness of earth's long night, and be as the light of the morning—the bright and morning star. . .

\* \* \*

THE MOON, the lesser light of the heavens, is the bride of the Sun. She shines in her gentle whiteness, not by her own light, but by the reflection of light from him.

In this study, we are impressed more and more by the evidence God has given of the Bible's divine origin. Many facts of nature and the universe learned thousands of years later by man in his gradually broadening field of knowledge and investigation are manifested in the simple yet profound language of Scripture.

The moon was the lesser light to rule the night. Her shining was to be in the night-time. The Sun, hidden from the earth during the earth's night, is shining upon her and she, during the darkness, reflects his light to the earth and gives glorious evidence that he, though hidden, still exists and shines in glory and will return to bring the joyful brilliance of the new day.

So the faithful waiting Bride, lifted up into the heavenlies by the promise of God, must turn her face to the absent Bridegroom and reflect his glory upon the earth until the morning return.

She is the candlestick in the Holy Place of present probation, while the Sun is the Shekinah-glory of the perfection of the Most Holy.

“*Ye are the light of the World,*” said Jesus to his followers, and Paul exhorts them to “*shine as lights in the world . . . in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.*” This is the present night-time of man's dark rule of sin.

In Bible times, the Moon was a far more important factor in men's lives than to-day. In the clearer air of those lands, it shone more brightly, and there was no artificial outdoor lighting such as we take for granted to-day. When men had to travel, or had work to do on their lands at night, a bright, clear moon was a tremendous comfort and blessing.

\* \* \*

THROUGHOUT the Scriptures the number of the stars is used to typify an incalculable number, like the sand of the sea. Until the inventions of the telescope, less than 400 years ago, the greatest number of stars that could be seen was about 6000, and less than half that number at any one time. With the telescope, **hundreds of millions** can be seen and the total number is estimated in billions.

The Bible speaks of a few particular stars. The Pleiades, referred to by Job and by Amos as “*the 7 stars,*” appear to have been always the most famous and best known cluster. History has always spoken of them as 7, though to the natural eye only 6 are visible to-day. This is an interesting and perhaps significant fact.

This cluster of 7 stars appears to be the foundation for the symbol of the 7 star-angel of the ecclesias in the Revelation—“*The sweet influences of the Pleiades.*”

While the Moon is the Bride, considered in her completeness, the stars represent individual members. Paul says—

“*As one star differeth from another in glory, so is the resurrection of the dead.*”

And Daniel was told—

“*Many that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake . . . they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever*” (Dan. 12:3).

At the creation, the angels are spoken of as morning stars singing together as, at the bidding of God, they brought light and life to a dark, dead earth.

Morning stars are those whose rising heralds the dawn. Jesus is pre-eminently the Bright and Morning Star—the Sun himself—the ruler of the heavens.

\* \* \*

In a secondary and limited sense, sun, moon and stars are applied to the present rulers and prominent characters of the kingdom of men. Suns being darkened, moons turning from peaceful white to bloody red, and stars being cast down to the earth, represent reverses and overthrowings among the powers of the world.

Jude refers to “*wandering stars to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever,*” applying the figure to that class of erratic and unstable persons who appear and disappear irregularly in the ecclesial heavens.

One particular heavenly phenomenon — COMETS — fits Jude's reference strikingly. They flash spectacularly into view from outer space. They shine brilliantly for a short time, outshining the fixed and stable stars. Their actual mass and weight is very small—they are largely gas and small particles, giving, by borrowed light, a tremendously deceiving appearance of substance. They soon disappear again into the blackness. Some come back at intervals, some are never seen again. On bodies of any weight or stability, they have no influence because of their own lightness, but light bodies are disturbed in courses by them. They appear to gradually disintegrate. The spectacular brilliance that surrounds them is actually the evidence of their process of disintegration. How strikingly all these details fit some individuals!

\* \* \*

ANOTHER heavenly phenomenon is the METEOR. This is a piece of some substance, usually stone or metal, travelling through space, which collides with the earth's atmosphere at great speed. Friction with the atmosphere creates tremendous heat and light.

A large meteor can dominate the heaven briefly with its brilliance. Some will travel right across the sky. But their life is very short and all soon burn up entirely in the air or fall to the earth.

In Rev. 8:10, the career of Attila the Hun, one of the scourges God used against Rome, is prophesied under this figure. He blazed brilliantly and briefly in the Roman heavens.

In Rev. 9:1 Mohammed is described similarly, with the addition (which fits perfectly with large meteors) that when he struck the earth he opened a great pit, out of which smoke arose and darkened the sky.

But the sun, moon, stars, comets and meteors of mankind are passing things. All belong to the heavens that will be rolled up like a scroll and taken away when the time has come to establish the—

“*New heaven and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*”  
To be Continued, Lord Willing

—Bro. G.V. Growcott

## Whom Do You Serve?

Our exhortation this morning is titled “Whom Do You Serve?” When I was asked to give this exhortation I thought that this subject would fit in well with the talks that we’ve been considering all weekend. Evidently, it has fit in a little too well. However this subject not only applies to the young people and Sunday school scholars, but to all ages—both those that have not been baptized and those that have. So I’ll pose the question one more time—Whom do you serve? Now, this may sound like a ridiculous question. Of course, all of us are gathered here this morning because of our belief and faith in the one, true God. But I want everybody to hold off on answering the question until we get to the end. At that point - the true and correct answer, only can and will be found in a complete and thorough examination of our own hearts, minds and souls.

So, in preparation for this exhortation, I consulted many of the pioneer writings to include Bro. Thomas, Bro. Roberts and Bro. Growcott. One of the best parts of putting an exhortation together is that the one who’s preparing gains so much more knowledge and an appreciation for Yahweh’s word and these pioneer teachings. Reading and studying these pioneer’s works is something that should be very important to each of us here—both young and old. They should not take the place of our reading and studying the Word of God, but in conjunction with it. Our Bibles should be open, as we study, because the things that are written are proved through Scriptural references. And, it’s fair to say that none of us would be here this morning, or have the amount of knowledge gained, if it weren’t for these writings.

So, we’ve all come here this weekend for a “youth” gathering. Much if not all the lectures have been geared toward the youth. This morning will be no different. But, for just a minute, I’d like to focus on the adults and parents. Much of what our young people learn comes from what they see and hear in their homes and from their parents. We are commanded, as parents, to set the example for our children to follow. This command not only applies to parents, but is true for all those that are in a covenant relationship. Whether we like it or accept it, this younger generation looks up to us—which is a huge responsibility. Jesus states that—“*Whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea*”. The word “*offend*” in this verse is a Greek word meaning—“to entice to sin” or “to cause to fall away”. The example that we set must not cause these young people to fall away or turn their back on the truth, but just the opposite. Our example should bring them closer to the truth and make them desire to

want to be a part of the family of God. This is not something that we always think about, but be very aware—the children are watching the things that we do and they are listening to the words we say.

Today, our young people and children are so exposed to the “wisdom of the world”, that the home and the ecclesia should be the place where they are able to discover the “true wisdom”. In Ephesians 6:4 the apostle Paul instructs us that the children should be “Nourished in the discipline and instruction of the Lord”. Together we need to shoulder the responsibilities of parenthood and devote our time and energy to the spiritual well-being of this young generation. It is so important for us to remember that our children are not our own—but, they are Yahweh’s. Psalm 127:3 tells us that children are the “heritage (or property) of Yahweh”. They are given to us as a sacred trust to bring them up in His way of truth. This can be accomplished through the daily readings and study with them. My wife and I try our best to make it important in our children’s lives and it’s not always easy in a busy household. There’s always something to do—homework, sports, exercise, music class, gymnastics and so on...but the advantages vastly outweigh the disadvantages. This young generation must learn a reverence for the teaching of the Word and for all the faithful examples of the past. If we do as we are commanded then we will be fulfilling our duties and responsibilities as being examples to our children.

So, enough said on that topic. How many people here this morning have read Bro. Roberts book titled “Christendom Astray”? If you haven’t read it, I highly recommend that it be put on your “To Do” list. Bro. Roberts opens the book with several scriptural passages that I’d like to read for you:

2 Tim. 4:3-4 —”The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine but after their **own lusts** shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and **they shall turn away** their ears **from the truth**, and shall be turned unto fables”.

Acts 20:30 —”Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to **draw away** disciples after them”.

2 Peter 2:1-2—”But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And **many shall follow** their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of”.

Each one of these verses refers to the time in which we are living in right now. These verses are an exhortation that we must always do our best to preserve the truth and continually be on guard of the company

that we surround ourselves with. They tell us that there will be those who will try and entice us to believe a doctrine contrary to what was originally delivered to the apostles and prophets. Paul considered it so important that this warning was repeated to the ecclesia at Galatia.

Galatians 1:7-9 —*“There be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”*

The apostle John instructs us in 1 John 4:1 —*“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world”*.

Unfortunately, the Scriptures abound with many examples where this message was not heeded. There were many people who were led astray because of false doctrine, idol worship, riches, etc... Paul instructs us in Romans 15:4—that *“Whatsoever things were written aforetime **were written for our learning**, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope”*. This morning we are going to heed Paul’s message and try and learn from the examples that have been given to us, so that we do not fall victim to the same punishments brought about to those unfaithful people.

No greater learning lesson can be found than when we look at the children of Israel. All of us are familiar with the account of the Jews miraculous exodus from Egypt. This instance is where Paul gives us our first lesson. We are told in 1 Corinthians that following Yahweh’s deliverance from Egypt, things slowly deteriorated for the children of Israel. If you would turn with me to 1 Corinthians 10 and we’ll read the first 12 verses.

*“Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. **But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.** (Notice what Paul says next)—**Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were***

*destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. (Once again Paul tells us)—Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”*

The apostle Paul repeats himself that these things were an example to us. What exactly does Paul mean by this? What he means is that the things written here were put there for us to learn something from. So what can we learn from these verses? There are several lessons that we can take from what Paul tells us. Firstly, we read in verse 5 that “with many of them God was not well pleased”. God was not well pleased with them for multiple reasons. Verses 6-10 gives us those reasons and these are some of the things we will consider this morning. We read that God was not pleased with their lusts (verse 6), their idolatry (verse 7), and their fornication (verse 8), their tempting (verse 9) and their murmuring (verse 10). It was as a result of these wicked ways that the children of Israel betrayed the blessing that was set before them and brought destruction upon themselves.

The first lesson that Paul gives, in verse 6, was not to lust after evil things like the rebellious Jews did. One of the evil things they lusted for was the “good things” of Egypt. We read of this in Num. 11:4-6:

*“And the mixt multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick: But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes.”*

It was quite natural for the Israelites to desire the pleasing things of the world that they had come out from. Truly there were many pleasant and desirable things about Egypt, which at that time led the world in all the arts, sciences, and flesh-pleasing inventions of man. However, Egypt with all of its pleasures was a land of futureless death. We read that the Israelites soon forgot the glory of Yahweh, who had delivered them out of bondage, and could only think of the natural things—the meat, melons, garlic, and onions of Egypt. This is one thing that I can relate to. There’s nobody here that likes to eat as much as I do. But, like everything else, we cannot allow desires of the flesh to consume our thoughts or conversation. There’s nothing better than getting together with our brothers and sisters for some great food and fun, but there must always be something Truth related added to the mix—whether it’s doing the daily readings or just talking about things of the Truth.

However, if we forsake spiritual food in the interest of natural food Paul states in Philippians 3:18-19 that *“Many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you, even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things”*. Spiritual food can only be ingested through a consistent and thorough study of the Word of God. As young people it all starts with the milk of the Word. Peter instructs the young generation to be *“As newborn babes, to desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby”*. No parent is going to grill up a big, fat, juicy steak, cut it up, and feed it to their newborn child. That only comes when they’re at an age to accept such things. The same is true when it comes to a study of the Word of God. The milk is the first principles teachings that are taught throughout Scripture. Bro. Roberts has a wonderful pamphlet called *“The Christadelphian Instructor”*, which allows you to drink this milk from the Scripture. Once you have a handle on the milk, you can obey the commandment to be baptized. From that point you can start tasting on the meat of the Word. The meat consists of a deeper and fuller knowledge of the Truth—which includes prophecy, types and shadows and so forth. This meat will continue to feed you for the rest of your life.

Food is just one example of something that the children of Israel lusted after. There are many things that we can lust after and these lusts hinder us, and take away from our true devotion to Yahweh. The apostle John groups these into (3) categories. He tells us that they are the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life. Each and every sin can be lumped into one of these three categories. So what exactly is lust? Lust can be defined as a strong, excessive or uncontrolled desire for something. Unfortunately for us, these strong desires can be found all around us. We can lust after our boyfriends or girlfriends. We can desire to listen to inappropriate music or read certain books, look at websites, or play video games that are not proper. We can watch TV shows or movies that are not pleasing to God. Books, films, TV programs, and music are often written in ways that arouse our sinful desires. We must avoid these temptations if we are to be sincere and devoted to the Truth. This is why Paul commands us to come out from among them and be separate. Our salvation depends on it. No matter who you are, or how strong you think you are—**THE FLESH IS STRONGER!** Paul is a wonderful example for us to consider. Even though we read of the many wonderful things that Paul said and did he continually struggled with overcoming his fleshly desires. He writes in Romans 7:23-24: *“But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into*

*captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am!*” If the apostle Paul had these struggles—how much more will we? This is something that’s definitely worth our consideration.

We must remember what we are told in Revelation 2:23 —that *“God searches the reins and hearts: and will give unto every one according to their works”*.

1 Corinthians 10:5 tells us that we are to *“bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ”*. Why must we bring into captivity every thought? Because thoughts lead to actions. We have to be extremely careful of what we permit our eyes to see, our ears to hear or our hands to touch. We should avoid any opportunity or influence that will contaminate our minds or cause us to sin. Whatever we deliberately put into our minds, or allow to enter in, will become part of us forever. We must use our minds and fill it with the right stuff. We must keep worldly pleasures out of our minds, as much as possible.

Instead, our thoughts should revolve around God, His Son, His purpose, our brothers and sisters, and the needs of our ecclesia. If we do this, our minds will be filled with the Gospel and there will be no room left for the evil of this world. There is hope for us if we have failed so far. The prophet Isaiah tells us in:

Isaiah 55:7 —*“Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto Yahweh, and **he will have mercy upon him**; and to our Elohim, for **he will abundantly pardon**.”*

Going back now to the children of Israel, Paul tells us that another way they were not pleasing to God was through their idolatry. Idolatry was probably the Jews biggest downfall. Idolatry can be defined as *“**the worship of someone or something other than God, as though it were God**”*. The Mosaic Law commanded the Jews to worship in a way that was contrary to all their human inclinations. It called on them to serve an “invisible” God, which required faith at their hands. The other nations that surrounded them had “gods” that they could see and touch. From the very beginning of their history, we learn that it was to these foreign gods that Israel turned to — not Yahweh. **Judges 2:11-13** tells us that — *“The children of Israel did evil in the sight of Yahweh, and served Baalim: And they forsook Yahweh Elohim of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked Yahweh to anger. They forsook Yahweh, and served Baal and Ashtaroth”*.

There is none of us here today, or at least I hope not, that worship physical idols like the Jews in the Bible did. But remember what the definition of an idol was — it was the worship of someone or

**something** other than God, as though it were God. Anything that takes the place of our service to Yahweh is considered an idol. Anything that keeps us from following and obeying the word of God is idol worship. Unfortunately, a lot of us put our time, our energy and our interest into things that **we** think are important. There is more spare-time today than any past generation ever had. This is not necessarily a bad thing. But it's what we do with our time that's important. It is doing what Yahweh requires of us and not what we think is important that matters the most.

How do you spend your time? Is it spent working long days and many hours only to be so exhausted when you get home that you don't have time to read your lesson? Do you sit for hours watching TV or on a computer or video game? How our time is used, in some ways, is a test of our faith. Having time to indulge in the pleasures of this life, and acquiring money to possess this world's goods, there is a danger that our service for Christ will be set aside. Jesus said that the "cares of this life" would be the cause of many being found unprepared for his coming. There are so many pleasures of this life that we all love to participate in. We must be extremely careful that they are not put in the place of God in our lives. We read in 2 Timothy 3:4 that there are some who will be "lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God". The ones referred to here are not the "unbeliever": they were the ones professing to be in the Truth. Titus 2:12 exhorts us to "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts". We are to put them away—and have no part with them. Do not consent to them—but deny them. The people that Paul is referring to are ones who believed the Gospel in theory, and submitted themselves in form to its institutions, but were not influenced by it and only went through the motions. They were not truly affected the way we, as believers are commanded to be, but allowed the love of the world and the cares of this life to creep in. This is something we all need to be careful of. A great example in Scripture was Demas. In Philemon 1:24 Paul describes Demas as his "fellow laborer", or companion in the work of the Truth. Then, two years later, when writing to Timothy, Paul states that "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world". Unfortunately here is a perfect case of a disciple, an actual companion of the apostles, turning aside from his present cause and "loving the world".

The love of the world is an influence to which we are all exposed. There are pleasures in this world which are very enticing just as they were in Egypt and Sodom and Gomorrah. The world provides us with recognition, with entertainment, with friendship, and with honor to all those who allow it. There is gratification to our natural flesh when we "go along with the group". There is always a fascination about something when we are told that there is "no harm" in it. It is the little,

subtle things that we must be aware of most. One of these things is our fascination with the television. I believe that the television is one of the most potent influences in society today. It is taking the place of so many things in our lives. It not only affects us, but our children as well. Shows today are in color, high definition, 3-D and are so pleasing to the lust of our eye. Cartoons that our children watch today are so much different than what I watched growing up. There also seems to be at least 1-2 shows per night that would be pleasing to watch, but we need to ask ourselves, how much of our time is being occupied? Is it distracting us from “Serving Yahweh our Elohim with all of our heart, our mind and our soul”? When asked by the disciples how to pray, the Lord said to pray not to be led into temptation. How can we pray to “Lead us not into temptation” if we deliberately place objects of temptation before our eyes? We, as Brethren of Christ cannot afford to jeopardize the sanctity of our homes with television. Evil reigns everywhere else; we need to let Yahweh reign in our homes.

Another idol that can be set up in our hearts is materialism. Bro. Jim spoke about this subject last night. Everywhere we look we see advertisements for us to buy things which are “bigger” and “better”. We find ourselves desiring big houses, and nice cars, expensive clothes, the latest smart phones and huge TV’s. Whether it is unconsciously or consciously--we are bowing to the “gods” of this world. **Luke 12:15** reminds us that—*“A man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth”*. Our most valued possession is the Truth and our life itself. Scriptures state: *“For what will it profit a man, if he gains the whole world and loses his life? Or what shall a man give in return for his life”?*

The world around us has made possessions their “gods” and their “idols”. They spend all kinds of time and energy in order to increase them. But the wise know that extraordinary riches of this age will not bring contentment. Instead, the possession of much leads to the desire for even more. If we make \$25K/year, we want to make \$50K/year. If we have a 2009 car, then we feel the need to upgrade to a 2012 car...and so on. Our natural fleshly tendency is to want more. A great example for us to learn from can be found in the parable of the rich man. He had acquired so much of the world’s goods that he had to tear down his barns and build bigger ones—only to be called a fool and that his soul was going to be required of him that night. We are commanded to set our affection or desires on things above, **NOT** the things on the earth. We need to constantly assess our values and principles. If we spend our time, our money and our energy on this world’s goods, to the neglect of Yahweh and his commands, then we need to change our approach. Scripture states that “Where our treasure is, there will our

heart be also”. We are also told that we cannot serve God and mammon and mammon simply means riches or treasure. There are many examples and parables which deal directly with this subject. We are commanded to *“Go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shall have treasure in heaven: and come, take up our cross and follow him”*. Jesus himself states to his disciples - *“How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God”!* On another occasion he states— *“Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God”!*

It would appear from these passages that the Scriptural view of riches is a solid and harsh one, and that no true follower of Jesus Christ has any right to possess material wealth. But does the teaching of Scripture really go as far as this? Does the Bible really declare that there is an inherent evil in money and in other forms of wealth? I think Abraham’s situation answers the question for us. We read throughout the Genesis account of Abraham’s wealth, but he is still called the “father of the faithful”, and the “friend of God”. We also read of Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Solomon and many other faithful sons of Yahweh who were very prosperous. These examples show that some of the most upright, zealous servants of Yahweh were men of great wealth, which leads us to the conclusion that money and other forms of wealth are not evil in themselves, but it is our attitude towards them. Paul states in 1 Timothy 6 that “The love of money is the root of all evil”. It is not the money itself that is the root of evil: it is the love of it. Paul goes on to say— *“Those **who want** to be rich, fall into temptations and snares and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and condemnation”*. We are instructed that “Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content”. Paul ends this section by teaching us what we need to do with regard to riches. He says— *“But thou, O man of God, **FLEE** these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience and meekness”*. Our attitude towards money and riches is what’s all-important. We cannot invest too much of our time in trying to achieve these fleshly desires. We are told that our heavenly father knows what we need and that if we seek after righteousness, all these things will be added unto us.

Another subtle pleasure that can be indulged in is our fashion, or the way we dress. Vulgar and immodest clothing is everywhere around us. All you have to do is walk down the street or go to a shopping mall and you’ll find many inappropriately dressed men and women.

Unfortunately the ecclesia has not gone untouched. Immodest dress can lead to lustful thoughts and sin—causing your brother or sister to stumble. So much time and thought is devoted to how we look. Now let me be clear here—I’m not telling you to not brush your teeth or not take a shower (Boys). I’m referring to the time spent in front of the mirror. The preacher states that it is all vanity and vexation of spirit. Paul tells us in 1 Timothy 2:9 that our clothing should be modest, sensible and seemly. Brothers are not immune from this issue. The world has adopted a second-class standard, a casualness for almost every occasion. Laxity in our dress can usually be related to a laxity in our moral conduct. We must remember that we are the servants of a King. Whether we are attending meeting or an ecclesial outing, we should dress in a way which would be appropriate if the King himself were actually present.

If we take a second and think about some of the things that we’ve considered this morning we’ll find a common denominator in all areas. That common denominator is THE WORLD. It is one of the clearest teachings of Christ that we are not to be “of the world”. By “the world”, he does not mean—do not be part of the globe, or of the air, or of the sky; he means the people that inhabit the earth; the people who we come in contact with outside of the ecclesia. A good example of not being part of the world is why we don’t celebrate December 25<sup>th</sup> as Christmas. This pagan time of year displays beautiful lights, decorated trees and many presents. The apostle John classifies these things “*the lust of the eye*”. We are commanded in 1 John 2:15 to “*Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him*”. If we do decide to love the world and have its friendship, it will result in the loss of our friendship with God. James 4:4 tells us that friendship with the world is enmity with God, and whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. 1 John 2:16-17 reads— “*For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever*”.

Temptations from the world go all the way back to the Garden of Eden, when Eve was tempted by the serpent. It was temptation and worldly desires that led to the children of Israel lusting and worshipping idols and fornicating, tempting and murmuring. It’s the desire to be liked by the world and to indulge in lust of the flesh, lust of the eye and the pride of life that causes us to be “not well pleasing” in Yahweh’s sight. But we must be aware that the world can exist within our ecclesia’s as well. Remember the verses that Bro. Roberts opened his book with. They all warned of the time that we’re living in. The

verses spoke that within the ecclesia—men would be drawn away from Truth and follow after their own lusts. We also learned of the example of Demas—who forsook the apostle Paul because he “loved the world”.

We cannot allow ways of the world to creep in and affect the standards that Yahweh has put forth in the Word. The only way to do this is through self-examination—that means to think about the things that we do. Better yet, it would be better to think about things before we do them. We must realize where we are going wrong. We should ask ourselves—How do we correspond with the pattern that Yahweh requires? and does Yahweh accept the way that I live my life? The first step is accepting responsibility. If we do not realize these things, how can we change them? God has given us a very clear pattern for change. We must seek and study the Word of God. If we do, we will learn of what we are commanded to do, what flaws we should watch for in our walk, and how to correct them. If we have the wisdom to daily inspect ourselves and correct what is wrong, then we should not fail in our final inspection before Christ.

There are two things which make it impossible for any of us who desire to be found accepted at Christ’s return, to indulge in these pleasures of the world. The first is that these pleasures will ruin the “new man” that should be formed within us by the Word of God. The pleasures of the world add to the “sin which already besets us”. They make us feel one with the world, which is God’s enemy. They do not help us draw closer to Christ, but rather it widens the distance between us and him.

In Psalm 1:1 David commands us saying— *“Stand not in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful”*. David’s words were followed by actions. We find these actions in Psalm 26:4-5 where he admits— *“I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers. I have hated the congregation of evil doers; and will not sit with the wicked”*. David is a wonderful example for us to follow after. As we all know - the greatest example for us to follow is the one whom we’ve come to remember this morning. That example is Jesus Christ. We should pattern our life after his. We should be as he was. We should be “in the world”, as he was “in the world”—doing the will of his Father, and glorifying His name, even to the point of self-sacrifice. If we follow after these 2 wonderful examples, the Bible tells us that there will be no human joy and no worldly pleasure that will even compare to the joy and gladness that will electrify the ranks of that symbolic 144,000 that we’ve just read about in our daily lesson. This brings to mind that wonderful Scripture that states— *“Our eyes had not seen, neither our ears heard, nor had it entered into our hearts to conceive what God hath prepared for them that love Him”*.

We are living in the latter days. Our desire should be to raise the standards of the ecclesia. There are no more prophecies to be fulfilled before we will be called to judgment. The next prophecy to be fulfilled consists of all those responsible being assembled at Sinai to stand before the judge. We have been forewarned that the ecclesia will be slumbering at such a time, with some prepared, but with others unprepared and sound asleep and thus unable to enter into the marriage feast. We also are reminded of the 5 foolish virgins, who were not prepared when their groom appeared. The signs of the times speak plainly of the Lord's imminent return. What a tragedy it would be to miss out on the glories of the Age to Come because of a desire to indulge in the pleasures of this world for only a season.

In closing now, I'd like for us all to go ahead and answer the question that was asked at the beginning. Whom do you serve? Do you serve Yahweh—the creator and sustainer of all things, or will you turn your back upon Him and serve idols, and riches and pleasures of this life? Will you choose light or darkness? Will you choose life or will you choose death? All of us are currently wandering in the wilderness, serving our probation, poised on the edge of the Promised Land and we must make up our minds. Are we willing to give our life wholeheartedly to the Truth, and set aside the interests and the things which we think are important? Our answer to all of these questions should be the same as Joshua's was. Joshua chapter 24 gives us Joshua's response when he was asked similar questions as to the ones we've posed this morning. Joshua's answer reads as follows:

*“Now therefore fear Yahweh, and serve him in sincerity and in truth and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye Yahweh. And if it seem evil unto you to serve Yahweh, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: **but as for me and my house, we will serve Yahweh!**”* —Bro. Bill Rinard

## **SIGNS OF THE TIMES (commentary)**

The below article is a big development demonstrating further signs that the way is being prepared by the Elohim for Russia's grand move to build its Image Empire (Daniel 2). Russia will then launch its sudden and massive onslaught in the Middle East against the mountains of Israel (Ezekiel 38, Daniel 11: 40-45).

The Russian Autocrat is not interested in helping make peace in the Middle East. He has ulterior motives. The Bible student will readily

understand his true motives. Bro. Thomas's comments from *Elpis Israel* are on point:

*The Bible is the enlightener. If men would not be carried about by every wind that blows, let them study this. It will unfold to them the future, and make them wiser than the world. The coming years will not be years of peace. **The policy of the Autocrat will be to throw his adversaries off their guard, and take the Sultan by surprise. He is to "come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he will enter into the countries, and overflow and pass over. And many countries shall be overthrown"** (Dan. 11:40-41). This is the career marked out for him; which neither France, nor England, nor the world combined can obstruct, or circumvent. – (Elpis Israel pg. 397) —Bro. Michael Jasionowski*

## **Palestinian leader turns to Putin for Palestinian state, dumps US and Israel as peace partners**

DEBKAFfile Exclusive Report January 24, 2014, 11:07 AM (IST)

Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) launched his "diplomatic intifada" against Israel and exit from the Kerry peace initiative Thursday, Jan. 23, from Moscow. His meetings with President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev marked his breakaway from the US-led peace process with Israel, four months before it was due to expire, and signaled his bid for Russian backing for a Palestinian state.

The Palestinian leader's defection caught both Secretary of State John Kerry and Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu unprepared – and surprised their intelligence agencies. Putin and Abbas almost certainly planned in advance to drop their bombshell on the day both Kerry and Netanyahu were otherwise engaged at two international events in Switzerland, Geneva 2 on Syria and the World Economic Forum.

**For the Russian leader it was a chance to show the international community and the Obama administration that he was several steps ahead of the game** on the three hottest Middle East issues – Iran's nuclear program, the Syrian civil conflict and the Palestinian bid for statehood.

**The first intimation that something big was up came from an ITAR-TASS agency report Thursday that Abbas and Medvedev were due to sign an intergovernmental agreement for a \$1 billion natural gas project in the Gaza section of the Mediterranean Sea. Russia's natural gas giant Gazprom hoped to produce 30 billion cubic metres of natural gas at the site.**

The report added that Russia's Technopromexport engineering firm was also considering a small oil development project near the West Bank city of Ramallah, hub of the Palestinian Authority government headed by Abbas.

**The Palestinian leader began his conversation with Putin by calling Russia a “great power” that deserved to play a more prominent role in the volatile Middle East region.**

Clearly taken aback by the news coming in fast from Moscow, Israeli official sources said Thursday night they could not understand how the Russians and Palestinians came to an agreement on Mediterranean waters off the shores of Gaza, when the rights were already owned by British Gas.

It did not occur to them that the deal Russia proposed to sign with the Palestinians was designed to be an extension of the Russian-Syrian oil exploration contract signed on Dec. 27 in Moscow.

This move confronts Israel with two troubling concerns:

**1. Russian interests could potentially encircle Israel’s offshore Mediterranean gas and oil sites and Russian pipelines may block Israel’s export facilities.**

2. Under international law, the Palestinian Authority is not recognized as an independent state and is therefore not empowered to establish Special Economic Zones in the Mediterranean as closed areas for prospecting for oil or gas. This was one of the topics placed on the agenda of the peace talks led by John Kerry.

**However, Moscow has high-handedly circumvented this obstruction by taking charge of the offshore exploration opposite Gaza, thereby proffering its Palestinian partner to the deal implicit Russian recognition of its status as an independent national entity authorized to sign international contracts.** This could be the precedent for a process of creeping Palestinian statehood without engaging Israel in negotiation.

Moscow has already proved it can get away with busting international sanctions by concluding a \$1.5 bn contract with Tehran for the purchase of half a million barrels of Iranian oil a day, without incurring a word of complaint from Washington.

Two weeks later, Putin and Abbas have acted together to wreck a painstaking US diplomatic initiative actively partnered by Israel for a negotiated peace accord with the Palestinians. They have left John Kerry and Binyamin Netanyahu holding an empty shell.

Nabil Shaath, a Palestinian Fatah veteran, could not have put the situation more bluntly when he said Thursday night that it was time to “end the American monopoly on peacemaking, after Washington had proved incapable of imposing agreements on Israel.”

Russian tactics for Syria and Iran had proved effective, he said, and there was no reason why Moscow could not perform the same function on the Israeli-Palestinian track.

The Palestinians have clearly opted to follow the examples of other Middle East leaders, ranging from Iran’s Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, to Syria’s Bashar Assad, Saudi King Abdullah and Egyptian strongman Abdel-Fatteh El-Sisi, in making tracks, overtly or covertly, to Moscow. **They are opening the door for Russia to fill the void left by American disengagement from region under the Obama administration.**

## **Meditations—Deity’s Ways No. 54**

A MAN is not a man unless he can put up with trifles—unless he can show himself wise and kind and patient under little irritations. If a question arise with the wife over unimportant matters, it is manly to give way. It is despicable to see a husband fighting with his wife for his own way over the colour of a frock to be worn, or the colour of the bread to be eaten. When God deputed the ruling of the house to the man, it was for other reasons than man’s superior ability in the eating of a dinner, or in lifting a load, or in making a noise. Man must show judgment in ruling, and his ruling must not trespass on territory which both Scripture and reason relegate to the wife. Man has no right to rob his wife of free-will; nor treat her as a cypher. She has to be consulted, and her services and co-operation enlisted. A man’s obligation to his wife is tersely and beautifully stated in Holy Writ—”Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church” (Ephes. 5:25; Col. 3:19).

If you cannot eat beef, eat mutton, and if this disagree, try fish, but do not, because of your inability to take every kind of food, abuse food in general. Remember that the food is right enough, and that the fault lies in your feeble and out-of-health digestion. To turn from the natural to the spiritual. Do not grow sulky with the Bible, because you cannot appreciate it in all its parts. Let the parts that disagree alone for the moment, and thankfully feed on those that do agree. Do this, and your health will improve. Oh! the folly of some men, who elect to stand aloof and starve and die rather than feed and strengthen themselves on the simple, elementary, obviously true and good, first principles of the

Word. It is the same old story. Because of hard sayings, men turn aside and walk no more with Christ (Jno. 6:66).

The doctrine of partial inspiration still simmers in many quarters. Let faithful brethren be vigilant, and stand by their guns. The work is trying, but the situation is of God. God wants—especially in these unbelieving times—men of earnest conviction, robust in the truth. The alertness, which the oppositions of unbelievers occasion, tends to produce such men. God’s methods are of the kill or cure kind—they drive men farther away from Him, or draw them nearer. Let us heed not the criticisms of those who see no danger, or who are unable to rightly gauge the insidious influences of these sceptical times. In this connection, an extract from a letter from our late brother Roberts is worth producing: “Never mind the black looks. You cannot wish more ardently than I do to be out of the contention. We are fighting for the right, and of Christ’s approbation we may be sure. The upholders of that which is after God’s own heart, have ever been in the minority in the congregation of the Lord. Often has he spared others for their sakes.”

Never mind about the age of the sun, nor of its having shone for years untold. The point is, it shines *now* for your benefit and for mine (Matt. 5:45). This is the practical view—the view which brings comfort, and inspires with gratitude. And it is not only the sun which has to be considered in this way; but the countless other creature blessings which are born afresh to us every day. We live in times when God is ignored, and His good gifts attributed to the mere workings of nature. No, the sun shines, the rain falls, and the seasons return, not by chance, but as the result of a loving arrangement of God, set agoing at Creation’s start, but at the same time unceasingly controlled (Deut. 28:12, 23). Let us then forget that the sun has been shining for ages, and remember that it commenced to shine this very morning—by the wonderful provision of our Father—for your happiness and well-being, and for mine. How delightful is the thought!

*Bro. A.T. Jannaway— 1899*

## **A Christadelphian on the Land of Israel Sixth Visit to the Holy Land**

AT TEL AVIV

While out with some of my Zionist friends, who, with the best of intentions, I am sure, insisted on accompanying me, I took the earliest opportunity of “losing them” so as to have a good independent survey

of Tel Aviv, and see with leisure the improvements made since my former visits.

Long and wide experience has taught me to shun being carted about in school-boy fashion. A tour a la Thomas Cook and Son, or the Polytechnic, is all very well as a preliminary visit to a foreign country, or when one's purse and time are strictly limited; but, in such a case, one only sees what the guide or conductor of the party chooses, and no more. For instance, the advertised and stereotyped tours to Switzerland, Rome, the Italian Lakes, the Baltic, or the longer tours to Palestine and Egypt, are the same year after year. And, so here, at Tel Aviv, the guides—professional or amateur, cater for those who are paying a first visit; consequently, I am certain, if I leave myself in the hands of my superattentive friends, I shall only see what they want me to see, or what they think I ought to see—and no more. Of course I have paid another visit to the Ibrith Gymnasium, or Higher Grade School, or Technicum. It is one of the sights and prides of the township. It was here, that, in 1912, the Head Master was so pleased at “Christians” like sister Jannaway and myself, taking such an interest in Zionism and its activities, that he gave the entire school of about 700 pupils (boys and girls) a half day's holiday in honour of our visit. My pleasure was indeed great at finding the same Head Master (Dr. Mossinsohn) in authority, and that he recognised me in spite of advancing years. In the interval he had experienced many ups and downs. When the Great War had broken out, and the Turks had thrown in their lot with the Germans, it was discovered that Palestinian secrets were oozing out, and the Ottoman authorities came to the conclusion that either the Jews or the Arabs were guilty of treachery.

It was therefore decided that someone must be hung as an example and warning to others. Three Arabs were selected and actually hung; not behind prison walls in privacy, but strung up on the gallows in the presence of the assembled mob—in fact, strangled in mid air. Photographs and picture postcards are on sale in the shops in Jaffa and Jerusalem depicting these public executions, and horrible mementoes they form. Three Jews were also selected, and Dr. Mossinsohn was one of the three so chosen! His life was only spared at the last moment, as it were, by reason of orders received from Berlin that no German should be among those sentenced to be executed (the Doctor is, as his name suggests, a German Jew). The order was that if any such were suspected, or found guilty of espionage, or treachery, they should be deported. Being so deported, Dr. Mossinsohn went to America and toured the States on behalf of the Zionist cause; and thereby, the exchequer of Zionism profited to the tune of many thousands of pounds. He returned to Palestine at the end of the War and reinstated as

Principal of the Ibrith Gymnasium. The terrible experiences through which he passed deprived him, however, of the bubbling enthusiasm which was so manifest the first time we met him.

Hearing of a diligence, or wagon, going to Rischon le Zion in a few hours' time, I secured a seat thereon, and then sauntered around to find a place where I could get something to eat: this I discovered in the shape of an American-Jewish Restaurant, and forthwith was engaged in partaking a good square meal, laying as it were a good foundation against the time to come, for one never knows exactly what may be one's fate in such out-of-the-way places.

#### AT RISCHON LE ZION

The visit to Rischon-le-Zion was quite like meeting an old friend, although it was a bit saddening to see, that, so far as its wine-making machinery was concerned, all was much the worse for wear—it lacked the up-to-dateness of previous days. It is suffering, like many of us, from that disease or complaint known as Anno Domini! I had not been very long in Rischon before the representative of the Palestine Wine Industry heard thereof, and was on my track anxious to afford me all the information he could, and show me round the “town.” It was evident he had been advised from their London headquarters, with certain instructions. Although the wine cellars of Rischon still rank with the foremost in the world, the machinery cannot be termed up-to-date; but, I have no doubt, from what was said, that modern machinery and appliances will ere long be installed. Wonders have been done since Rischon was founded in 1882. Among Jewish agricultural colonies this was foremost, as its name implies—Rischon-le-Zion (the “First to Zion”—see Isaiah 41: 27). It is still one of the finest agricultural colonies in the Holy Land, with its extensive plantations of grapes and almonds. It abounds with parks and palms. It possesses both telegraph and telephone Offices.

While I was being escorted round the place, I discovered that mine host was having prepared, at the Hotel Beracha, an excellent repast, which being quite unexpected, came as a welcome surprise.

The large Synagogue brought a quarter of a century ago quite near: here it was that, in 1902, we saw its old Rabbi doing charwoman's work, sweeping and scrubbing. It was reminiscent of the work that was wont to be done by our late dear brother and sister Roberts, some sixty years ago, in the Ann Street Schoolroom, Birmingham, where the “few-in-number-little-flock” used to assemble with “gladness and singleness of heart.” Then was Then, and Now is Now: what a contrast! (in many respects, not for the better). In these closing days of the Gentiles, we have heard it suggested that Ecclesias ought to consider, seriously, the

advisability of paying their door-openers and recording brethren! Perish such an un-Christlike suggestion. If these, or any other “fellow-labourers” cannot do the work of the Lord without monetary remuneration, let the Ecclesia concerned appoint others who can. The next move would be to appoint permanent presiding brethren, permanent arranging brethren, a permanent Chairman; and it requires very little stretch of the imagination to foresee a Head appointed to whom every now and again a honorarium for his valuable services would be voted by the Ecclesia on the recommendation of the Arranging Brethren. This is no fancy or imaginary danger, but a very real one. Eureka contains abundant historical evidence of such fears—it would simply be history repeating itself. Our late brother Gamble, of Leicester informed the writer of a “brother” in Leicester, with an undoubted gift of the tongue and who “could not dig;” offering his services to the Ecclesia for a quid pro quo. No: he was no newly fledged member, but one who had been connected with the Truth for thirty or more years, although never weaned of his love for clerical learning and ways. He even invaded our South London Ecclesia, and because the writer of these Palestine letters—following the example of Dr. Thomas and bro. Roberts—openly exposed this would-be trader in religion, a threat of writ for libel followed, but nothing came of it, and the impostor came to an end with none to help him.

No: the old, the real Christadelphian way, of doing the work of the Lord without money and without price, is the only right way, and those who suggest emulating the sects of the Apostasy with a whole, or even a partially paid ministry, should be given the cold shoulder and short-metre. These are the thoughts that come to mind as I think about that old Rabbi doing charwoman’s work at Rischon le Zion.

—Bro. F. G. Jannaway—1926

## **Conferring With Flesh and Blood**

*“But when it pleased God...to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach him among the nations, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood”—Gal. 1:15*

BIBLE lexicons define the Greek word from which “conferred” is here translated as meaning: “to put anything up toward one; to seek advice or counsel of one.”

So the Apostle means that, when he was arrested in his mad career of persecution against the saints, and was called to preach the Gospel, which necessarily involved a complete reversal of his life, he did not consult his own thoughts or desires, neither did he seek advice of any mortal man, but surrendered himself wholly to the Divine decree and sought advice from

none other source than from Him as to his heaven-sent mission. Therefore he could say in all truth—

*“But I certify you, brethren that the Gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ”* (Gal. 1:11-12).

“Flesh and blood” in scriptural terms means mortal, sinful nature, with all of its weaknesses and tendencies toward evil and away from Divine principles. It is the “old man of the flesh” whose thoughts and actions are contrary to God, and whose advice and counsel are almost invariably wrong when viewed in the light of Divine teaching.

In Heb. 2:14 we are told that Jesus Christ was a partaker of “flesh and blood” nature that he might through death redeem those who are of that sin nature. Therefore he inherited this sin-stricken nature that he might condemn it.

He was *“tempted in all points like as we are,”* but he *“conferred not with flesh and blood.”* He sought no counsel of man, but when tempted, **his sole standard of appeal was to the Word of God.**

And so he conquered and condemned sin in both its physical and moral aspects by keeping God's law and being offered as a sacrifice for sin, that sin might be condemned in his mortal flesh—thus winning a right to immortality through a resurrection.

He has been given a Name above every name, and made the resurrection and the Life that he might give eternal life to “the children” of God who also, like him, overcome the temptations of “flesh & blood.”

In Matt. 16:16-17, when Peter confessed to Jesus that he was the Christ, the Son of the living God, Jesus told him—

*“Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.”*

God, through the prophet Isaiah, says (55:8-9), in speaking to “flesh and blood” man—

*“My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are My ways your ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.”*

All thought, reasoning and philosophy which emanates solely from “the mind of the flesh” is not only of no spiritual value, but tends to lead away from divine teaching, if not diametrically opposed to it. It is foolishness with God.

The old man of the flesh reasons after the flesh and judges after the flesh, as Jesus told the Jews in John 8:15. He follows the dictates of the carnal mind which—

*“...is enmity against God; for it is not subjected to the law of God, neither indeed can be”* (Rom. 8:7).

There must be created in the believer a NEW mind, “created in righteousness and true holiness.” The mind of Christ, the spirit of Christ, **must** dwell in him, and the Word of God **must** be his guiding light and his counsel, with which he should constantly confer, and strictly abide by its instructions.

Humanly inspired counsel is dangerous to the spiritual man, therefore the prophet Isaiah warns us to—

“Cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?” (Isaiah 2:22).

This is as applicable to ourselves as to others with whom we come into contact.

**It is our own natural tendencies which are the most liable to lead us astray.** Bad advice from without will not harm us if we, like our Savior, are always prepared with a “thus saith the Lord” to guide our every thought and action.

The old man of the flesh is always ready to hold a conference with us, and he is liberal with his advice and counsel.

But in any conference with him, he always comes out the winner. He has advantages to start with because—though the spirit be willing—yet the flesh is weak. He has the advantage because there dwells in every one of us a law that when we would do good, evil is present with us ever ready to flame into sin at the slightest encouragement. Therefore, says Paul—

“Make NO provision for the flesh, to obey it in the lust thereof.”

Once we lend a willing ear to the counsel of “flesh and blood” we have taken the first step toward obeying the dictates of the carnal mind. There is only one safe rule: “Confer not with flesh and blood.” Seek not, neither heed, its “reasonable” suggestions.

If advice which one seeks to give is not wholly derived from the Word of God, and based solely upon Divine principles, let us have nothing to do with it. Let us put it in its proper place, with the **“things that be of man,”** and not the things that be of God.

We might note some of the advice and suggestions commonly handed out by the old man of the flesh which, though sometimes well meant, is solely dictated by his fleshly mind—

“The Word of God should not be taken too literally or too seriously.

God does not always mean exactly what He says, and there should be wide scope for ‘differences of opinions’.”

“Customs and circumstances have changed; therefore God does not require us to follow closely the example of the saints of old.”

\* \* \*

“Our presentation of the Truth should be modernized so as to appeal to the modern world.”

\* \* \*

“It is the spirit of Christ and an exhibition of brotherly kindness to show a tolerant attitude toward false teachers and wrong doers.”

\* \* \*

“We are too busy to give very much if any time to the service of the Truth.”

\* \* \*

“There is 'no harm' in many worldly pleasures and amusements.

\* \* \*

“There is much good to be derived from reading worldly literature.”

\* \* \*

“We should preserve peace in the Body at all costs.”

\* \* \*

“We should note carefully what the majority prefers, and follow them and seek to please them.”

\* \* \*

“We should confine our addresses to pleasant and up building things lest we discourage the brethren, particularly the younger members.”

\* \* \*

“It is 'nobody's business' how one conducts himself, and we should not be concerned about the conduct of others”

\* \* \*

“Those who want to conform to the principles of teaching and conduct of past generations in the Truth are old-fashioned and behind the times. We need brethren whose preaching and writing conform more to modern times and ways.”

There are some things that hardly anyone would say, or even consciously think, **but** which may be very clearly manifested by our **actions**, as—

“We are justified in bettering our temporal welfare even though it may mean cutting us off from rendering very much, if any, service to the Truth.”

\* \* \*

“We should be at liberty to 'forsake the assembling of ourselves together', or give no support to *the* work of the Truth, except when we feel like it or it suits our convenience to do so.”

\* \* \*

“As long as we have the Truth and commit no grave sins, we can take things easy and still have a fair chance of entering the kingdom.”

\* \* \*

“We should first consider our temporal welfare and comfort, and then if we have any time or substance left over to give to God, we might do so”

\* \* \*

“Almost any excuse we can possibly think of should be accepted as a good reason for not doing our duty.”

Such thoughts as these spring from the carnal mind, and are therefore rightly termed 'thinking of the flesh.' They war against the mind of the spirit, and must be put down if we are to win the race for eternal life.

*Let us give “flesh and blood” no quarter but bring into “captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ”* —Bro. Oscar Beauchamp

## Thou Hypocrite

The big issue is: are we going to trust our own natural thoughts and emotions and opinions as to what is right and good, or are we going to recognize that our own natural thoughts—however well intentioned, however well pleasing to us—are deceptive and fatally misleading; and consciously seek God’s law for guidance.

The latter course offers the only POSSIBLE chance of success and acceptance, and yet so pitifully few—even of those who claim to be Christ’s brethren—follow this course.

The common view is: “I think this is all right, so it must be all right. I think this worldly fashion is all right. I like this worldly custom. It is so pretty. It is so appealing to the flesh. It pleases me and gratifies my lusts. I see no harm in it. I do not want to look into it honestly, and find out the real truth about it, and what GOD thinks of it. I do not really care what God thinks—I am only interested in what I think and like.”

This is human nature—the thinking of the flesh; and if we are honest with ourselves, we can all see ourselves here, with our head in the sand of our own self-will.

But what about God’s law, which we profess to love. If God has spoken on a subject, even (as we may think) obscurely—the only possible course of honesty, wisdom and love is to study it intently, search it out, and if there is any doubt as to the meaning, to keep on the safe side, because we love God.

Sometimes God is obscure on purpose, so that the true state of our heart and love will be exposed.

If our roots are not reaching ever more deeply and thirstily into this pure river of water that is God’s law, we do not have a chance of life at all, for we are voluntarily (though perhaps blindly and unknowingly) choosing the flesh-pleasing way of death. —Bro. G. V. Growcott

## Jesus and Sin in the Flesh

THE article in the Christadelphian for March, 1869 continues to represent our convictions on the subject of which it treats, namely, the relation of Jesus to the condemnation which we all inherit from Adam.

On some details, however, of that general subject, we should if we were writing it again express ourselves more explicitly, in view of the searching controversy which has arisen on the subject of sin in the flesh. We should guard ourselves against forms of expression which seem to favor the false ideas that have come to be advocated.

In asserting, for instance, that there was no change in the nature of Adam in the crisis of his condemnation, we should add that though his nature continued of the order expressed in the phrase '*living soul*,' a change occurred in the CONDITION of that nature through the implantation of death, as recognized in the article in question (p. 83, col. 2, line 15) in the statement that death ran in the blood of Mary.

And on the subject of sin in the flesh, while retaining the declarations on p. 83 as regards the operation of our moral powers, we should add that the effect of the curse was as defiling to Adam's nature as it was to the ground which thenceforth brought forth briars and thorns. And that therefore, after transgression, there was a bias in the wrong direction which he had not to contend with before transgression.

Our mind has not changed on the general subject, but some of its details have been more clearly forced on our recognition by the movements and arguments of heresy. —*Bro. Robert Roberts*—1878

## America and the Pope

IT IS natural that the American people should begin to be alarmed at the progress of Roman Catholicism in their country, considering the claims of the head of that system, and the power of a popular vote there to give effect to those claims in case of a sufficient number of people consenting to recognize them.

But the nature of the times forbids the idea that that country will ever come under the power of Rome. While it is true that, on the verge of her destruction, Rome boasts of her queen-like prosperity and sovereignty (Rv. 18:7) and actually receives power and consideration at the hands of the European Governments in their war against the Lamb (Rv. 17:17; 19:20), it is also true that British Tarshish remains her antagonist to the last, and the Lord's ally as the anti-typical Tyre in the work of setting up the Kingdom of God.

America, while largely recruited from continental populations, is too closely related to Britain—both in blood and political genius—to admit of the supposition that she will be in the camp of the Beast and the False Prophet in the last great struggle, which is not far off. It is much more probable she will side with the mother country in its allegiance to the throne of David during the tempestuous interval that

follows the Lord's manifestation on the earth, before all governments are finally overthrown.

Nothing has been revealed on the subject, and therefore it is impossible to be certain; but the general drift of things seems to be against any fear of America becoming a tool of the Pope.

—*Bro. Robert Roberts* —1890

## **Forgiving, but Avoiding Appearance of Condoning: How?**

A BROTHER was imprisoned for theft. He applied for reinstatement, acknowledging and expressing sorrow for his sin. It turned out on investigation that the case (as is usual) had been magnified by rumor. Still it was bad enough. What were we to do? Some were for unconditional withdrawal: some for limited withdrawal: some for mercy and forgiveness.

All recognized the need for some public repudiation [by the ecclesia] of the wrong. All finally recognized that confession and humiliation left the brethren no alternative, under the law of Christ, but forgiveness.

It was finally arranged that the offending brother should, of his own accord, attend the meetings, but 'sit back' and refrain from the breaking of bread for 3 months, after which he should be received (no other cause of severance arising).

There are no scriptural grounds for refusing forgiveness to a brother who has committed a fault and has repented. But while granting forgiveness, there may be reason for indicating the repudiation of his offense: reason having to do with others rather than the offender, as when Paul says—

*"Them that sin, rebuke before all, that others also may fear"* (1 Tim. 5:20).

*"Give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully"* (1 Tim. 5:14).

*"Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them"* (Eph. 5:11).

Now if an offender, whose sin was notorious outside our community, were to apparently pass unchallenged among the brethren, occasion would be given to the adversary to say that they were indifferent to sin, and thus the Truth would be blasphemed. We should be seeming to have fellowship with the works of darkness.

We can only prevent this by some outward token of repudiation: such a token as would be visible to the outside. Miriam was excluded from the camp for seven days. If an offending brother is suspended from fellowship for a period, the right token is given, and the brother's repentance is put to the test.

In the apostolic days of the Spirit's delegated authority, there were more effective methods (1 Cor. 5:5). In our day, no other seems available. We cannot but suppose the Lord will approve of the brethren's action in such a case, and condone any excess of zeal for righteousness there may, in his judgment, be in it.

Whatever is done ought to be done in the spirit of kindness—with the desire to restore, and not to humble a brother, while at the same time upholding the standard of that *'holiness which becometh the House of God.'*  
—Bro. Robert Roberts—1891

## Christ Eating Passover

True it is that after eating the Passover with his disciples, Jesus went to the Mt. of Olives. But he did not in this become a transgressor of the Law. For though it is written (Ex. 12:22)—

*"None of you shall go out at the door of his house till the morning."*

—this was not part of the directions for the observance of the Passover after Israel should be settled in the land, but was an institution peculiar to the circumstances of the night of their deliverance from Egypt. You will see this if you will consider the reason given for the commandment not to go out—

*"For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians" (v.23).*

You do not find Israel commanded to stay in their houses on the night of the Passover after they should enter the land. On the contrary, they were commanded to leave their houses, and sacrifice and eat the Passover only at the place which should be chosen out of all the tribes of Israel for that purpose (Dt. 16:5-7)—

*"Thou mayest not sacrifice the Passover within any of thy gates ... but at the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place His Name in ... thou shalt roast and eat it at the place which the Lord thy God shall choose."*

Jesus fulfilled this command in repairing to Jerusalem to eat the Passover with his disciples in the place which Yahweh had chosen to place His Name, after the eating of which he was at liberty to do what he did.

Neither can we imagine that he transgressed the Law in the omission of the *'bitter herbs'* required to be eaten with the lamb. *'Bitter herbs'* are not mentioned, but their use was so much a matter of course as to be understood in the general statement that they ate the Passover (just as in our case, the cup is understood though we may speak only of *'breaking bread'*).

So with the use of wine at the Passover. This was not forbidden; and *'where there is no law, there is no transgression.'* Accessories appear to have been allowed that were not incompatible with the ordinance itself, such as the sop you mention.

Jesus, no doubt, partook of the Passover the day before the nation at large, but it was, nonetheless, the Passover of the Law, which was to be

observed '*between the evenings*' (Ex. 12:6), as shown by Dr. Thomas (Berean '63:135). Jesus ate the Passover at the earliest time allowed by the Law, the nation at the latest. The result was that Christ both partook of the typical Passover, and became himself the antitypical Passover in being crucified at the very time Israel as a nation were observing the typical ordinance.

The suggestion that it is the breaking of bread that is meant when it is stated that Jesus ate the Passover, is untenable. The breaking of bread is never called the 'Christian' or 'Christadelphian' Passover. It is Christ who is '*our Passover*', as Paul declares (1 Cor. 5:7). The breaking of bread is simply a memorial of him.

The only other Passover than Christ is the Mosaic type of which he is the antitype. And of the type he undoubtedly partook, as it was meet he should, being a Jew, '*made under the Law*' (Gal. 4:4).

—*Bro. Robert Roberts* —1878

## 2. The Rainbow

Now, over or upon the head of this angel, John saw "the rainbow." Before *iris*, all the recent editors of the text insert *he*, "*the*" which is no doubt correct, as having special reference to the rainbow in ch. 4:3. This is the symbol of the covenant, and inseparably connected with the throne. Upon this sat one like a jasper and sardine stone; and, as the rainbow was round about the throne, it was also over Him who sat thereon. The occupant of the throne is the Spirit, and those to whom he says, "he that overcomes will I grant to sit with me in my throne;" so that the rainbow arches over all such. The Spirit-Host is the pillar of cloud between the Cherubim, which reflects the light of the divine countenance, and develops the bow. This token of the Abrahamic covenant is well and appropriately placed over "the Head" of the Angelic Spirit-Host, seeing that in Him all the fulness dwells; and that, in the days of his flesh, his blood was the blood of that covenant brought into force by His death; and by which all the individuals of the cloud were sanctified (Heb. 9:15; 10:10). Arching over this symbol, it signifies that the angel is a company of kings and priests, related to the rainbowed throne — the throne covenanted to David and his seed.

The *rainbow* occurs only twice among the symbols of the Apocalypse; once in the fourth chapter, and again in the tenth. When seen by the scribe instructed for the kingdom of the heavens, it reminds him of "the covenants of promise," in which he has become interested by adoption into "the Commonwealth of Israel," when he put on Christ by immersion, as "the obedience of faith" (Eph. 2:12; Gal. 3:27,29; Rom. 16:26). The rainbow token in a scene reminds him, that the symbol with which it is associated, has to do with the Holy Land, and the Kingdom, of which the land is the territory. It suggests, that the things signified by the symbol are connected with the avenging of the holy (Dan. 8:14), when the covenant with Jacob, and the covenant with Isaac, and the covenant with Abraham, has been remembered; and the land also (Lev. 26:42).

*Bro. John Thomas—Eureka vol. 3 page 174 Logos edition*

# Hints For Bible Markers

## The Psalms

### Psalm 2:7

*“I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.”*

This Psalm is quoted quite a few times in the Scriptures. And there is no verse in this Psalm quoted more times than this one in the New Testament, a prophecy that had its fulfillment a thousand years after it was given. It has been quoted to prove:

Acts 13:33 “God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.”

Proof of the resurrection.

Hebrews 1:5 “For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?”

Proof the messiah will be (for this Psalm was written long before the birth of the messiah) the son of God and that he has, by inheritance, a better name than the angels.

Hebrews 5:5 “So also Christ glorified not himself to be made a high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee.”

Proof Christ is our high priest.

The kings of the nations, including the rulers of the Jews, claim Israel and the world belong to them. Yahweh and his Son disagree, declaring Israel and the world to be theirs. This is the issue that is powerfully brought out in Psalm 2. In the Roman court, judgment is given against Christ. He is executed for treason. This treason is justified by God in raising him from the dead, as His Son begotten on his resurrection day. “Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.”

Along with the last two verses, verse 7 is proof that the rulers of this world shall be hurled from their positions of power by Christ and his brethren, that Jesus may take possession of his inheritance, the Earth.