

# THE BEREAN CHRISTADELPHIAN ECCLESIAL NEWS

A monthly magazine devoted wholly to the Berean Christadelphian Ecclesial welfare, with the object of providing Ecclesial news, exhortations, articles and information of fraternal interest to the Brotherhood. Defending the original, foundation principles upon which the Truth was uncovered from darkness and upon which the Christadelphian movement was developed. Opposed to the dogmas of papal and protestant christendom. Upholding the Truth as Berean Christadelphians since 1923.

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

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

# **Berean Christadelphian Ecclesias Correction**

WORCESTER, MA, Sis. Jessie Prentice, 10 Homestead Ave, Worcester, MA 01610

## **Ecclesial News**

### **Lampasas, Tx.**

Dear Brethren and Sisters,

First an oversight on my part to communicate that Bro. Jeff Freeburg has been received back in fellowship as of December 2014.

Since we last wrote we have had more uplifting times to share. Many from all corners of the world joined us before and after the Hye gathering, with several making the trip to Richard and then finding their way to Texas. Many from our ecclesia were fortunate to venture to Ohio for their last participation in the Northeast gathering – a beautiful and inspirational time. We here in Lampasas just recently completed a record breaking attendance at our Youth Gathering – “Youth Through Baptism – The Early Years”; the young (and young-at-heart) were very attentive to all of our informative speakers covering responsibility, separation from the world, dating, when ready for baptism, Christ’s return, after baptism, and later years – many thanks to our Bro. Mike and Sis. Karen Neely and their many helpers in planning the program and meals.

Our Sunday School scholar, Nathan Edwards and our Sisters Ruby Wolfe and Ruthie Hall thank one and all for their continued thoughts and prayers during their times of health issues and trials.

Sis. Carol Smith has continued her “food and fellowship” get-togethers with the ecclesia in her new home, here in Lampasas. Our Bro. John and Sis. Sheila Wolfe with their three children have recently moved to Lampasas, with Sis. Sheila wanting to be in our Sisters class rotation. We are also thrilled to have sis Tanya Martin and her three youngsters closer to the ecclesia, now residing in Copperas Cove and able to meet with all of us regularly.

Our ecclesia is also growing with the blessings of new baby girls: Chloe Mae – born 11/27/15 to Bro. Nathan and Sis. Joanne Phillips, and Rebekah Susan – born 12/22/15 to Bro. Jason and Sis. Michelle Carroll.

The newest class to our ecclesia is a weekly study on the “Thirteen Lectures of the Apocalypse” starting this coming Friday, 1/8/16 – as we all are looking forward to Christ’s return.

In the one hope we share, Bro. Jerry Connolly

## Brisbane, Papua New Guinea

Dear brethren and sisters in the sure hope of the promises made unto the fathers,

The brethren and sisters of Papua New Guinea unitedly send their love and gratitude to all of like precious faith around the world, and above all things praise and thankfulness to our heavenly Father for what great things he has done for them in calling them out unto that eternal hope which will not fade away.

The Brisbane ecclesia has the very great pleasure of announcing the baptism of our new brother in Christ, **David Kori** on December 27, 2015. Bro. David becomes the foundation member of what we hope will become an active ecclesia in Port Moresby. For the past year and a half, bro. David had been diligently studying the Key lessons, Instructor, The blood of Christ and the Baptismal Review Book, which we reviewed with David via Skype before our end of the year visit. Bro. David is a very keen Bible student and we all wish him Yahweh's richest blessings as he continues to apply himself to the study of the Word and his sincere desire to walk in the footsteps of the faith of Abraham.

Sis. Sharon and I travelled to Port Moresby the capital of Papua New Guinea on the 25<sup>th</sup> December to link up with bro. Macx Kota who had been proclaiming the gospel in the city for some time before our arrival. We wasted no time joining him in this effort, and the following morning we met bro. Macx and David and went to a popular marketplace and transit centre where bro. Macx set up his public address system on a shaded embankment overlooking the market place. In the company of David and sis. Sharon, and with bro. Macx speaking in 'Tok Pisin', the pidgin English most widely spoken in PNG, and I in English, we proclaimed the witness of the prophets of the God of Israel, the purpose of prophecy and those concerning Gog, the king in the North and Armageddon incorporating signs of the times in relation to Syria, Northern Iraq, Iran and Russia. Hundreds had gathered to hear this message and we told all assembled that God willing we would return and continue this series of public talks on Monday.

On Sunday the 27<sup>th</sup> December we travelled to Ella Beach where we met with bro. Macx, David and a number of bro. Macx's relatives, one of whom was an elder of that area. All present sat patiently as David gave a good confession of his faith over a period of some three hours using some of the questions from the BRB for the interview. Many who passed by stopped to listen to the gospel being reviewed. David gave a good confession of his faith, after which we baptised David into the

name of the Father who was manifested in the son by the Holy Spirit for the remission of his sins. Later that afternoon as we came together to break bread and drink wine in remembrance of Yahweh's unspeakable gift I extended the right hand of fellowship to our new brother on behalf of all in fellowship around the world. On that occasion I also presented bro. David with an Elpis Israel, and as our end of the year studies in Aiyrua were to concentrate on Daniel's last great vision of chapters 10–12, I mentioned the Father of the Maccabees – Matthias. He began the revolt against the King of the North along with his sons by “knowing their God” and were prepared “to stand firm and take action” and “made many understand” and were “refined, purified and made white for the time of the end”. Matthias stood up to do this 167 BC before Christ's first advent and bro. Thomas began to do the same in 1848 when he published Elpis Israel standing against the Babylonian doctrines and blasphemy of the age 167 years ago! We urged David to continue in his probation, the principles of “the parable the Maccabees” so that he might along with them be declared as the “wise” who shall “shine like the brightness of the sky above and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever”.

We all assembled together the following Monday morning with our new brother and returned to the market place to continue the proclamation of the coming of the Lord Jesus and the re-establishment of the God of Israel's kingdom on earth in the land covenanted to Abraham Isaac and Jacob. On this occasion, hundreds again heard our message which focused this time on the “the latter days and the time of the end,” at the conclusion of which we distributed pamphlets on various gospel subjects with phone and email contact details. Such was the response that great masses of people surged forward to take all the material we had. We returned again the following morning and concluded our series with how, by believing in the gospel preached to Abraham and in walking in the steps of his faith, we through baptism may become Christ's and Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. That afternoon we left our new brother full of joy, and flew to Lae, the second largest city in PNG, where we spent three days similarly proclaiming the gospel with the assistance of some of the brethren and sisters who live in that city, again handing out hundreds of pamphlets to interested friends.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of January accompanied by a number of brethren and sisters from Lae, we travelled up to the Eastern Highlands to the Aiyura Ecclesia. The brethren and sisters of Aiyura had been very active over the past year spreading the gospel message to those who had ears to hear in the surrounding areas, the result being that delegations of elders

from three separate electorates had journeyed to Aiyura, some walking many hours, to listen to our New Year's scriptural program. Over three days we met at the Aiyura tabernacle from 9 am beginning with a discussion on the Psalms, followed by the "street talks" that bro. Macx and I had publicly proclaimed in both Port Moresby and Lae. Together, bro. Macx and I spoke of the message of the prophets and of that great salvation that should come through the promised Seed. (Most of those present can in fact understand and read English, though they cannot always find the correct English words to quickly respond. PNG was an Australian colony for many years up to 1975, and 'Tok Pisin' along with English is taught in their schools.) In this different setting of the Aiyura tabernacle, I encouraged all to write down the scriptural references so that they could in turn use these in delivering this message to their community. The elders who came to observe were greatly moved by this message, one they confessed they had not heard before. They were likewise greatly moved by the exposition of Daniel chapters 10–12 in the afternoon studies. At the end of these three days we gave them Key Lessons and other material to take with them on their return to their respective villages.

There is a great stir beginning in the Eastern Highlands, and it is a wonder to behold the enthusiasm and eagerness of both our beloved brethren and sisters and many interested friends. This last year has not been without its trials. The El Nino event in the South Pacific has caused drought throughout the highlands of PNG. Their crops began to fail and we in Brisbane heard reports of food shortages. Before this became critical the Brisbane ecclesia, despite not asking, began receiving anonymous donations for the 'help fund' for PNG. Before help was needed, Yahweh moved brethren and sisters to supplement what the Brisbane ecclesia through the grace of Yahweh was organizing. On behalf of our greatly beloved brethren and sisters in PNG, the Brisbane ecclesia thanks those who Yahweh the God of grace has so moved, and continues to move, in their assistance, both spiritual and material.

The sisters of the Aiyura ecclesia, this year have said that they will begin to translate the gospel message into 'Tok Pisin' so that we can print this and distribute it further afield. Likewise it is the Brisbane ecclesia's determination to begin this year to produce God willing a work for the proclamation of the gospel in PNG that will review the prophets' teachings concerning the time of the end, followed by consideration of the gospel preached to Abraham and a review of all the essential doctrines in preparation for baptism.

There is so much more we would like to share with all in fellowship, but these things we write to fill all earnest hearts with joy at the response of the brethren and sisters who were gathered together at Aiyura. The last morning before departing we joined hands with all present and, led by bro. Aiyuta, bowed our heads in praise and worship of our loving heavenly Father. I thought of the joy the Lord Jesus must experience in presenting such a united sacrifice of lips and heart to our Father “who is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to Him be glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever. Amen.” (Ephesians 3:20-21).

On behalf of the Brisbane ecclesia, your brother in the Hope of Israel, Peter Small

### **Goldthwaite, Tx.**

The Goldthwaite Ecclesia has the pleasure of announcing that on Saturday January 9, 2016, **Rianne Hurst**, after a good confession of her faith, put on the saving name of Christ through the waters of baptism. Rianne is the daughter of Bro and Sis Richard and Melissa Hurst. If you wish to correspond with Rianne, her address is 1371 FM 218 E Zephyr, Texas 76890

Bro. Curtis Hurst

## **GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES**

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

**HOUSTON FRATERNAL GATHERING**..... **March 25–27, 2016**

Bro. Bob Lorquet, boblorquet@hotmail.com

**LAMPASAS FRATERNAL GATHERING** ..... **June 10–12, 2016**

Bro. Ricky Hurst, PO Box 1381, Goldthwaite TX 76844, 325-451-4075

**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

## **The BCAA**

The Berean Christadelphian Audio Archives, or BCAA for short, has made available a large selection of talks on MP3 online. The address is [www.bcaudioarchives.blogspot.com](http://www.bcaudioarchives.blogspot.com). Please check this link often as we will be updating with new material as much as possible. The purpose of this site is to restore and make available lectures, exhortations, and study classes. Some of these talks are decades old and have seldom been heard.

We are always looking for tapes, and if you have some talks that you would like to share, please email Bro. Craig Kiley ([craigkiley@yahoo.com](mailto:craigkiley@yahoo.com)) and we will be happy to transfer the talks to MP3 format and post them.

# The Man That Hath Seen Affliction 4

## THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH

*“The Lord hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up .. In the third day He will raise us up.”*

### PART FOUR

#### VERSE THREE

*“Judah is gone into captivity because of affliction, and because of great servitude.”*

The prophet now expands his view from the one city Jerusalem to the logical extension of the whole nation of Judah (which the one city represented).

Some translations render ‘captivity’ as ‘exile.’ This verse may then mean that Judah chose to flee into exile (in Egypt), rather than endure the oppressive yoke of Babylon. If this be the meaning, the verse tells of the result of their choice: *“she findeth no rest.”* They were to be chastised, and by no maneuvers could they escape the divine hand.

But perhaps a better understanding of the verse lies in a possible different meaning of the word translated ‘because.’ Normally this carries the meaning of ‘in consequence of’ (in which case it could refer to Judah's captivity being the punishment for her affliction of others—the ‘innocents’ among her—Jer. 2:34; 2 Kg. 24:14).

But this phrase can also carry the idea of the consequence itself instead of the cause, and could be translated—

*“ ... to suffer affliction, and to suffer great servitude.”*

This seems to be the better view. Then it points to the sufferings of Judah in her captivity, her punishment.

\* \* \*

*“She dwells among the heathen?”*

(‘Nations’ is a better translation of the Hebrew than ‘heathen.’ The meaning will be found to be clearer in almost every instance if ‘nations’ is substituted for ‘heathen’).

When God maintained Israel as a separate nation, she was constantly straining at His bonds to return to the practices of the godless nations around her. This was notably true for Moses’ generation, which had just left Egypt, Ex. 14:11; 16:3.

At last Israel's wish was realized—but in a much different way than expected: she was now to have her fill of association with the nations, as her people—

*“Perished among the nations” and “pined away in their iniquity in their enemies' lands” (Lev. 26:38-9).*

\* \* \*

*“She findeth no rest.”*

*“And among these nations thou shalt find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest ... and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee” (Deut. 28:65-6).*

—a fulfillment of the curses from Mt. Ebal, which Moses foretold in the event that Israel violated God's Covenant (as he said they would—Deut. 32:29).

\* \* \*

*“Her persecutors overtook her between the straits.”*

The idea is that Israel, as a wanderer and a fugitive by God's decree, finds herself trapped by thieves in a narrow pass, with no escape in sight (note also 4:18-19). This is in contrast to the time of the Exodus, when God did not allow her enemies to overtake her between the straits as she came to the barrier of the Red Sea.

This can also be rendered “in the midst of her distress.” The conqueror usually strives to break the conquered both mentally and physically—he usually takes full advantage of the utter helplessness of immediate defeat in order to gain complete control and destroy all opposition.

*“Between the straits”* also carries the meaning of “no way out”—complete subjection and humiliation. There was no sparing, no escape: she was crushed politically and militarily.

#### VERSE FOUR

*“The ways of Zion do mourn.”*

The roads leading to Jerusalem were empty, since none came to the solemn feasts (2:6). But contrast this picture of desolation with Isaiah's prophecy of the future Kingdom—

*“And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness.*

*“And the ransomed of the Lord shall return ... with songs and*

*everlasting joy” (35:8-10).*

But now ALL of the land was to mourn (Isa. 24:4-5)—

*“The earth mourneth, and fadeth away ... because they have transgressed the laws.”*

Jeremiah had foretold the same punishment (9:11; 33:10-12), but again, in the very same context, the desolation is contrasted with the assurance of the future eternal blessedness of these same ‘ways of Zion’—

*“Again, in this place, which is desolate without man and without beast .. shall be an habitation of shepherds causing their flocks to lie down ... (when) the Branch of Righteousness shall grow up” (Jer. 33:12-15).*

The ‘ways of Zion’ mourned because of the wickedness of their inhabitants, but they will rejoice when Christ as King ‘turns ungodliness from Jacob’ (Rom. 11:26).

\* \* \*

*“None come to the solemn feasts.”*

The ‘solemn’ or ‘appointed’ feasts were the three annual feasts which all the men were commanded to attend: Passover, Pentecost (Firstfruits), and Feast of Tabernacles. But these, of course, ceased with the captivity and the destruction of the Temple—

*“He hath violently taken away His Tabernacle ... He hath destroyed His places of the assembly ...*

*“The Lord hath caused the solemn feasts to be forgotten in Zion” (2:6).*

God caused the worship services to cease because the Jews—in the depth of their sins—could no longer serve Him acceptably. In the same way He caused to cease the blessings of the field and vineyard, because Judah could no longer perform the meal and drink offering in the proper manner (Joel 1:8-16).

\* \* \*

*“All her gates are desolate.”*

In Eastern cities in Biblical times, the gates of the city were the main places of commerce, as well of legal and social activities (Lm. 5:14; Ruth 4:1; Job 29:7; Pr. 31:23). They would be especially alive during the various weeks of the feasts.

\* \* \*

*“Her priests sigh.”*

The priests—supposedly the spiritual leaders of Judah—are condemned in 4:13-16 for their grievous iniquity and for their misleading teaching.

Perhaps the priests sigh because of the famine (1:11,12,18-20). Or perhaps it is because with the elimination of the Temple worship comes the elimination of their lucrative positions. Or it could be true sorrow in the case of those who recognized the great loss of God's protective, loving hand.

\* \* \*

*“Her virgins are afflicted.”*

This, in conjunction with the mention of the priests, would refer to those ‘damsels’ who took part in the celebration of the feasts (Psa. 68:25): see Lam. 5:11.

\* \* \*

*“She is in bitterness.”*

She is grieved: this should be “*godly sorrow*” that “*worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of*” (2 Cr. 7:10).

#### VERSE FIVE

*“Her adversaries are the chief, her enemies prosper.”*

This just as Moses had warned the children of Israel—if they disobeyed God (Deut. 28:43-44)—

*“The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low.*

*“He shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail.”*

See Ezek. 21:25-27; Luke 14:11.

\* \* \*

*“Her children are gone into captivity before the enemy.”*

The ‘children of Zion’ were carried away by Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 52:28-30) as slaves (before the enemy), but there same children—called the ‘children of Rachel’—“*shall come again from the land of the enemy*” (Jer. 31:16) in the last days.

#### VERSE SIX

*“All her beauty is departed.”*

The priestly garments of Aaron and his sons were given them ‘for glory and for beauty’ (Exod. 28:2). The beauty which they represented was the ‘beauty of holiness’ and of righteousness. This

type of beauty had departed from the promiscuous daughter. She no longer maintained the (1 Pet. 3:4)—

*“Ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.”*

The inner beauty had departed. Therefore it was left for God next to remove the external beauty—which had been designed to signify the righteousness that could have been attained by the Jews: the Temple, the throne, the priesthood, and the various services of worship associated with Zion. All of these departed.

The greatest beauty which the Jews possessed was God's personal presence (Isa. 12:6)—

*“Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion, for great is the HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL in the midst of thee!”*

*“God is known in her palaces for a refuge”* (Psa. 48:3).

This, sadly, was also taken away at the time of the captivity. The Glory of the Lord departed in successive stages: from the Sanctuary, and then from the city, until it came to the Mt. of Olives on the east of Jerusalem, from whence it disappeared (Ezek. 9:5; 10:4; 11:23).

It must be noted again—as before—that **God will restore what He has taken away**. The same Glory of God will return, in a time of much greater happiness than the time of its removal. In the last days—

*“His feet shall stand upon the Mt. of Olives”* (Zech. 14:4).

The glorious company of saints, led by Christ, will come from the wilderness and approach the city from the east (Isa. 63:1; Song 3:6-7) to deliver it from the Northern host—

*“The Son of man shall come in the GLORY of his Father”* (Mat. 16:27).

Rather than judgment there will be deliverance. To this joyous occasion Ezekiel refers—

*“The glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East (‘the sun's rising’—Rev. 16:12, see Eureka) .. and behold the Glory of the Lord filled the House”* (43:2).

\* \* \*

*“Her princes are become like harts.”*

David, in Psa. 42:1, presents a picture of a hart panting after water in a dry and thirsty land. This is the picture intended here. The land of Israel had figuratively become a desert: the ‘water of life’—the true knowledge and fear of God—had vanished.

Also, the hart symbolizes timidity, meekness. The strong, oncelionlike princes of Judah, have become no better than cowards—who flee from their enemies, as did Zedekiah (2 Kg. 25:5; Jer. 39:5). The princes are here mentioned to supplement the priests in v. 4.

God has now left Jerusalem completely desolate. Twice before the Babylonians had invaded Jerusalem, but here is the final and complete overthrow. Both the Temple and the city are taken and burned, the Priest and the King—the mitre and the crown—are cast off “*until he come whose right it is*” (Ezek. 21:27). That is, until Christ comes in the dual office of Priest and King—

*“He shall be a Priest upon his throne”* (Zech. 6:13).

\* \* \*

*“That find no pasture.”*

No true sustenance from God (Psa. 23:2). Thus the princes forsake their children and those that depend upon them (Jer. 14:5-6; 47:3).

\* \* \*

*“They are gone without strength.”*

They ‘flee without strength’—again indicating cowardice, as Moses had foretold—

*“The sound of 00a shaken leaf shall chase them: they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword”* (Lev. 26:36).

(To be continued, God willing)

—Bro. G.V.Growcott

## **The Goodness and Severity of God—Our Example**

WE are very aware of God’s goodness, the fact that we are here is evidence of that, but there is woe to those who despise or ignore God’s precepts. For the example of His goodness that He has bestowed upon us is the grace and mercy provided through His son our Lord Jesus Christ whom we are here to remember today.

In our recent readings we have encountered some interesting actions & reactions of God and men. Perhaps in these we can take some lessons to ourselves for exhortation.

Firstly David is exposed for his horrible sin of adultery with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah the Hittite. 2 Samuel 12: 1-14 records Nathan at the behest of God confronting David, his confession of sin, God's forgiveness but with consequences that spread throughout the rest of David's life.

Let us note the sins, the challenge of sin, the confession and the forgiveness happened in an apparently short space of time. We know for certain that it happened within less than 9 months the conception to birth of the child which died, but probably within a few weeks. Some would say how could David commit and admit his sin and receive forgiveness within such a short time? It is a fact, however human nature judges these matters. It was deliberate pre-meditated sin but it was forgiven, which, despite men's laws requiring death, was God's prerogative to forgive, who knew this was an aberration in David's character, and assessed him as "a man after God's own heart."

What may we learn from this?

1. God's laws and judgments are far superior to man's.
2. God knows the hearts of men, we do not.

3. We ought to be cautious but generous in our assessment of confessions and repentance of sin from those desirous of retracing their steps in the Truth. As an example can there ever be an arbitrary time placed upon when a sinner can be restored? In some instances with the restoration of offenders marrying out of the Truth, ecclesias have restored some after a short interval of separation from the Meeting.

Let us be honest with ourselves and one another. Do you remember when you in your thoughts contemplated something sinful briefly, or even allowed it to occupy your thoughts longer, and sometimes, perhaps often, how quickly you came to your senses and set about in prayer to our Father in heaven for mercy and forgiveness. On the other hand perhaps the full realisation of contemplated wrong-doing, known only to you and God, took some time to make its impact on our conscience. There really cannot be any set time for true repentance to be demonstrated. Then some do not demonstrate either in word or writing what we think is adequate remorse, but if so we are not always able to discern true repentance, only God, who knows the hearts as He did with David, can. Be sure none can deceive God and Christ: on our part for now we are obliged to give offenders the benefit of any reservation we may have, but with due caution towards the reasonable & scriptural based sensitivities of others. Some thoughts on this by Bro. Roberts may help here to which I will refer later.

Now consider the consequences which all sins inevitably bring as in David's sufferings. God chose suitable individuals with a predisposition for wrong doing to afflict David. These particularly two Absalom, his son, and Ahithophel, Bathsheba's grandfather had motives to punish David. Absalom coveted the throne, and was wary that David would not select him as his successor, but rather another of his sons, but in any case he was impatient to attain his object sooner than later, so he took suitable steps, normally achievable, except for divine intervention. He was helped by Ahithophel who understandably was ashamed as no doubt other family members of what David did to both Bathsheba and Uriah, and therefore had a ready motive to help Absalom achieve his object.

Both these men suffered ignominious deaths as a result of their actions. Though God used them, they as free will individuals suffered the consequences of their actions

What may we learn from these two who had the opportunity & disposition to punish David?

1. May there be in our hearts a disposition to see offenders against God's laws suffer at least in terms such as, "they brought this upon themselves, they shouldn't be rewarded by a too soon restoration of fellowship if at all, look at what they did"? This seems innocuous enough but we are not at liberty to contribute to what may lead someone to lose their faith. There have been enough examples within other groups of individuals abandoning the Truth because the door for a return to fellowship has been shut because of a man-made rule. This rule has long been banished from Berean circles, and before that by our Pioneer brethren.

2. No doubt there can be some like Ahithophel who had or have a genuine, at least in their eyes, reason to obstruct any effort to restore a serious offender.

3. Are there not scriptural principles that would give any of this mind some cause for reflection? Consider these scriptures: Proverbs 20: 22; Proverbs 24: 29; Matthew 5: 39; Romans 12: 17; 1 Peter 3: 9; Colossians 3: 13; Ephesians 4: 31-32. Let us not contribute in any way to the consequences that repentant sinners inevitably reap due to their folly. They will suffer enough without our help.

4. There may be other less obvious ways of expressing our displeasure with a brother or sister especially when it comes to offenders against God's laws. Possibly sitting back and let others handle the problem would be the easy way out. If we are simply

passengers in the Truth we would be well accommodated by this, if we haven't already decided that they should suffer the consequences of their actions indefinitely. There could be others that may feel this is best so their comfort zone may not be disturbed. It may not be just in dealing with those expressing repentance. What of those who need more time to reflect on their sin? Perhaps marrying out of the Truth takes for some more time to honestly express admittance of wrongdoing. Let us encourage offenders, not discourage them. So in the spirit of Christ we should set about rescuing the lost sheep, and facilitate their restoration knowing that, "there but for the grace of God we might have failed if not in this in some other sin even if it did not go beyond the sinful thought."

What other incident is worth recalling from David's character? The mournful David at the loss of Absalom's life was remonstrated with by Joab for his seemingly excessive sorrow at the loss of Absalom. Joab didn't have in this and other murderous acts an ounce of the character that David had. Let us steer closer to David than the vindictive Joab!

We have been considering in our readings the prophecies of Jeremiah. What may we learn from these? Jeremiah 25 includes the prophecy of coming punishment upon Judah, verses 4, 7-9 by Nebuchadnezzar, described as "my servant." This is interesting as later in the chapter, verse 12 God says that, "I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation" after 70 years, "for their iniquity." Despite God's use of Babylon to punish Israel, and because God does not interfere with the motives of nations and individuals or their free will for good or ill, he will bring them to account at the conclusion of His purpose with them. It is also worth noting that often nations and individuals who have carried out punishments upon Israel felt justified because they believed they were carrying out God's work. Look at Jeremiah 50: 7. "All that found them have devoured them: and their adversaries said, **We offend not, because they have sinned against the Lord**, the habitation of justice, even the Lord, the hope of their fathers." So called Christian churches especially the papacy have considered they have had a divine right to contribute to punishing the Jews, and many remain antagonistic to Jews and the nation of Israel, by way of increased anti-Semitism for which retribution by God is not far off.

As in the case with David, although Absalom and Ahithophel, were used by God, there was no interference with their free will, and they suffered the consequences of their murderous intentions. Let us who may feel some right to make life difficult for offenders against the Truth and God, be very conscious of how we treat our brothers and

sisters, because we may have to give account for providing any impetus to the consequences which come upon offenders against God's law.

Compare our concerns, sometimes, and for some, often, prejudiced in favour of our own and close friends (phileo love), when dealing with sin and offences, and restoration.

Now those of our spiritual family, sometimes, even often, possibly ones we have had a brush with, may not by us be given the same willingness to forgive, and more especially to help their recovery and restoration after sin. However (agape love) helps us to know our duty.

If it is one of our own family or close friends, and they have strayed, is there anyone of us who will not provide every opportunity and encouragement for them to return after the example of the father with the prodigal son? Notice not just be ready to receive back the prodigal but to go to meet the offender and encourage and welcome his or her return. We note that this father is an example of how our Father seeks out His prodigal children. However it applies to us who are exhorted to, "*Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*"—Matthew 5: 48. Consider also the lost sheep and the efforts made to find it.

While on this subject, over many years in the Truth, it has been noticed how readily some have been to pronounce judgment on the lowering of standards by some, yet when one of their own have strayed, their standards have been adjusted to their prejudices. I know of two recent cases, not Berean, where this has occurred. Let us see we do not set different standards to cater for any of our prejudices for or against any of our brethren and sisters! We are all susceptible to this. There is in the record of Mark 3:33-35 a very important example of the difference and emphasis placed on the importance of spiritual family against that of the natural, as experienced by Christ himself. "*And he answered them saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren? And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.*"

We are all at risk of a wrong balance in separating natural and spiritual. We should have learned early in our lives in the Truth that in our separating from our past lives we had to accept as the disciples did, "*He that loveth Father or Mother more than me is not worthy of me*" (Matthew 10: 37), but rather that we are to hate (prefer less) all things, family, friends belonging to our past lives (Luke 14: 26).

We are also taught “*to love our enemies,*” which is or must be our response to wrong doing inflicted upon us. How important that, if we are to love our enemies, that we learn to love (agape) with more intensity our brothers and sisters especially those who may have hurt us mentally or physically. But we do have another commandment and that is we must not put an obstacle in the path of our brethren and sisters which might cause them offence, not just a hurt feeling, but such as could lead one to lose their faith. Therefore not one of us can afford to do anything which will put a stumbling block in our brother or sister’s path. That is the negative aspect, but more on the positive side, we are to set about seeking ways to help all where we have the opportunity, especially those whom we may find least attractive in appearance or attitude, even the ungrateful, boring, and you name it of irritating characteristics.

There is another interesting example of being firm in upholding the principles of the Truth in doctrine and conduct. Look with me at Paul’s serious admonition to the Corinthians, 1st epistle, chapter 5, verses 1-13. Then consider the softness he uses in 2 Corinthians 2: 6-10 in dealing with a repentant member. What a contrast, yet well balanced, be firm to uphold the Truth, but gentle & reaching out to the repentant! And this is the same individual of 1 Corinthians 5, I believe. Look at the purpose of the action against the one who committed a very serious sin, incest, in verse 5. “*To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*” I believe the object of this separation was achieved. Yet one Christadelphian commentator said it could not be this person who was restored due to the dreadful sin he committed, that he was **DRIVEN OUT** (in his words) of the ecclesia. Was it—is it an unforgivable sin? A serious sin but surely one forgivable with a change of lifestyle and repentance! So we see the fulfilment of the purpose of the flesh subdued and the spirit (of Christ) potentially saved, which matches with Romans 8: 13-14. “*For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*”

Is there not a lesson for us in balancing a sternness in dealing with sinners with mercy in restoring those who confess and forsake their sin by due repentance? In both cases our actions are an expression of agape love.

Bro. Roberts said, Christadelphian April 1890 in the case of sin and repentance in “Answers to Correspondents,” (where a brother was apparently convicted for theft—see Berean 1978)—

“There are no “Scriptural grounds” for refusing forgiveness to “a brother who has committed a fault and has repented,” but while granting forgiveness, there may be reason for indicating the repudiation of his offence—reason having to do with others rather than the offender, as when Paul says, “Them that sin, rebuke before all, *that others also* may fear.” We are to “give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully” (1 Timothy 5: 14), and to have no fellowship with the works of darkness (Ephesians 5: 11). Now if an offender, whose sin was notorious in the unbelieving community, were to pass unchallenged amongst the brethren, occasion would be given to the adversary to say that they were indifferent to sin, and thus the truth would be blasphemed. We should be seeming to have fellowship with the works of darkness. We can only prevent this by some outward token of repudiation: such a token as would be visible to the outside. Miriam was excluded from the camp for seven days. If an offending brother is suspended from fellowship for a period, the right token is given, and the brother’s repentance is put to the test. In the apostolic days of the spirit’s delegated authority, there were more effective methods (1 Corinthians 5: 5). In our days, no other seems available: and we cannot but suppose the Lord will approve of the brethren’s action in such a case, and condone any excess of zeal for righteousness there may, in his judgment, be in it. Whatever is done ought to be done in the spirit of kindness—with the desire to restore and not to humble a brother, while at the same time upholding the standard of that “holiness which becometh the house of God.”

One more matter worth mentioning is this: There are those of us that have been blessed with happy marriages, perhaps of whom some cannot imagine the breakdown of marriages where both have embraced the Truth & where the Truth is or should be the defining element that settles or should settle all differences, and even if not, where forgiveness reigns supreme. Sadly human nature prevails, and none of us can know how much of this some have to deal with in households that should know better. A few have been unable to prevail against the tide, and God only knows how much anyone can overcome, so we, (despite any prejudice perhaps sub-conscious) without tolerating any loosening of the bonds of marriage, need to simply thank God for the blessing of a happy marriage and not needlessly humiliate those who have succumbed to their weakness and sinned. There are also those who have had to accept a single life for different reasons, not necessarily a life choice, who may question,(again perhaps sub-conscious) why some cannot be as they. For some, as for example, Bro. Growcott, despite his apparent life choice, has shown that despite what for some would have been a clear prejudice against those failing in this

area, showed by his grasp on the fundamentals of the Truth that he was able to be understanding and sympathetic towards the erring where such showed a repentant attitude and a will to renew their lives in the Truth. Let us follow in the same spirit.

Bro. Growcott said: “We all have much to learn about spiritual things, about what love and compassion really are and really call for in help and service to the weak and straying. This present problem and controversy is to teach us many things, if we will face it and learn. At best we perceive the divine beauty of the Christ character as through a glass darkly. We are all, like the unconverted Paul, self righteous Pharisees at heart, especially if we are, or fancy ourselves to be, zealous for purity in ourselves—real deep-down purity of heart and thought and emptying of self and of service unto others—purity from all the daily-repeated ugliness and selfishness of the flesh—what divine and heavenly places the ecclesias would be!”

If we want admonition from Christ on this, turn to Matthew 25: 34-46 from which a few words should suffice to appreciate our priorities. Verses 40 & 45 are the particular ones to observe. “*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.*” This was a ground for approval, whereas those rejected were those who were advised, “*Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.*” life is God.

Bro. Ted Mingham

## **Meditations—Deity’s Ways No. 77**

WHICH is the greater sin—to forbid the reading of the Scriptures, as the Romish Church has done; or to advise their being read in the light of Modern Criticism, as the Protestant Churches are now doing? That Modern Criticism is positive blasphemy, no faithful student of the Word can doubt. If Modern Criticism is true, then the teaching of Christ and his apostles is false. What is Modern Criticism? Let us contemplate it in the light of the fact that Christ gave “his divine sanction to the identical collection of writings which we now call the Old Testament—consisting of the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms” (see introduction to *Lex Mosaica*). Modern Criticism embraces — (1) Textual criticism, which declares the text to be seriously corrupt; (2) Linguistic criticism, which throws doubt upon the interpretation of not a few passages; (3) Literary criticism, which asserts that some books have been revised and interpolated in such a way that their original authors would hardly be able to recognise them; (4) Historical criticism, which affirms that much of the history has been coloured by the beliefs and practices of the times in which the books were

compiled, and bids us to a great extent to revolutionise our views of the course of the history of Israel; (5) The researches of archæology and the comparative study of religions, which show that the religion of Israel derived many elements from the primitive religion of the Semites, possessed much in common with the religions of surrounding nations, and was largely influenced in its development by the faiths with which it came in contact in the course of its history. Such are the claims, according to Dr. Fitzpatrick, of Modern Criticism, which, says this notable professor, “demand a new treatment of the Bible.” What shall we say to all this? Are not the Psalmist’s words appropriate: “It is time for thee, Lord, to work, for they have made void thy law?”

The advocates of Modern Criticism have worked havoc with the Old Testament, and have now commenced operations on the New. God is not indifferent, we may be quite sure, to the doings of these ravagers of the Scriptures. The Jewish clergy filled up the cup of their iniquity by murdering Christ, and the Gentile clergy seem to be filling up theirs by similar behaviour towards the Bible. Modern critics speak of Christ as their Lord, but in so doing they insult rather than honour him. “Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” are the words which Christ addressed to men who opposed his teaching. Christ found no fault in the Scriptures—he had nought but praise for them. His whole endeavour was to encourage and establish his hearers in regard to every jot and tittle that had been written. Let us take care lest we be led away by the plausibility of Modern Criticism. If we escape, it will only be as the result of following Christ’s example—by devoting our time, not to the finding of mistakes in Moses and the prophets, but to honestly striving to understand them. The more we know of the Scriptures, the more shall we abhor Modern Criticism and its infidel principles. Our duty is to keep Modern Criticism at a distance—certainly on the other side of our ecclesial frontier. “I would they were cut off that trouble you,” said Paul of Judaism. We may be certain that he would use language equally strong of influential teachers who not only misinterpret God’s word, but question and deny its integrity.

Christ practised what he preached. The spirit bids us to be Christ-like—exemplary in the things which we enjoin on others. Christ attracted men, and encouraged and strengthened them, by his upright, consistent walk, and we shall do the same if we follow in his steps. Sincerity inspires confidence, insincerity destroys it. Brethren who talk and do not—who pose as saints on the platform, and who away from it act the part of sinners; who lecture, exhort and in private life go contrary to their teaching—are the truth’s greatest enemies. They distress and dishearten faithful toilers, and disgust and repel genuine

seekers after truth. They are hateful alike to God and man. Mere talkers are a danger—their unprincipled acting secures for them a character which they do not deserve, and an influence which, sooner or later, is bound to create disaster. If we aspire to public work let us be prepared to be exemplary—prepared to illustrate in our lives the great principles of the truth which we would enjoin on our hearers—otherwise let us lie low. The ecclesias want speakers, but better would it be to have none than to have hypocrites. The ecclesias require speakers whose hearts as well as heads have been reached by the truth—men who love righteousness, and who, from its practice, can speak earnestly and feelingly.

No man or woman can become or remain a member of God’s family except by an exhibition of faith (Gal. 3:26)—faith in the truth (Jas. 1:18; 2 Thess. 2:13)—the truth of apostolic proclamation, embracing “the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ” (Acts 8:12; 28:23, 31). The doctrines which go to make up the truth are discoverable by a candid and persevering search of the scriptures (as the life-work of Dr. Thomas abundantly proves). These doctrines are epitomised for us in *Eureka*, vol. II., pp. 666–670; also in *Christendom Astray* (new edition), pp. 312–316. If we should have any doubt about the correctness of the list, we can easily check it by an appeal to Bible revelation. Paul commended the Bereans for proving him in this way (Acts 17:11), and the authors of the works named court similar treatment. It is the truth—the Spirit’s teaching, believed and obeyed (Rom. 8:14)—and this alone, that transforms sinners into saints—children of Adam into sons and daughters of God. The errors of Christendom are powerless to do this, no matter how pious or sincere the believers therein may be. Hesitancy on the part of one who beats the same of Christadelphian to express this fact points to the conclusion that the conditions of divine sonship have never been realised, or that a dangerous departure from what is sound has occurred.

—*Bro. A.T. Jannaway— 1906*

## **Principles of Righteousness — “Christ’s Law of the Heart with Respect to Adultery”—Matt. 5:27–32**

Christ in his teaching on the doctrine of **the new covenant** and its bearing on the inner man fulfilled and superseded the old covenant and condemned the practices of the Scribes and Pharisees which the Mosaic Law (Deuteronomy 24) regulated. The Lord contrasted His supremely higher law of the inner man

with the then current morally insipid and motive driven pharisaic interpretation of the Mosaic Law. The pharisaic interpretations dramatically altered Yahweh's intent with Israel under Moses. The extent of their immorality on this question is illustrated by Josephus, himself a Pharisee, who stated "that there are **many causes** for a man to put away his wife". The greatest abuses had arisen in regard to divorce that was permitted on very trivial grounds. One rabbinical saying was, "if any man hates his wife, let him put her away".

The tradition of the scribes and the Pharisees was to quote one rabbinical opinion upon another, each opinion being tainted by the popular sentiment of the day. By the time of the coming of the Lord the nation was entering that final phase of corruption in which that generation would fill up the iniquities of their fathers. The scribes and Pharisees were addressed by Christ's forerunner in these words "O generation of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" The Lord Jesus takes up the same language to address the scribes and the Pharisees in Matthew 12 describing them as, "an evil and adulterous and wicked generation" (Matthew 12:34, 39, 45). This "adulterous generation" passed over the penalty due for what Job calls "an heinous crime... an iniquity to be punished by the judges" (Job 31:11). The Lord laid bare their inner man, the motive in all their dealings. The Law which condemned them all to a violent death (Leviticus 20:7, 8, 10, 23) was taught through their traditions in a way which seemed to elevate Israel's rulers beyond the Law's condemnation.

**The basis of judgement in relation to the new and everlasting covenant rests on higher principles altogether.** The Lord Jesus Christ will not ultimately enter into eternal fellowship with someone through entrance "into the kingdom of heaven," (Matthew 5:20) if that person's spirit or disposition of mind is not brought into servitude to Christ's.

Christ's teachings (Matthew 5:28–32) elevates the seventh commandment, "thou shalt not commit adultery," to encompass two aspects, one mental, the other moral. This was a new way of thinking for his disciples, who had been indoctrinated by the teachings of the scribes and Pharisees. The Lord's teaching brought them uncomfortably to consider the undisciplined musings of the heart upon "deceitful lusts" which if not brought under servitude to Christ would lead to the condemnation of adultery. This laid bare the real motive for divorce. The Lord in

his teachings concerning adultery (verses 28–32), though he continually refers to the man’s position, does not of course exclude the woman from the type of thinking that can lead to the practice of divorce and remarriage for reasons other than unrepentant unfaithfulness. The Lord’s words are applicable to all, male and female, as is illustrated in Mark 10:12. This being understood, the object of Christ’s consideration in Matthew 5:32 is the same type of man who has adulterous intentions as described in verses 27 and 28. It is this **adulterous motive of the heart** that led this man to quote the “it hath been said” Pharisees’ tradition of verse 31 which falsely interpreted the Mosaic Law of Deuteronomy 24:1–3, to provide permission for divorce for every cause. **It is also possible for brethren and sisters to use Christ’s teachings of the new covenant in a way in which he never intended, to circumvent his motive of transforming principles!** This man’s righteousness did not exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, who for the lust of his heart believed the law allowed divorce for any cause or ground. It is this adulterous man of verses 11 27–30 who is the predominant subject of Christ’s words in verses 31–32, **the man who puts away his wife who is innocent of unfaithfulness.** The Lord reveals this man’s terrible sin (versus 28–32) in terms of the consequences for his wife who was put away for improper grounds.

The Lord shows that this man’s motive is not the known and verified fact of his wife’s persistent unfaithfulness which the word “fornication” (Greek “porneia”) indicates, as Christ states in his words “**apart** from the cause of fornication” (Young’s literal translation). The reason we know this is evident is by Christ’s next words; for in the putting away of his **innocent** wife this man “**causes,**” or makes his wife to “commit adultery”. **If sexual immorality was the reason for this man’s putting away of his wife, his putting her away would not “make” her commit adultery, because she was already doing so.** If she was responsible for the illicit union and not her husband, then could he be accused of “causing her to commit” something, if she was already guilty of it?

By the act of divorce, this man causes his wife, who was innocent of “porneia”, to commit adultery because she would ultimately remarry under the circumstances of Jewish life. Furthermore, he who marries his divorced wife also commits adultery. This in itself proves that under Christ’s new law, the

divorced wife, **put away for reasons other than her known unfaithfulness, remains the wife of the man whose adulterous heart caused the putting asunder.** Thus Christ's doctrine (verse 32), sweeps away the Pharisees' contention that divorce for **any** cause severs the marriage bond, for upon what grounds could the Lord then say that he who marries her who has been put away also commits adultery? **It is this fact under Christ's new law that prohibits remarriage where separation has occurred for causes other than continued unfaithfulness (1 Corinthians 7:10–11), ensuring the reconciliation hoped for of the separated spouses.**

Bro. Roberts, in the April 1882 Christadelphian states, "There is nothing in the law of Christ to interfere with the remarriage of a man and woman who have been previously divorced from one another. The law of Christ rather favours every kind of reconciliation and triumph of peace".<sup>2</sup>

What is to be done, however, where a spouse is guilty of "porneia" and the condition exists in which the other spouse could "put away" and be free of the charge in doing so of causing to commit adultery? Indeed, necessity may leave no other choice but like Hosea, to separate and send his erring wife away from his house. Does this give the innocent spouse the right to divorce and remarry? The Lord answers this in Matthew 19:9. Where no other commands of Christ is violated (i.e. suing at law etc.) divorce from an unrepentant adulterous spouse is **not a sin against either Christ's teachings or against the spirit of them. However, Christ does not in his words encourage, let alone command it.**

Bro. Roberts in the 1891 Christadelphian answering a request to explain Matthew 5:32 states, "Christ's words relate to divorce for insufficient cause as was at that time common among the Jews. He recognises no divorce as lawful 'save for the cause of fornication'. (Notice bro. Roberts states Christ's words relate to divorce not just separation and that Christ's teachings do recognise divorce for the cause of fornication and that he is speaking of divorce in the context of Christ's day.) This severs the bond. Human law recognises this, and we are commanded to submit to human law where it does not conflict with divine law. **Where the law recognises man and woman in any case as husband and wife, there can be no question of adultery**"<sup>3</sup>

(notice bro. Roberts dismisses the idea of a continued state of adultery where remarriage has taken place).

<sup>2</sup> The Christadelphian No. 214—April 1882 Notes

<sup>3</sup> The Christadelphian 1891, Inside front cover

I would like to reiterate that the injured husband is not **commanded** to put away his wife who is committing porneia. The Lord's words are very carefully chosen. His words of verse 32 are compassed about by a multitude of other precepts that highlight the continual unabated characteristics of Yahweh manifested in the Son—long-suffering, mercy, forgiveness, patience, tireless seeking of reconciliation, which must find their representation in all God's sons and daughters that grace might be pleurably extended. Christ's own example of laying down his life for those who the apostle calls "enemies," (Romans 5:10) is the basis of our redemption, the recognition of which and manifestation of its principles in our own lives towards the undeserving, are our garments of beauty (Revelations 19:8). It is interesting to consider why the Lord did not give definitive commands regarding the rights or otherwise of the injured partner either in Matthew 5 or 19. This of course is the reason why over many years there has been so much contention over these verses. Why didn't the Lord make the matter absolutely clear?

**It is a trait of human nature to love to have everything clearly defined so that man does not have to seek matters out and exercise his mind to understand great truths.** But this matter of divorce and remarriage touches perhaps the greatest spiritual type revealed in Scripture from Genesis to Revelation. The reason the Master is not as clear and decisive about the injured partner as he is about the guilty, is because **the sons and daughters of God would not interpret Matthew 5 in isolation from all their Master's other teachings in chapters 5–7; principles by which "we judge (or discern) ourselves truly, that we might not be judged" (1 Corinthians 11:31).**

We are ever called upon to exercise our minds on the overall principles Yahweh has revealed to us through His son's example and teachings. The writer is fully convinced that this process cannot be without suffering, trial and tribulation, because integral to the understanding of Yahweh's mind, is the development of a character that is receptive to it. By this process alone, the

disciple can “attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a full-grown man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ”; and by “speaking the **truth in love** grow up in every way into him who is the head”, into Christ Jesus our Lord (Ephesians 4:13–15, ESV).

## Signs of the Time – Jewish Immigration

Jewish immigration to Israel from western Europe hits an all-time high following rise in anti-Semitic attacks.

European Jews feel as threatened as they did in the Holocaust, experts say.

Almost 10,000 Jews fled to Israel in 2015, the highest annual number ever.

The majority of the immigrants are from France, which has the highest population of Jews in the European Union and third highest in the world.

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Jews in Europe feel as threatened now in Europe as they did during World War II and the Holocaust, experts have said.

An exodus of western European Jews have flocked to Israel after rising anti-Semitic attacks reached an all-time high.

Almost 10,000 Jews from West Europe immigrated to Israel in 2015, the highest annual number ever.

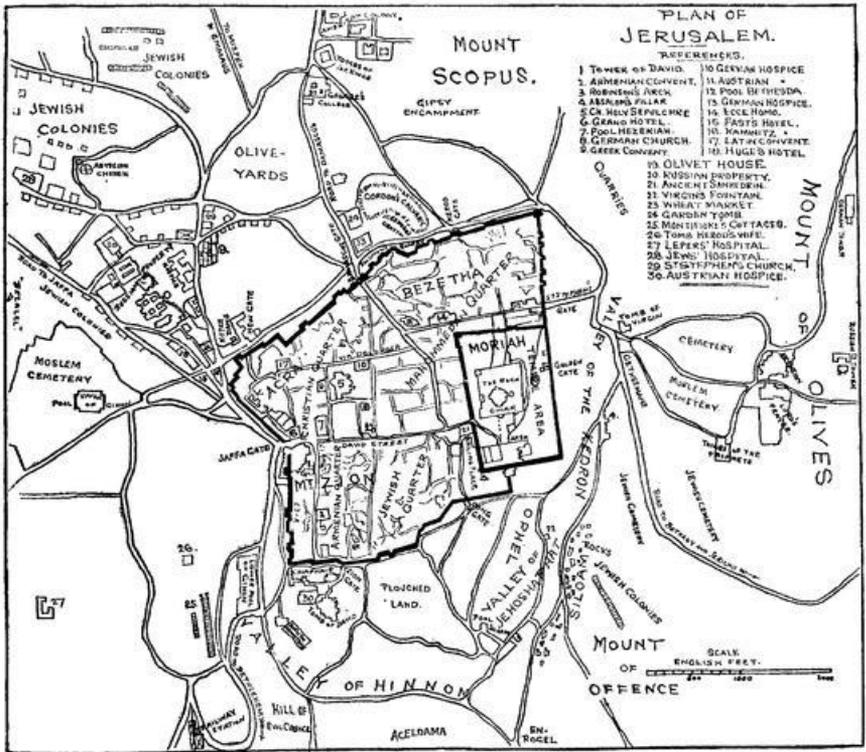
—Submitted by Bro. Steve Male

## Jerusalem Revisited - 4

OLIVET HOUSE, JERUSALEM

*March, 1912.*

DEAR BROTHER WALKER,—Let me describe “Olivet House,” as that will enable you to feel more at home with some things I have to say. And, as you have taken your readers into your confidence, and they are not so well acquainted with the topography of Jerusalem as yourself, let me introduce a home-made ground plan of the Holy City. It might be called “Multum in Parvo,” for I have blended several plans, as no single one took in all that a lover of Zion is interested in.



The map is a little over a mile-and-a-half square.—ED., C.

It is rather primitive, but it will enable readers of these letters to see the “lie of the land,” and follow me in my rambles.

Well, now to “Olivet House.” It is situated on the N.W. of the city, outside the walls, and is marked “19” on my plan. Home—sweet home, it was to us during our sojourn in the city of the great King. It is of oblong dimensions, and is made up of several buildings altered and adapted for the use to which it is now put. It has two frontages—one facing the northern portion of the eastern wall of the Russian Quadrangle, and the other abutting the road leading to the Damascus Gate of the city. Our apartment was on the first floor, which was also the top. Very few, if any, houses are more than two stories high. It had windows looking on to each of the roads named, with a balcony, from which we had a commanding view, not only of Jerusalem, which lay below, but also of the Mount of Olives beyond, some 200 feet higher, with the Valley of Jehoshaphat between. The doors of our room opened immediately into the public triple drawing-room, quite Oriental style. The establishment is owned and managed by a Mr. and Mrs. Hensman.

The comfort, cleanliness, and cuisine were equal to its situation. My experience in travel warrants my speaking with authority; and, besides, in the event of my carrying out one of my day dreams, I should like my prospective fellow-travellers to know where they will be housed in the Holy City. The size of the hotel may be gauged from the fact that the dining-room (which is as lofty as it is long) will seat 100 or more persons. Of course, the fittings are not of the latest “Doulton” or “Shoolbred” design or make. Nothing in Jerusalem is.

By the time we had had a wash-up and shake-down dinner-time had arrived, with its pleasant and unpleasant introduction to the fellow-guests. As possibly these letters may be read by some thereof, I must restrain my naturally frank outspokenness, and content myself with the verdict that any one thereof would pass muster in a crowd. On my right at the table was my beloved, whom I need not stay to describe. Those who know me know her, for is it not true that “a husband is what his wife makes him”? Hence, when you hear a wife praise her husband, you can be pretty sure she is a good wife. Personally, I have no hesitation in confessing that what there is of a good Christadelphian about me is, in the good providence of God, mainly due to my wife. On my left sat an old lady whom it took me three days to sum up. More anon. But she spotted us as new-comers; and, naturally, took us for the usual globetrotters with the stereotyped five days to “do Jerusalem,” with Bethlehem and Jericho, and the Jordan and Dead Sea to boot! She yearned for a donkey-ride round the city, with sundry calls *en route*, but didn’t feel safe going alone with an Arab. “Oh, well,” I said, “join us,” and, although we had only been an hour or two in the place, three donkeys were booked that evening to be in attendance at 9 a.m. next day.

Before retiring to rest we stood some time on the balcony of our bedroom, surveying the beautiful view of moonlit Jerusalem. Our meditations can be better imagined than described. Oh! how I do wish I had the pen of a ready writer. We slept well, and awoke sufficiently early to see the sun rise over the Mount of Olives.

After breakfast we mounted our donkeys, and, with two Arab boys in attendance, set forth on our tour. Neither of the lads could speak a word of English, so we were spared a lot of talk: an advantage, however, with corresponding disadvantages. But what they lacked in conversational ability they more than made up for in the use of their donkey-sticks, a luxury which ended by my taking possession of their weapons, much to their chagrin. You will see the route we took by looking at the plan. Starting from “Olivet House,” we proceeded along the North Road, with Solomon’s Quarries on our right. These quarries,

which have not been worked for centuries, are most extensive, and still contain sufficient stone to rebuild the whole of Jerusalem. It is supposed that from these quarries was cut the stone used by David and Solomon in the preparing and erecting the buildings carried on by them. Some students wrongly think that all the stone for the Temple was furnished by Hiram, King of Tyre; but, a re-examination of the Word will cause them to see that such was not so. He simply provided the masons and hewers (see 1 Kings 5.). Possibly the fact that Hiram provided the cedar wood gave rise to the impression that he also furnished the masonry. Leaving Jeremiah's Grotto (where that prophet is alleged to have written his Lamentations), and the Skull Hill, on our left, we passed the Damascus Gate. During the day, just outside this gate, which is the most imposing of all the city gates, can be seen hundreds of goats, sheep, donkeys, and camels, laden and unladen, from sunrise to sunset—quite an open market—a most eastern picture, only equalled by a somewhat similar scene outside the Jaffa Gate on the west of the city. The Gate is named "Damascus" from the fact that it faces and leads to the high road to Damascus, and along which road Saul, of Tarsus, travelled with those letters from the chief priests to the Syrian authorities, by which he was empowered to arrest all who professed allegiance to the crucified Christ. We next passed the Herod Gate, which leads into the Moslem quarter of Jerusalem, and, after touching the St. Stephen's Gate in the north-east wall, we descended the slopes of the Bezetha Mount, crossed the valley of the Kidron, and passing the tomb of the Virgin and the Garden of Gethsemane, rode along the Valley of Jehoshaphat, with the reputed tombs of Zechariah and James, and the pillar of Absalom, into the Valley of Hinnom. We ascended the slope of Ophel, and entered the Dung Gate on Mount Zion. Then to the Jews' Wailing Place, where we dismounted. More on this sad spot later on. Remounting, we left the city by the Zion Gate, and crossed over to the "Hill of Evil Council," so-called from its reputation of being the locality where the bargain was made of the sale of the world's future King for thirty pieces of silver. Here we alighted from our donkeys, and indulged in a much-appreciated rest. From this hill we had a good view of spots whose associations with incidents of the Bible narrative are unquestioned. There to the east, on our right, was the "Mount of Offence," so named from its being the place where Solomon (in order to gratify his "outlandish women," as the Bible terms his alien wives) erected altars to the false gods Moloch, Chemosh, Ashtoreth, and Co. He knew he had no right to ally himself with such people; and they, too, knew it, or they would have insisted on their gods having altars—not on this mount outside the city, but side by side with Solomon's Temple on Mount Moriah. And so to-day, those

who marry “out of the truth” realise that it is wrong, or they would not seek, as they do, to keep their “engagement” secret till it has been consummated in marriage.

Two or three hundred feet down this and the adjoining mounts, and dividing us from Zion, is the Valley of Hinnom, whose historical associations are too well known to need dwelling upon here. It formed the boundary line between Judah and Benjamin (Josh. 15:8), and which boundary is again defined in Josh. 18:16. Just where the valley joins the Kidron was Tophet, on the upper slopes of the mount already referred to, where Solomon built the high places (1 Kings 11:7). Other royal idolaters followed his example, and Ahaz and Manasseh there even offered up their own sons (2 Kings 16:3; 28:3; 33:6). Josiah made short work of these abominable practices when he came to the throne, and once for all put an end thereto (2 Kings 23:10, 13). On our left, to the west, is the Valley of Rephaim, where the Philistines were defeated by David (2 Sam. 23:12, 13; Chron. 11:15). Just beyond is the hill on which has been erected the Lepers’ Hospital; to which place, remounting our donkeys, we wended our way. It was somewhat difficult to find, because we were not cognisant of its Arabic name; but at last, with the aid of map, compass, and much gesticulation, we arrived there. It is a commodious building, situated in its own grounds. I believe it is supported mainly by Moravians, principally those in Yorkshire. Of course, we claimed admittance. The matron, who was most anxious that we should realise there was no danger of infection, conducted us over the Institution, which we greatly appreciated, as being the inmates’ dinner-hour, and therefore not a visiting time, it was quite contrary to rules, hence a favour. It is admirably designed and arranged. An interesting coincidence was that our daily readings from the Word, concerning the treatment of the terrible disease leprosy, were fresh in mind, with all the divine enactments concerning it. A sad sight it was to see the little groups of infected ones waiting the announcement of dinner-time: men and women in their respective wards, as well as in shady nooks and corners in the grounds, huddled up together like cowed baboons; all with, shall I say, that one touch of nature which made them all akin? Some seemed more conscious of their “uncleanness” than did others, and manifestly endeavoured to hide the more evident tokens of their condition. We were assured, and convinced, that this loathsome disease could be completely stamped out were the authorities to prevent lepers marrying, and thus stay their propagation. But evidently such will not be till the advent of the Great King, who will also at the same time prove himself to be the Great Physician.

For the afternoon I have arranged to visit the English Jews' Hospital, but first of all must return to "Olivet House" for lunch and a wash, for it is a *sine qua non* with me, acting upon advice of one of my earliest friends, Dr. Edward Roberts, never to visit such institutions without previously enjoying a good meal and a good wash. More anon.

With love, yours as ever,  
—Bro. FRANK G. JANNAWAY 1912

## Scripture quotes and Bro. Roberts' Comments No. 7

Scripture quote: —

*"Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? Therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord."*—2 Chron. 19: 2.

Bro. Roberts said, "We can have our conversation towards the world in all courtesy and benevolence, without going on to their ground, and joining affinity in schemes of pleasure, profit or friendship."

(Taken from "Love and Doctrine" "Seasons of Comfort" Volume 1, pg. 125.)

Scripture quote: —

*"Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh."*—2 Corinthians 5: 16.

Bro. Roberts said, "When a man puts on the Lord Jesus in obedience to the truth, he assumes a new position, and his relations to things around him are altogether different to what they are in Nature. He sees things in quite a different light; he is not of the flesh, and recognises no scheme as having a claim upon his sympathy that merely has to do with the present evil world."

(Taken from "Holiness" "Seasons of Comfort" Volume 1, pg. 140.)

Scripture quote: —

*"I will give to every one of you according as your work shall be."*—Revelation 22: 12.

Bro. Roberts said, "Therefore, **now** is the time of action. Let every man look to what he is doing—and every woman. Let them remember that their present daily life—dull, uninteresting, unimportant though it may appear, is really pregnant with their destiny. All depends upon how they turn the present time to account."

(Taken from "Holiness" "Seasons of Comfort" Volume 1, page 140.)

Scripture quote: —

*“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance:”*—Gal. 5:22-23.

Bro. Roberts said, “With this state of mind, as induced by the teaching of the Spirit, God is well pleased, as a man is pleased with ripe apples from his orchard. But this state of mind must, of course, find expression in action. Faith without works is dead, being alone.”

(Taken from “Receiving the Grace of God in Vain” “Seasons of Comfort” Vol. 1, page 144.)

## **All Israel Not of Israel**

*“They are not all Israel that are of Israel”*—Rom. 9:6.

AT first sight it would seem as if to be *'Israel'* and *'of Israel'* were the same thing. For as we look at Israel in the earth, it seems natural to ask: Who are Israel if not those who appertain to Israel?

The solution is in the use of the term *'Israel.'* There are two ways of using this term: 1) in the sense in which it originated in the history of Jacob at the very beginning, and 2) in the sense of designating the descendants of Jacob as a race in the earth. Now, it is obviously more appropriate every way to use the term with the meaning in which it originated, for this defines its exact relations.

Its meaning is *'a Prince with God.'* It was because of this meaning that it was bestowed on Jacob, who prevailed by his spiritual importunity on the occasion of a certain angel appearing to him. With this meaning, it has come to embrace the whole family of God, retrospectively and prospectively.

Now, why were Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets esteemed as *'Princes with God'*? Was it because of their extraction, or because of their character? The latter, unquestionably. God made choice of them on this ground.

*“I know him (Abraham) that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the Way of the Lord to do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring on Abraham that which He hath spoken of him”* (Gn. 18).

God chose their descendants as a nation, on the basis of the Covenant of circumcision (Gen. 17:10-14). And as a nation they will remain His, as unalterably as the establishment of the ordinances of heaven and earth (Jer. 31:36-37).

But a man may belong to the nation, and still pass away as an individual, like Achan or Judas, or the whole generation whose carcasses fell in the wilderness because of their insubordination. He may be born of Israel, and thus be '*of Israel*,' and yet not be '*Israel*' in the original significance of the term.

For individual participation in the glorious Aion of perfection in reserve for Israel, it is not sufficient that a man belong to the nation of Israel. He must be Israel as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were Israel: a Prince with God because of faith and obedience. This was the case with only a small minority in Israel. Hence it came to pass that they were '*not all Israel who were of Israel*.' —Bro. R. Roberts, 1880

## 14. Sixteen Hundred Furlongs

This "thousand six hundred furlongs" is a great Apocalyptic puzzle. Is it a measure of territorial surface, a measure of length without breadth and depth; or is it such a measure of length, representative of a measure of time? It cannot be taken in the sense of territorial measurement, because this would require a continuous line of cavalry two hundred miles long; and whether in single file, or broadly massed, cannot be told. Such an exposition would not be reasonable; nor is there anything in the prophets to justify it. The winepress is not a locality sixteen hundred furlongs in length; but the aggregate of the wrath of the Deity, affecting all the nations "without the city". Wherever there is a nation, kingdom, or republic, beyond the limits of "the Great Babylon," to be trodden down, there is the winepress, though it may be ten thousand furlongs from Jerusalem.

The question, then, in relation to the treading of the winepress is not *where*, but *how long*? How long is the smoke of the torment "from the glory of the Deity, and from his power" to ascend? In the eleventh verse the answer is *eis aionas aionon, unto ceons of ceons*. This reminds one, that "it is the glory of the Deity to conceal a thing; but the honor of kings is to search out a matter". This answer, it is true, reveals the how long. It is to continue till the commencement of "the Economy of the fullness of times," commonly styled the Millennium: but still the question remains to be solved, How long from the reaping of the harvest of the earth by the Son of Man upon the white cloud, which puts the saints in possession of Mount Zion, and the end of the judgments when the Millennial Economy begins? The answer before us

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is "a thousand six hundred furlongs" off; that is, a time of this length is *the square of the time* to be occupied in the execution of the judgment given, or committed, to the saints.

This principle of the square, traditionally incorporated in Masonry, is a specialty of revelation, from the Aaronic breastplate of judgment, to "the city that lieth foursquare". The measure of its wall, which is 144 cubits is the square of 12, obtained by multiplying 12 by itself— $12 \times 12 = 144$ . The like treatment applied to the sixteen hundred furlongs will show that they are the square of forty. Thus, the division of 1600 without a remainder gives 40; and 40 multiplied by 40 gives 1600 —  $40 \times 40 = 1600$ . Here, then, is the answer in figures. The treading of the winepress by the saints in command of the armies of Israel will continue by the space of forty years, at the end of which will be reached the fulfilment of the Jubilee in the kingdom of the Deity, when every Israelite shall return to his possession and to his family (Lev. 25:9,10).

This forty years is the period of Israel's Second Exodus, in which "it shall come to pass that the Adon (Lord) shall add his hand to redeem a second time the remnant of his people which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. They shall fly (as a bird of prey) upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west; and they shall spoil them of the east ("without the city") together; they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them. And there shall be a highway for the remnant of his people which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt" (Isa. 11:11,14,16).

It is clear from this testimony, that the restoration of the twelve tribes of Israel in our future is to be after the example of their ancient migration from Egypt under Moses; when "Yahweh led them through the deep, as a horse in the wilderness, to make Himself an everlasting and a glorious name (Isa. 63:12-14). Ezekiel testifies to the same thing, and cites the Exodus from Egypt, as the similitude of the manner of their deliverance from the long dispersion of the past. "As I live, saith Adonai Yahweh, I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there will I plead with you face to face. Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith Adonai Yahweh" (chapter 20:33-36).

But, do the prophets testify to the *how long*, as well as to the manner, of Israel's second exodus, or returning from the lands of their enemies to their own possession? Let us see. The spirit of Christ in Micah caused him to place on record in ch. 7:14, the supplication following: "Feed Thy people with Thy rod, the flock of Thine heritage, which dwell solitarily in the wood (or forest of nations), in the midst of Carmel; let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, *as in the days of old*". This is a petition praying, in effect, for the restoration of the kingdom to

Israel; for their return from their present long dispersion in "the land of the enemy;" for their re-establishment as a powerful and independent nation in the holy land; for the subjugation of all kingdoms and nations to the laws and ordinances of their king. To perform this great work will require considerable time, and a great manifestation of almighty power. It consumed forty years of days "in the days of old," or "a thousand six hundred furlongs" of time, from the institution of the Passover in Egypt to its celebration in the Valley of Achor under Joshua; which was its typical fulfilment in the kingdom of God (Josh. 5:6,10). These were "the days of the coming out of the land of Egypt" into the land of Canaan; in which Yahweh fed His people with the rod, and purged out the rebels among them, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness — the days of the coming out, in which He made use of the twelve tribes as His soldiery in His wars against the Amalekites, Amorites, and so forth, as recorded in the earliest records of the nation.

Understanding these things, the reader will perceive the meaning of the words of the oracle delivered to the prophet in answer to his petition. The Eternal Spirit replied, saying to him as the petitioner for Israel, "According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I show unto him marvellous things". That is, as the coming out of Egypt consumed *forty years*; so, in causing Israel to feed in Bashan and Gilead, I will consume *forty years* in the marvellous works whereby it shall be effected. Thus it is that Micah testifies to the length of the period Apocalyptically represented by the sixteen hundred furlongs. These are the square of forty; and this is the number of years during which the saints will be executing the judgment written, as symbolized, not only in this fourteenth chapter, but also in the sixteenth, from the seventeenth verse to the end; in the whole of the eighteenth and nineteenth, and the twentieth to the fourth verse inclusive. These forty years are included in Daniel's "Time of the End," which is the period of transformation and transition, styled by Jesus "the Regeneration" (Matt. 19:28); and by Peter, "the times of the Restitution of all things, which the Deity hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets *apy aionos*, from the aion"; or beginning of the course of things instituted through Moses (Acts 3:21). In these forty years the present constitution of the world is abolished. At the end of them there will be no armies and navies. These destructive agents will cease to exist. The vintage will have cut them off, and disbanded them as useless and demoralizing incumbrances upon society. War will be studied no more; and a general disarmament, which is now impossible, will be enforced by the all-conquering "King of the Jews," then become "the Light of the Gentiles," and the salvation of the Father to the ends of the earth" (Isa. 49:6). Babylon will have fallen with its Papacy and all the powers, temporal and spiritual, which now sustain it. They will all have "licked the dust like a serpent;" and the Deity will have performed the truth to Jacob and the mercy to Abraham which he swore to the fathers from the days of old (Mic. 7:20).

—Bro. John Thomas—Eureka Vol. 5

## Hints for Bible Markers

### The Psalms

#### Psalm 5

#### Psalm 5:7

*“But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.”*

Our minds, as the mind of Jesus always was, should be on the word of God. That his commandments are so imbedded in our thoughts that our great fear is displeasing our Heavenly Father. (Deuteronomy 17:19) “And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them:” “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.” (John 12:48)

We realize the depth of this Psalm when we consider the meaning of the word house. It is apparent that David means the Temple of God. The root of the word is family. As Paul wrote, “For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,” (Hebrews 2:11). There are at present two families in the world, the family of man, which is the manifestation of flesh only, and the family of God consisting of men & women who have been introduced into the Name, thereby constituting them a manifestation of God in an imperfect medium. Jesus was the representative of the entire family of God. Christ is the first-fruits, and afterwards those who are accepted through him. We obtain forgiveness for his sake, not as a right, but in the multitude of God’s mercy given on our recognition of our position. We look to the time, (in fear of displeasing God,) when the family of God will be organized in a way that will permanently exclude suffering, sorrow, and pain.

Continued next month should the Lord will

bro. Beryl Snyder