

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
The Berean Christadelphians since 1923.

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God Willing, The Berean Christadelphian Ecclesial News will be published monthly as an avenue of providing information of Ecclesial interest to the Brotherhood. Ecclesial news and correspondence, Fraternal Gathering notices, special activities and upbuilding exhortations are encouraged. This is an effort to upbuild and prepare us in heart and mind for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Ecclesial News

LAMPASAS ECCLESIAL NEWS

Since our last news we have had the pleasure of accepting transfers from Sis. Sarah Brown of Hengoed and Bro. Jack Carroll of Houston as they have both recently made Lampasas their new home. We were also thrilled to have the successful questioning and baptism (March 13th) of our now **Bro. Nathan Edwards**, son of Bro. Chip and Sis. Joyce Edwards. His contact information is PO Box 296, Goldthwaite, TX, 76844, nathanedward98@gmail.com, 325-642-4827.

Our Sis. Ruthie Hall has had continued health issues causing her to have several visits to various hospitals in the area, as we write this news she is currently at the Cornerstone Hospital in Round Rock for extensive care and testing. Our continued prayers are surrounding her.

More upbeat news:

We were pleased to host a shower for Sis. Aldi and Bro. Aaron Meyers of Dallas ecclesia for their twins on March 20th and since then we were happy to meet the two little ones at our June Gathering.

Our Sis. Carol Smith hosted a Sunday School Seafood Feast for our scholars at her place May 14th. Seafood of all kinds with every compliment you can imagine as well as games for all ages provided by our Sunday School superintendent Bro. Jason Carroll and his wife, Sis. Michelle.

Last, but not least, our well-attended June Gathering, June 10-12 covered a theme of “TREES – throughout time in the Scriptures, a progression from the Garden of Eden through the Kingdom.” The topics ranged from the Tree of Knowledge, Noah’s Ark, Ark of the Covenant and Tabernacle of Acaia Wood, Tree of Life-the Kingdom, Signs of the Times with Temple of Cedar, Trees for Food and the Olive Tree.

Our prayers are constant for the continuing health, financial and spiritual issues facing our many brethren and sisters throughout the fellowship as we all reside in this ever-changing world. These trials are to strengthen us in our Zionward walk together; let us encourage one another. Recording Bro. Jerry Connolly

We accept ecclesial news from Berean Christadelphian Ecclesias who unreservedly adhere to the BASF and the Berean Re-Statement.

GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

HYE FRATERNAL GATHERING.....**July 24-31, 2016**
Bro. Mark Braune, 209 Ranger Dr, Buda TX, 78610 512-577-1119,
markbraune@gmail.com, Study on Ezekiel

SOUTHEAST FRATERNAL GATHERING.....**October 29-30, 2016**
The gathering will be held at the Elder-Care of Alachua County Senior
Recreation Center, 5701 NW 34th Blvd., Gainesville, FL 32653.
Bro. Michael Jasionowski, mjasionowski@gmail.com

Like Him None Before or After

“A child shall be born to the House of David, Josiah by name, and on this altar shall he offer the priests of the high places” (1 Kings 13:2).

JOSIAH: THE FAITHFUL, FORETOLD RESTORER

Josiah was the last good, and the last independent king of Judah. He came to the throne at eight years of age; at sixteen he began to seek God; at twenty he began to totally purge the land of all false worship; at twenty-six he repaired the Temple, the Law was found, and the Great Passover was held; at thirty-nine he died bravely in battle, defending God’s land.

He was, in some senses, the best of the kings. Nothing adverse is recorded concerning him. He is presented as having followed a totally obedient, totally zealous course from his earliest youth. We cannot say he was as great as David, but the record we have of him is more pure than David’s.

His reign is a fitting and striking ending to the Kingdom that had its true beginning in David. There was Saul before David, as there were four evil men—vassals of foreign powers—after Josiah. But the period from David to Josiah really comprehends the Kingdom.

There is much about Josiah’s life and circumstances that is typical of Christ. And, like Christ, he alone of all the kings had his name and work foretold long before his birth (1 Kings 13:2).

He began his reign about 640 B.C. In the loving providence of God, a final period of peace and prosperity was given to Israel. Assyria, which had long dominated and oppressed the whole area, was greatly weakened. Josiah was able to freely re-establish his rule over the whole land, right up to Naphtali, the most northern of the tribes (2 Chronicles 34:6), and he used the opportunity to totally cleanse the whole land of idolatry and corruption.

The record concerning him is in 2 Kings 22-23 and 2 Chronicles 34-35. We get to his eighteenth year very early in the Kings record 22:3, but Chronicles gives fuller information of the beginning of his reign (2 Chronicles 34:3)—

“In his eighth year (he would be 16) he began to seek after the God of David.”

We do not know who guided him, or if it was entirely of himself. His grandfather Manasseh—wicked, but later repentant—had died when he was six. His totally wicked father Amon had died by murder two years later, when Josiah was eight and had the kingdom thrust upon him. Of course others would rule until he came of age. But at sixteen, in his eighth year, he began to seek God. Continuing 2 Chronicles 34:3,

“In his twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem.”

He would now be twenty. This would probably be the age at which he was given complete rulership of the kingdom on his own. The prophet Zephaniah prophesied in his reign (Zephaniah 1:1), and from the nature of his denunciation and prophecy, it would seem that he prophesied very early in the reign, and was possibly the cause of the course Josiah followed. Jeremiah did not begin his prophetic work until one year after this, in Josiah's thirteenth year (Jeremiah 1:2).

Verses 4-7 of 2 Chronicles 34 describe a very thorough cleansing, not only of Judah, but also the whole northern kingdom, which Josiah obviously added to his dominions at the withdrawal of Assyria as it weakened—

“Manasseh, Ephraim, even to Naphtali...all the land of Israel” (vs. 6-7).

This brings us (v. 8) again to his eighteenth year, indicating that the cleansing process occupied the six years from his twelfth to his eighteenth. We return now to 2 Kings 22:3, to pick up this eighteenth year. We do not know what condition the national worship at the Temple had been in for these six reforming years. Clearly they had long since cleaned out the idols and corruptions, and doubtless a form of worship was being carried on.

But the Temple, broken down by Manasseh and Amon, had not been repaired. It is apparent too (v. 4) that a fund for repairing it had been for some time underway.

So now (v. 5) the Temple is to be repaired, and especial mention is made of the fact that there was no checking on the expenditures, because the workmen were faithful. This seems to be one of the hints that we find throughout that this reuniting and cleansing of the land, and purifying and rebuilding of the Temple by this most perfect of the kings was typical of the final restoration to come.

In the process of repair (v. 8), the High Priest Hilkiah finds the Book of the Law. Was it the original Book of Moses himself wrote, eight hundred years before? From one point of view, it does not seem likely, for when Solomon put the Ark in the Temple, it is pointedly recorded that there was nothing in it except the tables of stone (1 Kings 8:9). However, it is not certain whether the Book was to be put *in* the Ark or *beside* it (Deuteronomy 31:26 R.V.), and they may have been separated later. The Book may have been hidden by faithful priests in the time of wicked kings who sought to destroy the true worship.

And from another point of view, it would be very fitting and forceful if this truly was the original manuscript. The whole reign of this wonderful king seems very significant and symbolic.

Another question is whether this was the *only* copy then available to the rulership, and whether the Law was generally known. It seems certain that it was known of in general. The prophets always show

complete familiarity with it. All the people were supposed to teach it diligently to their children (Deuteronomy 11:19). This presupposes general circulation. So there would bound to be copies and parts of copies in various hands, and many quotations in various writings.

Josiah's previous reforms show that he was generally familiar with God's laws. But it seems certain from his stunned reaction to this Book that he had no direct familiarity with a full and authentic text.

There is a strong Jewish tradition that both Manasseh and Amon had made great efforts to stamp out all copies of the Scriptures, and to persecute those that had them, like the Catholic Church in its heyday. And this indeed is exactly what we would expect—especially in the light of Jehoiakim's treatment of Jeremiah's prophecy, and his attempts to seize Jeremiah for writing it (Jeremiah 36:23-26).

How fitting and how powerfully dramatic if the very manuscript of Moses showed up by Divine Providence at this last bright moment of Israel's history, before the kingdom went into its two thousand five-hundred-year eclipse!

When parts of it were read to Josiah, he was tremendously moved and shaken. He was an extremely devoted and zealous man. For six years he had been labouring to cleanse the land from everything contrary to the Divine holiness. He would certainly have sought—and so far in vain—for a full, sure text of the Divine Law. And he now hears these ancient, inspired denunciations and dreadful, forewarned punishments of the very things he knows are deeply ingrained in the corrupted nation.

There is a great sense of urgency in his sending (2 Kings 22:13) the High Priest to enquire of God. He appears to realize that the cup of wrath is brimming full, and the threatened wrath about to fall. This gives us a deeper insight into the tense zeal which drove him to cleanse the land so thoroughly. We get the details of that cleansing in chapter 23, and no previous efforts begin to compare with his. He knew how corrupt the nation was. He knew that God's patience had lingered long.

To whom does the *High Priest* go for the Divine word? To Huldah the prophetess! There is great and sad significance here. Where was the Urim and Thummim? The High Priest himself should have been the direct source of Divine communication. Where were Zephaniah and Jeremiah? They had to go to a woman (v. 14).

God had set it up from the beginning that *man* was to take the responsibility, and answer for it. The woman does not come into the governmental and legislative realm unless the man fails. We remember the striking case of the fearless prophetess Deborah, who rallied and saved Israel. Barak wouldn't go to the battle unless she went with him. The man had failed. God that day saved Israel by two women, just as

He will save the race through the Woman's seed, because the man failed.

And that surely is the big lesson here. *Man* had totally failed of his Divine responsibilities, and God must drive that home by instructing him through a woman.

And that woman appears to be the first to announce to the nation that the long-drawn-out day of God's patience was finally ended, and there was no way now of averting the national disaster that Josiah's God-attuned mind had sensed was pending.

But there is a word of comfort for Josiah. He would not see it. He would die in peace, and be gathered to his fathers in honour and respect. He was the last king who was given an honorable in the city of God: the last to see peace in the land.

Beginning chapter 23, he called a great assembly of the nation: *all* that could be gotten together, both small and great, and read to them *all* the words of the Book of the Law that had been found. And—just as their forefathers had before Moses—all the people solemnly swore that they would perform the Lord's Word with all their heart and all their soul. And perhaps they even thought, they meant it.

Somehow, man has always had the fatal, subconscious assumption that if he *agrees* to do what God requires, that covers the necessities, and he can generally go his natural way on the whole, trusting God's "mercy" to bridge the gap between commitment and reality. And so it is today.

Most cheerfully agree that "Yes, of course, *that* is what God commands." But "No, He *really* won't actually require us to go to *that* extreme, for hardly anyone ever does—and surely He won't reject us all." Are we guilty of such folly, in spite of and in the light of the Divine record in the past? So Israel reasoned. Meditate upon their tragic two-thousand-year history.

* * *

Verse 4 of chapter 23 takes us back. This is clear from the fact that verses 4-20 describe in detail what 2 Chronicles 34:3 tells us began in his twelfth year, which was six years before this. These verses appear to be a summary and description of *all* his activities for the cleansing of the land.

They were (23:4) to remove from the Temple everything to do with *Baal* (that was the worship Jezebel and Athaliah introduced from the Sidonians), and everything for the "*grove*" (or more correctly, for "*Asherah*," the goddess of the original Canaanites), and for the *host of heaven* (the worship of sun, moon and stars, which was introduced into Israel by Manasseh, though warned against as early as Deuteronomy).

It will be noted (end of v. 5) that for “planets” the margin has “twelve signs or constellations”—that is, the *Zodiac*: associated with very ancient pagan abominations. This God-denounced superstition still has wide currency, especially among the ignorant. Newspapers still publish “horoscopes” and speak of the “signs” people are born under. God’s terrible denunciations on all these pagan corruptions should warn us not to give currency for a moment—not even in lightness—to the slightest flavour of these superstitious things that God hates. It is not a harmless game, but godless corruption and idolatry: whether we so mean it or not.

The priests of paganism, as we see later (v. 20), Josiah slew without mercy. But verses 8-9 deal with the Levitical priests who had professedly led the worship of God, though in an unauthorised way on the high places. Here we have another interesting type, for these were taken to Jerusalem, but degraded from the Altar service, though maintained by the priestly supplies and doubtless put to mental work. (Compare Ezekiel 44:10-14).

V. 10: “*And he defiled Topheth, in the valley of Hinnom.*”

Here was the beginning of the Gehenna picture. Manasseh had established Molech worship in the valley of Hinnom beside Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 33:6), in which children were passed through fire, and in some instances burned in the fire. It is strange that Manasseh, who was for much of his life the most wicked king of Judah, who introduced every possible abomination, who murdered God’s people and tried to stamp out God’s worship—

“*He did more wickedly than all the Amorites before him, and he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood*” (2 Kings 21:11-16)

—it is strange that he should finally repent, and that God should accept his repentance and forgive him, and still finally cast off Judah “*because of all Manasseh’s abominations*” (2 Kings 23:26; 24:3). Human beings are strange creatures. And God’s ways are strange: but always right and just. If Manasseh were truly repentant (and he must have been for God to accept him), then the cruel evils that he had done, and the terrible judgments he had brought upon Judah, would be a dreadful, everlasting burden upon him.

Verses 11-12 give more of Manasseh’s abominations that Josiah cleansed. Then (v. 13) the places of blasphemous idol-worship that Solomon had built for the false gods of his wives. Solomon: wisdom and privilege such as no man had ever been given—and in his youth he was zealous for God, and God loved him (2 Samuel 12:24-25).

What tragedies of folly and wasted opportunity the Scriptures contain! Do we ponder them sufficiently? Are *we* doing *all* that God

requires? —a total “living sacrifice”? —*everything* ruthlessly eliminated that can hinder our total service?

Why did the good kings like Hezekiah leave these abominations of Solomon? Doubtless some tried to obliterate them. But once these things had a historic existence, and a hold on the popular mind, the wicked kings would keep building them back up, as Amon did with all Manasseh’s corruptions that Manasseh in his repentance removed. Here is the tragedy of setting a precedent, and giving corruption a foothold.

But Josiah was more persevering and more thorough. Whatever idolatry he broke down, he defiled in such a way that superstition would thereafter avoid the place as a place of worship. There is a type here too in the finality of his thoroughness.

So far, 2 Kings 23:4-14 have paralleled 2 Chronicles 34:4-5. In verse 15 he moves to the northern kingdom, as 2 Chronicles 34:6-7 also tells us. He gave first and special attention to Bethel. We remember, when the ten-tribe kingdom was first established under Jeroboam, that Bethel was the main centre of the new idolatry: calf-worship (1 Kings 12:32-33). And a prophet came down from Judah and told Jeroboam that a man of the line of David *named Josiah* would slay the idolatrous priests on that altar, and burn men’s bones on it (1 Kings 13:1-2). That was three hundred years before, and the time had come for its fulfilment. God’s purposes work out slowly, but they never fail.

Both at Bethel, and throughout the northern kingdom (vs. 16-19) Josiah slew all the idolatrous priests right on their own altars, and burned men’s bones on them: both actions very extreme, unusual and shocking. It was a total, dreadful cleansing of the land by blood, purging out all the leaven.

Zephaniah (1:4-9) appears to represent it as a great sacrifice to God, and a type of the last day judgment. And in a sense, it was a sacrifice: for the essence of sacrifice is the purging of the flesh, and if it is not done voluntarily, it will at last be done judicially.

And so, in this terrible—but necessary and righteous—way, the entire land was cleansed and united for its last great recorded act of worship: the great Passover of Josiah’s eighteenth year. *He was still only twenty-six.*

Verse 22: “*Surely there was not holden such a Passover from the days of the Judges, nor all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah.*”

There had been a similar cleansing of the land, and a similar Great Passover, under Hezekiah, one hundred years before (2 Chronicles 30), just before the northern kingdom had been destroyed by the Assyrians—a final Divine call for them, which they scornfully rejected.

Hezekiah's Passover was more deep and joyous. There is more indication of popular sincerity and enthusiasm and zeal. *Josiah's* was more total and thorough, and there's indication of a broader participation from the north—a more *nationwide* Passover. In Hezekiah's day, most of the north had mocked his invitation to attend.

Of course, in Josiah's day the population of the land was much less, because of the intervening captivities. It was a remnant that was left.

But though Josiah's Passover was the greatest ever held in the Kingdom, and possibly the greatest national Passover ever since its inauguration in Egypt, it was but a hollow form, carried through by the tremendous zeal of this one man. Josiah, having supreme authority, could thoroughly purge out all the apparatus and outward aspects of idolatry; but even he could not give spiritual life to this debased and corrupted people.

It would appear that Manasseh, with all his abominations and persecutions of the righteous, had merely given the people what they wanted. And so they must suffer for his sins; though he himself repented, and was forgiven. Therefore, the record continues (2 Kings 23:25-26)—

“And like him (Josiah) was there no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses: neither after him arose any like him.

“Notwithstanding, the Lord turned not from the fierceness of His great wrath, wherewith His anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked Him withal.”

Josiah lived and reigned thirteen more years. We are not told one word about what occurred in them. God is not giving us *history*, as such, but *instruction*; and we must always remember this as we read. We come to the Word for lessons: not the story itself—though the better we get the story, the better we are likely to get the lessons, *if* our mind is right.

Doubtless there were thirteen more great Passovers. There's no indication Josiah slackened his zeal; much the reverse. But we are told nothing.

The next recorded event is his strange and puzzling death in battle, at the age of thirty-nine: the only king of Judah to die in battle. The record is given more fully in 2 Chronicles 35, beginning at verse 20. Assyria, which had dominated the Bible lands since the time of Hezekiah, had now declined. Babylon was rising in the East.

Egypt had a new young king, Necho, and he was determined to re-establish Egyptian power up the Mediterranean coast, now that Assyria was gone, and before Babylon got there. So he took his army to the north, to meet the advancing Babylonian forces in the area of
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Carchemish on the northern Euphrates, for Babylon now controlled that far, and was pushing west.

To get there, Necho had to cross Josiah's land. Josiah went out with an army to stop him. Necho tried to persuade Josiah that he had no quarrel with him, but just wanted to pass through. And he claimed verse 21 that he had God's authority to do so. But Josiah persisted, though his forces would be puny compared to Egypt's. And he was killed in the ensuing battle, and Judah was defeated, and the Egyptian king and army went on its way to the north to fight the Babylonians.

Was Josiah right or wrong? Necho's claim of divine authority could be dismissed as self-serving heathen lies, except for a strange remark by the inspired historian (2 Chronicles 35:22)—

“Josiah hearkened not to the words of Necho FROM THE MOUTH OF GOD!”

Was it a warning from God that he should have heeded? Or did he have a deeper communication from God that led him forward? We remember Paul on the way to Jerusalem, and to divinely-foretold calamity—and how he still pressed on toward his goal—

“Agabus said, Thus saith the Holy Spirit, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles.

“Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 21:11-13).

Was Paul right or wrong? Certainly the whole record, and Christ's words to him (as Acts 23:11), would indicate Paul was right, and following a higher call. And so it may have been with Josiah. God does not usually instruct His intimate and faithful servants through the mouth of heathen enemies.

In the Divine Purpose, the time had come for Josiah to be removed. His work was done, his record written in letters of gold. The judgments of God on wicked Judah were overdue, and they did not merit the continued blessing of such a righteous king. It had been promised to Josiah that the calamities would not come while he lived (2 Chronicles 34:28).

But Josiah did not know when the evils were due. He would feel it was his duty to defend the land. Hezekiah had been told the same about judgments to come, and peace in his day; and by his faithfulness he had preserved the kingdom, and it had gone on thereafter for another one hundred years.

And Pharaoh's claims about having no designs on Judah, spoken in the same breath, were false, as Josiah doubtless suspected. Necho was going to contest Babylon for control of the whole area.

Josiah may have felt strong reason to hope that, if he stood up to the enemy, God would give him victory as He had to Hezekiah, to carry on his righteous rulership of Israel, now that it was unified, strong, and cleansed. Sennacherib had made the same claims about being sent by God (Isaiah 36:10), and there was a certain amount of truth in the claim. But still God respected Hezekiah's faith, and preserved Jerusalem.

Or perhaps Josiah may have sensed that the time had come to give his life for his people. It was certainly fitting that he should end his life—which had been totally devoted to God's service—in defending the kingdom and people that God had entrusted to his care.

He was obviously courageous, as well as righteous and faithful, for he personally led his troops into battle, disguising himself so he could enter right into the fray (2 Chronicles 35:22).

There was great and unparalleled mourning at his death, unlike anything before. It was made a perpetual ordinance in Israel (2 Chronicles 35:25), and became proverbial (Zechariah 12:11). It appears to have been genuine, and doubtless was.

The shallow-minded people may have realised too late that the glory was gone, and that their national liberty and well-being had died with this wonderful young king whom God had given them in His mercy, and taken away in His wrath.

It was the end of their independence. Thereafter, till the kingdom was destroyed twenty-two years later, they were miserable vassals of foreigners, beginning with this Necho who had killed Josiah, and who took away his son Jehoahaz a prisoner, to die in Egypt.

It is remarkable that such a wicked people should have mourned so sternly righteous a king, who had so ruthlessly stamped out their beloved idolatries and corruptions. But he must have had other qualities than sternness to endear himself to them.

The depth and genuineness of the mourning is testified by its being made the type of the great mourning of Israel at the revelation of Christ to them, and their realisation that he is their rejected and crucified Messiah—

“In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadad-rimmon in the valley of Megiddon” (Zechariah 12:11).

They have been mourning ever since Josiah died. He was their last true king. The few who briefly followed him as puppets of Egypt and Babylon were worthless reprobates who took the nation to its ruin.

But the last great mourning to come will end all their mourning, and will usher in their everlasting joy.

—*Bro. G.V.Growcott*

Comfort

1 Peter 1.—Sometimes in reproof, sometimes in comfort: thus the Spirit speaks as need requires. Here, it is the voice of comfort; the voice of the shepherd, Peter, as he executes the commission assigned to him in the parting words of the Chief Shepherd: “Feed my lambs.” It is pleasant to hear such a voice. We need comfort. We are in a world of evil, in which are many hindrances. The Father is little thought of; the Son largely forgotten; and the children (such few as there are”) despised. This makes the situation bleak enough for the lambs; but there are other trials; false brethren, wolves in sheep’s clothing, biting “winds of doctrine,” and poor weak failings in all of us that make us self-chidden and condemned. We need to be comforted, and the Lord commands it for such as are broken and contrite in heart, trembling at His word.

Peter addresses himself to “the strangers scattered.” In Peter’s day, they were scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, etc. Today they are scattered throughout England, Wales, Scotland, America, Australia, etc.; and though differently situated in many respects, their spiritual needs are the same. They are strangers and not strangers. The truth has made them at home where they were strange, and strange where they were at home. They are no longer strangers and foreigners to the commonwealth of Israel with its all-glorious covenants of promise, with which in the days of their darkness they had no connection. They have received the adoption of sons and rejoice in being fellow-citizens with the Lord Jesus, with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets and saints of that splendid polity that will one day fill the world with light, and life, and love, and joy, and glory to God in the highest; in this, they are at home where they were strange. But this has more of the future than the present in it. We rejoice in the hope, it is true; but we walk by faith and not by sight, and this is burdensome to the natural man.

In the things that are seen, we have been turned just the other way about. We once belonged to the world, and the world loved its own, and we were at home in it, but now we are strangers and sojourners, as all the fathers were. We look not at the things which are seen. We await the day of the manifestation of the sons of God. In this attitude we need the exhortation of this chapter: “Gird up the loins of your mind; be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” Without the continual girding of the loins of the mind (in the continual adjustment of our mental relation to the things that are and shall be, in the unflinching study of the holy oracles) we shall grow weary and faint in our minds, and hope will die

instead of continuing, and we ourselves become castaway on the great ocean. We must train ourselves to accept the position of strangers and sojourners. "*If ye call on the Father*" says Peter: that is if ye really mean to be children of the Father, who, without respect of persons, judgeth according to every man's work, "pass the time of your sojourning here in fear." Our salvation is not otherwise to be wrought out than in fear and trembling. There is no time for pleasure-hunting. The service of Christ is now, as it always has been, a course of self-denial. Analyze most men's hearts, and self-comfort, self-prosperity, self-honour, self-pleasure, in some form or other, will be found the directing motive. Christ is made to wait on Mr. Self's convenience.

It is a dangerous policy; for, without respect of persons, the Father, who judgeth every one's work, will shortly ask of the whole programme, "Did ye it for Me?" Christ stands now at the door and knocks. If we open to him and take him in as our friend and counsellor, dwelling in our heart by faith, he will become Captain, and will direct the whole course of things for us, and enable us to render a good account in the day when the great question is put. But if we listen to other voices rather, and neglect the reading of the Word, giving heed only to the demands of business, the love of money, the claims of kindred, the wants of the flesh in houses, lands, clothes, eating, drinking, marriage, etc., Christ, after a while, turns away from the door, and the Christless house, joined to its idols, is given over, at last, to desolation. Christ means to bestow immortality and a kingdom, and, therefore, he asks a high price, even the whole heart and life. He is patient; but he will not, in the day of his glory, accept the homage of an eye-servant. Many, no doubt, in that day, will prostrate themselves eagerly before him, and claim kinship, as he himself tells us; but his favours will be reserved for those who faithfully serve him in his absence, declining association with a world that knew him not, taking part in the testimony of him which the world despises, and diligently observing his precepts, while all is untoward, self-crucifying, and silent. He will be to us what we are to him. In this he is like the Father, who to the pure shows Himself pure; to the righteous shows Himself righteous (Psa. 18:25). Deny him, and he will deny us; confess him, and he will confess us; neglect him, and he will neglect us; serve him, and he will gird himself and make us sit down to meat and come forth and serve us.

His great rule is, "He that doeth the will of my Father, the same is mine." Often did he enforce this rule when on earth. He comes soon again to enforce it as he never has enforced it before. Of how great consequence, then, it is to place ourselves in the right relation to this rule while opportunity continues. The Father's will is many a time, and

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clearly, expressed in these holy oracles which it is our privilege to read from day to day.

It is expressed thus in the chapter before us: “As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as he that hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.” This is the Spirit’s own standard. To reach it we must continually strive, for we are assured on the same authority of the Spirit that “without holiness no man shall see the Lord.” Let there be no talk of this standard being too high; this is the language of the unwise. We must rather accustom ourselves to the thought and the language of the Spirit, and labour to conform to that statute of the kingdom which requires us to “deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.”

We shall be greatly helped in this if we remember and in daily prayer realize that lovely aspect of the Eternal Mind presented by Peter when he says, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his *abundant mercy* has begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” Our salvation is of God.

Christ is of God. It is of His abundant mercy that we have hope. He is kind. He is love. He is not willing that any should perish. In Christ He invites all to come, saying, “Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.” In this we have strong consolation which comes like dew on the parched ground. Christ’s resurrection was the Father’s act, not by any rule of commercial satisfaction or equivalent, but of His “abundant mercy,” the obstacle being removed in the condemnation of sin in the flesh: sin having been nailed to the tree in the body of His beloved one.

According to His abundant mercy, which He was not compelled to show, He raised His beloved from the dead for our justification, that we who were dead in trespasses and sins might have hope who had none. The Father begat us again to this lively hope by the resurrection of His Son.

The resurrection is everything, without which the condemnation of sin in the flesh could have been nothing. The apostasy destroys this by making the condemnation everything, and the resurrection of Christ a thing of which no reasonable account can be given so far as effecting our salvation is concerned. It errs also in making the condemnation bear on the “soul” so-called—the immaterial principle of life—instead of on the flesh—that “body of his flesh” in which through death we are reconciled (Col. 1:22).

Certain good words and fair speeches have been sounded in our ears which would drag us in the same fatal direction. Let us be on our guard. There is need for the apostolic exhortation that we take heed that we lose not those things which we have wrought.

The comfort is to realize the whole arrangement as the Father's love. It is His way for His own honour and our salvation. We have but to learn what that way is and worship. The love that has devised it is a love passing knowledge. The goodness that will come of it eludes the highest effort of imagination. We are begotten "to AN INHERITANCE" such as no mortal ever possessed.

The highest state to which man can attain in this life is disfigured by the moth and rust that doth corrupt, and exposed to various kinds of thieves—including death, the most formidable of them—that break through and steal. The fine houses take much keeping in order; the fine ways of life bring much labour; this vile body wants much tending in bathroom and laundry to keep it even tolerable. All tends to decay and dissolution; but "the inheritance is incorruptible, undefined, and fadeth not away."

These characteristics apply to all its elements. Bodies spiritual, delivered from the tendency to decomposition inherent in all animal organizations: faculties exalted ; emancipated from the heaviness and cloud that haze over the most brilliant of mortal powers; life immortalized by the transmutation of our substance from the frail fibre of animal being to the indestructible tissues of spirit-body; the society of impeccable immortals, radiant with life, light, and praise; dominion secured in all the earth; honour, wealth, joy, and renown our portion in the high places on earth when the voice of the scorner has ceased; the earth a smiling paradise; its valleys jubilant with righteous mirth; "glory to God in the highest, goodwill toward men"; health, blessing and plenty crowning all lands with joy ; time not dimming the glory or weakening the zest; the advent of an enemy or an end to salvation impossible; "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away."

But meanwhile, it is "reserved in heaven." The Lord is there: therefore, all is there: for all this will come of him. We are not of those who make the mistake of supposing that because it is reserved in heaven, therefore we must go there to obtain it. We have listened to the exhortation which, in the same chapter, tells us to hope to the end "for the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ." We are of those who look for his appearing in the love of it, knowing that the kingdom, which is the inheritance, will, at that time, appear also. It's being out of sight makes a demand on our faith and patience;

but we wait, knowing that He who hath promised is faithful, and that he who shall come will come, and will not tarry.

But to whom will his coming be a joy? To all? Nay, verily, to them “who are kept by the power of God through faith.” The Gospel is the power (Rom. 1:16), and faith cometh by hearing it (Rom. 10:17). Those who keep it in memory (1 Cor. 15:2), are kept by the power of God through faith, if their memory be of the earnest sort recommended by Paul to the Hebrews, “giving the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.” This memory depends upon compliance with another apostolic recommendation : “Give attendance to reading”; “As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby.” A constant and diligent attendance upon this will include us among those “who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.”

“Wherein we greatly rejoice”; yet our experience is that of those to whom Peter wrote: “For a season we are in heaviness, through manifold temptations.” Our temptation” may not be of precisely the same Order as that of our brothers in the first century, but its operation and effects are the same. It is not joyous; it presses on us unto weariness and groaning, and perhaps, tears ; but it is not accidental. It is part of the Father’s programme “that the trial of our faith” may yield joyous results in the day of glory. If it be found unto “praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Christ,” we shall not have suffered in vain. This will be if we come through trial-proof. Peter mentions gold in the furnace as an illustration.

Our faith must not disappear in the process of trial. The gold may dissolve, but it is gold for all that, and is visible. Let us see to it that our faith fail not in the heaviness that comes with manifold temptations.

There is great joy, at last, if we overcome; “and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” “Whom having not seen, ye love,” says Peter. He does not say “we,” because he was among those who had seen him. But thousands, in the first century, believed who had not seen. They believed on the same principle that men believe in anything they have not seen with their eyes. They believed on the evidence of credible eye-witnesses. This is the solid foundation of our faith. The apostles make a strong point of this always: “We have not followed cunningly devised fables,” says Peter, “when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were EYE-WITNESSES of his majesty” (2 Pet. 1:16). “We cannot but speak the things which we have *seen and heard*” (Acts 4:20). “That which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked

upon, and our hands have handled” (1 John 1:1). The men of the first century not only heard the testimony of eye-witnesses, of whose integrity they had a guarantee in the steadfastness with which they declared their testimony in the face of evil consequences, but they saw their word attested with wonders and signs. Our foundation is the same, but we, being on a higher stratum, get down to it by excavation. By the exercise of reason upon the facts of history, we are enabled to get to the same point of belief in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. We have not seen him, but we believe he exists. We have not seen him, but we love him. How could we do otherwise than love him? And this love constrains us as it constrained Paul, to do those things which he has required at our hands ; in much weakness, it may be; in much sorrow and travail of soul, because of the hardness of the way; but yet, in love, in hope, in faith, and in a certain sense, in joy unspeakable. We contemplate him as our High Priest, and are comforted: we think of him as our Elder Brother, and we are drawn towards him.

We remember him as God manifest, and bow before him in great awe. We remember him as our coming deliverer, and our hearts rise and our hearts fill with great joy. We recollect him as the Lamb slain, and, with all our hearts, we yearn for the opportunity of joining our song to those who, surrounding him in the day of his glory, will sing, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and honour, and glory, and blessing. Amen, and Amen.”

—*Bro. Robert Roberts*

Signs of the Times

The Signs of the Times will have lost their significance when the event they are pointing to is no longer a matter of expectation. Their value and their importance are very limited and short-lived. We ought to think of this in the midst of all our watchings of them.

It is possible to be interested in the Signs of the Times, and not interested in that to which they stand related. It is better to see a man much in love with Christ and the hope of the Kingdom, and in much zeal for his service in the obedience of his commandments, even if he have little understanding of the Signs of the Times—than to see a man well up in the politics of the Time of the End, but of a callous heart toward the person and work and principles of Christ.

Of course, it is better to see both aspects combined. But if there must be extremes, it is better to love Christ and be ready for him, knowing little of the political indications of his approach, than to be abreast of all the Signs of the Times with but feeble attainments in that saintship which alone will qualify for companionship with Christ in the Day of his Glory.

—*Bro. Roberts 1880*

Meditations—Deity’s Ways No. 82

THE doctrine of purgatory is false. So is that of the larger hope. Akin to these untruths is the notion that we can idle away our Master’s time without imperiling our salvation. Whilst contemptuously thrusting aside the two first errors, let us not nurse the last. They are equally bad and fatal. Unbelief—a refusal to take God at His word—is at the bottom of them all. Each is a repetition of the old, old story, “Ye shall not surely die.” We require to be very much on our guard against these and similar truth-hating, ease-loving, duty-procrastinating doctrines. Now is the day of salvation—the day for work and for exhibiting faithfulness—and we shall have no other. No work, no wage: this is the inexorable decree of the Scriptures. Are we disposed to idleness—to look on with folded arms whilst others toil? If so, let us bestir ourselves ere it is too late. Night, when no man can work, is approaching for us all. In the hour of death, and much more in the hour of judgment, the sluggards of Christ’s household will bewail their folly. “Woe to the Christian brother (said Dr. Thomas) who presents himself at the tribunal of Christ with nothing else to offer but a hidden truth.” Are we drones? Then let the shameful end of the slothful servant in the parable of our Lord sober and energise us. Let us unstop our ears to the voice which speaks so solemnly from heaven:—”Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”

Not one day should pass without our doing something for Christ—for the wellbeing of the ecclesia, and the enlightenment of the stranger. Christ can be served in many ways, and by the busiest. We can materially forward his work by an exemplary discharge of the common duties of life. What better recommendation can the truth have than for those who profess the name of Christ to be kind, courteous, upright, sober-minded, and virtuous? This is a way of serving Christ which is open to us all, whether we be master or servant, husband or wife, parent or child, in health or in sickness. Touching this way the Scriptures exhort us frequently (Matt. 5:16; 1 Pet. 3:16). But we can all do more than this. We can take steps to make ourselves strong in the truth, so as to be in a position to impart instruction to the less enlightened, and otherwise form useful and stable members of the meeting to which we may belong. Who is there that cannot squeeze in, however busy he may be, many minutes during the day for Scripture meditation and study? Are not our minds, for the most part, more filled at the end of the day with unprofitable stuff gathered from the newspaper and other sources, than with divine knowledge, which might have been got if our attention had been turned Christwards? Then, again, we can sow the good seed

of the kingdom by dropping a word here and there. If we are too shy to open out to our neighbours in the tram or train, we can carry a few leaflets or lecture bills to lodge quietly as opportunity offers. It is not so much time that is needed as a willing mind. The day will come when all of us will lament that we did not put forth more effort for Christ.

The truth has made great headway since the early days of Dr. Thomas. At that time its friends were few, now they can be counted by the thousand. This progress has not been achieved apart from much toil. Who the toilers have been, God knows, and they will not be forgotten by Him in the promised day of recompense. "Every man," saith His unbreakable word, "shall receive his own reward according to his own labour" (1 Cor. 3:8). As we review the lives of our departed brethren—those who have established the truth so surely in our midst, and who wearied not in well-doing—we think that the secret of their influence lay in their strong recognition of God and their unbounded faith in the unerringness of the Scriptures. They made their hearers feel that God is a reality, and His word unfailing. To them the truth was more than a mere subject—it was the handing on of a message from the All-seeing Eternal. They took hold of the truth as a precious, beautiful, and very sacred thing. To them it was no toy, no carnal weapon, nor was it handled for the purpose of bringing praise and glory to self. They esteemed it (and their words and deeds are evidence of this) as a priceless gift of God, to be employed solely for His exaltation, and the enlightenment and salvation of man. They shrank not from being humbled by it—from suffering on its account. If God is to bless our preaching, as He did theirs, we shall have to follow in their steps. We shall have to show the same humility, courage, ardour, enthusiasm, and devotion. Like these faithful predecessors, we shall have to be always up and doing, making the advancement of truth the great aim of our life. Idleness in this matter is the parent of manifold mischief.

The flesh is an evil thing. It is corrupt and corrupting. Through Adam's transgression, sin entered it, and brought it under the doom of death. Concerning this there ought to be no contention amongst brethren. How angry Paul would be, if, after all he has said, he were to come and find us wrangling over this question. Let us adhere to the apostle's teaching. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin" (Rom. 5:12). What world? The world, manifestly, that is related to death—the world of all flesh. "In my flesh," said Paul in another place, "dwells no good thing" (Rom. 7:17–20). Let us not allow ourselves to be misled by the statements (seemingly harmless, but in reality destructive of the truth concerning the putting away of sin) that the flesh to which these texts refer is that of sinning adults and not of innocent babes or the righteous Christ. Paul makes no distinction in the

quality of human flesh. Its tendencies, according to him, are always sinwards—a fact which is corroborated by Peter, James, and John (Eph. 2:3; 2 Pet. 2:18; Jas. 1:14, 15; 1 John 2:16). Paul even goes to the length of enumerating the ugly and odious workings of Adamic flesh (Gal. 5:9–21). Then again, the sum and substance of all Scripture exhortation is based on the supposition that our nature (since the fall) is prone to evil. If our flesh is not now inherently bad and unclean, how are we to understand the commands (given without qualification or reservation) to sow not to the flesh (Gal. 6:8), to walk not and to live not after the flesh (Rom. 8:4, 13), to make no provision for the flesh (Rom. 13:14), but to crucify it (Gal. 5:24)? Would that men had the courage, when they realise that they have disseminated error on this simple but very important subject, to “own up,” and not to dissemble and shuffle to the bewilderment of truth-seekers. We must, however, be patient with the erring. There will be big bonfires presently of heretical writings.

Let us be careful how we attribute our failings to the weakness of our nature. It is possible to complacently sail along under a delusion in this matter. Before we tell one another—and much more so God—that our short-comings are unavoidable, and due to the infirmities of the flesh, it is wise to pause and think. Our sinful nature will excuse much, but not necessarily all our short-comings, otherwise there would be no condemnation for any at the judgment-seat. The boundary between ability and inability is oftentimes difficult to define, but it exists for all that. Let us not settle down comfortably with the thought that “It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me,” unless we know that we are making good effort to conquer our unholy passions. Before we use in our favour Paul’s words, let us see to it that we have Paul’s mind—not half of it. In reference to the effort he made the apostle could say, “I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (1 Cor. 9:27). It is not impossible to know if we are making effort—it is simply a question of reflection—of honest self-examination. We may be sure that things are right if we know that our life, through love of God and our neighbour, is more or less made up of self-sacrifice. Let us not, however, be distressed or discouraged by our own feebleness in our attempts to be perfect. Let us not wrongly or unwisely condemn ourselves or others on account of such feebleness. If we love the truth and its friends, are ready to acknowledge our failures, and have a desire to listen, learn, and improve, we need never despair. These are traits which distinguish the righteous from the unrighteous—the true from the false—a Moses from a Balaam—a David from a Saul—a Paul from an Alexander.

—*Bro. A.T. Jannaway*—1906

Principles of Righteousness — “Mercy and Truth Must Meet Together”

The proverbs record, “by **mercy and truth** iniquity is purged: and by the fear of Yahweh depart from evil” (Proverbs 16:6).

To the mind of man, it is an irreconcilable paradox that iniquity could be purged by the bringing together of these two mutually exclusive principles, mercy and truth. But in God’s purpose of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ, the psalmist tells us “his salvation is nigh them that fear him... **Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other**” (Psalm 85:9–10). Unless both mercy and truth meet together when the ecclesia deals with cases of sin and repentance then the power of God’s healing will not be present.

We know that forgiveness and our forgiving others is conditional on our confessing and forsaking our sins (Psalm 130:3–4; 1 John 1:17; 1 John 2:1; 1 John 1:9; Hebrews 7:25; Romans 8:34; Matthew 6:15; 2 Corinthians 2:10; Matthew 18:33). Why should God forgive us for Christ’s sake? We believe that God does, but why is this forgiveness in the end extended to some and not to others?

“Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that **does the will of my Father** which is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21). The measure of our Lord’s intercession on our behalf is the measure of our doing the **will** of our heavenly Father. To do His will is to be found doing the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. To what measure we do his work, then to that measure Christ abides in us (John 15:7); to that extent the Lord Jesus Christ can bear our sicknesses (i.e. iniquities, Matthew 8:17) and be sympathetic with our desperate pleas for help. But **unmercifulness and our refusal to seek that which is lost**” (Matthew 18:12) or our **unwillingness to fellowship God’s will of desiring not to see one of his little ones perish, will at last exclude us from abiding with Christ for ever more.**

A brother or sister, who has earnestly sought righteousness, stringently keeping themselves from sin, may deplore the sins of the offender, especially when their sin is one of weakness and ungodliness. It is not by accident that the Lord places beside this indispensable beatitude of “righteousness” (Matthew 5:6) which characterises God’s children, the beatitude of “the merciful”, who shall “attain mercy” (Matthew 5:7). This attribute, gives the children of God, a beauty and nobility which shall be perpetuated in the kingdom age as the characteristics of the king/priests who reign with Christ.

This glorious attribute finds its outworking in the saints’ lives now in their attitude to those who are sick because of sin, even as their Lord gave them an example. “Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converts a sinner from the error of his ways shall save a soul from death and shall hide a

multitude of sins” (James 5:19–20). The apostle Peter adds, “above all things have fervent love among yourselves: for love shall cover a multitude of sins” (1 Peter 4:8).

So the sins of the offender are covered over by the Lord Jesus Christ, Yahweh’s appointed propitiation or mercy seat, which under the Mosaic pattern covered the ark in which lay God’s truth, written in stone. Their sins are purged and cleansed, but associated with this saving work, like the palsied man’s friends, are those who as “workers together with God” in the fulfilling of his will, receive the forgiveness of their sins also. This rests upon the divine principle... “With what judgement you judge, you shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again” (Matthew 7:2).

“Then shall **the righteous** answer him, saying Lord, when saw we thee hungry, and fed thee? Or thirsty and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger and took thee in? Or naked and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison and came unto thee? And the king shall answer and say unto them, verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of **the least** of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matthew 25:37–40).

Now Yahweh wants us as his children, to truly appreciate these principles, and to do that, he tests us in many ways through relationships and ecclesial problems. The only way we can resolve these is by beholding he who was “the Word made flesh”, “the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). To behold this glory is to behold his grace and truth which is our salvation; it is a marrying together of grace (mercy, undeserved lovingkindness) and truth (the revelation of what God is, the “true light” John 1:9). **This marrying together of grace and truth vindicates Yahweh’s righteousness, and upon the acknowledgement of this and the forsaking of sin, grace is extended.** Therefore divorce and remarriage cases for reasons other than the exception, as with marriages contracted outside of the truth, must not be dealt with in such a way that grace and mercy overlook or minimise transgression! As we stated in the introduction on page 3; **Yahweh must be seen to be just in all He commands and in all His ways. The recognition of God’s righteousness is the basis and first condition of divine mercy and forgiveness.** In this process however, under the stress of ecclesial or personal problems we must not forget the most fundamental of all gospel truths—**Christ came and died to save sinners.** It is the attitude of mind of brethren and sisters who have sinned and yet now seek mercy, which must be evaluated by the ecclesia, to the best of their capacity. In the end it is our inability to fully appreciate the circumstances offenders have endured, and an awareness of our own failings and weaknesses that should prompt us to err on the side of mercy, for we are very much in need of mercy ourselves. As the apostle James states, “So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. For he shall have

judgement without mercy, that has showed no mercy; and mercy rejoices against judgement” (James 2:12–13). If the law of “grace and truth” has been the measure of our lives, in which mercy has rejoiced (gloried or boasted) against judgement, in our dealings with our fellow man, then that will be the measure of our judgement when we stand before our Lord.

The hard though transforming path to take is the individual and the ecclesia striving to make plain God’s principles of mercy and truth, for it involves so much determination, patience, love and humility. The individual and ecclesia may also be easily misunderstood while faithfully striving to follow this correct path, even as their Lord was misunderstood. He was condemned for doing so and he had the power to physically prove his divinely bestowed prerogative in perfectly making plain God’s principles of mercy and truth to forgive sins, as in the case of the palsied man. Matthew records the multitudes upon seeing this miracle, “marvelled and glorified God, which had given such power unto men” (Matthew 9:8).

Jerusalem Revisited – 8

OLIVET HOUSE, JERUSALEM, *March*, 1912.

DEAR BROTHER WALKER,—The exciting adventure at which I hinted in the conclusion of my last letter occurred in this way. While wandering up and down the “Via Dolorosa,” between the “Ecce Homo Arch” and the “Pool of Bethesda” (respectively marked “14” and “12” on the plan I sent with “Letter No. 4”), I caught sight, down a narrow alley (one of the “streets” of Jerusalem), of a charming green open space, which, on reaching, I discovered to be a portion of the Temple Area.

There, to the right, were the Barracks and Prison, where the “Tower of Antonia” used to stand; and, to the front of me, some distance off, the “Dome of the Rock.” Naturally, having my camera with me, and being out picture hunting, I essayed to take a photograph of so interesting and charming a view; charming, especially compared with the remainder of “Jerusalem within the walls.”

Seeing my intentions, and in the midst of much shouting, a man rushed forward and rudely pushed me back, and back, to the thoroughfare, or turning, from whence I had come. Although humiliated, having learnt that “discretion is the better part of valour,” I prudently pocketed the affront, and, after sundry meanderings, arrived at another turning which opened on to the same sacred enclosure. Reentering as quickly as possible, I at once fixed my camera, when an official as quickly fixed me. History repeated itself; only more so, for the treatment was comparatively ruder. I had to retreat to the courts of the “dogs” outside.

After taking a picture of the “Ecce Homo Arch” and one or two other noted landmarks, I soon came across another entrance to the “Harem-esh-Sheriff,” as “The Noble Sanctuary” of the Moslems is termed. This time was my final, for two bedraggled soldiers took possession of me, and escorted me back to an exit leading to the “Via Dolorosa.” One then left, leaving the other to continue in my company. When alone he coolly exclaimed “Baksheesh!” Finally, I went home to my wife at “Olivet House”! Am sorry the attempts were not rewarded with a picture, but the spot looked just as it looked eleven years ago, when in the care of the officials, both of the Ottoman Government and that of Great Britain, I snap-shotted you standing in front of the “Dome of the Rock.”

After dinner to-night I had an interview, by appointment, with Mr. W. H. Dunn, son of the late Admiral Dunn, He is in charge of an institution known as “Abraham’s Vineyard,” where he employs from fifty to one hundred Jews of all nationalities. I will leave a descriptive account till a later letter, as I shall then be able to speak from personal knowledge, having been invited to spend a time there. To-night’s meeting was more with the idea of comparing views on the Jewish Question. Although nominally Mr. Dunn is a member of the Church of England, he has not much sympathy therewith. He is much nearer being a Christadelphian, for his love for the “Hope of Israel,” as possessed by Paul, is not far removed from yours and mine. “The Covenants of Promise” are not strange to him. In fact, he is well instructed in most of the “things concerning the Kingdom of God,” but not conversant with all the Bible has to say about the “things concerning the name of Jesus Christ.” What may come of our conversation remains to be seen. At the end thereof he willingly accepted some of our literature, which he promised to read and consider. The termination of a most refreshing night’s rest found us fit for more work.

The morning was spent on foot. We thoroughly explored the Armenian and Jewish quarters of the Holy City. “Quarters” they truly are, for the city is practically divided into four parts, each part being built upon a hill; the four hills being Zion, Moriah, Acra, and Bezetha. Zion is occupied by the Armenians and Jews; although, by the way, the latter are fast turning the Christians out of the Acra district, which for centuries has been called the “Christian Quarter,” but now wrongly so. More anon, on that interesting “zionist” fact. Mount Moriah is taken up with the Temple Area, and Bezetha is possessed by the Moslems, and is really the newest portion of “Jerusalem within the walls.”

A VIEW OF THE TEMPLE AREA AND “DOME OF THE ROCK.”

The Mosque of Omar, and the interesting places adjacent thereto, cannot be visited by “Christians” before 8.30 or after 11 a.m., and even then not without permission and the escort of an Ottoman soldier and a

representative of the respective Consuls, called a Kawass. We intend paying such visit another day, when I shall be able to give details. Some of the Moslems, if not all, are as fanatical as ever. Their hatred of intruders is still bitter. Only a short while ago one who was praying shot two ladies who he thought were intruding on his privacy. So one has to be careful. And why shouldn't we? We have no right to be disrespectful to anyone's religion, however ridiculous or untrue we may deem it to be. We ought, at all times, to act as did Paul at Athens (Acts 17.).

The temptation, however, to overlook ordinary rules of etiquette, is very strong sometimes; too strong, in fact, to be resisted. For instance, when you see several ladies of the Moslem "persuasion," completely enveloped, from head to foot, in black or white, glide past you like ghosts, you cannot easily forego gratifying your curiosity by turning round to have another look. I confess to having done so repeatedly; and it was upon one of such occasions that I realised what it was to be "eyed." The Moslem ladies also turned round, and were surveying me with the aid of one eye which they had uncovered for the purpose, possibly never dreaming that I also would look round at the same moment. Alas, human nature! we are all chips of the same Adamic block: Moslems and Christadelphians; Jews and "Christians." But we are being shaped in different moulds.

Regarding the names of the roads or streets in Jerusalem, except those called Christian Street, David Street, Zion Street, Via Dolorosa and Palmer Street, no one seemed to know any. In fact, Palmer Street, which leads from Christian Street to the "Church of the Holy Sepulchre," even our friend Mrs. Dickson, the widow of the late British Consul, had never heard of; and she has lived not far away for 22 years! By the way, Sister Jannaway and myself called upon her this morning, and spent the best part of an hour at her abode. She is one of the common-sense sort. She was in the midst of Spring-cleaning, and, unnecessarily, apologised for the smell of sulphur which, very properly, is no small element in this annual turn-out. They could do with more of it in Jerusalem. Of course, we talked about the "poor Jews in Jerusalem," for whom, like their forerunners of the first century, the brethren at Birmingham and elsewhere managed to find contributions. Mrs. Dickson referred to the way in which she distributed such when it came to hand. Sometimes she had found as many as 300 Jews and Jewesses outside her door waiting for help in the shape of "backsheesh." Upon one occasion, she said, a Jew after receiving his share and saying "Thank you," and "Good-bye," went to the rear, changed his coat, etc., and rejoined the queue so as to have further help as a different applicant.

It was really this interview with Mrs. Dickson which set me thinking, and caused me to consult others in Jerusalem, as to the best means of using the contributions of the brethren for the poor Jews in the Holy City. The result was, I came to the conclusion that it is far better to help a poor Jew or Jewess with a wash, a clean bed, good food, fresh air, and, if necessary, medical or surgical attendance, than to give to the crowd of beggars, many of whom have never been known to do a day's work. I saw several such hanging about Mrs. Dickson's habitation.

At the Hospital I learned that any one bed helps annually from 25 to 30 poor Jews or Jewesses in succession, and, by relieving the homes of the presence of these sick ones, leaves the other members of the household—husband or wife, as the case may be, or grown-up children, free to earn their living unhampered. For these and other obvious reasons I am delighted that you have not only so readily assumed the task of getting the necessary cash, but have succeeded in so doing, and forwarded draft for the required sum to the Medical Officer, Dr. Masterman, and so, as you say, the brethren “now have a sort of little memorial in Jerusalem, speaking of the Hope of Israel.” We have promised to pay Mrs. Dickson another visit before we leave the city.

After lunch I visited the London Jews' Society Boarding School for boys, the headmaster of which is Mr. O. A. Hornstein. At present there are forty-five Jewish boys in residence. The aim of the Society is to get them to accept “Christianity,” but, with what lasting success is rather problematical. Should any hyper-critical reader exclaim, “Why spend your time visiting such an institution?” I reply: “Because I am out to visit any institution in the Land of Promise, where, to use Ezekiel's words, Jews are to be found ‘*at rest, and that dwell safely*’; and, therefore, it matters not to me of what colour or creed they may be, so long as they come within the scope of the prophecy as it bears on the ‘Time of the End,’ or ‘Latter-Days’” (Ezek. 38:8, 11, 13). A Jew who, on false premises, professes Christ is no worse in my opinion than a Jew who rejects Christ.

The boys are taught English, and so were able to conduct me to a Jewish printing establishment, as I wanted some visiting cards done, having used all I brought out with me, and, of course, in the mission on which I am bent, such cards are absolutely essential. The foreman promised me a proof in due course; but as it did not arrive at the time promised, I called at the office, where I discovered two men and a boy debating as to what type to use! Called two hours later and found them just pulling off a proof! The press on which *they* pulled it—for it took the three of them—was about 8 ft. long, and about 4 ft. wide; as big as a good-sized mangle. The card I required was 3 in. long and 1½ ins. wide! When they submitted the proof to me—Oh! that proof! It was a

perfect picture. “Olivet” was spelt without the “i”; the “S” and “W” after London had evidently quarrelled; and the dots and commas were quite unique in their locations. Between the four of us, we were a happy family; it was finally got ready for the press. They pulled me off six cards to go on with! “The rest will be sent up to your hotel, in a box, later on.” They arrived by special messenger about four hours later, and the account came to two francs, or, in plain English, 1s. 7d. the 100. Oh, Jerusalem!

That ejaculation reminds me how appropriate the readings from the Bible just now are to our surroundings. For instance, there are those superbly divine enactments with regard to the leprosy that we are seeing so much of; there is that beautiful and touching command, with its attendant promise and assurance: “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces.” There is that assuring Psalm: “They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth even for ever.” And then, too, there are those deeply interesting items in our readings from the gospel by Luke, too numerous to mention, but all bearing on scenes connected with our visit.

From the printing establishment I went to workshops connected with the “House of Industry,” for the purpose of ordering a number of articles made of olive wood from trees grown on the Mount of Olives. Before leaving London I had virtually promised the boys and girls of our Sunday School, at the Clapham Public Hall, that we would bring them each a memento from the Land, and I know nothing would please them more than some article of wood grown on the Mount of Olives, and made, and polished, and written upon by Jews. Have brought a number of samples for sister Jannaway to select from as we require about 150 articles in all. From there I set forth to try and find the “Besalel Institute.” Perhaps you will wonder what I mean by “try and find” in reference to any of the Jewish concerns of which I have written, am writing, and will write. But the fact is, all the people are apparently so enveloped in their own little circles, or colonies, or cliques, that they seem quite oblivious of the existence of any others. It takes a big slice of one’s time asking for, and finding out where the places are which I have marked out for visiting. Of course, they all know where the “Temple Area” is, or the “Church of the Holy Sepulchre,” or the “Jews’ Wailing Place,” or even Cook’s Offices; but directly one asks for such a place as the “Besalel Institute of Arts and Crafts,” the person asked looks askance and wonders what you are talking about.

The fact is the Jews are as divided as the “Christians,” and have just as little interest in each other. But the time looking for the places is never lost here, there is so much to see connected with Israel. For instance, just think of it, wherever you turn, even outside the walls, there are Jewish colonies, North, South, East, and West. I have a list of *no less than twenty-seven*, all within a mile or so of the walls, which I hope to give you some details of later on.

This “Besalel Institute” was conceived and founded by a Professor Boris Schatz. Till a few years ago he, although a Jew, had never been to Jerusalem. He only knew of the “Jews’ Wailing Place” from what he had heard at his “Beth Hamidrash” (the place where the Jews study the Talmud; not a synagogue, because they may eat and smoke in the “Beth Hamidrash.” Sometimes a small synagogue is attached to the building). He often had day dreams of a good time coming, when the talented and skilled of his race—the artists and cunning workers—would design, and carve, and paint, and weave for their own benefit, and not for that of aliens.

He met Dr. Theodor Herzl and unfolded his plans. For a full hour the Doctor listened to him; and, at the end of the interview, gave him his benediction. “But what name will you give to your school?” asked the Doctor. “Besalel,” replied the Professor, “after the name of the first Jewish artist who once built us a temple in the wilderness” (See Exodus 35:30–35: 36:1–4.) Yes, the building has been erected and the work is now in full swing, under the management of the said Boris Schatz. I have a letter of introduction to him from Mr. Israel Cohen, of Berlin, the Editor of *Zionist Work in Palestine*.

I was told I should know the building by a large seven-branched lightstand on the top of the front of the “Institute,” which is situate to the North-West of the city; of course, outside thereof. Everybody seemed anxious to help me; some by accompanying me, some by writing down information in the Hebrew dialect that best suited them; but the only real help was a young Jewess who, somehow or other, I guessed was more intelligent and more honest than the crew I was getting round me.

It turned out she knew a little English. She had come from Nazareth, her native place, and thought she remembered you and we two camping there 10 years ago. She knew the Nazareth woman who introduced those lacemakers and curio sellers to us and acted as our interpreter with them. With her help to-day I got rid of the hangers-on, and engaged her to show me the way, which ended with me being in the company of Professor Schatz. He said he had heard from Berlin, as well as from London, of my visit, but as it was getting late in the day he would suggest another visit. This suited me admirably, as I was anxious

for my beloved to also see over these interesting works, where over 500 Jews and Jewesses, with no mean talent, are employed.

Finding the “Besalel” occupied me nearly two hours, although, after all, it was not so very far away. The losing and finding myself took up most of the time, but even that was time well spent, for it enabled one to know the place much better than being led direct. I had to pass the Upper Pool of Gihon on my way. Both places are marked on my plan in “Letter No. 4.” The Pool is now called Bîrket Mamilla, and is spoken of as the “Upper Pool which is in the highway of the fullers’ field” (2 Kings 18:17; Isa. 7:3). The Lower Pool of Gihon (if such it be) is about half-a-mile away, and is known as the “Bîrket-es Sultan.” It is very large, being about 500 feet long and about 200 feet wide. The depth is about 40 feet. It is alleged that this is where David saw Bathsheba bathing (2 Sam. 11:2). Certainly it would be within sight of any palace built on “The Hill of Zion.” Ah, it will be “The Holy Hill of Zion” when God sets the one He calls “My King” (Psa. 2:6), “Great David’s greater Son.” May we be allowed to “ascend” it then (Psa. 15:24.) is the constant prayer of

Your fellow pilgrim,
FRANK G. JANNAWAY.

‘Necessary Things’ (Acts15)

PAUL allows the eating of meat offered to idols, provided there is no danger of the eating being misunderstood (1 Cr. 10:25-28). This is one of the four *‘necessary things’* mentioned in the apostolic decree of Acts 15. Its permission shows that the word *‘necessary’* was used in a different sense from the one you contend for: for a *‘necessary’* thing in your understanding of the word could never be dispensed with. The apostolic sense is completed by the phrase *‘under the circumstances.’* What these circumstances were is hinted at in the argument employed by James on the occasion of the adoption of the decree (Ac.15:21). This does not weaken the prohibition of fornication, which is in so many other ways excluded. —Bro. Roberts—1891

Angelic Visits

“Why do not angels visit the earth now, as in the days of the patriarchs?”

THE angels come when God sends them. He sends them when His work requires their presence. Of this, He alone can judge.

But we may see of our own sense that some times require them, and some times require them not. The foundation of things in the beginning certainly required their participation; for how could God

have been revealed, and the Promises made, and Israel delivered from Egypt, and the Law given, without them?

But there were long intervals when their visits were not needed, such as: most of the time during which Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob sojourned in faith as strangers in the Land of Promise; the time during which Israel multiplied in Egypt from 70 persons to 600,000 men; most of the time during which Israel occupied the Land in disobedience under the judges and kings; etc., etc. During these times they did not come, except at very rare intervals, as circumstances required.

When the time for Christ's appearance in the flesh arrived, they were more frequently in attendance, as the occasion called for. When he had gone away, and his faithful apostles had all fallen asleep, and their work had fallen into corruption in the hands of mere egotists—then the times of darkness (characteristic of the *'times of the Gentiles'*) set in, and it has not seemed fitting that the angels should be visitors during such a time.

Not only is there no divine center of operation in the chaos that now reigns on the earth, but the work already done, and put on credible record, is sufficient for the purpose in view: that is, the creation, by rational faith, of a people for Christ's use and glory in the day of his Kingdom.

The times of the Gentiles are ending, and presently we shall be favored, like the shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem by night, with a *"multitude of the heavenly host,"* as befitting the age of Christ's presence in the earth again *'in power and great glory'* (Matt. 24:30).
—Bro. Roberts—1898

Sowing Sparingly

To make the service of the Truth a matter of cheese-paring niceties is to do a handsome thing very unhandsomely. There is such a thing as *'sowing sparingly,'* as Paul intimates. And *"There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth."*

Liberal arrangements foster liberality. Parsimony in the service of God tends to paralysis and death. Men are never parsimonious where the heart is engaged. Let it be politics, business, courtship, or pleasure, the purse opens easily when zeal is at work. Extreme thrift in arrangements for the glory of God or the comfort of His people is evidence of extreme moderation of spiritual affection.

We have once or twice been frost-bitten in this manner. Frigid question: 'How much was the railway fare?' Answer: 'Two shillings, ninepence-halfpenny'—paid literally on the spot with a chill, without

any consideration of many undefinable expenses beside railway fare incurred.

Well, the heroism of the Truth can endure all things, and even be sorry that the Truth's friends, in the general blight of poverty, should have to even pay so much as 2s. 9½d. But it is pleasant to see the liberal devising liberal things. Love and good works are '*provoked*' by such a manifestation. The other is liable to make the mercury fall.

—*Good Company, Feb., 1892*

What are these Wounds?

"And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends"—Zech. 13:6.

THE identity of this hand-wounded personage is settled for us by an immediate appendix which can apply to none but Christ (v. 7)—

"Awake, O sword, against MY SHEPHERD—against the man that is MY FELLOW, saith the Lord of Hosts. Smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn Mine hand upon the little ones?"

This is in the nature of an explanatory parenthesis, thrown into the description of Israel's latter-day deliverance to account for the wounds of the principal actor. The speaker's account of the wounds is (v. 6)—

"They are those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends."

That he should give such an account in the day of his manifestation to Israel in power and great glory, is most suitable and telling. That an explanation should be introduced in the prophecy at a time when the wounds were not yet a matter of history is part of the completeness of the prophecy. Its fulfillment is explicitly before us in the apostolic history, both as regards the Shepherd and the little ones. Christ himself makes the application (Mt. 26:31), so we're not on speculative ground.

The smiting of the Shepherd is too notorious to require more than the most general reference to the crucifixion, which inflicted hand-wounds that remain with Christ forever. The turning of God's (supporting) hand to the little ones is illustrated in the miracle-attested labors of the apostles when Christ had left them.

Verse 7 is a parenthesis. Verse 8 (*'two parts cut off and die'*) resumes the account of the latter-day events in the land, including the subjection of the Jewish population of Palestine to a fiery ordeal that purifies and fits them for citizenship in the Kingdom which their Messiah has at last arrived to establish.

But, it maybe asked, Why should anyone make the wounds the subject of enquiry? A consideration of the salvation to which it stands

related will show to us that it is a perfectly natural question in the circumstances. Deliverance has come to Israel—miraculous deliverance—equal to anything that happened in Egypt, or to the Assyrians under Sennacherib.

And Jerusalem knows that the deliverance is the act of their God by the hand of the long-promised One. This promised One the Jews even now look for as destined to be of the house of David, though at the time of his manifestation, *'no man knoweth whence he is.'* This was their idea in the days of Jesus (Jn. 7:27). It was one of their difficulties in receiving Jesus that they knew his origin (as they supposed) *'of Nazareth.'*

When Christ at his appearing delivers them from the Gogian invader, it will seem that their traditional idea has been realized, and their opposition to Jesus vindicated. Messiah, the Son of David, has appeared, and shattered the terrible power of their foe: and no man knows whence he has sprung. He overthrows, expels, and exterminates the invader, and brings the iron rod of suppression on all the superstitions and idolatries that infest the land, and for a time conceals his identity, like Joseph from his brethren.

A suitable moment for the disclosure arrives. He allows himself on some special occasion to be freely seen, and contrives to exhibit the nail-wounds of his hands. There is no idea of his being Jesus. That idea will have been triumphantly dismissed in view of the total discrepancy between the deeds of this man, and the 'Jesus' of the sects of Christendom who is the only Jesus the Jews know anything about.

And this man will have so totally ignored Christendom, and will have been so totally disowned by them as a 'false Christ,' that any idea of his being Jesus of Nazareth will be out of the question with the Jews to the last moment. His hand-wounds are therefore a matter of curious enquiry merely, to which the enquirers address themselves with all confidence: *"What are these wounds in thine hands?"*

"Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends."

We can enter into the sequel: *"They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and mourn for him as for an only begotten son"* (Zc. 12:10).

What a signal for Jewish humiliation throughout the world! What a confounding of Gentile pretensions! With what an interest the sufferings of Christ invest the glory, as the sale of Joseph into bitter bondage paved the way for his elevation, and for the pathos of his revelation afterwards to the brothers who sold him.

All these considerations invest the hand-wound prophecy of Zechariah with utmost dignity and significance and pathetic interest.

—*Bro. Roberts—1891*

Jesus Before Anointing

When we contemplate the Cherub before his sealing and anointing, we see only the Son of Mary, the “Seed of the Woman” in the words of Moses; and the Son of God in the same sense that Adam was. The New Testament writers give us very little information concerning Jesus during the 30 years of his sojourn in the covenanted land. All we learn concerning him after his return from Egypt is that he dwelt in Nazareth and was subject to Mary and Joseph; and worked at the trade of his mother’s husband.

He knew his real paternity was not of Joseph. He never went to school, yet was he wiser than those who assumed to be his teachers, being filled with wisdom, the grace of God being upon him; and was the beloved of all who knew him—Matt. 11:23; Luke 2:40-52; Mark 6:3; John 8:15; Psa. 119: 97.

He was clearly in an intellectual and moral condition parallel with Adam’s before he transgressed. The “grace of God” was upon Adam and imparted to him much wisdom and knowledge; but still left him free to obey the impulses of his flesh if he preferred it, rather than the divine law. This was the case also with Jesus who, in his discourses, always maintained the distinction between what he called “*mine own self*,” and “*the Father Himself*” Who dwelt in him by His effluence—“The Son can do nothing of himself...I can of mine own self do nothing” (John 5).

He refers all the doctrine taught, and all the miracles performed, to the Father Whose effluence rested upon him and filled him. If this be remembered, it will make the “hard sayings”—John 6:60 of his teaching easy to be understood.

—Bro. John Thomas —*Phanerosis* 83

What Are the Urim and Thummim?

ANSWER: You will find a complete explanation of this matter in Eureka III: 313-21. The following extracts may help you:

“The breast-plate of judgment—that splendid decoration worn on the breast of Aaron in the holy place—was not a plate of metal, but a texture wrought of gold, blue, purple, scarlet, and fine twined linen.

“It was four-square, and of equal sides. It was filled in with settings of precious stones, four rows of them, and three in a row, and each stone set in gold. Upon these twelve stones were engraved, as upon a seal, the names of Israel’s 12 tribes . . .

“Having prepared the four-square texture, Moses was commanded to put into it the Urim and the Thummim; that is, the twelve precious stones: not that the stones abstractly were the Urim and the Thummim, but were indispensable to its manifestation.

“The Urim were the glistenings of the stones—the lights refracted and reflected from their cut and polished surfaces, and developing lights of divers colors. These were styled **urim**, ‘lights’: and the twelve stones themselves, **thummim**, ‘fullness,’ that is, of number and measure—fullness of number and fullness of measure . . .

“Where the precious stones are mentioned, there is no mention of Urim and Thummim (as Exo. 39:10), and where the Urim and Thummim are mentioned, there is no mention made of the stones, as (Lev. 8:8), which seems to show they are one and the same thing.

“The reader, however, will have perceived that they are not exactly the same, that the difference between the Urim and the stones is the difference between various colored lights and the stones reflecting them; and yet, without the glistening gems, there would be no light: so that the lights imply the stones and the stones the lights, and the presence of one argues that of the other.

“As to Thummim, the difference between them and the stones is not a matter of lights, but of number and measure. If, by some accident, the filling-in were deficient of one or more of the twelve stones, the Four-square Ornament would not have been Thummim, however bright the Urim of the gems present might have been. The deficient stones must have been supplied, and then Thummim would have been restored to the Holy Square . . .

“When Jesus lived again and ascended to the Divine Nature, and became Son of Deity with power by ‘Spirit of Holiness,’ he was typified by the ‘curiously wrought’ ephod, or jewelled overall and robe, put on by Aaron when standing before the Deity.

“As the living embroidered ephod, he stands in the presence of the Father with the names of the twelve tribes of the ‘Holy Nation’ engraven on his heart. He is set forth ‘for all,’ as an ephod to be put ‘upon all’ who would enter the Divine Presence, that they die not.

“This ephod may be put on after the manner in which Jesus became the ephod—by being born of water and Spirit.

“When the ephod is thus assumed, the immersed and resurrected believer is not only regarded as in it, but as a part of it, and consequently, as one of the Urim and Thummim—one of the lights—

and, therefore, one of the elements of the twelve precious stones, or Thummim: for, as each stone in the type represented a tribe, a multitude of individuals must have been signified by a separate stone...

The Spirit by Isaiah addressing the widowed Jerusalem, which shall hereafter be married to the Elohim of the whole earth, saith —

‘I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of precious stones. And all thy children shall be taught of Yahweh; and great shall be the peace of thy children’ (54:11-13).

“In this, the children of Jerusalem the exalted, *‘the mother of us all,’* are compared to precious stones of fair colors, or lights, Urim, without defining the Thummim, or full number of them.

“Peter styles the saints *‘living stones;’* and all that are built upon the foundation that Jesus is the Christ, and stand firm by the truth, Paul calls *‘gold, silver, and precious stones.’*

“And when he teaches, that they are citizens of the commonwealth of Israel, he says in effect, that they are Thummim, or individual elements of the precious stones, whose root fullness of number is twelve, and its symbolical 144,000.

“In the present state, the believers, who are constitutionally in the Christ-Ephod, and therefore citizens of the Four-square Polity which decorates it, are Urim, and addressed as such by Paul in Phil. 2:15, thus—

‘In a crooked and perverse generation, ye the sons of the Deity, shine as lights (or Urim) in the world.’

And in Eph. 5:8—

‘Ye were formerly darkness, but now light in the Lord; walk as children of light.’

“Being in the Lord, they are the lights and precious stones of his breastplate—the Urim and Thummim of his ephod. They became such by the law and the testimony dwelling in them **richly**. This gives them their polish, and enables them to *‘shine as lights.’*

“Where the Law and the Testimony are not in the understanding, there is no light there. In such, only darkness reigns; and while this continues they can be neither Urim nor Thummim, nor in Christ.” —*quoted from Bro. John Thomas*

Hints For Bible Markers

The Psalms

Psalm 5

Psalm 5:10

“let them fall by their own counsels”

There are those who have left the truth, then followed into the temptations provided by the world because they have not seen the love that the brothers and sisters should have towards one another. As Peter wrote, “And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity (agape – love). For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (2 Peter 1:7-8) The love is founded on the Word of God. We respond to the Word, and our interest grows. As our interest grows our mind perceives a profounder sense of need for the Word and a greater love for it. On the other hand, if we neglect the Word of God, we become indifferent to its claims and its counsels. For this reason “So I (Yahweh) gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels.” (Psalms 81:12)

Most fitting in the theme of this Psalm the final judgment on the wicked. At that fast approaching time when world will become Christ's, God will give the wicked up, to *“let them fall by their own counsels”*. We have many examples of this throughout the Bible. One example happened when war breaks out between Israel and the Philistines. Brother Roberts describes the event in *Ways of Providence*: “The two armies meet in the valley of Elah. They each entrench themselves on a mountain with a valley between. In this secure position, little progress is made on either side. They face each other a good many days. The Philistines have a big man among them who daily offers to stake the result of the conflict upon an individual encounter between himself and any Israelite who may come forward.” The result of the “individual encounter”, between David and Goliath, is well known. The Lord let the Philistines create the method of Israel's deliverance to show forth His might and absolute control of all things.

We have a wonderful New Testament example in the case of the Messiah. The Jewish rulers conspired against him and delivered him over to his Roman executioners. The leaders of the Jews were filled with jealousy and hatred. God used their feelings and their actions to accomplish His own plan. When Jesus comes to bring the world in to subjection God will accomplish this in a similar manner.