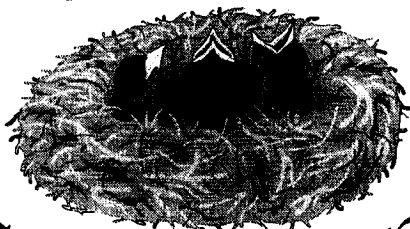
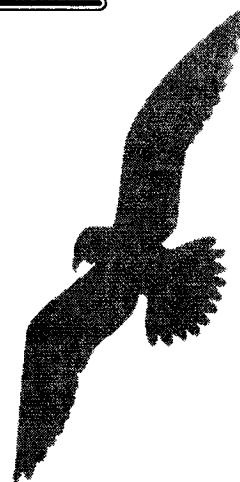


*"They shall
mount up...*

ON EAGLES' WINGS

*... with wings
as eagles."*

Isaiah 40:31



AERY NUGGETS

Our Father, we would worship
In Jesu's holy name;
For He, whate'er our changes,
Forever is the same:
Through Him our childlike praises
As incense Sweet will be;
The songs Thy Spirit raises
Can ne'er want melody.

Little Flock # 154

Lest we take any credit for the praise we offer to our Lord and His Father, these words of God should guard our thoughts, "I create the fruit of the lips" (Isa. 57:19). How pleasing it must be to the One above to hear our plea, "O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall show forth thy praise" (Ps. 51:15).

Of course, we should examine our motives that we are not just rendering lip service, as the people to whom the Lord Jesus had to say, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me" (Matt. 15:8). Solomon gives good counsel - "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few" (Eccl. 5:2).

I couldn't find the word **smile** in the Bible, but couldn't we imagine one on the person's lips who could say, "My mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips" (Ps. 63:5). Again, "My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee" (Ps. 71:23). It's hard to imagine a dour expression to be on your face if these verses reflected your feelings. Dwelling on this thought a little further, a true smile betokens friendliness, and is called for in Prov. 18:24 - "A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly." I'm reminded of the following poem by W.D. Nesbit.

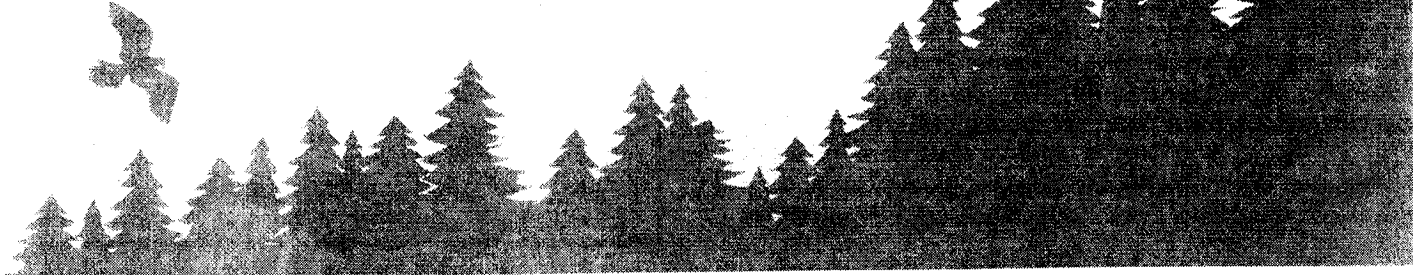
*The thing that goes the farthest,
Towards making life worth while,
That costs the least and does the most,
Is just a pleasant smile.*



Dear Lip Readers,

Have you ever heard the exhortation, "**Read My Lips**"? It isn't said so much for a person to learn what is being communicated, but to accept the veracity of the speaker. Our lips are a wonderful organ of the body, which can give expression by audible and inaudible means of the thoughts and intents of our minds and hearts, so let us consider some of these uses as referred to in the Scriptures.

Let us begin first and foremost with **praise** to God. David could say, "Because thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee" (Ps. 63:3). Heb. 13:15 instructs us, "By him (the Lord) therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name." In connection with the thought of praise corresponding to a sacrifice, the words, "So will we render the calves of our lips" (Hos. 14:2), equating it with an animal sacrifice.



Lips can also have an opposite expression, for have we not seen pouting lips displaying displeasure and even anger. Prophetically, it was said of those who would reject and crucify our Lord Jesus, "All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head" (Ps. 22:7). Doesn't this scorn and derision of our precious Savior pain your heart?

With "The lips of the righteous feed many . . . The lips of the wise disperse knowledge" (Prov. 10:21 & 15:7), our thoughts should be focused on the lowly Man of Galilee, of Whom it could be said, "Grace is poured into thy lips" (Ps. 45:2). As He taught, "All bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth" (Luke 4:22). What do our words manifest as we speak with one another, are they sharp and vindictive or gentle and loving? Paul exhorts us to, "Let your speech be always with grace . . . teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col. 4:6 & 3:16).

For our learning, God has given us a record of Moses' display of anger at the people's strife, "So that he spake unadvisedly with his lips" (Ps. 106:33). What a warning this should be for us to watch what we say! How good to cry out, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips" (Ps. 141:3).

Talkative people also come under the scrutiny of the scriptures, for we read, "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refrained his lips is wise" (Prov. 10:19), and, "Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding" (Prov. 17:28). Should the heart be full it will be hard to restrain ourselves, "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matt. 12:34), so may our prayer be, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer" (Ps. 19:14).

An irrefutable judgment was handed down many years ago, that the natural heart, with which we are all born with, "Is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9). These traits lead to a multitude of untruths being told and harmful deeds being perpetrated on unsuspecting victims. "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord: but they that deal truly are his delight" (Ps. 12:22). We believers have this exhortation, "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds" (Col. 3:9). "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor" (Eph. 4:25).

Coupled with deceit, is to be praised insincerely or flattered. How our ego is puffed up by such words and we have this warning, "He that goeth about as a tale bearer revealed secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips" (Prov. 20:19). The apostle Paul alerted the assembly at Rome to be watchful of those who might come in and, "By good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Rom. 16:18). Peter also gives us a word to take to heart when he says, "For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no

guile" (1 Peter 3:9).

Pride is an evil we are all afflicted with, and without realizing it we tend to tout the achievements to our credit without the display of humility. How hard it is to, "Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips" (Prov. 27:2). The book of Proverbs sure has a multitude of appropriate terse comments on wise living doesn't it?

The nation of Israel was very slow to pay attention to the words of the Lord, Who said, "I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them: yet they harkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but hardened their necks" (Jer. 7:25 & 26). Again we have the prediction, "For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people" (Isa. 28:11). So we see that God is not limited by the speaking capabilities of His servants, which should give us courage to speak out for Him when the opportunity presents itself.

A partial fulfillment is read of in Acts 2:4 that on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit descended, "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance". What grace a loving God in using every means to reach those who know Him not, "Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not" (1 Cor. 14:22).

One silent yet very expressive use of the lips is set before us in the following medical description. ***The juxtaposition of two orbicularis oris muscles in the state of contraction. A kiss!*** Its purpose is to show affection and agreement, but can be used to create a false impression, as many have found that, "The kisses of an enemy are deceitful" (Prov. 27:6). How sad are the words of Jesus, "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" (Luke 22:48).

Isn't it precious to dwell on the account of the woman, who was a sinner, standing at Jesus' feet weeping, "And began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment" (Luke 7:38). What affection! Without agreement, we wouldn't be able honestly to carry out the plea, "Salute one another with an holy kiss" (Rom. 16:16). Peter adds to this, "Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity" (1 Peter 5:14).

It is hoped that these rather brief meditations on the uses our lips will not only set cautions before us, and at the same time encourage each one to be articulate in various ways to benefit and bless the body of Christ, and whomever we can be a testimony before.

Read My Lips – I love You!

In the love of Christ, **Leslie L. Winters**

For address correction or free new name addition,

write to:

Leslie L. Winters

or

Christine Albury