

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

SAYING “OH, MY GOD”

By Robert Turner

Hardly a day goes by that we do not hear somebody exclaim, “Oh, my God!” Whether at work or school, the bank, supermarket, or even the church parking lot, this expression is heard again and again. Television, no doubt, is the chief offender, with nearly every game show, soap opera, situation comedy, prime time drama and movie featuring the phrase. There is even an art in saying “Oh, my God!” just right. The trick seems to be to say it, not loud or quick, but to draw it out and let the “God” trail off. This is a sure fire device, guaranteed to get a laugh and spice up one’s dialogue.

“Oh, my God!” has become a faddish and clever saying. It is used to register alarm, surprise, delight, dismay, sarcasm, and almost every kind of response. Some people, indulging us, find the phrase offensive. And some, we are sure, cannot imagine why. Why does it grate so upon our ears?

It will profit us to consider the faith and devotion manifested by men and women from the long ago; several of these are singled out as examples for Christians today (Heb. 11). Their insistence of reverence and humility while addressing Deity stands in marked contrast to the casual and off-hand manner prevalent today. Abraham, for example, approached God with these words **“Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes”** (Gen. 18:27). Jacob marked each place that the Lord spoke to him with a stone or an altar, recognizing that even the plot of ground was sacred because the Lord had revealed Himself there (Gen. 28:17). It is impossible to imagine the patriarchs of old referring to God in a flippant or causal manner.

Although we are not under Mosaic Law today, we worship and serve the same God revealed to the Hebrew fathers. The Lawgiver of Israel, Moses, was instructed to take off his shoes in the presence of God because, **“the place whereon thou standest is holy ground”** (Ex. 3:5). Moses was so overwhelmed by the knowledge that he stood before God that he **“hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God”** (verse 6). The posture of godly fear and awe was shown by Peter before Jesus (Luke 5:8) and John on Patmos (Rev. 1:17).

The first three of the Ten Commandments given to Israel concern the manner in which His people were to esteem Jehovah God. They were not to have any other gods before Him, were not to build an image or likeness of Deity to rival His own majesty, and **“Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain”** (Lev. 19:12). God’s people were taught that the name of the Lord God was holy, and not to be made common!

The Jews sought to protect and preserve the sacredness of God’s name. Indeed, in the centuries before the birth of Jesus they decided to stop pronouncing it altogether, lest its usage become common and ordinary. When the scriptures were read, the word Adonai (Lord) was substituted for the Hebrew YHWH (Yahweh or Jehovah). The Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek (280-130 BC) rendered the sacred name Kurio (lord). The original pronunciation of YHWH is unknown. While we lament this casualty of Jewish zealotness, we must admire the veneration God’s people held for even the name of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Ought Christians today, who are to **“serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear”** (Heb. 12:28), show less respect and regard for our heavenly Father?

“Oh, my God!” is unquestionably and unmistakably offensive. It is a trivial and vulgar use of His holy and reverent name **“Give to the Lord the glory due unto His name”** (Psa. 29:2). His name is far too holy to be invoked at the sight of a messy room or foolish behavior. **“O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His**

name together” (Psa. 34:3).

“Oh, my God!” goes beyond such ditties as “goodness!” or “gracious!” or “Gee!” and other euphemisms whose divine connection may not be realized until their obscure origin and etymology is looked up in a reference dictionary. “Oh, my God!” is not a euphemism at all! No effort is made to disguise the reference to God. If “Oh, my God!” is not a vain usage of God’s name, what in the world is? ■



Dissatisfied with God’s Word

By Joe R. Price

Not everyone is content to let God have the final word. Some believe God continues to reveal Himself to them through visions, dreams, feelings, experiences, voices, church councils, and the like. He does not (Heb. 1:1-2). Others claim they believe in the completeness of the word of God but then deny it by adding to or taking away from its teachings. Many people are dissatisfied with the completed word of God (Jude 3). This is evident by observing the epidemic proportion of religious division worldwide.

Here are some of the ways people show their dissatisfaction with the completed revelation of God’s word:

(1) Foolish and ignorant disputes (2 Tim. 2:23). This person is not satisfied with the Bible’s explanation of how things are and should be. He is convinced that spirituality is defined by seeking the unknown and unknowable. He does not know this shows a lack of faith in what God has revealed (Deut. 29:29). Refuse such questions, “knowing they generate strife.”

(2) Fables (1 Tim. 1:3-4; 4:7; 2 Tim. 4:4; 2 Pet. 1:16). A fable is a fiction, an invented story. Oh, how many fables have men believed in the name of religion? The New Testament exposes every spiritual invention of men for what they are – mere fables of men (Gal. 1:8-9; Col. 2:20-23).

(3) The commandments of men (Titus 1:4). Man’s authority in spiritual things must come from the word of God for it to be approved by heaven (Matt. 21:25). When men establish and impose religious commands on others, it is a clear sign they are neither satisfied with nor obedient to the commands of God (Matt. 15:1-9).

(4) Selfishness and pride (2 Cor. 2:17; 4:2). Some preach the gospel with a hidden agenda and evil motives (Phil. 1:15-17). These are not satisfied to be motivated to preach the gospel by a love for truth and the souls of men. Instead, the truth only satisfies this person when he can use it as a personal advantage.

(5) Spiritual immaturity (2 Pet. 3:15-18). This person may be convinced that his false doctrine is correct because he lacks the proper grounding in Bible knowledge. We must “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord,” or we will neither know nor be satisfied with what God’s word teaches.

(6) Satan’s deceptions (2 Cor. 11:13-15). Be assured that Satan wants you to be dissatisfied with the word God has spoken to you by His Son. Why? Because God’s word thoroughly equips you in the Son to be victorious over Satan, sin, and death (Eph. 6:10-18; 2 Cor. 2:11). Truth defeats the devil’s lies, and he hates it.

Do not be deceived by sin and error. The Bible is complete. God has spoken to you by His Son. Are you listening (Luke 8:8)? ■

Service Times — Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM — Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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