## morality

# SCRIPTURAL STANDARDS FOR CHRISTIANS

What Precautions Should Be Taken In Matters of Morality?

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### **Preface**

[Page i] WE present this treatise in the spirit of helping to assist the brotherhood in these perilous times and to deal with the problems of our modern day when the Adversary is **now** even more active than in the past. And, so that as the hymn #294 says, "The least and feeblest here may abide," "beneath the wings divine." "And Satan, seeking out his prey, may hate, but cannot harm!" It is a day called the "evil day" when it is more necessary now than ever in the past to put on the whole armor of God so that we may be able to withstand the whiles of the Adversary. He has many "problem" causing devices used with measurable success - a number of which are discussed here.

This is a "wake-up" call so that we may be prepared to do battle against the Adversary and his wicked Spirits in high places -- "It is written!" Faithful Joshua was encouraged on the demise of Moses, the servant of God, to "Be strong and very courageous," to observe and do according to the His (God's)"Law" of righteous standards and to "turn not from it to the right hand or to the left" and that it would "not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate upon it day and night"..."for then you shall make your WAY prosperous, and then you shall have GOOD success." And, that "There shall not any man be able to stand before you all the days of your life:" "Be not afraid, neither be dismayed, for Jehovah your God is with you wherever you go!" Joshua 1:5-9 What wonderful words! for so great help to the saints doing battle in their perilous journey! As God's righteous standards were in Christ Jesus (Psalm 40:7), so must they be in us - not after the letter but after the spirit! Romans 8:1-4.

[Page ii] We have discussed the matter of dealing with "gross iniquity" in the church which is not treated after the manner of a "sin against a brother" but as a "sin against God and the church" and must go first and directly to the church for judgment. It is not the responsibility of the Elders but of the Ecclesia! (I Corinthians 5). See our 1986 study and Booklet which discusses this subject, why it is necessary and the manner in which it is carried out. It is entitled "Disfellowship -- What it means to the Christian Church."

There are, of course, those individuals and classes who will **not** agree with this and *insist* that "it is too judgmental" and is "harsh treatment" of the wrongdoer and that "love and mercy" should prevail. We say here, that it **is** a responsibility that is conferred upon us who would be the *future judges of the world* and that we are **obliged to so judge** else we would shirk our responsibility and would *wrongfully* prevent others from doing clearly

what God has written! And for that, we also stand in judgment and must answer for our actions!

A transgressing person must bear responsibility for his or her actions and must answer to those actions in "chastenings and "scourgings." However, "practiced" or "grievous sin" is another and more serious matter that must be severely dealt with as is represented in Jesus call "metaphorically" for **"radical surgery"** or **"drastic action"** to "cut away such serious sin" in that the life of the New Creature is threatened and must be properly corrected or else the life or "spirit" will fail. We speak of salvation and not the covering over of sin. Matthew 5:29,30

We trust that the many God given examples and admonitions in the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures will give encouragement and help to the weary pilgrim. That is why we are given the **entire Bible** and must be familiar with "every Word" for our own good! Thank God for all the help along our Christian journey so that we are thereby enabled to make the *right* decisions and to have the proper "corrections in righteousness." Be sure to look up all the Scriptures cited in the text and those added in the "Page Scripture Index." They are very powerful! May the Lord bless this study so that you and others with whom you have to do may get the reward promised of "entering into His rest!"

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#### **MORALITY**

#### SCRIPTURAL STANDARDS FOR CHRISTIANS

## What Precautions Should Be Taken In Matters of Morality?

[Page 1] "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly; nor standeth in the way of sinners; nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But, his delight is in the law of Jehovah and in his law does he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of waters that bringeth forth his fruit in his season. His leaf, also, shall not wither and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so; but are like the chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore, the ungodly shall not stand in judgment. Nor sinners in the congregation (of the sides of the north) of the righteous. For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; but the way of the ungodly shall perish." Psalm 1:1-6.

We would not wish to speak on a subject like this, but we find it is a necessary to do so, since a void on these subjects seems to exist in the brotherhood. There are so many who *do hold* the standard high and who *do hold their consecration as most precious*, remembering all that we have been given as a people and the prize set before us.

Yet, since anarchy and immorality *has entered the church in our day*, we ask our selves, Can it be for any of the following reasons:

- 1). They are *not counting their consecration vows above all* -- their relationship with God, the most precious thing they have?
- 2). Are they touching lightly the things of the earth and placing their values with God, going to the throne daily?
  - 3). Is the vow something they feel that they are *above needing* to apply to them?
- 4). Are the elders, speakers or others among us *not* giving the clarion call on these moral issues?
  - 5). Are there some among us who are failing to study God's Word *sufficiently?*
- 6). Are any justifying and compromising any wrong that they would do and thereby deceiving themselves so that it would become a gray matter area neither black nor white? And who would also say, Who seeth us?

[Page 2] We are confronting the issue of the possibility of lowering of moral standards in the fellowship of the brotherhood. As you well know, in the Pastor's writings, proper Christian behavior is delineated with very direct statements from the writings of Christ, the Apostle Paul and the other Apostles. We believe that just after the second war and in the '50s and particularly the '60s, there was a movement on the part of Satan, the prince of sin and darkness and his agents among the spirits and those on earth. The object was to break down the good moral standards further in the world as was done in the days of the flood when he was upon the earth with the fallen angels. Wickedness was then widespread. (Genesis 6:5)

#### **DECLINE IN MORAL STANDARDS**

In our recent history, therefore, we note a sharp decline in moral standards. Along with this corruption came the widespread use of drugs. (See "sorcerers" "drugs" - Keys of Revelation comment, Revelation 21:8; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11) Such use is apart from alcohol or similar things. However, their prior use lay the foundation for decadence as we can see. As to the awareness of the situation, our government under the direction of the Attorney General completed a study of pornography in the media covering some 2500 pages. It showed the condition of humanity to be appalling. This is in our day! The conditions continue and worsen. These things still hold the young and have even touched the children of Bible students passing through school. We are giving evidence that the moral standards have been lowered in the world. And, even brethren who have for years held to higher standards are becoming easy prey to the disease of sin perpetrated by the great adversary. We read the same things that the world reads, if we allow ourselves to do so, that are on the bookstands in the stores and common markets. There are legalized publications in both pictures and words. The novel paints for the mind what the eye cannot see. The movies, videos, television, advertisements, cable, computer [and now internet] in the very privacy of the home contribute towards widespread degradation which were under controls and moral bans in the past. Satan is by no means bound, but is more active than ever and "we are not ignorant of his (many) devices" -- especially in our day! (2Corinthians 2:11) It is not merely a "wrestling against flesh and blood," but against Satan and his rulers of darkness and all the agencies supporting his cause in the earth. See Expanded *Comments*, pps. 462, 465.

Fallen man is incompetent to defend himself, except by being thoroughly loyal to Jehovah God and attentive to the Divine Word. *Volume 6*, p. 626. Much more could be said but time is limited. We mention these things for they are the **basis** for corrupt thinking and evil deeds. These things and others have come into the portals of the brotherhood. They have affected our young children and some of us as adults. And, even Elders and Deacons, which may be said to our shame!

To lower our standards in our fellowship, would mean to adopt an attitude of permissiveness-both with **forgiveness** and without the **most needed** thing "correction in righteousness" for which the Word of our Father was intended. Such action would stifle its intended corrective action and would uphold the great Deceiver and Father of the "children of the Wicked One." Further, if you lower the standard so far, then **you have no standard at all!** This is the level at which Satan, "the Wicked One" desires "to catch" God's professed saintly ones in "second death!

Consider, now, St Paul's remarks in his Epistle to the Romans 8:4-15. "For they who are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh. And to be carnally (fleshly) minded is death." He further states, "Because the carnal (fleshly) mind is at enmity ("at war") (Rom. 7:23) against God (by reason of the adversary as a roaring and devouring lion). For it (the Carnal fleshly mind) is not subject to the law of God. Neither can it be. So that they that are in (live after) the flesh cannot please God. But, you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. Now, if any man have not [Page 4] the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his (he would belong to his father, the Adversary). Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if you live after the flesh, you shall die (the second death). If ye through the spirit (of the righteousness of God's law standards and the "washing by the same Word") do mortify (kill) the deeds of the body (the flesh) you shall live (get life on the spirit plane or even the higher Divine plane of being)."

#### RESPONSIBILITY OF TEACHERS IN THE CHURCH

The lowering of the moral stands opens the door for the Adversary to come in and control. And, "the Wicked One" *touches him.* (1John 5:18) Just how might the lowering of moral standards come about?

- 1). Here is where the teachers in the Ecclesia have their part. God's Word is a simple book to those who have committed themselves to it -- "making wise the simple." Understanding the areas of right and wrong are not hard to comprehend. St. Paul tells us in Hebrews 5:12-14. "For everyone who uses milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But, strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age. For by reason of **use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."** He speaks of teachers who "need to be taught again of the first principles of the **oracles (law) God."** (Verse 12)
- 2). A teacher is to be "an example to the flock of God over which Christ has made you overseers." And, also upon whom the "greater judgment" would come. (James 3:1) We are told from the platform within the context of "homosexuality," as an example, that we are to experience the same things that are in the world, so that we can be a sympathetic high priest. Those who would judge righteously are themselves to be judged. And, that those who practice such things are condemned as sinners, needing the cleansing of a "fit man" of the "scape goat." (Hebrews 2:15)
- 3). Therefore any effort on the part of the Elders of the brotherhood, to compromise the righteousness of God's Word would by his **opposition** become unwittingly a tool of the **[Page 5]**Adversary. The approving support to **any** form of wrong course of conduct would have a detrimental effect both on the one who has done the wrong deed as well as the one providing the excuse for others of the congregation in general to follow in his steps. An example to this would be the words of our Lord. "Whoever would break one of the least commandments and teach men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:19) This, of course, does not take into full consideration, mentioned before, "living after the flesh."

This method of teaching is accomplished by some elders in their discourses to which we have referred. Thus, representing Christ as our Elder Brother and head such "teach for doctrine, the commandments of men." (Matthew 15:9) Jesus said, "As my Father has taught me, I speak these things." (John 8:28) Jesus, as the Logos was there when Jehovah's Iaw, the standard of righteousness was given to Moses at Sinai - after which spirit we walk. (Romans 8:4; 7:6)

The method of teaching these things can embargo Ecclesia action and can misdirect those who would be unfamiliar with the Bible as verses the volumes. They both have their value; but, the storehouse **is God's Word.** Coming away from such influence of sometimes powerful leadership in Nicoliatan-like control, may be hard to resist -- especially by the weaker. There were times when it was necessary for the good of the church. One example was St Paul when he withstood St Peter to the face, "for he was to be blamed" in the matter of a wrong teachings concerning obligations of the circumcision. (Galatians 2:11-14)

#### LEVITES AN EXAMPLE OF FAITHFULNESS

We know that the **fear** of any man "whose breath is in his nostrils" "**bringeth a snare**" as is evidenced in the history of the Christian church. (Proverbs 29:25) The end results would be bad for the young in our church and for our children. They both see and hear what we do and the course of action that we approve as does our Father who is in heaven. (1Corinthians 3:13; Isaiah 29:15) For, we **[Page 6]** cannot profess to be something that we are not. For, the overt rejection of those righteous commands is **hypocrisy** - just like the Pharisees. (Luke 12:1)

We are to be an example and to uphold that standard to the believers. (1Tim. 4:12) We are as we have sung "the standard bearers" in Zion. (Isaiah 59:19; Jeremiah 4:6; 50:2; 51:12,27) Your Adversary, the Devil, stands without. If we fail to strengthen our walls (Nehemiah 4:1,8-23), Sanballat, the enemy shall come in like a flood. And, our spirit unruled shall fail. And, our city shall be taken. (Proverbs 16:32)

How did the Levites get to become the "firstborn ones?" Surely, it was not through compromise, the pleading of mercy and love! In response to the query, "Who is on Jehovah's side?" (Exodus 32:26) "Let him come unto me!" They were to slay every man, his companion and his brother and his neighbor because of their "sin against God!" in the brotherhood of the congregation. "And there fell that day 3,000 men." Moses responded afterward, "Consecrate yourselves unto Jehovah." Every man! His son and his brother! For the blessed approval of God! (Exodus 32:27-29) This is how they became the Levites and the Priests! - the Church -- the Little Flock and the Great Company. They "loved righteousness and hated iniquity." (Hebrews 1:9) And, in the final hour of Moses, at 120 years, a type of the end-time now of the gospel Church, we believe, "Moses, the servant of God," whom He (God) loved! gave the commendation to the Levites, "For they observed God's Word and Covenant (Law)" and purged the sin from the congregation (brotherhood) without regard to "mother, children or neighbors." And, for this reason he, (i.e., the 144,000, the Little Flock) would "teach Israel (and the world God's New Law Covenant)." (Deuteronomy 33:9-11) Moses loved the Levites and God loved them for they faithfully performed his commands. (Revelation 3:7,8,10)

#### PERILOUS TIMES IN THE CHURCH

This, in a sense, is an "hour of trial" upon the church. These are the issues of life and death as [Page 7] Jehovah God set before Israel. "I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore choose life that both you and your seed might live!" (Deuteronomy 30:19) And of faithfulness and carelessness. Of ripe and unripe wheat. And of a cutting off or a perishing. (Revelation 2:10; 7:9-17; 2Thessalonians 2:10-12) We are approaching the final end "telos" of this age when these things shall be completely squared away. "Seeing, therefore, that all these things shall be dissolved (now very near), what manner of persons ought you to be in all holy conduct (behavior)." Conversation is an old English word that has been used many times in the King James version and has beclouded the true meaning in the understanding - Christian conduct. "What manner of persons ought you to be in all holy conduct." The systems are now being raised up like a millstone to come crashing down into the sea of anarchy (Revelation 18:21; Daniel 2:44) in the great Armageddon earthquake of inauguration of the Kingdom. (Hebrews 12:18-29 -- the Pastor's later view) (See Revelation 16:18-21)

2Timothy 3:1-13 is most very interesting as relates to our subject. It speaks of "perilous times [that] shall come." Generally, this text is applied to the world. But, specifically, we believe that it has special reference to the church in these last-days, and especially toward the end. We recommend the reading of the Zion's Watchtower Reprint article 1319 to 1321. It presents a fresh viewpoint of this matter and conditions within the church both with regard to doctrine, morality and opposition to the true brethren in general. Such are spoken of as covetous, unkind or unholy without control of themselves. With or having restraint of God's Word in their lives. Not of the same mind as was their forefathers in the truth, i.e. in all of its respects. Lovers of pleasure or of their own will and desires rather than of God's will or His pleasure. Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof as demonstrated in their lives and Christian conduct. From such turn away. The Pastor explains further that rather than having a zeal for the truth, their influence would be exercised after the manner of a vile class. Those who creep into houses and lead captive silly women laden with sins who are disposed in the same direction. These are also led away by various inordinate desires which may or may not be the immoral character of those teachers. And, like Janes and Jambres withstood Moses, these resist the [Page 8] truth and those who would uphold it. St Paul here calls them men of corrupt minds -- morally and doctrinally. Reprobate as concerning the faith (God's Word and righteous standards as they should have understood it). (2 John 1:11)

The advice of the Apostles concerning immoral standards in the early church is equally true now. In the beginning of the early church and particularly among the gentiles, there existed a condition of unrighteousness or **lawlessness**. Without regard for God's law. (1Timothy 1:7-10; Romans 13:8-10) It was therefore necessary for the Apostles, in view of those very bad circumstances to deal with the area of moral turpitude or corruption. (Ephesians 5:8-13; 2Peter 2:14-22 and Jude 1:1-25) As you read the accounts in your *Christian Greek Scriptures*, it becomes obvious that they are not referring to spiritual fornication as often there is the tendency to spiritualize. This we have heard from the platforms.

We are **now** living in the very end of the age. These are **perilous times** as far as the church is concerned. It is necessary once again to state these things so that we might be able to "fight the good fight of faith and lay hold on eternal life." We want to be very sure that our works are on the proper foundation. "Be clean that bear the vessels (the Word and truths) of Jehovah." (Isaiah 52:11) It is His Word and we should have proper respect as to the one we are serving and to that committed to us so that our lives would be in perfect accord therewith. Touch **no unclean thing**. If it be the "chewing of the cud" in masticating doctrinal error or "the dividing of the hoof" of the Christian walk or character by corrupt conduct. (Deuteronomy 14:2-20)

## THE BROTHERHOOD AND OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO GOD

As a child of God begotten "by the Word of truth," we cannot support these things; nor do we support those who would so do in providing excuses for aberrant Christian behavior in the church among which these things may have been committed. As teachers of God's Word all have [Page 9] access to that same Word -- every one of us. It is our responsibility to God as teachers, without regard to the "fear of man," or of respect of persons to see to it that proper instruction is given to the brotherhood with such positiveness and clarity so that the Christian life and doctrine would reflect that Word so that we would "sin not." (1John 2:1)

All of Israel was figurative of the brotherhood. That was God's picture that He gave. They were all brothers - brethren. If any would publicly sin, it was the clear-cut responsibility of the brotherhood to point it out. And have it purged, that others would **not be corrupted by the same sin**. (Deuteronomy 13:8-11; 17:2-7) For us to sit back and say, "I **will not judge** that brother." I have such **great love and mercy** therefore, I will **not reveal** my brother's sin for it would be "wicked" or "evil speaking" to do so (it being of a *grievous nature - we speak about that which could bring eternal death) but will hide it! They think that it O.K. to do so.* 

#### THE HIDING OF SIN

The hiding of sin when it is known or when it is not known brings responsibility. "And if a soul sin and hear the voice of swearing, and is a "witness" whether he hath seen or known of it, if he do not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity. Or if a soul touch an unclean thing...if it be hidden from him: he also shall be unclean, and guilty. Or if he touch the uncleanness of a man...that man shall be defiled withal, and if it be hid from him; when he knoweth it he shall be guilty. Or if a soul swear with his lips.,. to do good or evil, with an oath, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth it he shall be guilty in one of these. And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing." Leviticus 5:2-6

In conjunction with the sin of Achan, Joshua said, "Give, I pray the glory to the LORD (Jehovah) God of Israel, and make confession unto him and tell me what thou hast done; hide it not from me. And Achan answered Joshua and said, Indeed I have sinned against the LORD (Jehovah) God of Israel." Those things which he had done were under penalty by God. It was a [Page 10] sin against God! "And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them (including his family) with stones." (Joshua 7:19-25) Stoning represents death and figuratively pictures disfellowship in the Christian age.

"Woe unto them that seek deep **to hide** their counsel from the LORD (Jehovah), and **their works** are in the dark, and they say Who seeth us? and Who knoweth us?" (Isaiah 29:15) The Lord God both sees and knows that which is hidden *from his people* by some so as *to continue in a corrupted service* or to do their own will and would say, "I will not reveal my sin." And, the sin being of a grievous nature, bears personal responsibility and so do they who would lend support to such an one. The world also sees and takes note.

Under the guise of the Scripture "Love covers a multitude of sins" (James 5:20) That Scripture speaks of the "conversion" of the sinner from his "error of his ways." The "multitude of sins" is a line of practiced sins. It must be remembered that when a "grievous sin" has been introduced, it brings a blot against the brotherhood, the church but especially, as in these many illustrations, it is a direct affront and sin against God by a consecrated child of God and not one who had sinned prior to his dedication to do the will of God!

Such action of being non-judgmental would make a mockery of God's Word and renders it powerless. And, it would be occasion to further encourage that sin among others. This, God tells us, we are not to do! as was the example in God's ancient people Israel under the Law God gave to Moses. "Do you not know that a little leaven (of sin of incest or fornication or other grievous sin) leaveneth the whole lump (or congregation)? Purge therefore, the old (corrupting) leaven, that you might be a new (holy, free from sin) lump. 1Corinthians 5:5-8, 13.

#### PUT AWAY THAT WICKED PERSON FROM YOU

"Therefore, put away from yourselves that wicked person (he who practiced in the past) from you!" In 1Corinthians 5:2, it clearly states "that he that hath done this deed might be taken [Page 11] away from you. It clearly shows that he was not carrying on his deed at that present time but had ceased when the Apostle Paul was writing to the Corinthians, lest there be any mistake about the matter. Just because one may say "I am repentant" and that "I am sorry" or I have sorrow does not mean that they are truly sorry and having "godly sorrow." True repentance can only be shown by time. There is no real justification to characterize one as "wicked" because they would cast out in disfellowship a professedly "repentant" who had committed a "grievous" and "practiced" sin which is such an affront to God that in the Israeli brotherhood, they were cut off by "stoning to death." God's Law shows His mind. And, seeing His mind, we should soberly submit to what His Word and will directs pertaining to corrupt conduct and congregational responsibility. Our understanding comes not alone from the Christian Greek Scriptures - but "every word from God's mouth" from which we both conduct our life and "live by." (Deuteronomy 8:3; Matthew 4:4)

As mentioned, we do not have to guess as to the course of action that we should take. If we are acquainted with the **whole** Word and are "Bible" students, as we have said, God's mind is therein clearly revealed and we need not rely upon the "traditions of the elders," of mighty, powerful Ecclesias or great organizations. The Word of God is **powerful!** And, we as teachers in the church, are responsible to **HIM!** as to what we teach others and will have to render to Him an account! (Hebrews 13:17)

#### REGARDING DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

On Divorce and Remarriage. We see the example of unfaithfulness in the world as mentioned in the beginning. Sometimes the brethren allow their standards to become ours. This is a great mistake! For example: A sister leaves her husband, elder, to live with another man. She comes back to him. Leaves him again to marry another man. She is taken into *the father's house contrary to the Lord's Word!* The father does not renounce his Eldership. Teachers are an example to the flock, not to keep company, nor to eat with such. (1Corinthians 5:11; I Kings [Page 12] 13:7-26) We cannot do **things our** own way. We are to keep **His** (Christ's and God's) commandments. To live for Christ is a different thing. Christ is our life! (1Corinthians 5:10)

We are in the world; but not of it! Therefore, you cannot avoid keeping company with some of these people who are not doing the right Christ directed things in our day to day contacts. In our day, another example: An elder divorces, improperly, his wife and marries another. He *insists on keeping his eldership*. Another leaves one wife and marries another because of *incompatibility*. Not only is this wrong, but be not deceived; **bad associations corrupt good morals.** (1Corinthians 15:33) This is true, if not in ourselves, in the eyes of others.

"Awake to *righteousness* and sin not!" (1Corinthians 15:34) What happens before our consecration is one thing and what happens afterward is another. Poor fallen man! Better it would be for him if he would give heed to the advice of him who would be the "wonderful councilor," Christ our Lord. The commandment of our Father's righteous law is, "You shall not commit adultery." (Exodus 20:14) But, Jesus in Matthew 5:27,28 relates this to unbridled lust or desire toward another which goes *one step beyond coveting*. Coveting, another helpful commandment. (Exodus 20:17) The *one thing leads to the other*. Another example along this line might be: a deacon in the church, while on a business trip many miles away from his wife, severally visits a nudi-bar (topless or bottomless) and this leads to unfaithfulness. **Proper judgment** is necessary. If "grievous sin" is involved, that individual *must be cast out from the brotherhood*. It is the seed thought, when nourished, that is harmful. "When lust has conceived, it **bringeth forth sin:** and sin when it is finished (*practiced sin*) *bringeth forth* (*second*) *death*." (James 1:15)

The "deceitfulness of sin" is a progressive thing. "The heart is deceitful above all things and is desperately wicked. Who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9) However, in the days of Israel, divorce could be obtained for any reason. (Matthew 5:31; Deuteronomy 24:1-4) However, the first husband could not take her back; for she was defiled by the second husband. Jesus said, [Page 13] "Who ever shall put away his wife, except for the cause of fornication, causes her to commit adultery." (A woman was not able, until recent times, to change her status independently) But, this is the part that interests us: "And whoever marries her that is divorced commits adultery." (Matthew 5:32)

#### WHAT GOD HAS JOINED TOGETHER

Why is it necessary to make the change from God's righteous law given to Moses, which apparently some feel is still good? Jesus answers the very question asked by the Pharisees, and said, "Moses out of the hardness of your hearts (this was their willful desire allowed) permitted you to put away your wives." He then explained God's true arrangement: "But in the beginning, it was not so. At the beginning, he made them male and female." And said," For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife. And, they shall be one flesh. Wherefore they are no longer two, but one flesh." He concluded by saying, "What God has joined together, Let no man put asunder." (Matthew 19:3-9; Luke 16:18; Mark 10:19)

We are told here, that whoever puts away his wife, except for fornication and remarries, commits adultery. Jesus very own **commandment**. Whoever loves me will keep my commands. He further says whoever marries a wrongfully divorced person, except for the fornication or adultery basis, does him or herself commit adultery. We need not use the term fornication as a play on words. Adultery is unequivocally defined in the law and Word of God. Such reasoning by some becomes an excuse for our sin.

The sexual appetite both has been and is one of the determining factors of life and death. More important is **obedience to God!** "and holiness **without which no man shall see the Lord!"** (Hebrews 12:14) We have not followed "cunningly devised fables" nor our own imaginations. We are given specific instructions. St Paul, one of the twelve and only inspired Apostolic teachers of the head of which there were only twelve and not multiple successors. These were the writers of the *Christian Greek Scriptures*. There were no other writers.

## [Page 14] REGARDING MARRIAGE AND PREMARITAL SEX

"Marriage is honorable in all and the bed undefiled (unfaithfulness on the part of either spouse) but whoremongers and adulterers, God will judge." (Hebrews 13:4) He also makes it clear, contrary to the lie of Mormon Joseph Smith, that man is to be "the husband of one wife." (1Timothy 3:2, 12: Titus 1:6; I Corinthians 7:1,2) This is God's appointed teacher, St Paul! Proper marital relationships are described in great detail in *Studies in the Scriptures, The New Creation, Vol. VI* 

In 1Corinthians, the entire seventh chapter is devoted to advice from the holy Spirit on the subject of marriage. He deals with the married, the unmarried, widows, the believing and unbelieving spouses and virgins. The marriage is binding as long as the husband lives. And, **only when he is dead is she free to marry another!** To their sorrow, some have ignored the advice that he adds, "only in the Lord!" I Corinthians 7:39

Also, at this point we would like to say, the "Vow unto the Lord" presented in the Manna Book by Pastor Russell, strictly observed, would be very helpful in this "evil day." The Vow is not being kept. Some believe themselves to be above it.

We have at this stage seen the propriety of remarriage. Jesus statement was that the only allowable reason for remarriage is fornication – being the basis of adultery. We have seen that this condition of doing things contrary to our Lord's declarations with respect to the marital state, is more predominant in the world than ever before and is condoned by Hollywood and the media. This is particularly true with "Babylon, the Great," the Antichrist system, where there is a lot said concerning fornication along symbolical lines (Revelation 17:2,5: 18:3,9 etc.). But he way of life both among the clergy and the parishioners as therein described and becomes an adequate description of identity for the one searching to define that system of iniquity – much like that of ashes on the forehead.

[Page 15] should not take place between the family member and the father, the father's wife (1 Corinthians 5:1), brother, sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, or sister-in-law, etc. because it is "confusion." Clearly, it was not a part of the divine arrangement as Jesus states, and would be an abomination from His standpoint. (Leviticus 20:7-26) (See the Books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy with various references.) There is a similarity to the confusion of the woman and the beast in Revelation 17:5, the fornication there and the abominations in the earth.

St Paul mentions *separation* in lieu of divorce. And, reconciliation if the wife remained unmarried. The *other allowable basis was mentioned last, which is the death of the spouse*. Any other attempt of remarriage without this basis **is pure and simple adultery**. We regret to say that this has been practiced by some of those who name the name of Christ, for some time. And, it is without recrimination by Bible students. This practice has included **willing participation of Elders and Deacons and others** of the congregation in violation of these dictates. Some would say, "We do not feel that we would deserve disfellowship for our actions." *It is just as wicked an action as that of the cast out* brother in 1Corinthians 5.

#### DISFELLOWSHIP NECESSARY REPENTANCE SHOWN ONLY BY TIME

Now, let us give another example: A brother who is divorced from his wife is told by an Elder, after taking a slap on the wrist, "He could marry again. For it is better to marry, than to burn. No one should have to remain without a wife" and 1Corinthians 7:9 is cited. This is the world's wisdom. It is foolishness and dangerous. The divorced brother **may not marry another ever as long as he or she lives**, except on the two conditions above mentioned -- adultery or death of the spouse. Another example: and Elder has an affair with a woman and returns to his wife and then has an affair with another woman. He was *not disfellowshipped*. He is *simply forgiven and welcomed back* to the studies *because he said he was "repentant" and "sorry for his sin."* 

[Page 16] There are those Ecclesias great and small who **condone** receiving into their fellowship, those who have committed "**grievous sins,**" *refusing* to cast them out from among them. They want to extend *mercy and love* to these without doing it in the prescribed way

delineated by God's word. Such would be *more loving and merciful than God or His Word would allow*. Their actions cannot be justified. But, it follows, *they stand judged of God in the matter*.

Repentance can only be shown by time. What responsibility do we or the Ecclesias have for those things which have occurred *in the past?* It became common knowledge that this particular situation referenced before in 1Corinthians had been uncorrected by the Corinthian congregation. And, they continued accepting his fellowship in their presence even though he had done this vile thing *some time before*. The matter must be dealt with. Any sin against the church and against God is of a serious or grievous nature and cannot be let go by a slap on the wrist and such pleas. We emphasize again: a sin against God must not be confused with a sin against a man or "your brother" (of Matthew 18). This is a blatant cop-out that many use to excuse their lack of judgment of "grievous sin." "If one man sin against another (man), the judge shall not judge him (the matter can be corrected): but if a man sin against the LORD (Jehovah) who shall entreat for Him?" (1Samuel 2:25) God is a "consuming fire" He is "the judge of all." It is "a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

Gross or "grievous sin" requires, yea, demands judgment by the Church of God and the only corrective action is clearly outlined in His Word. There is no other alternative! *Having been removed from the fellowship* and by prayer and application to the "blood of Christ," *the restoring processes will have begun*. The progress of repentance would have been demonstrated in the time elapsed. And not too long, *lest he be discouraged* and by the influence of the Adversary threaten his life. Only then would he be welcomed back to the brotherhood. But even here his actions *after having returned to the Ecclesia must be proved*. (See *Zion's Watchtower Reprint* page 1699 referring to this case.)

[Page 17] the matter of grievous sin. They think it would be the *end of the world and every opportunity* that they could ever have of service. That is a deception! The **object is true repentance**. A true correction of the evil condition. David, the King, was *very submissive to God and freely accepted his punishment* even though it meant the loss of his son. He was cast out of the congregation of Israel by his son Absolom for about a half-year and stayed with the Philistines. Shimei came to him, persecuted him, cursed him, cast dust upon him, and threw stones at him. David, then, commanded Abiashai his chief servant in charge to let him go, as it *was punishment from the LORD (Jehovah)*. He accepted disfellowship, proved his repentance and demonstrated true sorrow. That wonderful **Davidic sorrow** was evident in his Psalms. (2Samuel 16:5-13) David pleased God and that is why God loved him so much and called him by name, "the Beloved after His heart!

With "grievous sin," a blot against the name of God and a stain against the Christian Church has been publicly committed. And, if not dealt with by the Ecclesia, it may have to be dealt with individually.

#### HOMOSEXUALITY AS IN THE DAYS OF SODOM

"As it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed." Luke 17:28-30

On Homosexuality, Lesbianism, and cross-dressing. First, we will mention this Scripture on "cross-dressing," which along with "make-up" is a practice of Homosexuals sometimes called "drag-queens." It is an abomination for the following reason that one plays the interpretive part of either a man or a woman **as though it were really so. That is the abomination**. In today's world even though, they do not prefer the denomination of one being called the *husband* and the other the *wife* of *same sex* associations and prefer being called the *husband* for same sex [Page 18] Homosexual males or the wife for same sex Lesbians, in reality the *former* is true. Hence the relationship to *cross-dressing*. It is a **changing of the form** in which God created man. You don't even altar by *cloning* either man or animals, "for God created them and man would be changing the *very design of God!* Hear the Lord speaking through Moses, "The woman shall not wear (cross-dress in) that which pertains unto a man, *neither shall a man put on (cross-dress with) a woman's (clothes) garment:* For *all that do so are an ABOMINATION unto Jehovah thy God!* (Deuteronomy 22:5)

Homosexuality in relevance to fornication and adultery *as regards a previous or currant married state* or whether practiced before and/or after divorce or *during separation*. In such case there would be **double condemnation!** 

Homosexuality in the eyes of God is a most abominable sin. It is very much akin to beastiality in that in both cases the act performed is not natural relative to the manner of creation and relationship as both Jesus words and God's Moral Law indicate. One practicing Homosexuality should be cast out by the Church. And, if later claiming reform but yet would continue to live together would indicate that there is something lacking. Further, it would show that they would be placing themselves in very grave danger for temptation from the Adversary. Judas, who had a problem with money, *should never have taken the treasury charge*.

It does not take a great deal of intelligence to realize that Homosexuality is a *corruption* of the human body **from the image in which God made it.** All attempts to justify the act are set forth as a means to condone the evil of their lust for one another. This God cannot stand for! And, we present the following:

#### "HOMOSEXUALITY IS ABSOLUTELY FORBIDDEN, FOR IT IS AN ENORMOUS SIN." Leviticus 18:22 (The Living Bible)

First, hear the Word of the Lord on the subject of **Homosexuality.** "Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind; it is abomination! These things the heathen (Canaanites - a type [Page 19] of wickedness and gross iniquity) do; and because they do them, I am going to cast them out of the Land (of Canaan - prefiguring second death). For whosoever shall commit

any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them, shall be cut off from among their people (i.e. they shall die, they shall not be among those who will inherit the land of Canaan, either in heaven or in earth)." It is practiced sin. (Leviticus 18:22-30 -- KJV and Living Bible) "The penalty for Homosexuality is death to both parties." (Leviticus 20:13 -- The Living Bible) "There shall be no sodomitess (KJV, Margin) (Lesbian) of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite (a Homosexual) of the sons of Israel." (Deuteronomy 23:17) Listen to what is being said! There shall be NO Lesbian and NO Homosexual among those who are called Israel -- meaning, the people of God! He already said, He (God) will destroy from the face of the earth, that soul who is in covenant relationship either now or in the Kingdom age. "And, there was Homosexuality throughout the Land; and they did according to the abominations of the nations which the LORD cast out (of the land of Canaan) before the children of Israel. (1Kings 14:24) (Living Bible). He is telling us here that in the days of Rehoboam, there was much evil in Judah.

The evil of fornication and adultery was committed in the groves on the hills -- places of enticement -- highly exalted and made to be seen in the plain view of all the people of Judah. Shameless committing of sin in public view! But, in addition to that, there was the greater abomination of Homosexuality. On the scene, shortly after this came good King Asa, who "did that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah, as did David his father." (1Kings 15:11) "He took the sodomites (Homosexuals) out of the Land (of Canaan)." (1Kings 15:12) Apart from certain wrong acts of King Jehoshaphat of Judah, he was repentant and, we are told, that "The remnant of the sodomites (Homosexuals), which remained in the days of his father Asa, he took out of the land (of Canaan which was Israel's inheritance). (1Kings 22:46) Finally, The wonderful Judean King Josiah, who pleased God, after putting down the priests of Baal and destroying the high places of fornication and their vessels, he put the ashes upon the graves of the children of [Page 20] Israel who had both supported and committed these things. (2Kings 23:6) It prefigured the ashes of eternal destruction. (See Malachi 4:3) After all this, King Josiah "Brake down the houses of the Sodomites (Homosexuals), that were by the house of Jehovah." (2Kings 23:7)

From the *Christian Greek Scriptures*, we further quote, Having turned them over to a reprobate mind (a mind devoid of God), "Their (Lesbian) women turned against God's *natural plan* and indulged in (Lesbian) sex sin with each other (same sex). And (Homosexual) men, instead of *having normal* sex relationship with *women, burned with their (Homosexual)* lust for each other, men (of same sex) doing shameful (Homosexual acts) with MEN!. (And now, they clamor for "same sex" marriage, *advocated by the media and ACLU) Getting PAID within their own souls with THE PENALTY they so richly deserved!" (Romans 1:24-28, The Living Bible) Some think the penalty (AIDS) is quite clear in our day. However, the act continues. It is very clear: There shall be no Sodomite (Homosexual) in either the heavenly or earthly Canaan. (Hebrews 3:7-4:11) "He sware in His wrath, They shall not enter into my rest!" The "rest" of the Israel of God. The "rest of Canaan" of heaven or earth -- for "In that day, there shall be no more the Canaanite (of Sin) in the house of Jehovah of hosts." (Zechariah 14:21)* 

Because of the reasons stated in the beginning, we can readily see that the Lord's professed people are not an exception in regard to the state of affairs in the world today, however few. These things must be thoroughly stamped out. A mother or father may not have inordinate sympathies for their son or daughter. How can they "be holy" because of us except they first be

castigated. And, if they have named the name of the Lord, should be put out of the fellowship for a time until full repentance and sorrow be proven. "Therefore *put away from yourselves that wicked person.*" (1Corinthians 5:13) Our emotions for our own flesh and blood must not be permitted to get in the way by defending "the wicked" who have committed this or any other grievous sin. For, like the Levites of old, we are judged worthy **only** if we carry out God's commands! If we let ourselves, we are very much affected by our environment. The baser [Page 21] elements can rise. And, the old man or the flesh can come to life again.

Now we present the case of a very prominent Overseer and *Minister of the Divine Word*, a professed Christian brother, who recently died. He wrote a "booklet" on "*Homosexuality*." It was a most disgusting work for one whoever named the name of Christ. He considered himself a *Pastor to the Homosexual or Gay community* in San Francisco. He believed in the propriety of such marriage between homosexuals and of Gay rights (?) "lifestyles" as is shoved in our faces by marches and demonstrations today (1997). This reminds us of the Scripture in Isaiah, "The show of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not (Here is sin not hidden - blatant sin - as demonstrated by the Homosexuals of today!) Woe unto their soul! For they have rewarded evil unto themselves!" (Isaiah 3:9) Under the guise of "liberty and justice for all" such marriages and rights are being demanded today with protection of the Constitution of the Unites States. In an abominable statement recently made (February, 1997 -- Tennessee) "Next year in Sodom!" (Their claim is that the Sodomites were condemned just because they were not hospitable) That is a takeoff of the phrase, "Next year in Jerusalem." Millions have been afflicted by AIDS and hundreds of thousands of gays have died as a result. That is a fact!

It should be perfectly clear, that God hated the sin of Sodomy (which Sodomy Laws are being erased from the law books in this land), so much that He that he buried the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah under the dead sea! Sodom was buried under the dead sea (like unto Gehenna) which represented second death - nothing could live in its waters. We also have the example in Judges 19:22-20:7. The Sodomites or **Homosexuals** of Gibeah had committed an evil thing of Sodomy. The children of Benjamin, who were sharpshooters with the bow, defended them. Israel lost 40,000. (Judges 20:21, 25) Benjamin -- whose name's first meaning was "Benoni" -- son of my right hand (and were sharpshooters, very skilled) and were later a faithful tribe alongside Judah. The name was changed to Benjamin - "son of my sorrow." We can see the appropriateness, at least in this case, in view of the shame that was brought to God in upholding [Page 22] (supporting) Homosexuality for they were nearly wiped out. But God gave the faithful of Israel the victory on the third day! That third day would have to do with the kingdom age and particularly the final test of mankind concluded - victory over sin, pictured by the defeat of the Canaanites of Gibeah and their sympathizers (Benjamin), by the overcoming warriors of Israel, representing those who will then become God's people. Gibeah was completely (burned by fire and) destroyed.

The individual mentioned was never disfellowshipped by his fellow Christian brethren and his writings remain publicly uncondemned today with no general effort or resolution of repudiation (with the exception of one lonely voice) and which work is circulated out in the world from one claiming to be a brother in Christ and who advocated such a course. That Homosexual supportive book has **never** been condemned. This is an evil thing in the midst of the

congregation. For such an one being used as an Elder or a speaker would be an affront to God Himself. It is vile and is one of the most detestable things. Whatever our affliction in life (genetic disorder or birth defect causing this aberrant behavior is not an excuse!) We will want to "live for God and for Christ" and to "keep his commands."

#### **BI-SEXUAL HOMOSEXUALS**

Others, less desiring to "come out of the closet," take the appellation of "Bi-sexual," i.e., Homosexual and heterosexual. One, who claimed to be a brother suddenly appeared from another organization, on the scene in the midwest and defended his "right"(?) to Bisexuality and to falsely and shamefully accuses our beloved Pastor Russell as being a "dandy in the closet." May God correct his evil course and clean out his foul mouth, which was an unwitting tool of the adversary. We believe that the practice of this sin of Homosexuality would lead to the second death. (1John 5:16-18) Further, we do not feel that it would be proper to lend support to such a [Page 23] "grievous sinner" in his life or at his death by our presence. (Leviticus 21:11; Numbers 9:6; esp. 19:13, 19:16,11) Why? Because "death" represented the defiled or corrupted state in God's eyes. To in any way endorse one whose sin is grievous or is gross wickedness and that person is unrepentant, would be indicative of supporting one who practiced sin leading to second "death." You may not advocate in any way the defiled or you would be considered as unclean -- contaminated, and thereby justifying the wrongdoer by your influence.

#### REGARDING SEXUAL ABUSE, FORNICATION

Child molestation and sexual abuse, next of kin. (Leviticus 20:10-23) Another example: One who named the name of Christ in a nearby country had sexually abused a granddaughter. His name had even appeared on the front page of the local paper. He was arrested and put in prison. The daughter, not in the truth, was left furious. Brethren *would not believe* that he could do this. He gave up Eldership and *they forgave him and felt that no further action was necessary*. According to God's law, **he would have been stoned**. It is very definitely stated so. He sinned against God and the church, blacking God's name publicly by his actions. But they would not cast him out in disfellowship to at least show public disfavor toward the individual for his sin until full reformation and sorrow. (2Corinthians 7:8-11)

If one, who is an adult and a Christian, who commits fornication or other sex acts with an underage child, the Laws of this land **would put him in prison** for many years. That same person who has shamed both God and the Church should be judged by the Church worthy of disfellowship and *should cast him out from their midst until such time as reform has taken place!* There is no credit to us if we say we have repented and are **defended** *without ever having been cast out*. And, are regarded as one *more holy* than another -- just because we are still coming to Church. Such reasonings are corrupted! The same situation would apply to adult sexual abuse. "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" (Romans 6:1) By no means! (See also Malachi 2:17)

[Page 24] The matter of fornication was somewhat dealt with in 1Corinthians 5. Some who name the name of Christ, have permissively dealt with the situation of an unmarried state between two parties. This is not God's way. Living together with someone outside of the bond of

marriage is not God's way! Neither is premarital sex. Marriage is honorable and the bed undefiled.

There is the case of one being involved with a number of others in fornication that under the law God would have commanded stoning to death. The situation had not been dealt with in the proper way. **Shame** had been brought upon God and the church *such as was never heard of before now*. And, of fornication, the Apostle says, "**Let it not be named once among you.**" (Ephesians 5:3,5) It applies to fornication, covetousness, uncleanness and other "grievous sins."

#### PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD

We would rather not have to speak of these things. We hope with what has been said to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance. As we said in the beginning. to "put on the whole armor of God" and especially the "breastplate of righteousness," that ye may be able to stand in this evil day and not fall. For, "A thousand shall fall at thy side (side by side) and ten thousand at thy right hand (a larger number at a distance, yet in the right hand of [God's] favor.)" (Psalm 91:7,2,14) But, it shall **not** come near the one who loves his Father because he trusts in Him and he *loves those commandments that He gave to him*. Also, we are to respect our parents if God would have respect to us. (Ephesians 6:2,3) Thus, "we are not ignorant of his (the Great Adversary's) devices" (2Corinthians 2:11), "for we wrestle...against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits (KJV margin) of 'the evil one' (Diaglott) on high," also. (Ephesians 6:11-18)

In the Book of Revelation, in the midst of the plagues, just before the seventh, we read, "Blessed is he that that watcheth and keepth his garments lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." (Revelation 16:15) This parallels the cut-off time between the Little Flock and the Great Company. That plague time, in the winding up of this world's affairs, is very near. This will [Page 25] mean that the call of the primary church, the "Little Flock," has come to an end and that the door is shut. There will be no further opportunity to do anything for the "dark night" will have set in. It will then be necessary for "the foolish virgins," called "the great multitude," to go out to the market place of the "time of tribulation" and there to "wash their (stained) garments in the blood of the Lamb" and to buy oil -- thus getting the holy Spirit within them that may not have been had sufficiently by some in the past. St John the Revelator reports, in this reference in the book of Revelation: "He that is righteous, let him be righteous still. And, he that is filthy, let him be filthy still. And, he that is holy, let him be holy still." (Revelation 22:10-14) In the Sinatic translation, it says that God rewards the church, each according to what his work is. And, that the Great Company must experience the severe discipline of the tribulation if they would save their souls (beings) alive and to stand as overcomers in their own righteousness shown by the white robes worn in the presence of God. They will, by those experiences, have proven their love for righteousness and their disdain for any form of iniquity.

"Blessed are they who do his commandments." It is well to learn this lesson **early** in the Christian life. And, that principle shall always apply to all of God's creation. May God help us to be truly soldiers of the Lord, fighting as did Joshua (representing Christ) and Israel against these (sinful) Canaanites of sin that are within and around about us. That we might be led by him. That he might bring us forth across the Jordan, dryshod -- unhurt of the second death into the heavenly

Canaan, following him. Christ is our leader. Christ is our captain (Jehoshua - Jesus - savior) and he will bring us to that salvation if we will let him! May God help us along this line that we might be faithful and get that highest reward for which we seek. Amen. \

From a discourse Sunday, March 4, 1990 at Rockland Bible Students Convention, Overlook Lodge, Bear Mountain State Park, New York.

mailto:zions.tower.ofthemorning@juno.com Web: <a href="http://www.zionstower.com/">http://www.zionstower.com/</a> Additional notes were added in March of 1997,

Br. Charles Thornton

## **Stand Up For Jesus!**

Stand up! stand up for Jesus!
Ye soldiers of the cross;
Lift high his Royal Banner,
It must not suffer loss!
From victory unto victory
His army he shall lead,
Until every foe is vanquished,
And Christ is Lord indeed!

Stand up! Stand up for Jesus!
Stand in his strength alone!

The arm of flesh will fail you,
Ye dare not trust your own!
Put on the Gospel armor,
And watching unto prayer,
Where duty calls or danger,
Be never wanting there!

Stand up! stand up for Jesus!
The strife will not be long!
This day the noise of battle,
The next, the victor's song!
To him that overcometh.
A crown of life shall be!
He with the King of Glory,
Shall reign eternally!

Poems and Hymns of Millennial Dawn

**IMPORTANT:** Note of explanation. Since this study is **not** in its original booklet form, it was necessary **to adjust the pages** so that they would **somewhat match up** with the "page and paragraph" listings. In order to do that so that the INDEXES would **still retain utility**, it became necessary to put the page numbers of the original booklet *as close as possible* **in proximity.** The **original page numbers** are shown in **bracketed** bold face. Example: [Page ii], [Page 19].

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#### SCRIPTURAL STANDARDS FOR CHRISTIANS

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Note: "\*"Indicates that Scripture may be added supportive of text.

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