

## COMMENTS ON THE DAILY READINGS

### March 1

#### Leviticus 5 and 6

Lev. 5:1-13 continues the laws concerning sin offerings. It should be noted the phrase “trespass offering” in verse 6 is misleading. The word for “trespass” there is *asham* – guilt. Rotherham translates “guilt-bearer.” The remainder of the verse uses the terms “sin” or “sinned” four times indicating that this is still a reference to the sin offering. You may wish to amend the heading at the top of the column to “Sin offering.”

The laws concerning the trespass offering begin in verse 14 and go through to Lev. 6:7. It is a useful exercise to highlight the references to the different offerings considered in these two chapters so they can be differentiated.

- Lev. 5:15 – “trespass offering” (for sins of trespass against others, including God where restitution is required)
- Lev. 6:9 – “burnt offering” (continual fire to consume daily burnt offerings plus the fat laid upon them as a constant reminder that only by atoning sacrifice was fellowship with God possible)
- Lev. 6:14 – “meat (meal) offering” (Aaron and his sons to consume remainder of the meal offerings as Yahweh’s representatives)
- Lev. 6:25 – “sin offering” (the priests eat the sin offering as Yahweh’s representatives, except when the blood was taken into the Tabernacle)

Lev. 5:16 – The essence of the trespass offering was restitution as well as forgiveness – “he shall make **amends** for **the harm that he hath done** in the holy thing, and shall add the **fifth** part thereto, and give it unto the priest.” Sin and trespass are quite similar, but with trespass someone else has suffered, whether that be God or man. All sin needs the grace of God (hence a fine of a fifth), but with trespass the offender also needed the forgiveness of the victim and would receive that by the acknowledgement of his trespass – “And if he **trespass** against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him” (Luke 17:4).

The distinguishing sacrifice for trespass was always a **ram** (Lev. 5:15,16,18; 6:6), whereas for sin there were several different sacrifices that could be made depending on the offeror’s ability to provide a sacrifice (Lev. 5:6-12). What that suggests is the seriousness of trespassing against others along the lines of Christ’s teachings – “It is impossible for the stumbling blocks not to come, but woe to him through whom they come....that he may cause one of these little ones to stumble” (Young’s Lit. for Luke 17:1-2). As Bro. Roberts wrote in Nazareth Revisited pg. 406 – “It is manifest that by the law of Christ we are under an obligation to consider the bearing of our actions upon others. If we are indifferent on this head we may find ourselves unexpectedly confronted with unknown responsibilities in the day of account.”

Lev. 6:8 to 7:38 deal with laws surrounding the offerings and the role of the priests in relation to those sacrifices. V.9-13 concern the continual burnt offering and the treatment of the ashes accruing therefrom. V.14-18 deal with the treatment of the meal offering. V.19-23 address the meal offerings associated with the consecration of the priests. V.24-30 concern the treatment of the sin offerings. The critical element here was that the priests consumed the sin offering on behalf of Yahweh to indicate His acceptance of the offering. Significantly, on the very first day of the operation of the Law under the Aaronic priesthood, the goat for the national sin offering was not consumed by Aaron or his sons (Lev. 10:16-18). Fittingly, this presaged and emphasized the

truth of Heb. 10:4 – “For it is **not possible** that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.”

### **Psalm 105 – The need to praise Yahweh for His faithfulness to His covenants**

V.1 – (ESV) “O give thanks unto Yahweh; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the peoples” – Authorship of this psalm has been attributed to Moses, David, Ezra and others by commentators. The Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge comments – It appears from 1 Chron. 16:1-43, where the former part of this Psalm, as far as the Ps. 105:16, is found with little variation, that David composed it at the removal of the ark to Mount Zion, and he himself probably enlarged it afterwards with the glorious detail of God’s merciful dealings with Abraham and his posterity till their settlement in the land of Promise. The Hallelujah, which terminates the preceding Psalm, is made the title of this by the Septuagint, Vulgate, Arabic, and Ethiopic; and the Syriac considers it a paraphrase on the words, “Fear not, Jacob, to go down into Egypt;” and teaches us spiritually not to fear when we are obliged to contend with evils; for God is our shield, and will fight for us (end of quote). However, there are sound reasons to link Psalms 105, 106 and 107 with the same author. That may well have been Ezra who would have drawn heavily on the writings of David.

Psalm 105 reflects upon the faithfulness of Yahweh’s covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in relation to Israel of old. A major focus is on the promise of Gen. 15:13-16 and Israel’s sojourn in Egypt for 215 years and their release in the Exodus led by Moses. The psalm speaks for itself, but one correction to the KJV translation is necessary. V.28 says “they rebelled not against his word.” It should read as translated by Rotherham – “He sent darkness, and made it dark, But they rebelled against his words” (i.e. the Egyptians rebelled).

V.14-15 refer to Abraham in the embarrassing incident described in Gen. 20 (see comments on January 11).

The exhortation of this psalm which reviews Israel’s history in a positive light (for no failures are recorded) is that we should do as V.2-3 suggest – “Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works. Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek Yahweh” for His loyalty to the promises made to the fathers of old is our guarantee that those with which we have involved ourselves will ultimately be fulfilled.

### **1 Corinthians 14**

Paul addressed the problem of the gift of tongues being used inappropriately due to its appeal to human nature which is attracted to the flashy and impressive.

It will be noted that the word “tongue” (KJV) is often preceded by the italicized word “*unknown*.” The word “tongue” is *glossa* meaning ‘a language (specifically one naturally unacquired); i.e. a foreign language. *Glossa* occurs 21 times in chapters 12 to 14, and 15 of those are in chapter 14.

Paul’s argument is simple – what is the value of using a foreign language to a community who do not understand it? It may be impressive and attract attention to oneself, but it is of no value to anyone, unless it is interpreted.

In verses 34 to 40 he turns to the matter of sisters speaking in the gatherings. They are not to do so, and his proof is drawn from the Law of Moses – Num. 30 where the law of vows is outlined. A male making a vow before Yahweh was to keep it. There was no way of escape. However, in the case of a wife and daughter, the matter was different. The husband/father could disallow the vow they made on the day he heard it. The import of this was clear. The husband/father of the household was the head. His authority was not to be usurped (1 Tim. 2:11-12 – “I suffer not a

woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence”). Sisters in Corinth were guilty of this as chapter 11:3-16 implies.

In recent times, due to the influence of Humanism with its ‘unclean’ attitudes of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, Paul’s counsel has been set aside. The argument is that his advice only concerned the local situation in Corinth and does not apply to any other ecclesia, then or now. Another false argument is that Paul is only dealing with memorial meetings and not other gatherings. This is a serious misreading of the text. Paul introduced this matter with the words of verse 33 – “For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as **in all ecclesias** of the saints.” His counsel is for **all ecclesias** in any era. Furthermore, he says in verse 34 – “Let your women keep silence in the **ecclesias**.” So, he doesn’t have only Corinth in mind, nor does he have in mind just one type of gathering (see chap. 11:18), otherwise he would have said so. He then adds words that are fatal to the suggestion that his counsel is his own opinion on the matter (as some have argued) by saying – “If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord” (V.37). What we have here are clearly commandments of Christ. These cannot be dismissed quite so easily.

Ignorance is a problem in the modern world. Paul acknowledges that it has always been a problem by saying in V.38 – “But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.” Those who wish to keep the commandments of Christ cannot afford to be ignorant. Ecclesial order is jeopardized by ignorance. “Let all things be done decently and in order” (V.40).

## March 2

### Leviticus 7 – The law of the peace offering

V.1-10 complete the laws concerning the trespass offering. The next section from V.11 concerns important matters in relation to peace offerings. There were three forms of peace offering – (1) Thanksgiving – V.12; (2) Vow – V.16; (3) Voluntary; i.e. free will – V.16. Intuitively, we think of the voluntary offering as the most important, but this is not the case. The ‘thanksgiving’ offering was the most important. This is illustrated by the fact that it could only be consumed by the offeror on the first day (V.15). The ‘vow’ and ‘voluntary’ could be consumed on the second day, although not on the third (V.17-18). Why was this the case? Vow and voluntary offerings are made by the will and desire of the offeror. It is what he chooses to do for God, whereas the thanksgiving offering is made out of gratitude for what God has done for him. Its focus is on God, not man. A key Scripture in that regard is Ps. 50:23 – “Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.” Gratitude produces a positive response.

Uncleanness disqualified from fellowship (V.19-21). Partaking of that which belonged exclusively to Yahweh – the fat and the blood – also led to banishment (V.23-27).

V.29-36 provide further important instructions for the peace offering. The offeror was to bring the fat and the breast **with his own hands** to the priest. This was very personal. The priest would wave and heave these portions of the sacrifice. The **wave offering** which was waved in the hands of the priest (to draw God’s attention to the offering, so to speak) spoke of **consecration**. The **heave offering** was exactly what the word suggests. It was lifted up towards heaven with two hands to be **surrendered** to Yahweh (see Lam. 3:41 – “Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens”). Consecration (separation for service), and total childlike surrender of the heart are essential elements for fellowship with God.

## **Psalm 106 – The mighty acts of Yahweh towards Israel**

V.1 – “Praise ye Yahweh. O give thanks unto Yahweh; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever” – Both Psalms 105 and 106 may have been composed by Ezra picking up David’s theme in 1 Chron. 16:9 – “Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, **talk ye of all his wondrous works.**” The sentiments of these two psalms echo those of 1 Chron. 16:1-43. However, there is one important contrast in these two psalms. Not a negative word is spoken in Ps. 105 about Israel’s long history from the time of Abraham unto their settlement in the land of Canaan, but in Ps. 106 the mood changes in V.6. The first five verses are a review and reminder of the wonder of God’s interventions on behalf of His people, but from V.6 with the admission – “We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly,” there begins a litany of failures from the time of their Exodus out of Egypt despite Yahweh’s continual support for them – “he saved them from the hand of him that hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.”

V.12-14 indicate the rollercoaster experience of Israel in the wilderness. After the destruction of Pharaoh’s host in the Red Sea – “Then believed they his words; they sang his praise. They soon forgot his works; they waited not for his counsel.” This led to failure for they “lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert.”

The psalm covers the entire history of Israel from their departure out of Egypt to their captivity in Babylon (V.46). In all that history Yahweh “remembered for them his covenant, and repented according to the multitude of his mercies” though there were times when “the wrath of Yahweh kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance.” The conclusion reached by any intelligent observer of this chequered history is – “Blessed be Yahweh God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye Yahweh.”

## **1 Corinthians 15 – The resurrection of the responsible dead**

This resurrection chapter is large in its proportions and message. Just a few matters of its content can be considered here.

Firstly a consideration for anyone who may question the importance of types in Scripture, there is an important challenge in verse 4. Paul writes about Christ that “he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.” The Scriptures of which he speaks are of course the Old Testament. The challenge is this – find a place in the O.T. which tells us that Christ would be raised on the third day **without using a type**. It can only be demonstrated by types – Isaac, Jonah, Hezekiah, Joshua 3, etc.

In **verses 24 to 28**, the Apostle speaks of the end of the Millennium and the time when God will be “all in all”; i.e. all beings on earth will be immortal. This is demonstrated in that series of verses by two prominent words in the Greek. They are *pas* translated consistently 10 times as “all”; and *hupo* standing alone, and as part of the word *hupotasso* 8 times. Eight is the number of immortality in Scripture, and ten stands for ‘all’ – hence, all will be immortal.

In **verse 29** Paul makes the statement – “Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?” The ‘baptism’ he has in mind is the same which the Lord spoke of in Mark 10:38-39, namely, the sufferings of Christ. Paul provided his answer in **verse 30** – “And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?” The jeopardy of which he speaks is recounted in 2 Cor. 11:23-27. His life was constantly in jeopardy because of his mission to preach the Gospel.

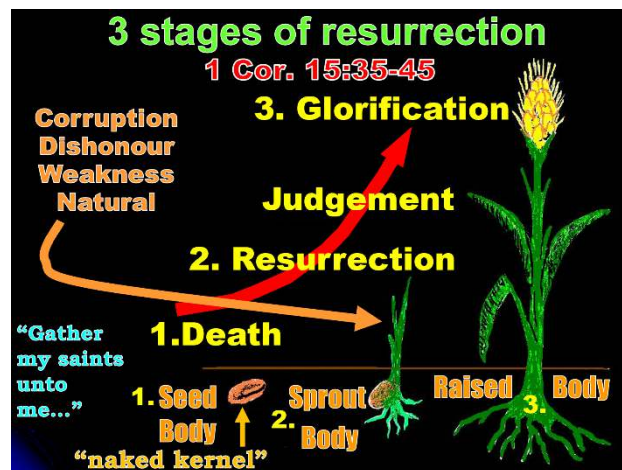
From **verses 35 to 58**, the Apostle deals with the resurrection and its outcome. He scolds the doubters in Corinth in V.35-36 and asserts that “even nature itself” taught the principles of resurrection. We get the same product from the ground that we sow – wheat produces wheat according to the law of Gen. 1:11-12. Similarly, a mortal body buried in the ground is resurrected mortal, not something different.

The Greek word for “sowest” is *speiro* and occurs 3 times in V.36 and 37, all in the Active Voice meaning to scatter seed, to sow seed (Liddell and Scott Greek Lexicon). It represents the burial of the dead body just as “bare grain” is placed in ploughed earth and covered over.

However, in verses 42 to 44 the same word *speiro* occurs 4 times, but in a different form. The word in the Greek is *speiretia* in the Passive Voice meaning to spring or be born (Liddell and Scott Greek Lexicon). It speaks of the **results** of sowing, not the act of sowing. This is proven by the first sentence of V.42 – “So also is the resurrection of the dead.” The word “resurrection” is *anastasis* – the standing up dead ones (as Bro. Thomas translates in ‘Anastasis’). So what follows is not about burying a dead body, but causing it to stand up by resurrection and undertaking a process that leads to a change of nature (consistent with V.35 – “to, (or) for what body do they come forth” – Bro. Thomas).

Accordingly, another important word used four times in V.42-44 is “raised.” It is the Greek word *egerthesontai* (from *egeiro*) meaning ‘to raise up, rebuild, cause to exist.’ It is not a reference to resurrection, but to the end of the process – glorification. The following table shows the way these verses should be understood.

“sown” – “it springs forth in...”	“raised” – “it is caused to exist in...”
Corruption	Incorruption
Dishonour	Glory
Weakness	Power
Natural Body	Spiritual Body



V.45 – “And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.” – In ‘Anastasis,’ Bro. Thomas states on a number of occasions that the resurrected body will be in condition and nature like the body of Adam before he transgressed and was made subject to death. This is not correct, and as time went on, subsequent to the publication of ‘Anastasis’ it is evident that Bro. Thomas modified his understanding on the subject of the condition of the resurrected body. His comments in Eureka Vol. 3 (original version) are quite clear that he believed the resurrected body is the same in its condition as it went into the grave. He wrote – “But the dead body was made to live again. It was thus restored to its former life; **brought back to what is was before.**” In **Appendix 1** there is an extract from the study notes ‘Events Subsequent to the Return of Christ’ providing full coverage of this matter.

V.52-58 – “the dead shall be **raised** incorruptible” – The word “raised” is *egeirō* meaning to cause to exist. It is not a reference to the actual resurrection of the body, but to its transformation from mortality to immortality as the following verses illustrate. Two words and their counterparts

are prominent in this section. They are “corruptible” and “mortal” in such sentences as, “For this **corruptible** must put on **incorruption**, and this **mortal** must put on **immortality**.” It is evident that the real focus is on the transformation of a mortal body into an immortal body, but some have suggested that the parallelism might suggest a moral element as well. Thayer does say that the word “corruption” in V.50 – *phthora* can mean in the NT, in an ethical sense, corruption, i.e. moral decay. Certainly the bias in human nature is corrupting and will be one of the things that is left behind when the body is transformed into an immortal body. Two O.T. citations cement the Apostle’s teaching (Isa. 25:8; Hos. 13:14).

In the light of the incredibly bright prospects for the faithful in all ages who will be resurrected and changed into the likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ (Phil. 3:21 – “who, in the exercise of the power which He has even to subject all things to Himself, will transform this body of our humiliation until it resembles His own glorious body” – Weymouth), this is truly an incentive to remain firm and active in the Truth’s service – “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

### March 3

#### Leviticus 8 – The consecration of Aaron and his sons

This chapter deals with the seven days of the consecration of Aaron and his sons to the priesthood. The whole congregation were to be present for this event because Aaron and his sons were objective representations of themselves. They had been called “a kingdom of priests” in Ex. 19:6. Witnessing the consecration of the priests provided understanding of what that really meant – “gather thou all the congregation together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation” (V.3).

One very important aspect was the placing of the blood of the ram of consecration on the right ear, right thumb and right great toe of Aaron and his sons. This was done after the other ram had been offered as a burnt offering. The ram of consecration was a peace offering and spoke of fellowship with God after the dedication signified by the burnt offering.

- The ear represented ‘hearing’ and therefore the things of the mind – Mental.
- The thumb represented the labours of the hand – commitment in service – Moral.
- The toe represented the walk and the way of life – Physical manifestation.

God’s priestly people were meant to realise that His law was constantly to be heeded (the ear); acted upon (the hand), and made the rule for daily walk (the foot). By Moses sprinkling the blood of this ram “upon the altar round about” (V.24) the point was made that sacrifice was required for God to be able to work mentally, morally and physically with His people. Time would be required to wash with the water of the Word (V.6; Eph. 5:26) and this would produce works and a walk in harmony with the Divine way of thinking.

The offerings bore in upon the people that their duty was to respond to God’s mercy in forgiving their sin by devoting themselves completely to Him (burnt offering), and by sinlessness honouring their privilege of fellowship with Him (peace offering).

Aaron and his sons were not to go out of the Tabernacle compound for the entire seven days of their consecration (V.33-36). This complete time-cycle taught that the priestly people must ever remain spiritually in God’s presence. Accordingly, they kept the door – “Therefore shall ye abide at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation day and night seven days, and keep the charge of Yahweh, that ye die not.”

## **Psalm 107 – Praise for the restoration from exile**

V.1 – “O give thanks unto Yahweh, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever” – Psalm 107 begins what is called the ‘Deuteronomy Book’ of the Psalter. Like Deuteronomy, this section recounts the experiences of Israel and points them (and us) in the direction of an inheritance in the Land which is called in V.7 in its incipient form “a city of habitation” = the ecclesia (V.36).

This psalm is a call to thanksgiving for the wonder of Yahweh’s goodness and mercy in redeeming a remnant of Judah from exile when he gathered them out of the lands (V.3). The theme of the psalm is “the sacrifice of praise” (Heb. 13:15) that is due to Yahweh who redeemed them out of exile from all kinds of destruction. There is a direct quote from Job (V.40), and several references to Isaiah 40 to 66. Ezra may have compiled all three of these psalms (Ps. 105 to 107) under the inspiration of the Spirit as “holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:21). The psalm contains a series of four scenarios of trial and suffering (V.4-32) that highlight the goodness of Yahweh in delivering men from the extremity of trouble and danger in answer to their prayers. In each case there is a description of the sufferer’s plight; their cry for help and its answer, and a call to thanksgiving. The returned exiles are meant to see in these pictures both the proofs of God’s goodness and the illustrations of their own experience. Israel had been on the point of perishing in the great desert of the world (V.4-9); it had been imprisoned for its transgressions in the gloomy dungeon of exile and had lain there crushed and hopeless (V.10-16); it had been sick unto death through its own sin (V.17-22); it had been all but swallowed up in the vast sea of the nations (V.23-32), but now released from exile in Babylon they had good cause to praise their God.

Highlighting the repeated words found in verses 6,13,19 and 28 is very helpful in appreciating this psalm – “Then they cried unto Yahweh in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses.” Similarly, the repeated admonition, “Oh that men would praise Yahweh for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!” (V.8,15,21,31) is also worthwhile highlighting. Whether the experiences of the rescued distressed wanderers of V.4-9; or the release of bound prisoners (V.10-16); or the deliverance of the afflicted fool (V.17-22); or the salvation of the floundering shipmen (V.23-32), the outcome is always the same – “Oh that men would praise Yahweh for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!” We too have good reason to join that chorus having the prospect of being delivered imminently from “the bondage of corruption” (Rom. 8:21) at the return of Christ.

The final verses of the psalm (V.33-43) speak of judgements on those who remain wicked despite the gracious interventions of Yahweh, and the blessings on those who respond with praise and gratitude.

## **1 Corinthians 16**

V.1-4 – One of the major projects of the Apostle was the collection of funds for the brethren in Judea suffering from the famine that had afflicted the land. This famine was predicted by Agabus, and occurred in the time of Claudius Caesar (Acts 11:28-30). Barnabas was associated with Paul in conveying the contribution to Jerusalem. He appealed to the Corinthian ecclesia to be generous in their contributions to the ‘Jerusalem Poor Fund’ and expected they would be. However, in his second (retained and recorded) epistle he had to prod them (2 Cor. 8 & 9) as there was economic hardship also in Corinth at the time (1 Cor. 7:26).

V.5-14 – Paul planned to visit the ecclesia which was likely to be preceded by a visit from Timothy whose timidity worried the Apostle given the number of assertive brethren in the ecclesia and its existing problems – “Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear.”

The more robust Apollos was not available to visit Corinth and this was a disappointment for Paul as he would have been able to address some of the problems. It is curious that Paul should adopt the words of the Philistines in 1 Sam. 4:9 – “quit you like men, be strong” when speaking of the need for faith, but the courage of their convictions would be necessary to handle the problems the ecclesia was confronting. That courage would only be possible by fixation on love for Christ and his ways so that “if any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha” (“excommunicated at the coming of Christ”).

V.15 – “I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have **addicted** themselves to the ministry of the saints).” Addictions are one of the many scourges of the modern world. If the only ‘addiction’ we had was devotion to the service of the saints we would do well. The word “addiction” in the KJV is *tasso* – to put in order, arrange. Most translations say “that they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints.”

## March 4

### Leviticus 9 and 10

After the seven days of consecration of Aaron and his sons, the eighth day arrived for the beginning of the operation of the Aaronic priesthood. It turned out to be a disaster on day 1. To the end of Lev. 9 all seemed to be going very well. All the prescribed sacrifices for the priests and the people were made and accepted by fire from heaven after Aaron and Moses had blessed the people. The glory of Yahweh appeared and all the people saw it, and gave a shout of joy and fell in humility on their faces. What could go wrong?

Leviticus 10:1 records how the two eldest sons of Aaron prepared incense using fire from a forbidden source (perhaps from their own barbeque). Incense could only be burnt with coals from the altar of burnt offering (Lev. 16:12). Fire came down from heaven and consumed them, just as it had consumed the sacrifices on the altar (Lev. 9:24; 10:2).

The lesson from this for all time is then proclaimed in verse 3 (Rotherham) – “Then said Moses unto Aaron—The very thing, that Yahweh spake, saying—**In them that draw near to me** (meaning the appointed priests), **must I be hallowed**, And before the faces of all the people, must I get myself honour.” Those who represent Yahweh must honour Him before the people by doing exactly what was commanded. Accordingly, Aaron and his surviving sons were not to show any sign of grief or sorrow at the death of Nadab and Abihu (V.6). That would have been difficult, but they had to stand with Yahweh because of that declaration.

It is evident from the context that Nadab and Abihu were intoxicated. Why else would Yahweh introduce a new law for the priests in verses 8-11 speaking directly to Aaron? “**Do not drink wine nor strong drink**, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die.” In addition to the ban on alcohol while serving, there is reference made to making “a difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean.” This is then amplified in the following chapters – Lev. 11 to 15 with a vast array of laws of clean and unclean, holy and unholy. That these laws were directly derived from the tragedy of Lev. 10 is shown by Lev. 16:1 – “And Yahweh spake unto Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before Yahweh, and died.”

The cousins of Aaron who had the grisly task of carrying the charred bodies of Nadab and Abihu to their wilderness graves were unable to keep the Passover which followed six days later on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Abib. They were unclean for seven days due to contact with a dead body (Lev. 5:2; 11:24). So, another new law was introduced allowing them to keep the Passover a month later (Num. 9:6-11).

In verses 12 to 15, in the wake of the disaster, Moses gave instructions to Aaron and his two remaining sons to eat the portions of the sacrifices made that day as Yahweh's representatives. But his eye did not see the goat of the sin offering for the people (Lev. 9:15). This had been burnt and not consumed by the priests, hence it had not been accepted by Yahweh. This meant that on the very first day of the operation of the Aaronic priesthood, the Law of Moses failed to secure forgiveness for the people. The Law could not save and this was a testimony to that fact.

Aaron confessed that he simply could not represent Yahweh that day because of the foolishness of his elder sons and the disaster that had overtaken his family (V.19). While Moses was 'content' with that explanation, nevertheless the need for Christ and his sacrifice was thus emphasized – "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Heb. 10:4).

### **Psalm 108 – For the strengthening of Messiah – The two keys of the Kingdom**

V.1 – "**A Song or Psalm of David.** O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise, even with my glory" – The wording of this psalm is derived from other psalms, particularly Ps. 57:7-11 and Ps. 60:5-12. The inspired superscription of Ps. 60 is therefore relevant to Ps. 108 and identifies the background to V.6-13. However, Ps 57 has its background in the time when David was on the run from Saul and hiding in caves and the section from Ps. 57:7-11 is cited almost identically in V.1-5. The superscriptions of these two derivative psalms are as follows: Ps. 57 – "Michtam of David, when he fled from Saul in the cave"; and Ps. 60 – "Michtam of David, to teach; when he strove with Aramnaharaim and with Aramzobah, when Joab returned, and smote of **Edom** in the valley of salt twelve thousand." (Note the words "To the chief Musician upon Shushaneduth" belong to the subscription of Psalm 59). This raises the question as to why this is a composite psalm of two that have gone before. The answer would appear to be in the way the psalm is structured to inform and encourage Messiah.

Consistent with 1 Pet. 1:11 – "Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand **the sufferings of Christ**, and **the glory that should follow**" (the two keys of the Kingdom), David, writing under inspiration on behalf of Messiah views the two phases of Christ's experiences (mortal and immortal). Firstly, pursued by murderous Judaizers who ultimately secured his death (Christ's sufferings), and then having been raised and glorified, pursuing and destroying his enemies at his Second Advent (the glory manifested). That is why in V.6 there is reference to Christ's resurrection and glorification – "That thy beloved may be delivered: save with thy right hand" (cp. Ps. 16:11 – "at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore").

Edom is clearly the core subject of the latter portion of this psalm. Hence, the questions in V.9 – "Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom?" are important. Edom is a type of 'Babylon the great' in prophecy. This is proved by the citation of Isa. 34:9-10 in Rev. 14:10-11, and by the allusion to Isa. 34:11 in Rev. 18:2. Additionally, in the parable of Balaam in Num. 24:17-19, both Edom and the 'city' are referred to as being destroyed by Christ and the saints. The keen eye will see that Num. 24:18 – "And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do **valiantly**" is alluded to in Ps. 108:13 – "Through God we shall do **valiantly**: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies." Accordingly, Edom represents the enemies of Christ at, and beyond Armageddon. These will include at the head, 'Babylon the great' with its headquarters initially in Rome, and later in Central Europe after the destruction of the 'city' – Rome (Rev. 14:8).

## Psalm 109 – Betraying Christ has no future

V.1 – “**To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.** Hold not thy peace, O God of my praise” – The highlighted phrase is the subscription of Ps. 108. This psalm was almost certainly written by David at the time of the rebellion of Absalom. The proof of this is in the citation of the phrase from verse 8 – “let another take his office” in Acts 1:20 – “his bishoprick let another take.” This was said of the traitor Judas Iscariot who was the anti-type of Ahithophel David’s close friend of whom he wrote in Ps. 55:12-14 – “For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him: But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company.” Judas had also been a close companion and trusted friend of Christ (John 13:29). David spoke of him in this and other psalms (Acts 1:16).

V.8-18 therefore tell us an enormous amount about Judas Iscariot’s character and his machinations against Christ, and his suicide and the consequences for his family;

- V.8 – “let his days be few” – they were because of his suicide.
- V.9 – His wife became a widow and his children fatherless.
- V.10 – His children became vagabonds and wandering beggars.
- V.11 – Extortioners stripped away all the wealth he had accumulated.
- V.12 – No-one would care for his fatherless children.
- V.13-15 – His family would fade into obscurity.
- V.16 – His self-serving character ultimately manifested mercilessness.
- V.17-20 – In his heart he cursed Christ and spoke evil against him.

The enemies of David and of Christ have no covering for their sin and will depart ashamed from the Judgement Seat – “Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame, and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle” (V.29). However, Christ and David together with a countless glorified multitude will praise Yahweh – “I will greatly praise Yahweh with my mouth; yea, I will praise him among the multitude.”

## 2 Corinthians 1

Paul wrote this second preserved epistle to the ecclesia at Corinth after an earlier severe admonitory letter which he refers to in 2 Cor. 2:4 and 7:8 which has not been preserved. While that letter had clearly compelled the ecclesia to deal appropriately with the offender referred to in 1 Cor. 5:1, it had also stirred up some strong feelings towards the Apostle. The tenor of the language used in these two chapters is coloured by that. Paul had enemies in the ecclesia at Corinth (11:3-4,12-15) who were determined to undermine his work. He knew he needed to proceed with caution towards those who were sympathetic towards him but who had been bruised by his admonitory letter. That is why there is an emphasis on “comfort” throughout the epistle. The Greek word translated “comfort” in V.3 (*paraklesis*) is used 11 times, although variously translated in the KJV. The cognate verb *parakaleo* is used 18 times in the epistle and is largely translated “comforted” or “comfort.”

Related to the idea of “comfort” the Apostle focuses on his sufferings in this epistle as a sign of the genuineness of his ministry on their behalf – “For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ” (V.5). He expanded on this theme in V.8-9 and in chapters 4:10-11 and 11:23-30. His detractors who did not experience such tribulations were largely silenced by these facts, for like the Galatians “before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you” they had seen ‘Christ’ in their midst. So Paul could safely say without fear of contradiction, “whether we be afflicted, it is for **your**

consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for **your** consolation and salvation” (V.6).

V.12-24 – “that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth” – The Apostle explains in this section that he had changed his plans to come earlier to Corinth to spare any further ill feeling over the now resolved case of the offender of 1 Cor. 5:1. This case had been the subject of Paul’s severe admonitory letter. The ecclesia had responded by withdrawing from the offending brother who had then repented of his sin. There was now scope for the Apostle to visit again. This is continued in chapter 2.

## 2 Corinthians 2

V.1-4 – “But I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness” – Driven by a desire to correct the leaven-like immorality in the ecclesia which they seemed reluctant to deal with (1 Cor. 5:1-11), Paul had shed many tears as he wrote his admonitory letter. He knew what impact it would have, and he was right. But it had succeeded in the matter being corrected. The question could be asked in the Humanistic environment of the world today whether the Brotherhood is doing any better in the handling of such cases than did the Corinthians until the Apostle’s intervention.

V.5-11 – (RSV, ESV) “For such a one, this punishment by the majority is enough” – Paul counsels the ecclesia to restore the repentant sinner to their fellowship. Where there is genuine repentance there is no need for statutory periods of exclusion.

V.12-17 – “when I came to Troas to preach Christ’s gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother” – So concerned was Paul about the outcome of his admonitory letter that he had asked Titus to visit the ecclesia in Corinth and report back to him. In those days of limited communication it proved to be an agonising wait with consequences for Paul’s preaching work. His agitation had a negative impact on his ability to preach as he normally would do. The uncompromising message of the truth, particularly in the synagogues of hardened Judaisers, was difficult enough, but was made harder by the distraction of the issues in Corinth – “For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.” Paul had written strongly in his admonitory letter and he would have to speak strongly against the destructive Judaistic opposition he encountered in the ecclesia in this epistle (11:12-15). Upholding the purity of the truth is rarely a comfortable task.

## March 5

### Leviticus 11 – The laws of uncleanness

The laws of uncleanness speak largely for themselves. They were introduced in the wake of the disaster of Lev. 10. Discernment between what Yahweh regards as clean and unclean spiritually is the purpose of these laws. We will focus on just two animals – the camel and the swine. We can be either one in our walk in the Truth.

V.3-4 – “Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is **clovenfooted**, and **cheweth the cud**, among the beasts, that shall ye eat. Nevertheless these shall ye not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the hoof: as the **camel**, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you.”

V.7 – “And the swine, though he divide the hoof, and be **clovenfooted**, yet he **cheweth not the cud**; he is unclean to you.”

Cloven-footed animals represent 'sure-footed' people; i.e. those who can negotiate the rough and dangerous paths of life due to the fact that they regularly chew the cud; i.e. ruminates upon the Word of God.

Both camel and swine are an anomaly. The camel can last seven days without water in desert lands. It takes in huge draughts of water that can be stored and used over time. However, it is not cloven-footed. Its feet are soft pads that are uniquely designed for sandy terrain, but not for rocky and rough roads. The camel represents those who do take in the water of the Word, but only every now and then. They may take in huge quantities, say at a Bible school, but not in the days following. These are those who are in danger of falling into the trap of James 1:22 – “But be ye doers of the word, and **not hearers only**, deceiving your own selves.”

On the other hand, the swine has a cloven hoof. To all intents and purposes he appears to be walking in the way, but this is not because the motivation is from the Word of God on which he does not ruminates (chew the cud – Phil. 2:13). He eats but does not regurgitate and extract all the nutrients of the food as do cud chewers. Therefore, Yahweh declared him to be unclean. It is a warning and an encouragement to be a little more like the psalmists who wrote:

Ps. 119:97 – “O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.”

Ps. 19:14 – “Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Yahweh, my strength, and my redeemer.”

Ps. 119:99 – “I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation.”

The many creatures of sea, air and land that are listed as being unclean in the balance of the chapters teach many lessons about what Yahweh eschews in people. The natural man is more like the beasts than he is prepared to acknowledge (Ecc. 3:18; Ps. 49:19-20; 73:22; Prov. 30:2). The purpose of these laws was that right moral choices could be made by discernment of the principles involved – “To make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the beast that may be eaten and the beast that may not be eaten.”

## Psalm 110

A full set of Bible marking notes on Ps. 110 can be found in **Appendix 4**.

V.1 – “**A Psalm of David**. Yahweh said unto my Lord (*adon*), Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool” – That this is a psalm of David is made clear by its citation by Christ – “How then doth **David** in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?” (Matt. 22:43-44). Ps. 110 is the most quoted Old Testament Scripture in the New Testament by far. That fact alone makes it extremely important. It was certainly very important to Christ as Matt. 22:41-46 demonstrates.

V.2 – (Rotherham) “Thy sceptre of strength, will Yahweh extend out of Zion, Tread thou down, in the midst of thy foes” – This qualifies V.1. Christ will be active in the conquest of his enemies, not sitting until they are subdued. The word “until” in V.1 is *ad* – as far as, even unto, during, while, until. The duration required to subdue all Christ’s enemies will be to the end of the Millennium (1 Cor.15:24-28). There are stages to this work (Eph.1:20-22) and the saints will be involved.

V.3 – “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth” – This primarily refers to the saints; raised and glorified after resurrection (dew being a symbol for resurrection – Isa.26:19).

See Eureka Vol.1 pg.140-142, 312-313). They will have two essential probationary qualities for involvement as immortals in the future. The first is **willingness** (the word “willing” is *nedabah* – spontaneous, and is used of the freewill offering and is translated “freely” in Ps.54:6; Hos.14:4). This is based on Abraham’s 318 trained servants who willingly followed him into battle (Gen.14:13-14) for Gen. 14 is the root of this psalm. The second quality is **holiness**, the principle governing Christ’s resurrection (Rom.1:4; 6:4). It is also an essential moral requirement in the saints (Rom. 6:22; 2 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 4:24; Heb. 12:10,14; 1 Pet. 1:15-16).

V.4 – (Rotherham) “Yahweh, hath sworn—and will not repent, Thou, shalt be a priest unto times age-abiding, after the manner of **Melchizedek**” – This oath was probably God’s response to David’s oath to bring the Ark to Zion (Ps. 132:1-6) – “Yahweh, remember David, and all his afflictions: How he swore unto Yahweh, and vowed unto the mighty God of Jacob.” Ps. 132 was written at the time David fulfilled his vow. David had worked out from Gen. 14 that the Mosaic Covenant would be superseded by the Abrahamic Covenant when the priesthood was changed from the Aaronic to the Melchizedek order. That is why he brought the Ark to Zion to house in a tent he had erected for it (1 Chron. 15:1; 16:1), and acted as a Melchizedek king-priest in doing so (see comments on 2 Sam. 6). David was a forerunner and type of Christ. He knew the reality would not come until the seventh millennium which is why he made the Kohathites carrying the Ark on the second attempt take six steps and stop while he sacrificed. It was an acknowledgement that the fulfillment of the type of Gen. 14 and the vow that Yahweh made to His Son would only become reality then.

V.5 – “The Lord (*adonai*) at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath” – Adonai here should be “Yahweh” (see The Companion Bible). This refers to Armageddon and the subsequent 40 years of war to subdue the nations (Zech.14).

V.6 – “He shall judge among the nations, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries” – Some doubt has arisen about the reference to the massive loss of life at the time when Yahweh’s judgements fall upon the earth, as they soon will. V.6 is in harmony with Jer. 25:30-33 – “And the slain of Yahweh shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground.” These testimonies are clear and we should take God at His word. The scourge of Humanism (the three unclean spirits like frogs – Liberty, Equality and Fraternity) that will bring the nations to Armageddon (Rev. 16:13-16) has created a world not unlike the days of Noah when all that God can do with mankind generally is to wipe the slate clean and start all over again. The thing about Humanism is that Christ describes it as insanity (Rev. 16:14), and that of course cannot be cured except by a miracle. Only those susceptible to change of mind (for Humanism is never wrong!) will be preserved. If God uses the same ratio with Gentiles as He will use for His own people in the Land, then fully two thirds of the world’s population will perish (Zech. 13:8). Truly, that will fill many places with dead bodies. Some of those will belong to Gog’s armies and it is fascinating that God “shall smite through the **head** over a great country” (the word “head” is *rosh* and points to Gog – Ezek. 38:2).

V.7 – “He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head” – Bro. Thomas says Christ drank of the brook during his probation and suffering (Heb.5:7). His successful probation fitted him for his role as judge, as a Melchizedek King-Priest with its two essential qualities – righteousness (moral) and immortality (physical – Heb. 7:3,16,26). The psalm concludes on a positive note of final victory. Christ’s ultimate triumph over the power of sin depended entirely on his personal victory

### Psalm 111 – Yahweh is righteous

V.1 – “Praise ye Yahweh. I will praise Yahweh with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation” – Psalms 111 and 112 are ‘brother’ and ‘sister.’ Both psalms are acrostic. Ps. 111 celebrates Yahweh’s righteousness which is shown by His “works.” There are two Hebrew words used for ‘works’ here. In verses 2,6 and 7 the word is *ma’aseh* and signifies deed, work, a thing done, act. In V.3 the word ‘work’ is *po’al* – work deed, doing. The first speaks of the many gracious acts of Yahweh towards His “assembly” and “congregation” (V.1). The word for “assembly” is *besod* – a secret assembly; while “congregation” is *edah* – a stated assemblage; like a family. Both imply a unique and privileged class of people – God’s special people (1 Pet. 2:9). The second word for ‘work’ reflects on the way that special company of people view God’s works (V.3 – “his righteousness endureth for ever” is repeated in V.9).

The divisions of Ps. 111 are V.1-4 – Praise to Yahweh for His gracious works. V.5-9 – Yahweh’s gracious works described; and V.10 – The only intelligent response. That response is threefold – (1) Fear or reverence; (2) Wisdom; shown by...(3) “do” = action. Those who appreciate Yahweh’s righteousness choose that path.

### Psalm 112 – The righteous man manifests Yahweh

V.1 – “Praise ye Yahweh. Blessed is the man that feareth Yahweh, that delighteth greatly in his commandments” – This psalm turns to the ‘righteous man’ who has moulded his life on the model of Yahweh who was seen in full manifestation in Christ (John 1:14). The heading of this psalm could be – The righteous man manifests Yahweh. Rotherham’s translation brings V.1 to life – “Praise ye Yah! How happy is the man who revereth Yahweh, In his commandments, delighteth he greatly.”

At a time when evangelicals propound a doctrine of grace without works, this psalm contains an important message. We are called to manifest the character of our God. “Works” will be the basis of our judgement before Christ (Rev. 22:12; Matt. 16:27; Rom. 2:6-7). Without works of righteousness (not works of law), there is no hope of eternal life. That the ‘righteousness’ of Ps. 111 is actual deeds (i.e. acts of righteousness) is shown clearly by Paul’s use of this psalm in 2 Cor. 9:9. He quotes Ps. 112:9 – “He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; **his righteousness endureth for ever**; his horn shall be exalted with honour” in the context of the need for the Corinthians to give generously to the Jerusalem Poor Fund. This is actual manifested righteousness in “good works” that are essential in the life of every believer.

### 2 Corinthians 3

In this chapter, Paul addresses the problem of some in the ecclesia at Corinth who insisted on living under the Law of Moses (they were inveterate Judaizers), and they undermined his work. He speaks of them in no uncertain terms in 2 Cor. 11:3-4,12-15. Accordingly, in this chapter he demonstrates that the Law of Moses, while “holy, just and good” (Rom. 7:12) could not give eternal life. It served only to convince man of his innate sinfulness (Rom. 7:5-11). So, at the death and resurrection of Christ it was abolished as a code requiring a life of rituals (but not its principles which remain the same under the law of Christ – 1 Cor. 9:21).

The Apostle used the law inscribed in stone as a representation of a “ministration of death” (V.7), and contrasted that with the writing on “the fleshly tables of the heart” of “the spirit of the living God” (V.3; Rom. 2:15). He then used the imagery of Moses face with its fading glory to contrast with the ever-increasing ‘glory’ of the face (identity or character) of Christ (V.7-18).

We repeat below what was said about Ex. 34:29-30 in February.

Moses face shone with luminosity after conversing on the mountain and in the 'tent of meeting' with Michael the archangel (Ex. 34:29-30). After speaking with Aaron and the children of Israel, Moses put a veil on his face to obscure the fading of the glory as the luminosity faded away. The italicized word "till" in V.33 (KJV) should be "when" for as soon as he had finished speaking to Israel with an unveiled face, he placed a veil over his face (V.35). Paul explains the meaning of this in 2 Cor. 3:13-16.

V.13 – "And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel **could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished.**" The Law of Moses was to be superseded by Christ. The former had a glory that would fade; the things that belonged to Christ would only increase in glory – see 2 Cor. 4:6-7,16-18.

Sadly, Jews who clung to the Law actually had a veil on their face (2 Cor. 3:14-15). We are able to look at Christ's 'unveiled' face as in a mirror. The more we focus on the character of Christ who manifested perfectly his Father's character (Yahweh's 'way' – John 1:14), the more we are transformed into the same likeness as Paul says in 2 Cor. 3:18 (Rotherham) – "And, we all, with unveiled face, receiving and reflecting, the glory of the Lord, into the same image, are being transformed, from glory into glory,—even as from a Spirit that is Lord." It is a stage-by-stage process. It doesn't happen quickly.

## 2 Corinthians 4

In this chapter, the Apostle expands upon the brightness of the glory of Yahweh manifested in Christ and his faithful followers. This can be hindered and negated by "the hidden things of dishonesty" and by "craftiness" and by "handling the word of God deceitfully" (V.1), all of which are easily fallen into by the deceitful nature we possess (Jer. 17:9). We have the "treasure" of "the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ" (ESV) in "earthen vessels" (V.4-7). As Bro. Thomas said, it is our misfortune that we have this nature, not our crime.

V.10 – Paul alludes to the body of Joseph carried for 40 years (probation period) through the wilderness as a reminder to "take up the cross and follow" Christ, of whom Joseph was a complete type.

V.13 – Paul quotes Ps. 116:10 ("I believed, and therefore have I spoken") in reference to the resurrection of Christ, and the prospect of being there when he pays his vows in the courts of Yahweh's House of Prayer for all nations (Ps. 116:8-19). It is to such wonderful visions of the future that Paul alludes in V.17-18 ("a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory"). The "outward man" (i.e. the physical body) decays, but the "inward man" is "renewed" (*anakainoo* – to renew; to daily acquire new strength which previously it had not) day by day by the intake of the Word of God ("as by the spirit of the Lord" – 1 Cor. 3:18).

## March 6

### Leviticus 12 – Laws concerning child birth

This chapter deals with laws of uncleanness at childbirth – "If a woman have conceived seed, and born a man child: then she shall be unclean seven days; according to the days of the separation for her infirmity shall she be unclean." A woman having given birth to a son was to be "unclean seven days" (V.2), and on the eighth day, the child was to be circumcised. At the end of thirty-three days, the mother was to offer certain sacrifices, and then she was to be eligible for contact with holy things and attendance at the Tabernacle, from which she was cut off during that period. What might this teach?

V.3 – “in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised” – Bro. Roberts wrote in ‘The law of Moses’– “seven days’ uncleanness and then circumcision; what can this be but the history of the world in miniature from the Divine point of view: seven days of a thousand years each, the earth unclean; and on the eighth day, the flesh cut off, and the covenant sealed in truth for ever.”

V.4-5 – The significant factor in these laws is the doubling of the days of purifying for the birth of a female child over that of the male child. What might this mean at the spiritual level? Childbirth introduces more sin and death into the world (Rom. 5:12). Job intoned, “Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble” (Job 14:1), and lamented – “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one” (V.4). Solomon in his prayer of dedication of the first Temple stated the truth – “If they sin against thee, (for there is no man that sinneth not).” (1 Kings 8:46). So, the cycle of sin and death continues – “there is no discharge in that war” (Ecc. 8:8).

The woman is the bearer of the child. As Paul writes in 1 Cor. 11:11-12 – “Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, **even so is the man also by the woman**; but all things of God.” Without the woman no one would be brought into the world. Hence, the 66 day period of purifying for the female child as opposed to the 33 for the male child. There is also a strong hint here too of the hierarchy that Paul set out in 1 Cor. 11:3.

V.6-8 – “when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring a **lamb** of the first year for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtledove, for a sin offering” – The sin offering was to acknowledge the basic cause of sin in human nature, while the burnt offering was to express the mother’s desire to recommence her worship of Yahweh after her period of separation (V.8).

It is significant that a lamb is prescribed as a burnt offering which has inherent in it “atonement” (Lev. 1:4). The answer to the problem of human nature can only be resolved by “the lamb of that taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). The uncleanness was related to the blood of child birth – “she shall be cleansed from the issue of her blood.” Blood is the life of the flesh (Lev. 17:11). Therefore, the burnt offering and sin offerings pointed to the need of the whole human race for redemption from a death stricken nature and the sin that emanates from it.

### **Leviticus 13 – The laws of leprosy**

Lev. 13 begins the laws concerning leprosy. Sufficient to say that leprosy when it shows itself in the flesh of man is a symbol for sin. However, like our human nature which is naturally biased towards sin, it is possible to be related to it and be ‘clean’ (i.e. without sin). That was the case with Christ who was regarded as a leper (Isa. 53:4 – note he was “esteemed” stricken), but never sinned. It was only when someone suspected of having leprosy broke out with “quick raw flesh” (V.10,14) that he was pronounced “unclean.” A man with all the signs of leprosy could be pronounced “clean” – Lev. 13:13,17,23,28,34, etc. The word “clean” is *tâhêr* – a primitive root; properly to be bright; that is, (by implication) to be pure; physically sound, clear, unadulterated. It is used 11 times in Lev. 13 and 19 times in Lev. 14 for a total of 30. Christ was regarded as a leper by his enemies (and he bore the same nature as them), but no “raw flesh” (the manifestation of sin) ever broke out in him.

The worst form of leprosy is revealed in V.40-44. It is leprosy in the forehead which stands for what sits behind it – the brain. V.44 – “He is a leprous man, he is unclean: **the priest shall pronounce him utterly unclean; his plague is in his head.**” There is no worse spiritual condition. When the mind is leprous, and flesh rules, men are utterly unclean. When a man is

completely ruled by King Sin in his mind he is doomed to destruction. As the Apostle John writes in 1 John 5:16-17 – “**There is a sin unto death:** I do not say that he shall pray for it. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.” We know that the only stated “sin unto death” is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Matt. 12:31). Allowing the flesh to rule in one’s life, when one knows better, is tantamount to blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 2:20-21). It is leprosy in the brain that makes a man “utterly unclean” in God’s sight.

### **Psalm 113 – Yahweh is high above all nations**

Psalms 113 to 118 are called by the Hebrews the great Hallel, or praise; which was sung on their most solemn festivals, and particularly at the celebration of the Passover (this is hinted at in Matt. 26:30; Mark 14:26). It is claimed Ps. 113 and 114 were sung before the Passover meal and Ps. 115 to 118 afterwards. While the sentiments of this psalm do not focus particularly on the Exodus, some of its companions do and they were all used at Passover time. There are quite clear echoes from the song of Hannah (1 Sam. 2:7-8), and long beams of light to the rejoicing of Mary (Luke 1:46-55).

There is found in these psalms the phrase “Praise ye Yahweh” (Hallelujah). The day will come when V.3 will be fulfilled and when every waking hour of mankind will see praise ascend to Yahweh – “From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same Yahweh’s name is to be praised.”

But there are also things to praise Yahweh for now (Ps. 113:9) – “He maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye Yahweh.” This has been the experience of many faithful women down through the ages starting with Sarah (Gen. 21:6-7) – “And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me. And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given **children** suck? for I have born him a son in his old age.” Note Sarah’s ‘prophecy’ in the words “given children suck” (she knew the promise to Abraham of a multitudinous seed would come through Isaac).

### **Psalm 114 – The earth trembled when Israel went out of Egypt**

V.1-2 – “When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language; Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion” – This Hallel psalm celebrates the great things Yahweh had done to redeem His people from the bondage of Egypt and to bring them into the Land of His promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Its message for us is simple – never forget the value and importance of our call to those same promises. Many in Israel did.

### **2 Corinthians 5 – A ‘house’ from heaven**

V.1-4 – Paul speaks of the ‘nakedness’ of human nature. He is not speaking here of spiritual nakedness which keeps one out of the Kingdom (Rev. 16:15), but of the state in which we were born (Job 1:21), and ultimately return to the ground (1 Tim. 6:7) – “For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.” His context is clearly about ultimately putting on immortality (“a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens”), “For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be **unclothed** (end up as we were born), but clothed upon, **that mortality might be swallowed up of life.**”

V.5-10 – In the mortal state we are distant from immortality (V.6) – “whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord” (in the sense that we do not yet possess his immortal

nature), but when one falls asleep (as Paul desired), the next waking moment is in the presence of the Lord and the receipt of the reward that awaits the faithful (2 Tim. 4:8). That will manifest what we actually are (Rotherham on V.10) – “For, we all, must needs be **made manifest** before the judgement seat of the Christ.” The word “appear” is *phaneroo* – to make manifest (translated that way in the KJV of V.11).

V.11-20 – Paul turns to “the ministry of reconciliation” (V.18) which he was constrained to both preach and live – “if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (V.17). He spelt out his commission from Christ – “We are to tell how God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not charging men's transgressions to their account, and that He has entrusted to us the Message of this reconciliation” (Weymouth for V.19), and called on the Corinthians to “be ye reconciled to God” (V.20).

V.21 – “For **he hath made him to be sin for us**, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” This verse has created problems for some in relation to the Atonement. The Greek word for “sin” – *harmatia* is used twice in this verse but clearly means something different in each case. It is obvious the second occurrence concerns transgression, of which Christ was free. But he possessed a nature (like us) that was biased to sin, and in which there is no good thing (Mark 10:18; Rom. 7:18; Jer. 17:9). Therefore, he possessed what Paul calls “the body of sin” (Rom. 6:6). This is the language of **metonymy** used often in Scripture. The figure of speech known as Metonymy is where the thing contained is put for the container, and vice versa. An example of this is found in 2 Kings 4:40 – “there is death in the pot.” One of the sons of the prophets had mistakenly added a poisonous plant into the broth that was fatal to those who ate it. Accordingly, their cry was “there is death in the pot.” They meant the poisoned food would lead to death. That is metonymy. Christ had a “body of sin” in that he was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin.

## 2 Corinthians 6 and 7

V.1-13 – “I have heard thee in **a time accepted**, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee; behold, **now is the accepted time**; behold, **now** is the day of salvation” – The Apostle began this epistle gently, knowing that he had bruised some in the ecclesia at Corinth through his insistence that the right thing be done with the moral offender of 1 Cor. 5:1. He now urged the members of the ecclesia to reset their course. With that bruising matter behind them, the time was right (i.e. an acceptable time) for a reset of priorities. Paul's priorities were well known and are set out in V.3-12. There were serious deficiencies in the ecclesia that required correction (chap. 12:20-21), and some clear choices needed to be made between right and wrong.

V.14-18 – When stating the complete dichotomy between truth and error, light and darkness, etc., Paul draws on the principles of the Nazarite vow of Num. 6 – “And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of (delete ‘the’ – there is no Def. Art.) living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in (*en* – within) them, and walk in (*emperipateō* – to go about in, walk in them); and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate (*aphorizō* – to be set apart for some purpose), saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and **ye shall be my sons and daughters**, saith the Lord Almighty.” The only thing under the Law of Moses where a woman had equal access and liberty with a man was in the Nazarite law (Num. 6:2) – “When **either man or woman** shall separate themselves to vow a vow of a Nazarite, to separate themselves unto Yahweh.” That is why chapter 7 begins – “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us

cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

The Corinthians had allowed a terrible “uncleanness” to exist in their ranks by failing to withdraw their fellowship from the sinner of 1 Cor. 5:1. Now that they had acted against that uncleanness by withdrawal and ultimately had recovered the offender, the Apostle commends them for upholding the values of the Nazarite (2 Cor. 7:11). “Now” was an acceptable time to renew their ‘vow’ of commitment to Christ. Their renewal of attitude (at least by many) had gladdened the heart of Titus, one of the Apostle’s most committed companions.

## March 7

### Leviticus 14 – The cleansing of leprosy

The laws concerning the cleansing of a healed leper were never invoked because no Jewish leper was ever cleansed until the ministry of Christ (Luke 4:27), which is why Christ sent them to the priest hoping its uniqueness would invoke a realization of who he was (Matt. 8:4). In the case of a cure (and apart from Miriam there were none), the healed leper was to be inspected by the priest, and if found clean, special offerings were to be made. Then, after washing and shaving off all hair he was permitted to re-enter the camp.

In ‘The Law of Moses,’ Bro. Roberts comments – That leprosy and issue, as distinct from ordinary infirmity, should be treated with a spiritual meaning seems appropriate in view of the infectious and destructive nature of these diseases as compared with ordinary human ailments. Man, as the propagation of Adam’s condemned earthy nature, is by nature a mortal and afflicted being: but there are degrees in the afflictedness. There is such a thing as a healthy mortal, and there is such a thing as a diseased mortal. The law of Moses deals with both – both literally and typically. For the healthy mortal, it prescribes circumcision and sacrifice; for the unhealthy, separation and special treatment. It is the spiritual or typical meaning we are concerned with at present. We have discerned this in its treatment of the healthy: the healthy, though mortally healthy, are recognised as “all under sin,” to use Paul’s expression (Rom. 3:19), because the descendant of the sinner of Eden, and the individual transgressors of the Divine law, and are therefore held at arm’s length, as we might say, unless they humble themselves and confess and approach in the way appointed, and then they are received for blessing and ultimate healing. Their mere mortality is no bar when the divine conditions of reconciliation are complied with. But here are diseased mortals whose cases not only receive special treatment physically, but whose connection with special sacrifice appointed, shows they have a special significance typically. The distinction is a natural one physically, and it seems a natural one spiritually, for there is a great difference between human frailty by natural constitution, against which a man may be struggling in the way of righteousness; and human wickedness which a man may be following from taste and preference and wilful bent. The one, we may take it, is represented by healthy human nature under the ordinances of the law, and the other by diseased human nature in the same relation (pages 253-254). That being the typical significance of leprosy, a ‘healed leper’ represents one whose sin has been overcome and forgiven (see Isa. 55:7; Ezek. 18:21-22).

V.4-10 – Sprinkling with blood 7 times; 7 days of absence from the tent; and cleansing on the 8th day all suggest that the problem of leprosy (sin) will not be erased from the earth until the end of the Millennium when God will be “all in all” in the 8th Millennium.

V.14-18 – The same ritual was to be used as for the consecration of the priests in Lev. 8 with blood related to ear, thumb and great toe. This indicated the need for restitution of hearing,

working and walking in the way by sacrifice. This can only be accomplished by the power of the Word of God working in one's life, hence, oil was also applied to these appendages.

V.33-57 – The laws relating to a **leprous house** were to have important ramifications for God's people in their subsequent history. Yahweh constantly warned of leprosy in His 'house' through the prophets (Isa. 1:5-6 – “putrifying sores”). The first inspection was to be made by a priest (Lev. 14:36-37). Jeremiah (a priest) made his 1st inspection in Jer. 5 to 7. The house was, as it were, shut up 7 days (Lev. 14:38) when Jeremiah stood at the gate of the temple (Jer. 7:2) and called for the cleansing of the spiritual lepers who boastfully frequented it (Jer. 7:29; cp. Lev. 14:2-9).

Then there was to be a second inspection by the priest (Lev. 14:39). Jeremiah made his 2nd inspection in Jer. 16 to 29. The law specified that the infected stones were to be removed and the walls scraped and those parts of the leprous house taken to an unclean place (Lev. 14:40). This happened when the 'stones' (Jews) were removed to Babylon and Egypt in BC 587/586. The house was 'scraped' and the dust removed by Yahweh's judgements through the Chaldeans. It is curious that the word “dust” (Lev. 14:41) first occurs in Gen. 2:7. The word for “scraped off” (*qatsah*) in Lev. 14:41 is rendered “cut short” in 2 Kings 10:32 of foreign captivity.

The Law provided for the partially destroyed house to be rebuilt. New stones were used to repair the house (Lev. 14:42). On the return of the exiles under Zerubbabel and Joshua, the temple was rebuilt by the returned captives (Ezra 3:8-10). As it were, “other mortar” (same word for “dust” – V.41) was deployed in the new generation associated with the temple (Ezra 3:11-13). However, as time went on, leprosy returned to God's house after the rebuilding (Lev. 14:43) in the period BC 516 to AD 30. Christ (as presumptive priest after the order of Melchizedek) made the third and final inspection (Lev. 14:44) in the period 10th to 13th Abib (Luke 19:28-47). He declared the temple a leprous house because of the corruption within it and said, “they (the Romans) shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.” This was in accordance with Lev. 14:45 – “he shall break down the house, the stones of it, and the timber thereof, and all the mortar of the house; and he shall carry them forth out of the city into an unclean place” (i.e. Roman captivity).

V.57 – The purpose of these laws was “To teach when it is unclean, and when it is clean: this is the law of leprosy.” The principles remain the same today.

### **Psalms 115 – Good reasons to trust in Yahweh**

V.1 – “Not unto us, O Yahweh, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake” – There is no certainty about the author of this psalm. Various suggestions have been made about periods in the nation's history when they came under pressure from powers who served idols. One such was Sennacherib of Assyria in the days of Hezekiah, and therefore he may have been the author. It has also been suggested that this psalm is a triumphal song, in which the victory is wholly ascribed to Yahweh and may well be part of the songs that were composed and sung at the time of Jehoshaphat's triumph over the confederated forces of his enemies in 2 Chron. 20:1-37, with praise alone. In reality, it matters little who wrote the psalm. It was one of those that Christ and his disciples had before them at the last supper and its message, though clearly directed to Israel, is relevant for all time.

V.4-8 – “Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands” – The folly of idolatry is parodied here as it is in Isa. 44:9-20 – “They that make a graven image are all of them vanity.” Many of the idols are made in the image of man who worships himself. They have mouths, ears, eyes, noses, hands and feet but are inanimate and useless, and their makers are

like them – “They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them.” They are effectively dead – “The dead praise not Yahweh.”

By contrast, the blessedness of those who serve Yahweh alone is spelt out in V.9-18 – “He will bless them that fear Yahweh, both small and great” (V.13).

## Psalm 116

A full set of Bible marking notes on this psalm can be found in **Appendix 5**.

V.1 – “I love Yahweh, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications” – This is clearly a Messianic psalm as is proven by the Apostle’s citation of V.10 in 2 Cor. 4:13 (note the context). Additionally, reference is made to Yahweh’s “handmaid” in V.16, and only Mary can claim that title (Luke 1:38). It is not possible to say with any certainty who may have authored this psalm, but it fits exactly the mould of 1 Pet. 1:11 in which reference is made to inspired recorders of old who with “the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow” (the two keys of the Kingdom). Accordingly, an analysis of the Psalm from a Messianic perspective results in the following summary of content:

### V.1-11 – Messiah recalls his sufferings and deliverance

- V.1-2 Messiah’s love for his God
- V.3-4 A cry to be delivered out of death
- V.5-6 Messiah’s cry for help answered
- V.7-9 Threefold deliverance brings life and rest
- V.10-11 Christ’s faith vindicated and declared

### V.12-19 – Messiah pays his vows before all his brethren

- V.12-14 Christ’s response to Yahweh’s deliverance
- V.15-16 A precious death provides life for many
- V.17-19 Christ praises Yahweh in the presence of all his brethren

Messianic statements are woven all through the psalm; e.g. V.3 – “The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow” is clearly a reference to Christ’s crucifixion; V.8 – “thou hast delivered my soul from death”; V.9 (Rotherham) – “I will walk to and fro before Yahweh, in the lands of life” (meaning eternal life); V.11 – “I said in my haste, All men are liars” expressed Messiah’s alarm at the utter depravity of men displayed in the events leading to his crucifixion; V.15 (Young’s Lit.) “Precious in the eyes of Yahweh is the death **for** His saints” (i.e. Christ’s death); V.18 – “I will pay my vows unto Yahweh now in the presence of **all** his people” (this can only be fulfilled by Christ in the future). Even in V.6 there is a hint of God’s way in bringing ‘low’ in order that His faithful servants might be ‘lifted up’ (cp. Luke 2:34; Ruth 1:21; 1 Sam. 2:6-8 – see the context).

The wonder of Christ’s future is revealed in V.12-19. That future will spring from a vow made in utter gratitude (“I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving”), and was motivated by a desire to repay his Father’s love – (Rotherham) “How shall I give back to Yahweh all his benefits unto me?” to which the answer was, “I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of Yahweh. I will pay my vows unto Yahweh now in the presence of all his people.” It might be thought that Christ had already paid his vows in his complete obedience even to the death of the cross. Certainly, “Precious in the eyes of Yahweh is the death **for** His saints” (i.e. Christ’s sacrifice), but the work will not be finished until sin and death are finally eradicated from the earth. That will not be until the end of the Millennium. There will be much work to do over the course of 1,000 years (1 Cor. 15:24-28; Rev. 20) as human nature will not go down without a fight to the death. However, Christ will not be alone this time, and on a special

occasion in the completed House of Prayer he will involve his saints in completing his vow – “I will pay my vows unto Yahweh now in the presence of all his people, in the courts of Yahweh’s house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem” (V.18-19).

## 2 Corinthians 8 and 9

These two chapters concern the collection for the Jerusalem Poor Fund. The Corinthians had shown enthusiasm when Paul initially proposed to them the need to regularly contribute to the fund until he could come and collect their contribution (1 Cor. 16:1-3). Clearly, Paul had heard that that enthusiasm had waned. He uses a combination of strategies to convince his flagging Corinthian brethren to renew their zeal for the project.

He points out that the Macedonian ecclesias with much more serious economic issues had given generously to the fund (V.1-5). He wishes to avoid the embarrassment should it become widely known that their zeal from 12 months prior had waned (V.6-11; 2 Cor. 9:2-4). He then exhorts on the value for the present and the future of a willing mind (2 Cor. 8:12) – “For if there be first a **willing mind**, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not” (V.12-24). Using the experience of the wilderness wandering of Israel, he makes the observation that because the manna only lasted one day, those who collected more than they needed generously passed on the excess to those who, for whatever reason prevented it, had not collected enough for their family (V.15 citing Ex. 16:18). Temporal wealth is only temporary. Sharing it with needy brethren when necessary stores up future treasure (1 Tim. 6:17-19).

It is a rule of creation that we reap what we sow (Gal. 6:7). So, meanness, stinginess and disinterest in the well-being of others will lead to diminished future harvests (2 Cor. 9:6) – “But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.” Willingness, generosity and whole-heartedness lead to bounty (2 Cor. 9:7) – “Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a **cheerful giver**.” Truly, in the gift of His only begotten son, Yahweh has shown the way (2 Cor. 9:15) – “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.”

## March 8

### Leviticus 15 – Laws about unclean issues from the body

This chapter treats with the uncleanness of men and women in their issues, and the means by which they could be ceremonially cleansed. It deals with the body (i.e. “flesh”) as a euphemism for the genital organs, and treats discharges therefrom as unclean. A discharge from other parts of the body such as the nose or ear is not treated as unclean.

Paul exhorted the Corinthians in 1 Cor. 15:33 (Weymouth) – “Do not deceive yourselves: **Evil companionships corrupt good morals**.” Holiness cannot be passed on, but unholiness is infectious (Haggai 2:11-13). This is the spiritual message of Lev. 15. A man with an issue from his body defiled everything he touched – bed, chair, vessel; his touch, his saliva all passed on ‘uncleanness’. Washing in water (a symbol for the Word – Eph. 5:26) was the antidote (V.11-13).

In the moral arena, these laws drove home the fact that there is no good thing that comes out of man naturally (Mark 7:20) – “That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man, for from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts,” etc. and given the subject matter in Lev. 15, it is not surprising the first two evils listed are “adulteries” and “fornications.”

When cured of the issue, sin and burnt offerings were made on the 8th day. This pointed to a ‘new beginning’ and hinted at the ultimate cure for all ‘issues’ from the flesh – the 8th Millennium

when God will be “all in all.” Matters to do with the production of children (perpetuating ‘uncleanness’) also fell under this law and similar offerings were made.

### **Psalms 117 – The ultimate purpose of God**

Psalm 117 is the shortest chapter in the Bible and yet contains the ultimate purpose of God to bring Jew and Gentile together in universal praise. It lies near the centre of the Bible as though it is the fulcrum of God’s Word. The citation of V.1 in Rom. 15:11 and allusion to V.2 in Rom. 15:8-9 provide an important clue. Paul was addressing the tension between Jew and Gentile converts in the ecclesia at Rome. He could not have chosen a better passage of Scripture.

V.1 – “Praise Yahweh, all ye nations (*goyim* – Gentile nations), Laud him, all ye tribes (*’ummah* – people, tribe, nation meaning Israel) of men” (Rotherham). This presages the time when both Jew and Gentile in the Kingdom Age will praise Yahweh together in complete unison. This cannot be a reality until the fulfillment of Num. 14:21 – “But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of Yahweh.”

V.2 – “For his **merciful kindness** is great toward us: and the **truth** of Yahweh endureth for ever. Praise ye Yahweh.” The word translated “merciful kindness” is *chesed*, the word used by Yahweh to describe His “loving-kindness” in Ex. 34:6-7 (247 occs. O.T). The word translated “truth” is *emeth* – firmness, faithfulness, truth, sureness, reliability. This is used to describe the other prominent characteristic of Yahweh in Ex. 34:6 – “truth” (127 occs. O.T). Paul alludes to these two qualities in Rom. 15:8-9 – “Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the **truth** of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his **mercy**.” Believing Jews leaned on the **truth** surrounding God’s promises, while converted Gentiles rejoiced in God’s **mercy**. If this situation will bring harmony in the Kingdom, Paul was suggesting now would be a good time to practice it.

The purpose of God is to fill the earth with those who have chosen to be like Him in character. Jesus Anointed was the full manifestation of his Father’s character – “full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). We are called to follow that example, though we are invariably faint reflections of him.

### **Psalm 118 – The right hand of Yahweh doeth valiantly**

V.1 – “O give thanks unto Yahweh; for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever” – As the last of the Hallel psalms in the group (Ps. 136 stands alone), this psalm appears to be a processional psalm as the voices alternate between the singular and the plural. It finds its roots in Ex. 14 and 15. Authorship has been attributed to David and to Hezekiah based on internal evidence. However, while there was doubtless a historical background, the psalm is Messianic and verses 10 to 12 speak of the mission of Christ to destroy Yahweh’s enemies at Armageddon. That is why the following verses draw heavily on Ex. 15 – the Song of Moses – after the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea (Ex. 15:1-6). “The right hand of Yahweh doeth valiantly” is an allusion to Ex. 15:6,12. Moses’ song concludes with the words (Ex. 15:18) – “Yahweh shall reign for ever and ever.” So, V.24 points to that great Day – “This is the day which Yahweh hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it,” for the righteous have entered the “gates of righteousness” (V.19-20).

This psalm was very important to Christ. He quoted V.22 in Matt. 21:42 when wrapping up the parable of the vineyard which was to be taken from Israel and given to the true ecclesia of Jew and Gentile. He again cited V.26 in Matt. 23:39 when declaring that Israel’s house would be desolate until his Second Advent. The people also sang the words of V.25-26 – “Save now” (Mark 11:9-10) – “Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord” as he rode

the colt into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day (10th of Abib). Ultimately, though Israel's redemption and the concomitant humbling of the nations (Israel's enemies) depended on one great sacrifice that was prefigured by the Passover Lamb – “bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.” There are few psalms that have been used in so many different ways pointing to our Lord Jesus Christ.

There are those who say that the middle words of the Bible are found in Ps. 118:8 – “It is better to trust in Yahweh than to put confidence in man.” That would indeed be fitting.

## 2 Corinthians 10

In chapters 10 and 11, the Apostle turns to address those who were undermining his work in the ecclesia at Corinth. He mentions “some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh” in V.2. This is the launchpad for verses 3 to 5 – “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: For the weapons of our warfare are not **carnal** (*sarkikos* – pertaining to flesh), but **mighty through God** (Youngs Lit. – “but powerful to God”) to the pulling down of strong holds; Casting down **imaginings** (*logismos* – reasonings, computations) and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every **thought** (*noema* – purpose) to the obedience of Christ.” Human experience demonstrates the impossibility of bringing every ‘thought’ into captivity unless you are the son of God, but mere mortals can be single minded when it comes to plans and purpose. Direction of life and future plans can be harnessed to the will of God in the everyday warfare of life.

Paul was a powerful writer as his letters to the ecclesia had shown, but his speech and presence evidently did not match his pen – “his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible” (V.10). His critics used this against him in an endeavour to weaken his influence. So he responded by asserting his integrity as opposed to his critics’ boastful hypocrisy. They gloried in things of no consequence. Paul’s counsel – “But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord” which is drawn from Jer. 9:23-24 and struck at the heart of the problem – “Thus saith Yahweh, Let not the wise man glory in his **wisdom**, neither let the mighty man glory in his **might**, let not the rich man glory in his **riches**: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am Yahweh which exercise lovingkindness, judgement, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith Yahweh.” It was these qualities that the Apostle was urging on the Corinthians.

## 2 Corinthians 11

V.2 – “For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have **espoused** you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ” – Judaism was a different religion to the truth in Christ. This was made clear to the Galatians in Gal. 1:8-9 – “If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.” Paul expressed his deep concern that the teachers of Judaism who visited Corinth and had made disciples would also deceive many others in due time (V.3). Believers in Christ are espoused to Christ (not yet married) and must be “chaste” (free from adultery). Paul’s arguments to the Romans in Rom. 7:1-4 come to mind. There he argued that the Law of Moses was a “husband” and while he was ‘alive’ (i.e. still followed as a means of gaining salvation) it was adultery to consort with another man (namely, Christ). The “husband” had to be ‘dead’ (i.e. abandoned as a means of salvation) so that one previously living under the Law could be espoused to Christ (see comments on Rom. 7 on January 30).

V.3-4 – “I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ” – Eve was utterly deceived by the serpent’s reasoning in the garden of Eden (1 Tim. 2:14), and she didn’t have the biased and deceitful nature that was created by that first transgression. There is a simplicity about the truth in Christ. The Judaisers corrupted that simplicity by preaching “another Jesus” and “another gospel” as do ‘Christian’ Jews in modern times. Sadly, there have been cases in our community recently where charismatic and persuasive ‘Christian’ Jewish teachers have swayed Christadelphians to forsake the truth and join their ranks. There seems to be something hypnotic about Judaism. It was that way in Christ’s day and as this chapter shows, also in Paul’s.

He described the teachers of error as “false apostles, deceitful workers” (V.13), and their leader as “Satan...transformed into an angel of light.” Paul’s concern materialised in due time when from his final prison cell he wrote to Timothy – “This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me” (2 Tim. 1:15).

V.16-33 – In these verses Paul sarcastically queries the boasts made by his enemies in the ecclesia. Compared to his sufferings in preaching the gospel, they had an easy time. He was able to match any claim of Jewishness they made, and exceed them. His persecution, weariness, privations of many kinds and jeopardy faced in his travels made their experiences fade into insignificance. Paul recounted all this with tongue in cheek for he did not really see any glory in it – “If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities,” and concluded with his humiliating escape from Damascus in a reed basket.

## March 9

### Leviticus 16

V.1-2 – Reference to the death of Nadab and Abihu confirms that the preceding laws of uncleanness that flowed from their demise was due to failure to make a difference between clean and unclean in the spiritual realm.

This culminated in the introduction of the Day of Atonement on the tenth day of the seventh month (Tishri) – Lev. 16:29. This was the most important day in Israel’s religious year. There were many things undertaken on this solemn day in which they would “afflict” their souls as sacrifices were made “to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year.”

- Firstly, Aaron the high priest, suitably washed and arrayed in holy garments made a sacrifice for himself and for his house – V.2-6;11-14.
- Secondly, he selected the scapegoat and “the goat for Yahweh” by lot and sacrificed the latter after the bullock for himself – V.7-10;15.
- The high priest was to be alone in the Tabernacle (V.17) while sprinkling the blood of the sin offerings on and towards the Mercy Seat seven times – V.14-15.
- On emerging, he sprinkled the blood of the sin offerings seven times on the altar of burnt offering – V.18-19.
- Then, placing his hands on the head of the scapegoat and confessing “over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins” he released the goat into the wilderness guided by a “fit man” – V.21-22.
- After washings and change of garments, Aaron offered a burnt offering for himself and for the people, and burnt the fat of the sin offering on it – V.23-25.
- The carcasses of the sin offerings (normally consumed by the priests) was burnt outside the camp because their blood was related to the Mercy Seat – V.14-15,27.

- The Israelites who released the scapegoat and burnt the bodies of the sin offerings washed their garments and bathed in water – V.26,28.
- Finally, Aaron appointed another priest to make atonement for the Tabernacle, its altar, the priests who ministered and the people – V.32-34.

All this was redolent of the mission of Christ as the redeemer of mankind (Heb. 9:24-28; 10:10-11). With spotless character (holy garments), though bearing human nature from which he himself needed redemption (i.e. involved in his own sacrifice), but sent to redeem the world, he offered the perfect sacrifice and rose again (release of the scapegoat) bearing away the sins of those in him (1 Pet. 2:24) – “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.” This he did once for all time in contrast to the priests of old whose ministrations could not take sin away permanently (Heb. 10:11-12). Because he was the ‘Mercy Seat’ whose shed blood would sanctify his people, he was crucified “without the camp” (Heb. 13:11-12). The appointment of “another priest” to make atonement hinted at the mission of Christ as our High Priest in heaven.

It is tragic that his own people did not see him in this light (John 1:11), but sought to cast him over a cliff (Luke 4:28-30), just as Israel did in the past! Because they feared that the scapegoat would return to the camp (with their sins), they had the living goat thrown over a cliff to ensure that it could not return. Jesus Anointed was the only “fit (*ittiy* – timely, ready) man” (*ish* – great man) capable to perform the work of redemption, and they crucified him.

When we keep the memorial feast, it is an opportunity to reflect on that great Day of Atonement and “afflict our souls” (1 Cor. 11:28) – “But let a man **examine** himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.”

### **Psalm 119 – O, how I love thy law**

This psalm could have been composed by David or even much later by Ezra. It is clear that the author was young (V.9), with a profound love and interest in the Scriptures so that he excelled and surpassed others (V.99-100). He had however made some mistakes that he deeply regretted. He had also acquired some powerful and revengeful enemies (V.51). Perhaps because of that, he was whole-hearted in everything he did (V.2,10,34,58, etc.). Our inability to say with certainty who the author of this prodigious psalm was is fitting, for it was clearly designed for Messiah.

Ps. 119 is another of the alphabetical (Acrostic) psalms. It consists of twenty-two parts, answering to the number of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet; every part being divided into eight verses, and each verse beginning with that letter which forms the title of that part; that is, the first part of eight verses with א, the second with ב, etc. It is an elegant, important, and useful composition; the chief subjects of which are the excellence of God’s laws, and the happiness of those who observe them. (Adapted from Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge).

The psalm is a revelation of the mind of God revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ – the Word made flesh (John 1:14). Yahweh’s language is Biblical Hebrew. To express each letter of its alphabet by eight (the number of immortality) stanzas is to declare that eternal life is only possible through the power of the Word of God to change us into His likeness. Hence, the Word of God is mentioned, in one form or another, in almost every verse of this psalm.

In the section of the psalm that is read today (verses 1 to 40), ‘Messiah’ answers the question of V.9 – “With what doth a young man purify his path?” (Youngs) with the same approach to the temptations presented to him by the tempter – “To observe—according to Thy word,” (i.e. “thus it is written”), and adds “With my whole heart have I sought thee” (V.10), and the

outcome of that singular desire – “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.” We do well to follow that example.

A summary of the section read today (V.1-40) could be:

V.1-8 – The blessedness of those who walk according to God’s law.

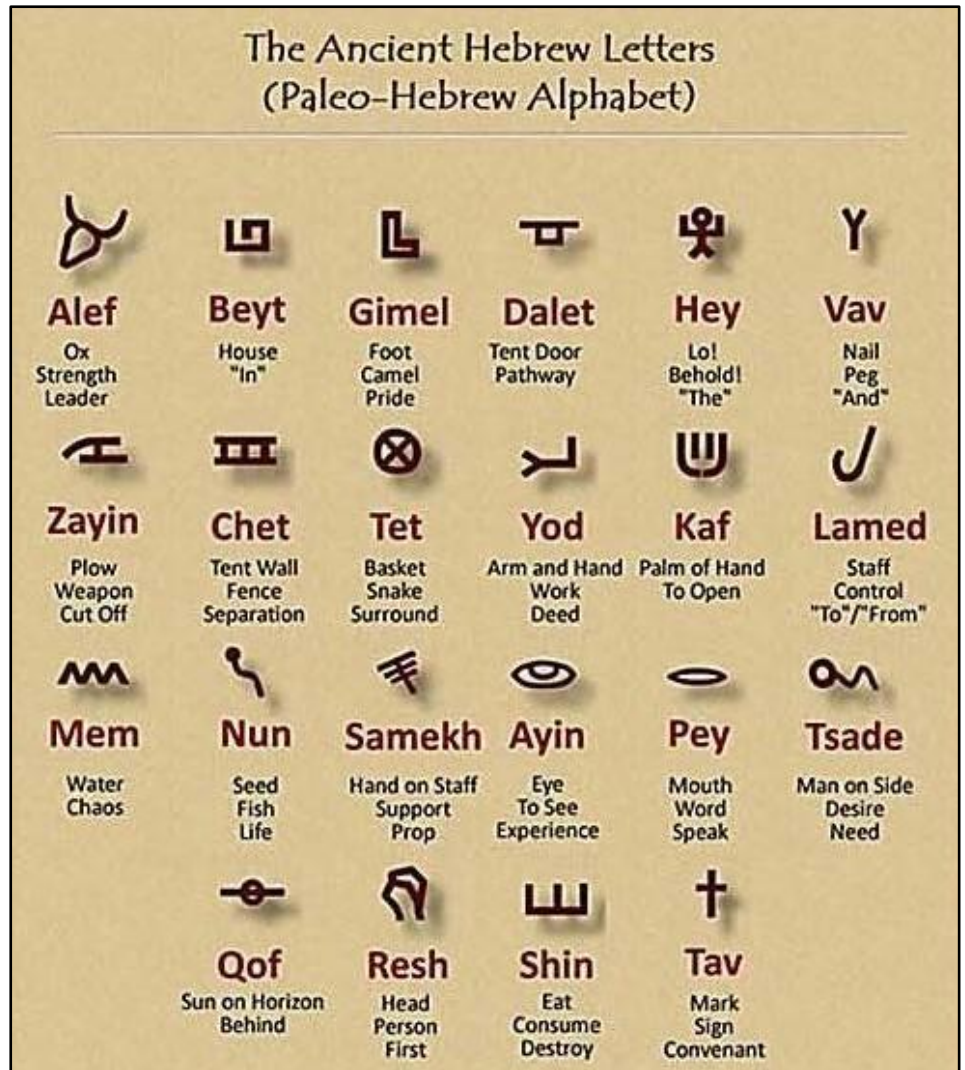
V.9-16 – The secret of personal purity.

V.17-24 – Comfort and counsel in reproach and contempt.

V.25-32 – A prayer for life and strength.

V.33-40 – A prayer for understanding and assistance.

Let us look for the indications of the mind of Christ as we read through this psalm over a period of four days.



## 2 Corinthians 12

Having suffered the humiliation of being lowered over the wall of Damascus that demonstrated the folly of boasting of one’s status, credentials and trials (as his enemies routinely did, and which Paul had ironically mimicked), he turned to the most important visions and revelations he had received in harmony with his counsel (2 Cor. 10:17) – “But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord” – cited generally from Jer. 9:23-24.

In order to prepare him for his mission as the Apostle to the Gentiles he had been given, some 14 years prior, a vision that he likened to an ‘out of body’ experience, taken to an ‘other-worldly’ region to witness things and hear words that he described as “unspeakable...which it is not lawful for a man to utter” (V.2-4). He called that ‘place’ the “third heaven.” This is clearly the time beyond the Millennium when God will be “all in all” (1 Cor. 15:28), and sin and death and all human frailties will be eradicated from the earth (a thing too difficult for burdened children of Adam to understand = “unspeakable”).

Standing back and looking at Yahweh’s plan for the earth there are three ‘heavens,’ i.e. an order of things. These are (1) From Creation unto the Kingdom – 6,000 years; (2) The Millennium – 1,000 years; (3) The time beyond the Millennium when God is “all in all” – the “third heaven.” This is not to be confused with the ‘heavens’ or ‘ages’ of the first 6,000 years of human rule on earth. There have been pre-Flood ‘heavens’ (Gen. 3:1); Jewish ‘heavens’ (Deut. 32:1; Isa. 1:2),

and Gentile 'heavens' (Isa. 13:13; 34:4; Hag. 2:6,21; Matt. 24:29), and there will also be Millennial 'heavens' (Isa. 65:17; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1) that will give way to the time of which Paul speaks.

V.7 – “And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh.” Intuitively, we feel the work of preaching the Gospel is best performed without handicaps and mortal restrictions, but this is not so. “My grace is sufficient for thee: for **my strength is made perfect in weakness**” was the answer Paul received to three earnest beseechings of his God to relieve him of his affliction (most probably Malaria contracted in the swamps of coastal Galatia that invariably impacts the eyes – see hint in Gal. 4:15).

The Apostle ended the chapter with a warning that at his next visit he would deal with the problems and issues outlined in both his recorded epistles (2 Cor. 12:20-21 – the subject of chapter 13).

## 2 Corinthians 13

V.1-2 – “This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established” – Using the principle of judgement under the Law (Deut. 17:6; 19:15), Paul reminded the ecclesia that he had thrice formed the intention of visiting Corinth, though the second time he had to forego his plan (2 Cor. 1:15-17). Had he been able to fulfil his plan, his next proposed visit would be the third. From letters received from Corinthian brethren and the visit of Titus (2 Cor. 8:6,16,23; 12:18), Paul knew what the problems in the ecclesia were. After at least three letters to the ecclesia (and perhaps four), the time had come to resolve the issues. It would not be a happy experience – “if I come again, I will not spare,” and “lest being present I should use sharpness” (V.10).

The way for them to avoid unpleasantness and embarrassment was to “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?” (2 Cor. 13:5). The word “reprobates” is *adokimos* – not standing the test, not approved. That is not where Paul wanted any of the Corinthians to end up (V.11). What he wanted for them is expressed in V.9 – “this also we wish, even your perfection.”

## March 10

### Leviticus 17 – The place of sacrifice

This chapter can be divided into two sections: (1) The Altar as the one place for offerings (V.1-9); (2) The Altar as the one place for the use of blood (V.10-16). Strict laws are set down for the observance of animals slain for eating, as well as the use of blood itself.

Previously, in patriarchal times, it was permitted for an altar to be erected at various places where Yahweh manifested Himself (see Exod. 20:24); but now that is superseded in favour of the Altar of His appointing, in the court of the Tabernacle. Therefore, whereas Abraham built altars at certain places where Yahweh revealed Himself to the patriarch; now such liberty was prohibited.

Animals sacrificed were to be brought unto the Tabernacle/Temple (V.3-4). This law is not about killing animals for food. They were allowed to do this in their own locale (Deut. 12:15,21). It was introduced to ban the offering of sacrifices to Yahweh in other places in the Land, for this led, in some cases, to sacrifices being made to false gods (V.7-9).

Eating blood was strictly forbidden (V.10-14). This was because “the life of the flesh is in the blood” and it was reserved solely for the purpose of atonement (Heb. 9:22). This law even included a ban on eating animals who died of themselves. The blood would be congealed and

thus would be eaten with the meat as it was not drained like an animal killed for food. Anyone guilty of this had to “wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.”

**Leviticus 18 – Laws about unlawful sexual relations**

Separation from the world is fundamental to a relationship with God (James 4:4). Hence, Israel were to eschew the morals of Egypt and Canaan (V.3). What follows is a list of forbidden sexual relationships that were practiced at that time, and are not unknown in modern times. The repeated reference to uncovering the nakedness of someone is a euphemism for sexual relations.

Sacrificing children to Molech; homosexuality and bestiality are grouped together as sins of equal abhorrence (V.21-23). The “iniquity of the Amorites” was full (Gen. 15:16), and judgement was about to fall on them, as it is on our world (V.25) – “And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.”

**Psalms 119**

The Ancient Hebrew Letters (Paleo-Hebrew Alphabet)					
					
<b>Alef</b> Ox Strength Leader	<b>Beyt</b> House "In"	<b>Gimel</b> Foot Camel Pride	<b>Dalet</b> Tent Door Pathway	<b>Hey</b> Lo! Behold! "The"	<b>Vav</b> Nail Peg "And"
					
<b>Zayin</b> Plow Weapon Cut Off	<b>Chet</b> Tent Wall Fence Separation	<b>Tet</b> Basket Snake Surround	<b>Yod</b> Arm and Hand Work Deed	<b>Kaf</b> Palm of Hand To Open	<b>Lamed</b> Staff Control "To"/"From"
					
<b>Mem</b> Water Chaos	<b>Nun</b> Seed Fish Life	<b>Samekh</b> Hand on Staff Support Prop	<b>Ayin</b> Eye To See Experience	<b>Pey</b> Mouth Word Speak	<b>Tsade</b> Man on Side Desire Need
					
<b>Qof</b> Sun on Horizon Behind	<b>Resh</b> Head Person First	<b>Shin</b> Eat Consume Destroy	<b>Tav</b> Mark Sign Convenant		

This chart may assist in understanding the basics of the Hebrew alphabet. Each letter has a symbol. There are times when reading through Ps. 119 you will see reference in the bracket of 8 verses to that symbol.

For example, AIN = eye (Ayin in the chart) from verses 121 to 128, the psalmist writes in verse 123 – “Mine **eyes** (*ayin*) fail for thy salvation, and for the word of thy righteousness.” And again for PE = mouth (Pey as shown in the chart) in verses 129 to 136 where in verse 131 the psalmist says “I opened my **mouth** (*peh*), and panted: for I longed for thy commandments.”

The section read today (V.41-80) can be summarised as follows:

V.41-48 – A plea for God to fulfil His promises, and vindicate His servants.

V.49-56 – Comfort, joy and hope in affliction.

V.57-64 – Turning back to God who is our portion.

V.65-72 – The permanent value of trial.

V.73-80 – A calm appeal – the time for mercy has surely come

## Luke 1

Gabriel's intervention in the Temple with Zacharias and his subsequent visit to Mary in Nazareth prophesied the imminent births of John the Baptist (forerunner to Messiah) and Jesus of Nazareth (the son of God and Messiah). The disbelief in that promise by Zacharias led to his silence. He was unable to bless the assembled multitude. However, the chapter ends with the birth of John and the song of Zacharias giving expression to his complete conviction in the promises God made to the fathers (V.64-79). There are times in life when enforced silence that compels rumination on the reasons for it, culminates in praise and glory to God.

Mary believed in what was humanly impossible (the key to ultimately obtaining eternal life) and became the humble "handmaid of the Lord" (V.34-38; Ps. 86:16; 116:16).

Two prophecies concerning John and Christ require special comment.

V.15-16 – (Rotherham) "For he shall be great before the Lord, and, wine and strong drink, in nowise may he drink, and, **with Holy Spirit**, shall he be filled, already, from his mother's womb." There is no definite article before "holy spirit." John performed no miracles (John 10:41). The reference here is to the singular purpose of John's life. He was totally dedicated to one cause, hence, he had a 'spirit' (i.e. attitude) of 'holiness' (i.e. separated to one thing like the life-long Nazarite he was born to be).

The disciples were slow to recognize that John would fulfil one portion of the prophecy of Mal. 4:5-6 in their lifetime – "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of Yahweh: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." He did turn many unto God (Luke 1:16) – "And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God," but more importantly, in so doing he fulfilled Elijah's role in relation to Judea (Judah). This is what Christ had difficulty getting through to the minds of his disciples (Matt. 11:13-15) – "For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. **And if ye will receive it, this is Elijah, which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.**" They didn't get it, so he had to try again in Matt. 17:10-13 – "And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elijah must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elijah truly shall first come, and restore all things. **But I say unto you, That Elijah is come already, and they knew him not,** but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. **Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.**" Accordingly, Elijah will not have a work to perform among the Jews in the Land of Israel – John Baptist fulfilled that requirement of the prophecy. Elijah's work leading to the Second Exodus is among Jews scattered through all nations. Consistent with this is the fact that Elijah of old never went anywhere near Judah. His mission was then, and will be in the future, to 'Israel' (also called 'Ephraim' and 'the remnant of Jacob' in prophecy) outside the Land (see Logos Vol. 37 pages 317-324).

V.33 – "And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and **of his kingdom there shall be no end.**" This is not a reference to time as Christ's Kingdom only lasts for 1,000 years (1 Cor. 15:24-28; Rev. 20:4,6). It is an allusion to Isa. 9:7 – "**Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end,** upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgement and with justice from henceforth even for ever." How will Christ 'increase' government and peace? Only by conquering one nation after another over 40 years until he fully establishes the Kingdom. When

he has complete control of all nations, then there will be no end to his Kingdom. Wherever you go then, you will be in Christ's Kingdom.

V.39-45 – Mary's visit to the hill country home of Zacharias and Elizabeth elicited two stirring things. When Mary's voice was heard, John now after six months growing in the womb of his elderly mother leapt with joy. The implicit belief in the message of Gabriel to Zacharias was evidenced by Elizabeth's declaration – "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb...that the mother of my Lord should come to me" is a joy to behold. The Catholic Church has blasphemously made Mary 'the mother of God' because of these words, but Elizabeth was only repeating Gabriel's words of V.28. Every faithful woman in Israel desired to be the mother of the son of God for that was the clear message of all the promises of God (Gen. 3:15; Gen. 22:17-18; 2 Sam. 7:14). Surely, to be chosen for this role was to be "highly favoured" and "blessed...among women."

V.46-56 – Mary's song of praise draws heavily on Hannah's prayer (1 Sam. 2:1-10) with a focus on the lowly and humble being raised up. When the record says she "returned to her own house" after a three month visit, there is a hint that Mary was an orphan. There is no mention of her family. You could not get much lowlier in those times than to be an orphan.

V.57-80 – After a bumpy start to the naming of John when relatives sought to name him after his father (the common practice of the time), Zacharias's faithful insistence spelt out on a writing board that "his name is John" ("Yahweh is a gracious giver" – Thayer) resulted in his mouth being opened after more than 9 months of silence. His initial disbelief in Gabriel's message now culminated in one of the most comprehensive and beautiful surveys ever of the promises God had made to David and Abraham and their ultimate outcomes.

## March 11

### Leviticus 19

V.2 – "Ye shall be holy: for I Yahweh your God am holy." This is cited by Peter in 1 Pet. 1:14-17 – "As **obedient children**, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which 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**. And if ye call on the **Father**, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear." It is no coincidence that the next verse in Lev. 19 refers to the fifth commandment (Ex. 20:12) – "Honour thy **father** and thy mother: that **thy days may be long upon the land** which Yahweh thy God giveth thee." V.3 – "Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his **father**." Paul refers to the 5th commandment as "the first commandment with **promise**" (Eph. 6:2). V.3 continues "and keep my **sabbaths**," for the Sabbath was the type of the Millennial Age, the real meaning of the promise of the 5th commandment. These passages are intertwined showing the inspiration of Scripture.

A wide-ranging list of laws follows in which the phrase "I am Yahweh" (signifying "He who will become"; i.e. manifested in a glorified multitude fashioned in His own moral likeness) occurs 15 times in Lev. 19 (43 times in Leviticus). It occurs 163 times in the O.T. It is the holiness enjoined in verse 2 that brings forth this long list of behaviours.

V.18 – "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" – In answer to a disingenuous scribe (also called a "lawyer" in Matt. 22:34-35) who asked "Which is the first commandment of all?" the Lord first cited Deut. 6:4-5, and seeing the evident satisfaction of his interlocutor, then added this statement – "the second is like, namely this, **Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself**. There is none other commandment greater than these." The scribe was wise enough to

understand that his initial attempt to 'tempt' Jesus was foolish, and provided a sensible summary for which he was commended – "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God."

V.19-37 – A little reflection on the wide range of laws in this section reveals how far removed from God and His principles is the Humanistic world in which we find ourselves. Here are a few examples. V.28 – "nor print any marks upon you" – tattooing of the body has become a widely accepted practice. V.31 – "Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards" – popular celebrations like Halloween make a mockery of this law. V.32 – "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man" – respect for elders is largely a thing of the past in the modern world. V.25-36 – "Just balances, just weights, a just ephah" – the world is full of scammers who are totally unprincipled.

## Psalm 119

The section to be read for today is from V.81 to 128 and can be summarised as follows:

V.81-88 – A call to be comforted by persistence in doing right.

V.89-96 – The power of the ever-certain and all-sustaining Word.

V.97-104 – Constant meditation is sweet and fruitful.

V.105-112 – The value of committed obedience under great pressure.

V.113-120 – Love of the Word leads to hatred of wickedness.

V.121-128 – Time to vindicate the lovers of the Word

For those who looked at the chart of the Hebrew alphabet and its attendant symbols, here are some more examples:

V.73 – YAD ("hand") – "Thy **hands** (*yad*) have made me and fashioned me: give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments."

V.161 – SCHIN (eat, consume, destroy) – "Princes have **persecuted** (*radaph* – to run after with hostile intent) me without a cause."

## Luke 2

V.1 – "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed." A census was to be taken in Judea and every man had to return to his birthplace (V.3-4). Mary was very close to giving birth to the son of God (V.5). The timing was perfect (Galatians 4:4) – "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law."

So crowded was Bethlehem due to the imperial order that the only lodging available was in the shepherd's tower beneath which was a stable (V.7-8). The son of God was to be born in the humblest of circumstances (Matt. 8:20; Phil. 2:6-8; 2 Cor. 8:9). It has been speculated that Mic. 5:5 hints that there were 7 shepherds and 8 'wise men' or magi (note the birth of Christ in Bethlehem is prophesied in Mic. 5:2), although Mic. 5:5 is primarily about the saints as king priests at the time of Armageddon. Note too, Mic. 4:8 – "tower of the flock" (Edar) which Jacob was at when Rachel gave birth to Benjamin ("the son of the right hand") – Gen. 35:18-21.

The refrain of the angels celebrating the birth of Messiah is heard in carols at the end of every year, but is little understood (V.14) – "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." A better translation is Rotherham's – "And, on earth, peace, among **men of goodwill**." Weymouth translates – "And on earth peace among **men who please Him!**" There cannot be peace on earth until men are brought into harmony with Yahweh (Isa. 48:22). The majority of the human race do not glorify God, and therefore peace eludes them. What is

necessary is “good will,” i.e. good intent; a desire to obey the principles of God and to follow His will and ways.

V.24 confirms the poverty of Joseph and his family. The minimum that could be offered by the very poor for a male child at birth was two turtle doves or two young pigeons (Lev. 12:8). Mary could not bring a “**lamb** of the first year” as specified by the Law (Lev. 12:6), so she brought “the **Lamb of God**” in his first year of life who would take away the sin of the world (John 1:29).

There were some in Jerusalem who, like some who saw the fig tree of Israel shoot forth leaves in 1948, would not “pass away” until they saw Yahweh’s Anointed (Luke 21:32). Simeon (“hearing”) waited patiently while keen to rest in ‘sleep’ and received his reward (V.30) – “For mine eyes have seen thy salvation” (V.25-32), although his message to Mary was not something she wanted to hear (V.34-35) – “a sword shall pierce through thine own soul.” She faithfully kept all these things in her heart.

Similarly, Anna, 84 years old and a widow for many decades, entered with praise and a declaration that “redemption” had arrived for those who looked for the Messiah. Sadly, there were so few who shared their faith and understanding.

V.41-50 – Aged 12 (in modern times Jewish boys undergo Bar Mitzvah normally at age 13), Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem for three days. So obedient and responsible was he that neither Joseph or Mary, burdened as they were with other young children, took any concern for his whereabouts for some while. Their frustration on returning suggests that this was completely out of character for him. But he was on his Father’s business (V.49), and his mortal family would have to find their rightful place. Over three days he had bamboozled and mystified the doctors of the Law who marvelled at his knowledge and understanding of Divine things. It was just the beginning, but he honoured his mother and adoptive father by returning to Nazareth “and was subject unto them” (V.51).

V.52 – “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.” Superior knowledge and understanding to mature doctors of the Law was not adequate for the Son of God. He continued to grow in spiritual things as we all must.

## March 12

### Leviticus 20

V.2 – “Whosoever he be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that giveth any of his seed unto **Molech**; he shall surely be put to death” – It is a remarkable thing that regardless of such an unequivocal condemnation of sacrificing children to Molech that it was practiced by a number of Yahweh’s people in history. Solomon started the rot by building a high place for both Chemosh and Molech for his foreign wives (1 Kings 11:7). While he may not have participated in such worship himself, he did give the green light for others to do so. Ahaz immolated some of his children on the arms of Molech (2 Chron. 28:3) to which Jeremiah refers in Jer. 32:35. Manasseh did the same (2 Chron. 33:6), and Josiah destroyed what remained of the idols of Molech in the Valley of Hinnom (2 Kings 23:10).

Molech was a ‘god’ represented in the body of a man with a pot belly and outstretched arms. A fire was stoked in the open pot belly stove and the child was placed upon the arms to roast or be severely burnt as was Hezekiah by Ahaz his father (2 Kings 16:3). Hence, it was said of him “that his visage was marred more than any man” (Isa. 52:14 – said of Christ based on Hezekiah as a type), and may account for him not marrying due to embarrassment until after his recovery from a fatal illness 14 years into his reign (a delay that almost resulted in the line of David being extinguished). Similar allusions are made to Hezekiah’s upbringing as a type of

Christ in Isa. 53:2-3 (“dry ground” i.e. Ahaz as his father and “as one hiding the face from us” as Youngs correctly translates it, as he was seriously scarred from passing through the fire).

V.9-10 – Cursing of father and mother was a capital offence, as was adultery and a list of other sexual and ‘spiritual’ crimes that follow through to V.21.

V.22-27 – The chapter concludes with a warning against adopting the practices of the nations whom the land had ‘spewed out’ because of their utter depravity. The overarching principle that governed all these laws was “ye shall be holy unto me: for I Yahweh am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine” (V.26).

### Psalm 119:129-176

The final section of Psalm 119 to be read today may be summarised as follows:

V.129-136 – Deep appreciation for God’s testimonies.

V.137-144 – The everlasting righteousness, faithfulness, purity, and truth of God’s testimonies.

V.145-152 – Enemies draw nigh, but God is also near.

V.153-160 – Plead my cause, deliver me and quicken me.

V.161-168 – My heart standeth in awe of thy Word.

V.169-176 – A desperate plea to be redeemed from human nature.

Psalm 119 is a revelation of the mind of Christ, where each letter of the Hebrew alphabet (which in its original form is the language of the Almighty Himself), is extrapolated in eight verses for each of the 22 letters of the alphabet expressing the attitudes, profound thoughts, deep longings and various trials of the one who was “the word made flesh” and “the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). Almost all the verses of this psalm mention the Word of God in one form or another. It is the key to salvation for all who choose to follow the example of the Son of God.

### Luke 3

V.1-2 – To none of the pompous and tyrannical rulers of Judea did the Word of God come, but to the ragged prophet John the Baptist in the wilderness. This was in harmony with his message drawn from Isa. 40:3-5 – Rotherham for Luke 3:4 – “A voice of one crying aloud! **In the desert, prepare ye the way of the Lord**, straight, be making his paths.” The environment of the desert was a far cry from the luxurious palatial accommodation and decadent way of life of the rulers listed. This is what Christ later noted (Matt. 11:7-8) – “And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the **wilderness** to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in **soft raiment**? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in **kings’ houses**.” Prosperity, luxury and fulness of bread do not contribute much to spiritual thinking and direction. It is in seclusion and privacy through quiet reflection that men and women straighten their path to the Kingdom.

V.7 – “Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of **vipers**, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?” These were the ‘serpent’s seed’ of Gen. 3:15 who would fulfil the second conflict of that promise – the mutual hostility between Christ and those who would crucify him (Matt. 23:32-33).

V.8 – “Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.” John was baptizing in the River Jordan near where Israel crossed over in Joshua 4. Twelve stones were laid in the river bed and 12

others brought from the river and placed on the bank (Josh. 4:1-9). These represented the 12 tribes of Israel. If Abraham's natural children refused to repent and be baptized, then the Gospel would go to the Gentiles who would become "the seed of Abraham" (Gal. 3:16,29).

V.9 – "And now also the **axe** is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is **hewn down**, and cast into the **fire**." This is the "wrath" John spoke of in V.7. There was thick growth like a jungle in what is called the "swelling of Jordan" in Jer. 12:5; 49:19; 50:44. This thick undergrowth harbored snakes and wild animals such as lions. It was cut down and set on fire in the dry season causing the snakes and wild animals to flee. AD 70 was coming and would destroy the unresponsive who rejected their Messiah. This warning is amplified in verses 16-17 because it was Christ himself who would 'lead' the Roman army in AD 70 (Dan. 9:26-27; Matt. 24:15). He made that clear to his disciples in Matt. 10:23 – "But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, **till the Son of man be come**" (i.e. at the head of the Roman armies).

V.11 – "He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath **two coats**, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise." Exhortations are most powerful when delivered without a hint of hypocrisy. John could never be accused of that. He only had **one coat** and it was made out of the skin of a dead camel. Even if he had a second one, who would want it? And, who would want his food of locusts (Lev. 11:22) and wild honey? (Matt. 3:4; Mark 1:6).

V.19-22 – John's imprisonment by Herod Antipas ended his three-and-a-half-year ministry (cp. Elijah) and began that of Jesus Christ who had been baptized by John.

V.23-38 – This is the genealogy of Mary (Mary not being mentioned, because the Hebrews never permitted the name of a woman to enter the genealogical tables). That of Joseph is found in Matt. 1:1-16. This demarcation is demonstrated by the son of David being different in each genealogy – Matt. 1:6 – Solomon in Joseph's line, and Luke 3:31 – Nathan in Mary's line. Christ came through Nathan, not Solomon – Note Zech.12:12.

## March 13

### Leviticus 21 – Laws for the priests

This chapter contains laws concerning the holiness and separation of the priesthood. Its injunctions are reflected in the law of the Nazarite because when either man or woman made a Nazarite vow they were electing to mimic their high priest (Num. 6). The priests in Israel typed believers in Christ who are described as priests in his service (1 Peter 2:5,9).

V.1-4 – The sons of Aaron could not attend funerals, except for close relatives. However, the high priest could not approach any dead body (V.10-11). This followed on from Lev. 10 when Aaron's two oldest sons, Nadab and Abihu, were slain by Yahweh for their indiscretion and he was not permitted to mourn or attend their burial. As priests were called to minister in the things of **life**, they were required to look beyond **death** to a better time. As an illustration of that, the regulations strictly limited the circumstances in which they were permitted to mourn. They were not to do so as those who have no hope, but were to look forward to a resurrection to **life**.

V.13-14 – "And he (the high priest) shall take a wife in her **virginity**. A widow, or a divorced woman, or profane, or an harlot, these shall he not take: but he shall take a **virgin** of his own people to wife." Our High Priest, Christ (of whom Aaron was a type) will only marry a "chaste virgin" (2 Cor. 11:2) "of his own people."

V.16-23 – Any **physical** blemish in priests disqualified them from service in the Tabernacle or Temple. This taught an important **moral** principle. Those who represent Yahweh in the moral arena must be true representatives of Him in Whom is no blemish morally or physically (Lev. 10:3 – “In them that draw near to me, must I be hallowed” – Rotherham). The presumptive priests of the future Age must also be morally unblemished (Eph. 4:24; Heb. 12:14; Rev. 1:6; 5:10). This can be achieved by two measures: (1) by choosing to be holy (or separate) like God (Lev. 19:2); and (2) being cleansed of sin by confession and forgiveness so that we can be ultimately presented “faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy” (Jude 24).

### **Psalms 120 to 124 – The Songs of Degrees**

Psalms 120 to 134 are called the Songs of Degrees. They are a fascinating selection of psalms said to be assembled by Hezekiah in the wake of his sickness and healing, and the attendant destruction of the Assyrian army (2 Kings 19 and 20; 2 Chron. 32; Isa. 38). This is doubtless what he meant when he wrote in Isa. 38:20 – “Yahweh was ready to save me: therefore we will sing my **songs** to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of Yahweh.” Isa. 38:9-20 is called “The **writing** of Hezekiah king of Judah, when he had been sick, and was recovered of his sickness” and makes mention of “my songs” to be sung at a later time. It is evident that this collection of “Songs of Degrees” are the “songs” he refers to.

The 15 psalms are arranged in **five** groups of **three** with the theme of each companion psalm in the group dealing with the same subject, as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> psalm – The subject is ‘**distress**’;

2<sup>nd</sup> psalm – The subject is ‘**trust in Yahweh**’;

3<sup>rd</sup> psalm – The subject is ‘**blessing and peace in Zion**’.

Ten of the psalms were composed by Hezekiah (see Isa. 38:20 and cp. 2 Kings 20:8-11); four were composed by David (Ps. 122, 124, 131, 133); and one by Solomon (Ps. 127 which sits in the centre). There are seven either side of Ps. 127 – five by Hezekiah and two by David. In each group of seven either side of Ps. 127, Yahweh’s name is used 24 times (once in the third of each seven), and three times in Ps. 127. The background to the Songs of Degrees is clearly 2 Kings 18 to 20. Hezekiah was given an extension of life of 15 years (hence, 15 psalms – 2 Kings 20:6). He composed 10 of them because the sun dial of Ahaz went backwards 10 degrees to indicate the intervention of Yahweh to cure him of his fatal illness, and to destroy the Assyrian host (2 Kings 20:8-10).

In testing the above analysis, note Ps. 120:1 – “In my **distress** I cried unto Yahweh, and he heard me.” In Ps. 121, the theme “My **help** cometh from Yahweh” (i.e. trust in Yahweh) is repeated time and again. In Ps. 122, the theme “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee” is looking to the time of blessing and peace in Zion.

The Songs of Degrees are a wonderful demonstration of the inspiration of Scripture and a testimony that even in the worst of circumstances we can rely upon our God.

### **Psalm 120 – A cry of distress during the Assyrian invasion**

V.1 – “**A Song of degrees.** In my distress I cried unto Yahweh, and he heard me” – This is evidently the first of the 10 “Songs of Degrees” composed by Hezekiah. As songs to be sung in the Temple, there is a musical structure intended for use in worship. In this song V.1-2 are a solo voice representing Hezekiah, while V.3-4 are a second solo voice in response, and then V.5-7 resume the first solo voice of Hezekiah. As Sennacherib approached Jerusalem after taking 46

cities in Judah (according to his inscription) with intentions to follow through on the blasphemous threats of his ambassador Rabshakeh (“when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had come,—and that, his face, was—to war” – Rotherham for 2 Chron. 32:2), Hezekiah cried unto Yahweh in distress and was heard.

V.2 – “Deliver my soul, O Yahweh, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue” – The deplorably blasphemous letters of Sennacherib and words of Rabshakeh match this description.

V.3-4 – “What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue?” – Yahweh hates lying and falsehood, so this is a response to the call for deliverance in V.2. “Sharp arrows of the mighty” (*gibbôr* – mighty warrior) refer “to the fiery darts of the wicked” (Eph. 6:16; Ps. 64:1-4) that had come from the mouths of the Assyrian invaders. Their fate is to burn slowly with intense heat like “coals of juniper” (the roots of the broom tree in the wilderness from which charcoal was made to heat a furnace). Such will be the fate of the latter day Assyrian who will similarly reproach Yahweh (Isa. 31:9; Mal. 4:1). While we are not told by what means the corpses of 185,000 Assyrian ‘mighty warriors’ were disposed of, it would be no surprise if fire was one method used.

V.5-7 – (Rotherham) “Woe is me, That I sojourn in Meshek,—That I abide near the tents of Kedar!” – The voice of Hezekiah returns and projects to the future foreshadowed in the type of the Gogian (latter-day Assyrian) invasion of Israel. Meshech was a son of Japheth (Gen. 10:2; 1 Chron. 1:5) and his brothers were Gomer (France), Magog (Central Europe, including Ukraine and Germany), Madai (Medes and Persians), Javan (Greece), Tubal (Siberia), and Tiras (Western Turkey) – these being their modern day locations as for Meshech which points to the Muscovites of Russia. It is not difficult to see in this the confederacy of Gog described in Ezek. 38. As for the tents of Kedar, this refers to Arab peoples for he was a descendant of Ishmael (Gen. 25:13). Some Arab/Muslim nations will be part of the Gogian confederacy at the time of Armageddon (Ps. 83:6) while others will be allies of Israel (Ezek. 38:13). The cleavage in the Arab world between Sunni and Shia Muslims will ensure this outcome.

Israel today is seeking to make peace with amenable Arab nations just as Hezekiah sought peace, but some are incorrigible – “My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace” (like Iran and its proxies), but all the efforts made fail because “I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war.”

### **Psalm 121 – Trusting in Divine protection**

V.1 – (ESV) “**A Song of Ascents.** I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come?” – This is the second song of Hezekiah of ten. It begins rhetorically. There is no help to be found in the hills surrounding Jerusalem. It alone comes from Yahweh (V.2), the Creator of the hills. The structure is again fashioned for songs in the Temple. V.1-2 are a solo voice representing Hezekiah seeking help, and V.3-8 are for the choir representing God’s response through His prophet (Isaiah).

V.3-8 – Repetition of certain phrases as in V.1-2 (“my help come/th”) mark this section; e.g. “he that keepeth thee” (V.3) is echoed in V.4,5 and in V.7-8 in the form “preserve thee.” This emphasizes the confidence and trust shown by Hezekiah in a time of great distress – “He trusted in Yahweh God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him” (2 Kings 18:5). We do well to share his confidence in difficult times by our steadfast faith – “Yahweh shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.”

### **Psalm 122 – Pray for the peace of Jerusalem**

V.1 – **“A Song of degrees of David.** I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of Yahweh” – Hezekiah selected this psalm by David as the third song in the bracket because its theme is blessing and peace in Zion (refer to the structure above). It is the psalm from which the most well-known hymn in the Christadelphian Hymn Book (61) is drawn.

While the sentiments of the psalm could fit any time when the nation was in harmony with their God from the time of David to that of Hezekiah, it really projects into the future to a much better time. This is suggested by David’s words – “Let us go into **the house of Yahweh.**” While it is true that the Tabernacle and even David’s tent in which he housed the Ark are called “the house of Yahweh,” there is reason to believe he had the future in mind. For example, the ‘house’ David has in mind has “walls” and “palaces” which his tent did not have.

V.5-6 – “For there are set thrones of judgement, the thrones of the house of David” – Bro. Sulley in ‘The Temple of Ezekiel’s Prophecy’ uses this verse of the 389 thrones of judgement that will be set in the outer porch of the inner circular sanctuary where the saints will sit to counsel and judge the issues of mortals who visit the house of prayer for all nations. It is this vision of the future that animates the call to “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem” by those who “love” her.

### **Psalm 123 – Distress because of contemptuous words**

V.1 – **“A Song of degrees.** Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens” – The 4th song is by Hezekiah and the theme returns to distress. Under the pressure of Sennacherib’s threatening letters and Rabshakeh’s blasphemies and the approaching Assyrian army, Hezekiah cried unto Yahweh – “Have mercy upon us, O Yahweh, have mercy upon us: for we are exceedingly filled with contempt” (V.3), for as he confessed, “Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud.” It was this distress that caused Hezekiah and his people to look to God as desperate servants look to their masters for support in times of distress.

### **Psalm 124 – Trust in the name of Yahweh**

V.1 – **“A Song of degrees of David.** If it had not been Yahweh who was on our side, now may Israel say” – This psalm of David was selected by Hezekiah to represent the trust that he and some of his people placed in their God. The Septuagint does omit reference to David, but it doesn’t make a great deal of difference because the sentiments represented Hezekiah’s own feelings. The song has two parts; V.1-5 – An acknowledgement that if Yahweh had not intervened, disaster would have overwhelmed them; V.6-8 – Praise to Yahweh for their deliverance. The key theme is confidence and trust in God.

### **Luke 4**

It was necessary that the son of God who bore our nature with all its inherent weaknesses be tempted in all points like as we are (Heb. 4:15). Those ‘points’ were “the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 John 2:16). The temptation of Christ is among one of the most debated topics in Scripture in our community. The arguments that go back and forth about whether the temptation was internal or external usually miss the simple truth that it was both. To assert that the son of God would attempt to conjure up in his mind any form of rebellion or mistrust in his Father is quite wrong. Similarly, to argue that he did not process the externally suggested temptations in order to reject them with a “thus it is written” is equally incorrect. The temptations came from without, but had to be processed and rejected within his mind.

It is curious that the tempter (whoever he was) is not identified, except by the word “devil” – *diabolos* (V.3,5,6,13), and the Lord also calls him (clearly a person outside himself) “Satan” (V.8). *Diabolos* means ‘false accuser’ and *Satan* means ‘adversary (one who opposes another in purpose or act)’. It is significant that when the temptation was complete “the devil...**departed from him** for a season.” The bias that is human nature never departs for any period of time as Paul laments in Rom. 7:21 – “I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.” As with us, the *diabolos* remained with Christ to be “crucified with its affections and lusts” daily until finally destroyed on the tree (Heb. 2:14).

The reason why the tempter, or tempters, are not named is firstly because we do not need to know in order to appreciate the Lord’s overcoming of temptation with a “thus it is written,” for that is our example in confronting and fending off temptation. We are faced with a myriad of temptations that come from every direction and through the most deviously sophisticated media in the modern world. It, like the tempter, is largely hidden behind a curtain of anonymity. The second reason is that to focus on the identity of the tempter would be to detract from the Lord. It was the triumph of “God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself” (2 Cor. 5:19) that was important, not a lying and deceptive contemporary of Christ.

V.15-29 – Christ was glorified in all the synagogues in the Galilee region he visited (V.15), except for his own synagogue in Nazareth. Here he was well known as a reader of Scripture on the Sabbath (V.16). On this day he read from Isa. 61 (V.17-19) as it was most likely the Day of Atonement (Isa. 61 was read on that day). The effect was negative on an unheeding audience due to their familiarity with him from childhood. The mantra that “no prophet is accepted in his own country” (V.24) proved true again.

The Lord did not complete the reading of Isa. 61:2 – “To proclaim the **acceptable** year of Yahweh (which he cites), and **the day of vengeance** of our God; to comfort all that mourn” (which he does not cite even though **judgement** was coming in AD 70). He was their Messiah. It was a time for “acceptance”; i.e. for them to accept him, and thereby be accepted themselves by God (2 Cor. 6:2). What was required was a hearing **ear**, hence, when he rolled up the scroll, “the **eyes** of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to **say** unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your **ears**” (Luke 4:21). They expected a miracle (V.23), but he simply “preached” (V.18,19,22). Men are not changed for the Kingdom by miracles and signs. Only the Word of God can achieve that (Rom. 10:17; 2 Pet. 1:16-21).

He advanced as witnesses the Gentile widow of Zarephath who **heard a report** of Elijah’s miracles and believed without seeing him with her eyes, and the Gentile captain Naaman who **believed a report** of Elisha’s miracles and was healed without seeing him. This enraged the townspeople of Nazareth who sought to cast the Lord from a precipice (V.28-29). In so doing, they emulated their foolish ancestors who threw the ‘scapegoat’ over a cliff so that it would not bring their ‘sins’ back should it return to its ‘home’. Accordingly, the Lord departed and made Capernaum his hometown (V.31; Mark 2:1; John 2:12).

V.33-35 – The healing of the demented man in the synagogue at Capernaum was an enacted parable of what Christ sought to achieve in all of his own people. The bulk of the nation had “a spirit (i.e. attitude or way of thinking) of an unclean devil” (*daimonion* – a contemporary term for insanity). They sensed, like the demented man, that Jesus of Nazareth was special (V.32), but wanted him to leave them alone (V.34) – “Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God.” The word of Christ rebuking the ungodly spirit is the only cure for human ‘insanity’

(V.35-36). Similarly, the healing of Peter's mother-in-law by the same word is the only way to clear the path towards useful service (V.38-39).

V.40 – “Now **when the sun was setting**, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them.” Why didn't they come during the day? Because it had been a **Sabbath**, and that ended at 6 pm. This was another hurdle the Lord had to deal with, the negativity with which his people treated the Sabbath, and it would ultimately lead to him being crucified by them. He was “Lord of the Sabbath” (Mark 2:28), and performed wonderful miracles of healing on seven different Sabbath days (that are recorded). They did not understand that the Sabbath pointed to the redemption of the human race in the Millennium. It was a time for working on behalf of Yahweh, not hiding in the shadows doing nothing while indulging in self-worship (Isa. 58:3-5,13).

V.42 – “And when it was day, he departed and went into **a desert place**.” He sought the solitude and quietness of the wilderness (Luke 3:4) to refocus on preaching the glad tidings of Isa. 61 in all the towns of Galilee (V.43-44).

## March 14

### Leviticus 22 – Additional laws for the priests

This chapter continues the regulations governing the service of the priests. It is divided into two sections: (1) Prohibited persons (V.1-16), and (2) Prohibited offerings (V.17-33). The former reveals that the priests are called to separateness, and therefore must not be defiled by sickness or death; nor must any partake of their holy things who are not of their number. The latter declares that sacrifices must be without blemish, and indicates offerings that are to be excluded. The utmost care is to be observed in carrying out the instructions of Yahweh. Priests were to exercise the most scrupulous care in avoiding profaning the holy things of God.

V.1-16 is a repetition of preceding laws in Leviticus but with a particular focus on the priesthood. No uncleanness, deformity or unwitting behaviour was to hinder their work. Similarly, V.17-25 expand upon and clarify laws previously outlined. The fundamental rule for offering a sacrifice was “whosoever offereth a sacrifice of peace offerings unto Yahweh to accomplish his vow, or a freewill offering in beeves or sheep, it shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein” (V.21). In the time of Malachi, this requirement was being ignored (Mal. 1:8).

V.32-33 – “I am Yahweh which hallow you, that brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am Yahweh.” When this language is used it is always a reference to the Atonement – the redemption of God's people (see Gen. 15:7 and the context).

### Psalms 125 – The permanence of Zion

V.1 – “**A Song of degrees**. They that trust in Yahweh shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever” – Consistent with the pattern of the Songs of Degrees where each group of three songs has the progressive themes of ‘Distress,’ ‘Trust’ and ‘Blessings and peace in Zion’ this song, being the third psalm in the second bracket of the Songs of Degrees, deals with ultimate blessing and peace in Zion. The children of Zion (Ps. 87) who trust in Yahweh will live forever and Zion will be their home, called “the camp of the saints....and the beloved city” (Rev. 20:9 – cp. “the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous”). The wicked will be destroyed but “peace shall be upon Israel.”

### **Psalm 126 – Distress replaced by the joy of deliverance**

V.1 – “**A Song of degrees.** When Yahweh turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream” – Hezekiah is evidently the author of this song and its sentiments mirror the feelings of exultation that followed the height of distress that followed the deliverance from Sennacherib’s army. So the song remembers the ‘distress’ and then exalts in the deliverance from it (V.5-6) – “They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing.”

### **Psalm 127 – Trusting Yahweh to build the house**

V.1 – “**A Song of degrees of Solomon.** Except Yahweh build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except Yahweh keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain” – This song by Solomon was selected by Hezekiah as a pivotal psalm in the Songs of Degrees. It speaks of **trust** in Yahweh as the builder and protector of the “house” (the family) and the “city” (ecclesia). Hezekiah had no heir to the throne of David because he had not married. Disaster loomed over the promise of God to David. Only Yahweh could save that from happening. As the Assyrians surrounded Jerusalem the watchmen could see the hopelessness of the situation. Only God could redeem them from the hand of the oppressor.

V.2 – “It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep” – No amount of human planning and activity such as they had undertaken (2 Chron. 32:4-6) could save them from Sennacherib without Divine intervention, and that came at night when many were asleep – “it came to pass that night, that the angel of Yahweh went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses” (2 Kings 19:35).

Bullinger offers an alternative to “so he giveth his beloved **sleep**” suggesting it could read “in sleep”: i.e. while they sleep: i.e. without their labour. The word for “beloved” is *yedid* – This was the meaning of Solomon’s name (Jedidiah) bestowed by Yahweh (2 Sam. 12:25).

V.3 – “Lo, children are an heritage of Yahweh: and the fruit of the womb is his reward” – This is the same message as Mal. 2:15. Children being raised in God’s ways is in reality Him building the “house” of V.1. Straight arrows are what is required if a father is to be “mighty” (V.4), and this is best done while the parents are young – “so, are the children of young men” (Rotherham). We live in a world where child-bearing is delayed into the 30’s and 40’s when the vigor of life is already waning. The energy and zeal of younger parents is a great bonus for children who are Yahweh’s heritage.

V.5 – “Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them” – the ‘them’ is a reference to **quality** (i.e. straight arrows), not quantity.

### **Luke 5**

The Lord’s use of Peter’s fishing boat on the Sea of Galilee in order to teach unhindered is the backdrop for an enacted parable about his mission – “Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch” (ESV – V.4), but is initially met with a doubting response from Peter. The name ‘Simon’ is used because it means “hearing” and he was not yet hearing. The word “master” – *epistatēs* – an appointee over, that is, commander (teacher); implies that Peter was really dismissive of the less experienced fisherman that Jesus was. He was virtually saying, “OK boss, I know more about fishing than you do, but we will do what you ask.” It is for this reason that Peter was so mortified later in V.8 – “Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.”

This enacted parable is the first in a series of parables that feature fishing nets. The others are Matt. 13:48 and John 21:11. Here the Gospel net is cast into the Sea of Galilee called “Galilee of the nations” in Isa. 9:1. Overwhelming numbers responded to its message among Jew and Gentile (Acts 2:41; 5:14; 6:7; 11:24; 17:6), so that there were not enough labourers to handle the work (Luke 5:7; 10:2). However, the net broke and many ‘fish’ escaped (V.5). So it has been ever since. The second net refers to the Judgement Seat (Matt. 13:48) – “Which, when it (the net) was full (Rom. 11:25), they drew to shore, and **sat down** (Christ will sit on a judgement throne), and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.” The third net in John 21:11 does not break because it contains 153 “great fish” the symbolic number for the glorified “sons of God” (see comments on that later in John 21).

V.12-14 – A cured leper is sent to the priests for the law of Lev. 14 to be applied. They had never seen a case of a cleansed leper and the law had never been invoked. The aim was to stir in the priests’ minds that the Messiah was in their midst. It is evident it didn’t.

V.16-26 – The enacted parable of the healing of the palsied man reveals the two great needs of the human race. Palsy is a paralysis, and so is human nature. It paralyzes men morally and physically. This man, who doubtless had faith, and perhaps induced his four friends to take him to Christ, was seeking a cure for his physical disability. The Lord’s actions are revealing. The **five** men (seeking ‘grace’) could not get near the Lord because of the crush outside the house which had a veranda. So they made their way up the external stairs and removed portion of the roof of the veranda in order to lower the palsied man at the feet of the Lord. His next words scandalized the Scribes and Pharisees present (V.21) – “Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.” Christ is teaching a very important lesson. Men have two great needs – one is **moral** and the other is **physical**. Without the moral, there is no access to the physical. Our first great need is the forgiveness of sins. This is ‘easy’ compared to healing sickness or changing the nature after acceptance at the Judgement Seat. That is why Christ says “it is easier to say, thy sins be forgiven thee” than to cure a mortal disease (V.23). Forgiveness of sins is available to those who acknowledge God’s righteousness and ask to be forgiven, and if they are found in a reconciled state at the Judgement Seat, a little more effort will be required to grant them immortality.

V.24 is one of the 84 occurrences in the Gospel accounts of the title “the Son of man” that the Lord uses concerning himself. Perhaps surprising to some is that he only calls himself “the son of God” four times in those records. We automatically think that the title “the Son of man” is a reference to Christ’s mortal likeness to ourselves. This is not so. The title is drawn from Ps. 8:4 and 80:17. Ps. 8 was written by David after the slaying of Goliath. He foresaw in this event the victory of Christ over sin and death (hence, Ps. 8 features prominently in Heb. 2). The title refers to Christ’s delegated authority from his Father to conquer all carnal things. A simple checking of the context wherever the title occurs will confirm this fact. That is why he said to the palsied man “thy sins be forgiven thee” and “take up thy bed and walk” as he was delegated to have authority over all carnal things (Ps. 8:6; 80:17).

## March 15

### Leviticus 23 – The feasts of Yahweh

V.2 – “Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of Yahweh, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even **these are my feasts.**” They are listed in order:

V.5 – The Passover – 14th Abib

V.6-14 – The feast of unleavened bread – from the 15th of Abib for seven days

V.15-22 – The feast of weeks (Pentecost) – 50 days after the 16th of Abib

V.24-25 – Blowing of trumpets – 1st day of the seventh month (a special Sabbath)

V.26-32 – The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) – 10th day of the seventh month

V.33-36,39-43 – The feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot) – 15th to 21st of the seventh month

The word translated “convocations” in V.1 is *miqra’* – something called out, that is, a public meeting; also a rehearsal. The feasts were in fact a rehearsal for the purpose of God in Christ. Paul uses the feasts to explain this – “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: **Christ the firstfruits**; afterward **they that are Christ’s at his coming**. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God.”

Christ as the firstfruits is foreshadowed in V.10-12 – “ye shall bring **a sheaf of the firstfruits** of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before Yahweh, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it. And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf an **he lamb** without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto Yahweh.” The sheaf represented Christ as the Passover Lamb accepted by sacrifice and glorified by God as the “firstfruits of them that slept” (1 Cor. 15:20,23).

They that are Christ’s at his coming are foreshadowed in V.17 at the feast of weeks (wheat harvest) – “Ye shall bring out of your habitations **two wave loaves** of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with **leaven**; they are the firstfruits unto Yahweh.” This feast celebrated the call of both Jew and Gentile (two loaves) on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1) and beyond. Leaven indicated that these were mortals who needed the perfect sacrifice of Christ (the sheaf at the feast of unleavened bread) for their salvation. They will be “the first-fruits” of the harvest to come. The Millennial Age will be the period represented by the Feast of Tabernacles (Zech. 14:16) when the whole harvest of mankind will be brought in.

V.33-44 – The purpose of the Feast of Tabernacles was, “That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am Yahweh your God.” It was celebrated when all the harvest had been brought in while the weather was still balmy and it was comfortable to camp outside in a booth made from the branches of trees (a succoth). While it was a reminder of Israel’s redemption from Egypt, it also pointed forward to the bringing in of the entire human harvest. The inherent prophecy also reached to the time beyond the Millennium when God will be “all in all” and there will only be one nation on earth, namely, Israel (Jer. 30:11; 46:28). While the same number of rams and lambs were offered on each of the seven days of the feast, it was not so with the bullocks. Day 1 began with 13 bullocks with one less for each day until the seventh day when seven were offered (as shown in the

chart at right). In aggregate this came to 70 bullocks – the number of the nations (Gen. 10; Deut. 32:8; Ex. 15:27, etc.). This feast heralded the overthrow of all that Nimrod had created (he being the 13th generation from Adam with a name that means “We will rebel”), including the kingdom of men and the false religions of the world. This would finally be accomplished through the promises made to Abraham signified by seven (covenant) bullocks on the seventh day (Millennium). But there was one more day in Israel’s religious year remaining; a

### Feast of Tabernacles – The Ingathering

#### Seven days - 15th to 21st day of Tishri (7th month)

Day 1 – (Num. 29:13)	13	bullocks offered
Day 2 – (v.17)	12	<b>Begins with 13 –</b>
Day 3 – (v.20)	11	<b>No. of rebellion</b>
Day 4 – (v.23)	10	<b>Ends with 7 –</b>
Day 5 – (v.26)	9	<b>Covenant &amp;</b>
Day 6 – (v.29)	8	<b>Sabbath rest</b>
Day 7 – (v.32)	7	≠ Total 70 (The Nations)

8th Day - One bullock offered (Num. 29:35-36) –  
“That great day of the feast” – John 7:37.

special Sabbath called “that great day of the feast” in John 7:37, and which was called the eighth day but was separate from the feast of tabernacles. It pointed to the 8th millennium when only the perfected nation of Israel will remain on earth. There will be no more sea (i.e. nations – Rev. 21:1) and all things will have been created new (Rev. 21:5).

### **Psalms 128 – The blessings of Zion’s families**

V.1 – “**A Song of degrees.** Blessed is every one that feareth Yahweh; that walketh in his ways” – Ps. 128 is the “blessings in Zion” psalm of the group and builds on the theme of Ps. 127.

Rotherham has an interesting and important change to the KJV translation of V.3 – “Thy wife, like a fruitful vine, **within the recesses of thy house**,—Thy children, like plantings of olive-trees, round about thy table.” It was the practice in ancient times for the wife and mother to be the home-keeper (especially when children needed nurturing) – 1 Tim. 5:14; Titus 2:5. The demands of modern life seem to have impinged on that practice, but it remains true that where the Divine prescription is followed – “Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth Yahweh” (V.4). Where quality sharp arrows are produced the future is bright – “Yea, thou shalt see thy children’s children, and peace upon Israel.”

### **Psalms 129 – Distress under oppression relieved**

V.1-2 – “**A Song of degrees.** Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say” – Ps. 129 begins a new bracket in the Songs of Degrees where the theme is ‘distress’ but the mood is positive and hopeful – “Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth: yet they have not prevailed against me” (V.2).

V.3 – “The plowers plowed upon my back: they made long their furrows” – The brutal treatment of the Assyrians against the 46 cities that fell in the 14th year of Hezekiah is depicted in the gruesome frieze of the capture of Lachish by Sennacherib’s sculptor. There are images of men being skinned alive, and of others being impaled alive on stakes through their groin. Those horrors are adequately described in this language.

As the Assyrians marched towards Jerusalem the prospects did not look very good, but Yahweh was angry with the blaspheming haters of Zion and cut them off in one night – “he hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked” before they fired an arrow (Isa. 37:33).

V.8 – “Neither do they which go by say, The blessing of Yahweh be upon you: we bless you in the name of Yahweh” – The haters of Zion were doomed because they refused to give honour to Israel’s saviour. So it will be for Israel’s enemies in the future when they resist the rule of Christ in the aftermath of Armageddon (Ps. 2).

### **Psalms 130 – Trust in the mercies of God**

V.1 – “**A Song of degrees.** Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Yahweh” – In this song, Hezekiah (it is highly likely he is the author) expresses his ‘trust in Yahweh’, particularly in the matter of forgiveness of sins (V.2-4). There will be no “plenteous redemption” without that (V.7). But why was Judah being afflicted? V.8 hints at the core of the problem – “he shall redeem **Israel** from all his iniquities.” The nation is called Israel here because many from the north had migrated to Judah following Hezekiah’s appeal to them. It was as well that they did, because in the 6th year of Hezekiah the last 30,000 or so inhabitants of Israel in the north were taken into captivity. There were many problems in the nation at the time of the Assyrian invasion as is revealed in Isa. 22. Even Hezekiah stumbled in the matter of the Babylonian ambassadors after the destruction of the Assyrian host (2 Chron. 32:31). It was true then, as it is now that “If thou, Yahweh, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?”

V.4-7 – There are four things laid out that are as relevant today as they were then. Yahweh’s willingness to forgive where His righteousness is upheld is critical to salvation and productive of a grateful reverence – “there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.” The key to overcoming is faith that is produced by the Word of God (Rom. 10:17) – “in his word do I hope.” Seeking to build a living and vital relationship with God is a key (see Acts 20:32) – “My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning” (V.6). The Apostle Paul wrote “we are saved by hope” (Rom. 8:24), and so the psalmist wrote, “Let Israel hope in Yahweh: for with Yahweh there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.”

## Luke 6

V.1 – Bullinger comments on “the second sabbath after the first” – All this represents only one word in the Greek (*deuteroprotos*), i.e. the second-first. Occurs only here in the N.T. The first and second sabbaths can occur only in the week of the three great Feasts. The first day of these feasts is a Sabbath “high day” (Hebrew – *porn tov*), and is the “first” or great sabbath, whatever day of the week it falls on (see Lev. 23:7,24,35), the weekly sabbath then becomes the “second”. This “second sabbath” was therefore the ordinary weekly sabbath, as is clear from Matt.12:1. Not seeing this the current Greek texts solve the difficulty by omitting the word altogether!

V.2 – “And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath days?” The rabbis’ had developed 39 different regulations governing what might not be done on the Sabbath day. These included harvesting which is what they accused the disciples of. The Lord advanced David’s partaking of the newly replaced loaves of shewbread on a Sabbath day (1 Sam. 21:5-6) which was reserved exclusively for the priests (Lev. 24:5-9). How was that justifiable? For the same reasons Christ worked on the Sabbath day to heal and cure. David had been anointed king of Israel (1 Sam. 16:12-13). He had already in his youth worked out that the Aaronic priesthood would be superseded by the Melchizedek king-priesthood of Christ of whom he was now the forerunner (Ps. 132:2-9). Accordingly, when he brought the Ark from Kirjathjearim to place it in a tent of his own pitching (1 Chron. 15:1; 16:1), and not in the Tabernacle of Moses, as king he wore a priestly robe and dispensed to the people (both Jew and Gentile, men and women) bread and wine as Melchizedek had done (Gen. 14:18). That is why David could eat the shewbread without condemnation. Jesus Christ was “Lord of the Sabbath” (Luke 6:5). Like David he operated above the Law for a superior and more permanent cause.

V.6-11 set forth the principle of the Sabbath – the open hand symbolizes all that the Sabbath stood for. The healing of the man with a **withered hand** standing in the middle of a synagogue is another enacted parable where the actions are just as important as the words. The command to “Rise up, and stand forth in the midst” as a representative of all in that place indicates that their mind and thinking was of the withered or closed hand variety (1 Kings 13:4). The imagery is drawn from Isa. 58 where the principle of the Sabbath is beautifully portrayed. The law keepers who sat together on Sabbaths fasting had a clenched fist attitude (Isa. 58:4-5). The fast that Yahweh desired was the **open hand** that loosed the bands of wickedness; unloaded heavy burdens; and let the oppressed go free; broke every yoke; dealt bread to the hungry; guided the poor to a safe place and covered the unclothed (Isa. 58:6-7). These were things that could only be done with the **open hand** – the symbol for the Sabbath, and the way of Yahweh Himself – Isa. 59:1 – “Behold, Yahweh’s hand is not **shortened** (by being clenched), that it cannot save.” Herein lay the huge gap between Judaistic law keepers and the presumptive Priest after the order of Melchizedek. If only these closed minded law keepers would open their ‘Sabbath hand’ and seek to cure like Christ, and not kill as they sought to do to him (V.11).

V.20-49 – The discourse on the plain follows a night on a mountain. This is the reverse of Matt. 5 to 7. The reason for this is provided in the preamble of both discourses. In Matt. 4:23-24, Jesus came to **preach** the Gospel of the Kingdom, and to **heal** (in that order), but the people flocked to him to be healed. That is why he ascended a mountain to deliver his discourse on the mount (Matt. 5-7). They needed to make an effort to hear his teaching. However, in Luke 6:17 it was different. The people on that occasion “came to **hear** him, and to be **healed** of their diseases.” They had their priorities right. There was no need for Christ to ask of them the effort of climbing towards higher things. They had come to listen. What follows is a discourse that draws heavily on the content of Matt. 5 to 7.

## March 16

### Leviticus 24 – Oil for the Lampstand

V.2 – “Command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee pure oil olive beaten for the **light**, to cause the **lamps to burn continually**.” The light of truth and righteousness was never to go out in the otherwise darkness of the Holy Place. So it should be in the time of our probation in a very dark world (Eph. 5:13-16) – “But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the **light**: for whatsoever doth make manifest is **light**. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee **light**. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”

Accordingly, it fell to the people to bring “pure oil olive beaten for the light” (the Lampstand = the ecclesia – Rev. 1:20). The pure oil could only be obtained by persistent individual effort, beating out and sifting – the equivalent of daily careful reading and rumination on the Word of God of which the olive oil was a symbol (Ps. 141:5; 119:105,130). It was a “command,” not an appeal. Hence, in the parable of the Ten Virgins (Matt. 25:3-4), there was to be a store of oil in a vessel separate from the lamp itself (“But the wise took oil in their **vessels with their lamps**”) and this indicates that preparing and storing a reserve of oil is a key element to readiness and salvation.

V.5-9 – The 12 loaves of shewbread representing the 12 tribes of Israel were provided by them, and were arranged in two rows of 6. They were renewed every Sabbath with the old loaves becoming food for the priests. Incense (the symbol of prayer – Ps. 141:2; Rev. 8:3) was placed on the rows. Herein was a lesson. God is the source of light which is found in His Word, but it can only provide light when ‘combusted’ in the minds of His people. They return to Him prayers of thanksgiving for their calling to the Hope of Israel (Rom. 8:24-27).

V.11-23 – By contrast, blasphemy of Yahweh’s name results in death, as does murder (the antithesis of what the provision of oil and bread stood for). “The son of an Israelitish woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel” and got into a fight with an Israelite and in the process blasphemed Yahweh. The blasphemer was a member of the mixed multitude that left Egypt in company with Israel (Ex. 12:38). Moses had trouble with those Gentiles from the beginning (Ex. 11:40). The very way in which this is recorded suggests an act of defiance. The foreigner moved among the Israelites as though he were of equal status with them by birth, and hence failed to remember the privilege that he enjoyed by being separated from Gentilism, and incorporated into the Commonwealth of Israel (Eph. 2:11-13). Egyptians had to qualify for full entrance into the congregation of Israel; they were not permitted therein until the third generation (Deut. 23:8). Therefore, this person should have remained in the separate allotment of the camp that evidently was reserved for such as he. The Law was clear. Blasphemy deserved death. The only question was by what method. He was to be stoned to death by the whole congregation as a warning to all.

V.17-23 – Executions were to be carried out judicially with equity. The Law did not emphasize retribution when it specified an “eye for eye, tooth for tooth” so much as equity and justice. The same justice was to be dispensed to both Jew and Gentile.

### **Psalms 131 – The child-like trust of the humble**

V.1 – **“A Song of degrees of David.** Yahweh, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me” – Hezekiah chose this psalm of David in the wake of his mistake in entertaining the Babylonian ambassadors after the triumph over the Assyrian invaders. His heart was haughty on that occasion – “Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up” (2 Chron. 32:25) and he deeply regretted it. Accordingly, he humbled himself and accepted the prescribed punishment that was graciously reserved to a future generation (2 Kings 20:16-19). So humbled was Hezekiah that he selected a psalm of David to reveal his true feelings rather than compose a song himself. Consistent with the pattern, this will result in blessings in Zion – “Let Israel hope in Yahweh from henceforth and for ever.”

V.2 – “Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child” – These sentiments suggest the early years of David’s life when he was despised by his own brothers and distanced by his family (see comments on 1 Sam. 16 and Ps. 23). They declare a child-like acceptance of the difficult circumstances that faced him when on the one hand he was hated by his family but exalted to be Saul’s armourbearer. This complex mix of exclusion and exaltation can do strange things to sinfully inclined human nature. The antidote is child-like trust in God. Hezekiah craved to return to what he had himself displayed in his early years.

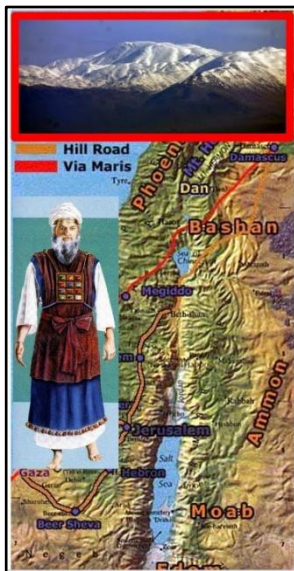
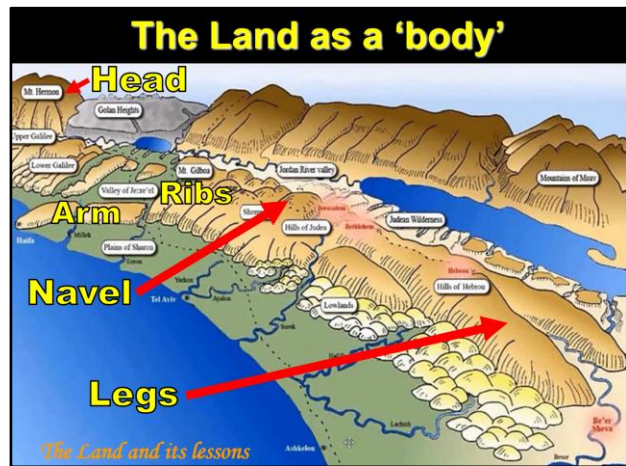
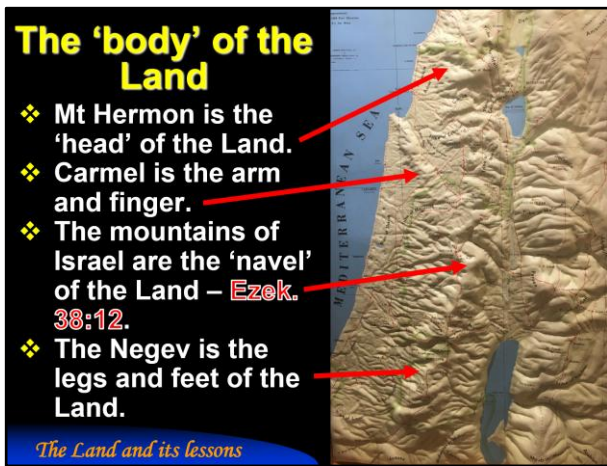
### **Psalm 132 – David’s vow concerning the Ark**

V.1-2 – **“A Song of degrees.** Yahweh, remember David, and all his afflictions: How he swore unto Yahweh, and vowed unto the mighty God of Jacob” – Hezekiah had been in distress over the future of Zion as the Assyrian army bore down on Jerusalem. David was distressed as he saw the Ark lying dormant and unloved for 20 years in Kirjathjearim (1 Sam. 7:2). This psalm selected by Hezekiah is illuminating about the mind of David in his youth. As a shepherd boy on the hillsides of Bethlehem his ruminations on the Word of God had brought him to an understanding of the purpose of God in the earth that was unique. It was for this reason he was called “a man after God’s own heart” (1 Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22). That understanding led to an oath by David to bring the Ark to Zion operating as a Melchizedek king-priest and to place it in a tent of his own (1 Chron. 15:1; 16:1). In doing this he superseded the Law of Moses and intentionally involved Gentiles, giving to them “bread and wine” equally with Israelites just as Melchizedek had done in Gen. 14:18. Yahweh responded to David’s oath by making an oath to David (Ps. 132:11) concerning His own Son, the greater ‘Melchizedek’ spelt out in Ps. 110:4 – “Yahweh hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek”. This is what David meant when he wrote “Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah (Bethlehem): we found it in the fields of the wood (Kirjathjearim – “city of the forests”). Accordingly, throughout the psalm reference is made to “righteousness” (V.9), and Yahweh choosing Zion – “For Yahweh hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it” (V.13-14).

V.10-18 – The psalm makes continuous reference to the promise God made to David in 2 Sam. 7 and the role of David’s greater son in the Kingdom when Zion is exalted and he is its Melchizedek King-Priest.

**Psalm 133 – How pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity**

Ps. 133 sets forth the Land of Promise as a 'body', but not any body – that of the High Priest – as a way to illustrate the delightfulness of true fellowship (V.1).



**Ps. 133:1** - A Song of degrees of David. Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

“degrees” – *ma’alah* – what comes up, ascent, elevation.

“pleasant” – *na’iyim* – delightful (Rotherham), pleasant, lovely, agreeable.

“dwell” – *yashab* – to sit down.

“unity” – *gam yachad* – Lit. “even as one” (Rotherham) or “even together” (Youngs).

**V.2** – “ointment” – *shemen* – oil – Ex. 30:25-30; Lev. 8:12. Symbol for the Word which is the essential uniting element.

“skirts” – *peh* – mouth; i.e. the collar of the ephod. See Ex. 28:31-32 where “hole” is *peh* (3 occs.). The anointing oil only reached the collar of Aaron’s garment. It did not run down the whole body.

**V.3** – “dew” – Represents God’s word – Deut. 32:2.

“Hermon” – “a sanctuary” (BDB).

“descended” – *yarad* – Translated “ran down” and “went down” in V.2. As with the anointing oil, the dew (moisture – symbol for the Word) of Hermon’s snows does not descend on Zion itself. It runs down to the ‘collar’ of the Land (Galilee) and ends up in the Dead Sea.

“Zion” – “Conspicuous”.

“forevermore” – *ad olam* – i.e. for the hidden period = the Millennium and beyond.

The key exhortation is that true and delightful fellowship is only possible when the members of the ‘body’ are united with the ‘head’ (mind) of our High Priest (Phil. 1:27; 2:1-5; Mark 9:50; Rom. 15:6); as Paul wrote to the Ephesians in Eph 4:11-16 – “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of **the body of Christ**: Till we all come in **the unity of the faith**, and of **the knowledge of the Son of God**, unto a **perfect man**, unto **the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ**: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may **grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ**: From whom **the whole body** fitly joined together and compacted by that which

every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”

### Psalm 134 – True blessings and peace in Zion

V.1 – “**A Song of degrees**. Behold, bless ye Yahweh, all ye servants of Yahweh, which by night stand in the house of Yahweh” – The fifteenth and final song of degrees confirms there will be blessings and peace in Zion. It is evidently a psalm of Hezekiah composed in the stillness of the night when the threat of the Assyrians had dissipated. Priests and Levites could return without anxiousness to the duties that had been severely interrupted by the invasion. People had crowded into Jerusalem for security and the atmosphere was tense (see Isa. 22). Praise is not usually the first thing on peoples’ minds when this is the case. Now there was an opportunity to return thanksgiving to the One who had saved them – “Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless Yahweh” (V.2).

V.3 – “Yahweh that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion” – Hezekiah and his people could rejoice in their deliverance as we should in ours. There will come a time when all men will be blessed out of Zion (Isa. 2:1-4).

### Luke 7

“Capernaum” means “the city of comfort.” It had been that for the palsied man of Luke 5:17-26. Now another palsied man (suffering from the paralysis of human nature) received ‘comfort’ from a distance by the faith of his Gentile master.

V.2 – A distant centurion displayed an unusual compassion towards a slave with palsy (Matt. 8:6). He had not only heard of Jesus, but perceived his delegated authority from God to heal the sick. Thinking himself unworthy of coming into the presence of Christ, he sent some Jewish elders for whom he had built a synagogue in Capernaum (V.2-5). The Jews thought he was “worthy” (*axios* – deserving) because that is how they viewed themselves, but he did not, using a cognate word in V.7 – “worthy” – *axioo* – to deem entitled to, fit. The Gentile knew his position – “Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not **worthy** (*hikanos* – fit) that thou shouldest enter under my roof” (V.6).

He understood the principle of **delegated authority** (*exousia*) because he was in that position of authority himself serving with the Roman auxiliaries under Herod Antipas, who himself was subject to the authority of the Caesar – “For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it” (V.8). The Lord had not encountered that kind of perception and faith among his own people – “I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel” (V.9 = proof he was a Gentile). The centurion’s faith was in the Abrahamic promises. This is evident from the companion account in Matt. 8:10-12. As such he was in “the seed of Abraham” (Gal. 3:8,16,29).

V.11-17 present a totally different enacted parable. No faith is evident in the raising of the widow’s son in Nain. In fact, faith is not mentioned until V.50 when it was seen in the humble submission and earnestness of the sinful woman who washed the feet of Jesus with her tears seeking forgiveness.

V.11 – “And it came to pass **the day after**, that he went into a city called **Nain** (“beauty” – Thayer); and many of his disciples went with him, and much people.” This statement is revealing. The Lord had begun the trip to heal the centurion’s servant (V.7), but had been stopped by the messengers from the centurion. Being near Nain which is about 30 miles (50 kms) from Capernaum. The Lord may have been heading to Caesarea some 60 miles (100 kms)

from Capernaum when he was met by the messengers. Many of those who left Capernaum with him (V.9) were still present. Two companies met at the gate of the town – one a mixed bunch of would-be disciples, and the other a grieving funeral procession (V.12). Both were brought to a standstill in the narrow gate (V.14).

A bereft widow was burying her only son who had died quite possibly about the time the centurion's servant was healed. The Lord had "compassion" (*splagchnizomai* – to have the bowels yearn, that is, feel sympathy, to pity) on her. There is no mention of her faith, or that she even knew who Jesus was. Jesus talked to the dead man who revived and sat up to the astonishment of all present (V.15-17). What could this enacted parable point to in the absence of faith, but to the redemption of faithless latter-day Israel in her widowhood? (Isa. 49:14,17-22; 54:1). Because of the faithlessness of Israel, Yahweh turned to the Gentiles (Rom. 11:17-28; Acts 13:46-47), a fact prophesied in the previous miracle.

The day will come when Yahweh, through His 'only son' will have compassion on His chosen race when with broken hearts "they shall look upon **me** whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for **him**, as one mourneth for his **only son**, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn" (Zech. 12:10). It is not without significance that the name Nain means "beauty" as does the word "grace" (*chen*) in Zech. 12:10.

There are 16 places in Scripture where a "stranger", "widow" and "fatherless" are seen together as recipients of God's compassion. Three examples are: Deut. 10:18 – "He doth execute the judgement of the **fatherless** and **widow**, and loveth the **stranger**." Deut. 16:11 – "...the **stranger**, and the **fatherless**, and the **widow**, that are among you." Ps. 94:6 – "They slay the **widow** and the **stranger**, and murder the **fatherless**." The two enacted parables noted above bring them together again.

V.18-29 – Even the 'greatest' of men may experience lingering doubts when commonly held expectations do not transpire as they thought they would. All Jews expected Messiah to come and relieve them from Roman oppression and establish the Kingdom. In prison; oppressed by Roman agents, and not seeing any indication of the Kingdom being set up, John the Baptist sent disciples to enquire of Jesus, "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?" Isa. 61:1 was being fulfilled (V.21-22), and that was to be reported to John with an exhortation – "And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me." The Lord's worthy forerunner was the greatest born among women, except for himself as he was the only one guaranteed a place in the Kingdom at that time (V.28).

V.30-35 – Christ proceeded to reprove the inconsistency and fickleness of his people at that time. He says they were like children – nothing pleased them. He refers here to the "plays" or "sports" of children. Instrumental music, or piping and dancing, were used in marriages and festivals as a sign of joy. Children imitated their parents and others, and acted out in play what they saw done by others. Among their childish sports, therefore, was probably an imitation of a wedding or festal occasion, and even funerals. One part of them are represented as sullen and dissatisfied. They would not enter into the play: nothing pleased them. The others complained of the lack of response. We have, said they, taken all pains to please you. We have piped to you, have played lively tunes, and have engaged in cheerful sports, but you would not join with us; and then we have played different games, and imitated the mourning at funerals, and you are equally sullen; "you have not lamented;" you have not joked with us. Nothing pleases you. So, said Christ, is this generation of people. "John" came one way, "neither eating nor drinking," abstaining as a Nazarite, and you were not pleased with him. I, the Son of man, have come in a different manner, "eating and drinking;" not practicing any austerity, but living like other people, and you are equally dissatisfied. You calumniate him, and abuse me for not doing the very thing which

displeased you in John. Nothing pleases you. You are fickle, changeable, inconstant, and abusive. No wonder they wanted to eliminate him.

V.36-50 – Having made the comment in V.34; “The Son of man is come eating and drinking” the Lord was disinclined to refuse the invitation of the Pharisee who invited him to dine with him. Whatever Simon’s motives were, he was scandalized by the unbidden entry of a woman he knew to be of dubious moral standing who poured ointment on Jesus and washed his feet with tears, saying within himself, “This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.” Jesus showed himself to be a prophet by reading his mind, and presenting a parable of a creditor with “two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.” Both being remitted of their debt, he asked, “Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?” The Pharisee answered correctly, and Jesus turned to the woman and made a direct contrast between her and Simon (“hearing”) of the treatment he had received, and concluding, “Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.” Accordingly, he could then add, “Thy sins are forgiven,” and “Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace” which those present counted as blasphemy.

## March 17

### Leviticus 25

The final section of Leviticus legislates for the Land in preparation for when the Israelites would take possession of it. The moral behaviour of a people consecrated to Yahweh necessarily included their treatment of the land which was portion of Yahweh's inheritance to them. The legislation that was now set before the people is extremely wise and beneficial. It provides for Sabbatical years, and years of Jubilee. The former provided for necessary rest; the latter provided for release from bondage. The laws were not designed for observance during the wilderness wanderings, but when the nation was settled in the land (V.2).

The principle of the Sabbath, namely, to cease from one’s own works so that men might do the work of God was to apply to both people and land. Ex. 31:12-17 contains the law of the Sabbath for Israel and this chapter contains the law applying to the Land of Canaan after its inheritance by Israel.

That the seventh day and year, and the Jubilee period of seven times seven are prescribed for rest indicates the importance of seven in the Divine scheme, for it refers to God’s covenants. We know God has a 7,000 year plan set forth in type in the six days of Creation and the seventh day of rest pointing to the Millennium (2 Pet. 3:8).

V.23 – “The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me” – An important principle was established in this declaration. Israelites, like their fathers, were “strangers and pilgrims” in the Land God had promised to Abraham. A permanent inheritance must wait until the Kingdom. When Israelites were allotted an inheritance in the Land, it was to remain in their family and could not be sold. This caused the hiatus when Ahab wanted to buy Naboth’s vineyard (1 Kings 21:1-3). It was for this reason that land sold because of poverty was restored in the year of Jubilee.

V.47-55 – Various laws relating to poverty were laid down with ultimate resolution in the year of Jubilee. The overarching reason for these laws was because “the children of Israel are servants; they are my servants whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: I am Yahweh your God.”

**Psalms 135 – Yahweh’s Name and Memorial is forever**

V.1 – (Rotherham) “Praise ye Yah, Praise ye the Name of Yahweh, Praise, O ye servants of Yahweh” – This psalm begins and ends with “Hallelujah.” It contains carefully selected extracts from various psalms, which have been selected as the flowers of a garden are gathered for one beautiful bouquet. V.1-4 call on God’s servants to “sing praises unto his name; for it is pleasant,” and the reason is given – “For Yahweh hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure.” The arguments for praise are threefold: Yahweh’s glory in Creation (V.5-7); His patient dealings with Israel (V.8-14); and the contrast of His glorious being and character with idols (V.15-21).

Although it is general in its character the objectives of this psalm are to excite to the praise of God, to show reasons for that praise and to highlight the vanity of alternative objects of praise. It is essentially an exhortation addressed to the Priests and Levites, and eventually to all Israel with much of its imagery taken from Hebrew history. While it is possible that a significant portion is sourced from Psalm 115, and Jeremiah draws on the content of Psalm 135 in Jeremiah 10, its emphasis is the praise of the one true God rather than satirising the folly of idol worship.

The psalm has a distinct poetic structure and uses both introversion and alternation, with the key being the pivot of the psalm as revealed by introversion. As an evident example of chiasma it looks like this:

V.1 – Hallelu-Yah
V.1-3 – Servants exhorted to praise Yahweh
V.4 – Yahweh has chosen Israel
V.5-12 – Yahweh’s superiority over idols
<b>V.13 – Yahweh’s Name and Memorial forever</b>
V.14 – Yahweh responds to His people
V.15-18 – Yahweh’s superiority over idols
V.19-21 – Israel exhorted to praise Yahweh
V.21 – Hallelu-Yah

A chiasm in the Bible is a literary structure where ideas or words are presented and then repeated in reverse order, creating a symmetrical, mirror-like pattern that emphasizes the central point (V.13), making it memorable and adding depth.

**Psalm 136 – The steadfast love of Yahweh endures**

V.1 – “O give thanks unto Yahweh; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever” – Psalm 136 is often referred to as the Great Halal (meaning praise). It is an expression of praise and thanksgiving to God for His enduring deliverance and steadfast love. It is an antiphonal psalm (in music, “antiphonal” describes a texture where two or more groups – choirs, instrumental sections, etc., alternate or respond to each other, creating a “call and response” or “dialogue” effect), intended to be sung by two choirs or by a soloist and the Temple choir. This declaration of the ever sure mercy of Yahweh, amid all the fluctuation and change of human affairs, is quite striking in its contrasts. When we view the history of the world from God’s perspective we discover that the dark episodes have been intertwined with golden periods of mercy. When we review our own lives from the vantage point of heaven, we discover that the mercy of God was the blue sky peeking through the dark clouds that obscured the glory of the Almighty by man’s foolishness. There is reason to praise Him continually both in private and in the company of those of “like precious faith.”

Our challenge is not to become distracted by the tedium of the constant repetition of the response, “For His mercy endureth forever” to each historical reference made throughout the psalm. If we were listening to a choir for which this psalm was designed, that would likely not be a problem. The key is to pause and consider the implications of each stanza; e.g. V.13 – “To him which divided the Red sea into parts: for his mercy endureth for ever.” Pause and

consider its implications for ourselves, because Israel's baptism in the Red Sea was a type of ours, as Paul explained in 1 Cor. 10:1-6. Gratitude for what God has done for us in the past is the basis for future commitment as Paul declared in 1 Cor. 15:10 – “But what I am I am by the grace of God, and His grace bestowed upon me did not prove ineffectual. But I laboured more strenuously than all the rest – yet it was not I, but God's grace working with me” (Weymouth).

## Luke 8

V.1-15 – The companion accounts of Christ's parables are found in Matt. 13 and Mark 4. For those who have heard “the glad tidings of the kingdom of God” (V.1), there are only four possible outcomes – **rejection** at the Judgement Seat for (1) Disinterest; (2) Failure of faith and zeal after a brief probation; (3) Allowing the cares of life to choke the Word; or **acceptance** (4) Due to bringing forth “the fruit of the Spirit” in varying degrees, for “the word of God,...liveth and abideth for ever” (1 Pet. 1:23-25).

The disciples were curious about why the Lord chose to speak in parables. They were doubtless mystified by his response in V.10 – “Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; **that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.**” Surely the Lord desired to save everyone like his Father does (Ezek. 18:32; 33:11; Heb. 2:9). However, salvation is dependent on recognition of one's need, and the desire to seek it using God's prescribed method (Rom. 2:7). Christ was confronted by a nation largely given over to rabbinical Judaism. Like Adam, they had created their own religion – a fig leaf covering (Gen. 3:7; Job 31:33; Mark 11:13), and rejected “the Lamb of God” (John 1:29; Rev. 13:8).

Matthew in his record (writing primarily for Jews) provides a more thorough explanation (Matt. 13:10-17). The citation from Isa. 6:9-10 is significant because that chapter begins with a vision of Christ in glory in the Kingdom surrounded by his glorified brethren (Isa. 6:1; John 12:39-41; Rev. 4 which is based on Isa. 6), but goes on to warn of desolating judgements in V.11-12 that fell on Judea in AD 70.

V.16-18 – “No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a **vessel**, or putteth it under a **bed**; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light.” There are two human weaknesses that invariably lead to failure to allow the ‘seed’ of Christ's teachings to grow and flourish. The first is the “thorns” of V.7 represented by the vessel of commercial and domestic life. The word “vessel” is *skeuos* – a vessel, implement, equipment or apparatus. It is the word used in Luke 17:31 of the “**stuff** in the house” followed by the warning “Remember Lot's wife.” Allowing the demands of domestic life and/or business to set aside attention to the Word is ultimately fatal. The second problem is the antithesis – sheer laziness and disinterest (Prov. 26:14 – “As the door turneth upon his hinges, so doth the slothful upon his **bed**.” In these matters there is a principle of Divine operation that does not go down well in our Humanistic world – “for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.”

V.20-21 – Christ's family consists only of those who hear the Word and do it (James 1:22).

V.22-25 – The calming of the storm on the sea emphasized the need for absolute faith in the Lord's teachings as we in our time negotiate the violent storms buffeting the ecclesial ship by the ‘winds of doctrine’ (particularly Humanism – Rev. 16:13-14) on the sea of nations (“Galilee of the nations” – Isa. 9:1). Implicit faith in the certainty of the Lord's soon arrival to calm the storm is required (Ps. 65:7).

The balance of Luke 8 matches Mark 5. Both Mark and Luke wrote for Gentiles, hence, their accounts include enacted parables concerning the involvement of the Gentiles in the purpose of God (a subject not understood by Jews, including Christ's disciples). The three miracles that follow illustrate the **three classes Christ came to save**, if only they would hear and believe his words.

These three classes were:

V.26-39 – **Gentiles** represented by Legion afflicted with Cysticercosis – the infestation of man by the larval stage of the tapeworm from swine (see comments on Mark 5 – **February 9** or **August 10**).

V.40-42,49-56 – The raising of Jairus's daughter from death representing the **religious class in Israel** who were 'dead' under law without knowing it (Rom. 7:5-6). Only some would respond to his teaching like Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathaea until he was raised from the dead. Even then, many in Israel refused to believe, which is why Jesus "charged them that they should tell no man what was done." They would not believe even though one rose from the dead (Luke 16:31). However, Legion was instructed to tell everyone (V.39) because many Gentiles would believe.

V.43-48 – The woman with an issue of blood who was 'unclean' under the Law had been kept from entering the synagogue for 12 years (12 is the number of Israel) by Jairus whose daughter had been alive for that same period. She represented that class in Israel who were considered to be beyond salvation – the **tax gatherers** and **sinner**s.

## March 18

### Leviticus 26 – The blessings of obedience and the cursings of disobedience

V.1 – "Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am Yahweh your God" – Israel's permanent and blessed tenure of the Land was contingent on the exclusive worship of Yahweh. Worship of false gods, disobedience of the Sabbath law or disrespect for the place of God's habitation among them would lead to disaster and catastrophe. Obedience to God's commandments would produce abundance and the peace to enjoy it through remarkable triumphs over their enemies. History proved the truthfulness of the promise.

V.3-13 – The blessings that would accrue for obedience are listed – rain in season, abundant harvests and the peace to enjoy their blessings, and the strength to repel their enemies. Significantly, the promise of V.12 – "And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people" is drawn from Gen. 17:7-8 and is the blessing of the Abrahamic Covenant.

V.14-46 – "if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgements, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant" – The agonising curses that would come upon Israel if they forsook their God and broke His covenant are then listed. Sadly, many of these things came upon Israel throughout its chequered history.

This chapter may well be one of those read to Josiah in 2 Kings 22:8-11 that caused him so much angst and concern about the future of his nation. It was certainly the roots of the expansive type of the mission of Christ in the type presented in Judges 6.

The repeated warning (V.18,24) – "I will punish you seven times more for your sins" is echoed in Judges 6:1 – "And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of Yahweh: and Yahweh delivered them into the hand of Midian **seven years**." The proof of this is in the

meaning of the name Midian = “quarrel” (Lev 26:25) – “And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the **quarrel** of my covenant.” Midian being a son of Abraham was an ideal vehicle for the punishment of Israel for breaking the Covenant . Note the reference to the Abrahamic Covenant in V.41-42.

### **Psalms 137 – The longing of the exiles for Zion**

V.1 – “By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion” – The author of this psalm is unknown, but it seems it must have been someone who went through the experience of captivity in Babylon either from BC 606 when Daniel went to Babylon, or at one of the following captivities of BC 598 or 586. The memories are fresh and vivid.

V.1-3 appear to concern the early experiences on arrival in Babylon, while V.4-6 indicate a stubborn refusal to sing the songs of Zion under the pressure of the scorn of their captors who “required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion” (V.3). As time went on, and the seventy year captivity unfolded, the prospect of the destruction of their inveterate enemies Edom and Babylon became clearer through the prophesying of Ezekiel and Jeremiah.

V.5 – “If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning” – This mantra has echoes from the past. In 1 Kings 13:4 when Jeroboam ordered the arrest of the man of God from Judah his hand withered up (as it were ‘forgot its cunning’). Jeroboam was inaugurating his worship of two golden calves and had discouraged his people from going up to Jerusalem for the feasts (1 Kings 12:26-30).

V.8 – “O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us” – Judgement did fall on Babylon in BC 539 when Cyrus overthrew the city by ‘drying up the Euphrates’. Within three years a proportion of the captives returned to the Land under the Decree of Cyrus (BC 536) and rebuilt the temple. Cyrus was a type of Christ (Isa. 44:26 to 45:5; 13:1-22; Rev. 16:12), and exactly the same pattern will be followed in the future destruction of Babylon the Great which is also called “Edom” in the prophecies of the latter days (see comments on Isa. 34 on June 10). The Antisemitic oppression of the Jews in the past will be repeated in the events surrounding Armageddon, and the fate of latter day Babylon the Great (Edom) will match that for which the forlorn psalmist longed.

### **Ps.138 – Yahweh will perfect the things that concern His faithful servants**

V.1 – “**A Psalm of David.** I will praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto thee” – This psalm is the first of a group of eight psalms attributed to David in the superscriptions. Commentators debate the authorship because in V.2 mention is made of “thy holy temple” (*hêykâl* – a large public building). As there was no temple in David’s time, some question the superscription. Who is to say that like many of his psalms David’s mind is far away in the future. There is no harm in accepting the superscription as it is. This psalm precedes the closing Hallelujah psalms.

V.1 – “...before the **gods** (*elohim*) will I sing praise unto thee.” This is one instance where *elohim* is used of mortal humans. It is used that way in Ps. 82:1,6 and of judges in Israel (Ex. 22:9,28). The glorified saints will be the Elohim (mighty ones) of the future Age, having taken over the role of the angels (Heb. 2:5).

V.2 – “I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.” The Word of God is the means of developing both faith and character in His servants, hence, Yahweh has

exalted His Word above His name which expresses His purpose – “He who will become” manifested in a multitude who choose to pattern their lives after His character.

V.4-5 – “All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O Yahweh, when they hear the words of thy mouth” – The obvious help that God had given to David was known by the surrounding nations (1 Sam. 29:3-5), but these words project into the future to the Kingdom of God when all flesh shall come to know Yahweh and will give praise to Him (Ps. 46:10; Zech. 2:13; Hab. 2:14,20; Ps. 72:11; 102:15,22; Isa. 60:3-5).

V.6-8 – “Though Yahweh be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly” – The Almighty condescends to save the humble and lowly (*shâphâl* – depressed), as David said in Ps. 8:4, “What was weak man (*enosh*), that thou shouldst make mention of him?” (Rotherham). Being “poor in spirit” (Matt. 5:3) is the first step on the road to salvation, for “the proud (those without affliction) He knoweth afar off.” Trial and affliction are necessary ingredients for the development of faith and reliance on God – “Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me” and “thy right hand shall save me.” Even the Son of God learned “obedience by the things which he suffered” (Heb. 5:8) for this is God’s method (Heb. 12:5-8), but He will not forsake His children who beseech Him – “forsake not the works of thine own hands” (V.8).

### Psalm 139 – Christ – The curiously wrought veil

V.1 – “**To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.** O Yahweh, thou hast searched me, and known me” – The highlighted phrase is the subscription to Ps. 138. Bro. L.G. Sargent wrote in ‘The Teaching of the Master’ that David was the most God-conscious man of the Old Testament. It is psalms like this one that add weight to that assessment. As the forerunner and type of the Son of God, David said of himself – “and hast seen me as a type of the man who is on high” (Young’s Lit. for 1 Chron. 17:17). David was rightly declared a man “after God’s own heart” (Acts 13:22). His consciousness of the presence of God in his life was second to none. It is unsurprising that he was the author of such a psalm that speaks so eloquently of a consciousness of God’s presence.

V.1-12 – David marvelled at the omnipresence and omniscience of Yahweh. There is nowhere that man can hide from Him. Then as a type and forerunner, he speaks on behalf of Messiah in V.13-17. Sometimes the passage cited below is used of our human body which is indeed a marvel, but these words are actually a reference to the unique conception and birth of Christ as the Son of God. Consider what Christ would have thought about the following passage when he pondered it in his early childhood, for it was said of him that was unique (Ps. 22:9-10).

V.13-17 – “For thou hast **possessed** my **reins**: thou hast **covered** me in my mother’s womb. I will praise thee; for I am **fearfully** and **wonderfully** made: **marvellous** are thy works; and that my soul knoweth **right well**. My **substance** was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and **curiously wrought** in the **lowest parts of the earth**. Thine eyes did see **my substance, yet being unperfect**; and in thy book **all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned**, when as yet there was none of them. How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!”

The words in bold above can only in their totality be applied to Christ. It is a description of the careful formation of the Son of God in the womb of Mary. He was unique, though bearing our nature. Only he could speak the words “How precious also are thy thoughts unto me” as a result of his birth. He could assimilate the mind of his Father in a way that mere mortal humans cannot. It was this fact that enabled him to overcome human nature in a way that those born of two human parents cannot. The following Bible marking notes may assist.

## PSALM 139:13-16

### “The curiously wrought veil”

#### Verse 13

“**possessed**” – *qanah* – to erect; i.e. create; by imp. to own. 1st occ. is “gotten” – Gen.4:1. It is often translated “purchase”, “bought”, “buy.” Rotherham – “thou didst possess thyself.”

“**reins**” – *kilyah* – a kidney; fig. the mind. Used figuratively refers to the innermost aspects of personality. See use Ps. 7:9; 16:7; 26:2; 73:21.

“**covered**” – *sakak* – to entwine as a screen; by imp. to fence in, to cover over. Used of covering the Ark with the veil, and of the Cherubim covering the Mercy Seat. Rotherham – “thou didst weave me together in the womb...”

#### Verse 14

“**fearfully**” – *yare* – to fear.

“**wonderfully**” – *palah* – to distinguish. Rotherham – “that fearfully was my being distinguished.”

“**marvelous**” – *pala* (prim. root) – to separate; i.e. distinguish.

“**right well**” – *me'od* – vehemence; (by imp.) wholly.

#### Verse 15

“**substance**” – *otsem* – power; hence body. From *atsam* – to bind fast. Cognate with *etsem* – a bone, hence strength, therefore substance. Rotherham (Mgn.) – “frame.”

“**curiously wrought**” – *raqam* – to variegate colour, i.e. embroider; by imp. to fabricate. Used between Ex. 26 & 39 of the needlework of the hangings and garments of the Tabernacle.

“**the lowest parts of the earth**” – Figure of human nature (Eph.4:9). This is a reference to growth in the womb.

#### Verse 16

“**my substance yet being unperfect**” – This is one word in the Hebrew – *golem* – a wrapped and unformed mass; i.e. as the embryo. Rotherham – “mine unfinished substance thine eyes beheld.”

“**all my members were written**” – Rotherham – “all the parts thereof were written.”

“**which in continuance were fashioned**” – Rotherham – “the days they should be fashioned.”

Who among mere mortals would claim that the above applied to them when they were conceived and grew in the womb of their mother? There is only one to whom this can properly apply, and he was the Son of God, raised up to do what no other human born of two children of Adam could do; i.e. maintain perfect obedience possessing a nature biased towards sin.

V.17 – “How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!” – We are all born with a vacant mind that is naturally amoral (serpent-like – John 8:44). It needs education and encouragement to think in a different way and assimilate Divine thoughts (Isa. 55:8-9; Rom. 8:7). This was not the case with the son of God – “But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me **hope** when I was upon my mother’s breasts. I was **cast upon** thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother’s belly.” What ‘normal’ baby ever ‘hoped’ on its mother’s breast? How many of the sons of Adam were “cast upon” God from the womb? To ask these questions is to answer them. There was only one, and

though he possessed all the frailties of human nature in common with us, and declared that in it there was no good thing (Mark 10:18), yet by virtue of his Spirit induced conception and the careful overshadowing of his Father as he grew in the womb (V.13-16), he was given all the moral equipment to overcome what we do not overcome, and indeed cannot (Rom. 8:3).

To have inherent moral capacity is one thing, but when you add to that the daily education and contact with his Father who woke him every morning to instruct, guide and encourage, then you have the antidote to the proclivities and machinations of base human nature that “is deceitful above all things and desperately sick” (Jer. 17:9) – “he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned” (Isa. 50:4-5). There was never a more ready and morally astute disciple (the word “learned” is *limmûd* – instructed).

V.18-23 – “Do not I hate them, O Yahweh, that hate thee?” – To love righteousness is to automatically hate wickedness. This was said of Messiah – “Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness” (Ps. 45:7; Heb. 1:9). There are many who hate wickedness, but do not always love righteousness. The touchstone of whether we are like Christ or not is if we are happy to have the blowtorch of the Divine “thoughts” (V.17-18) applied relentlessly to ourselves – “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know **my thoughts**: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” (V.23-24).

## Luke 9

As Luke wrote for Gentiles (Greeks – Acts 1:1), his focus is on their inclusion in the purpose of God in Christ. Accordingly, using the principle of the Jew first, and then the Gentile, Luke 9:1 has the Lord sending 12 disciples (the number of Israel) out two by two first, and then in Luke 10:1 he sends out 70 disciples to similarly preach the Kingdom of God. Seventy is the number of the nations (Gen. 10; Ex. 15:27).

Luke 9 is remarkable for the fact that **Elijah** is mentioned **5 times** in the chapter (V.8,19,30,33, 54), and 8 times in the book. There must be a reason for this. The book begins with matters concerning the birth of John the Baptist, forerunner to Christ as was Elijah to Elisha (a type of Christ). It is the attitude of Elijah that needed changing that is at the core of the frequent use of his name. Rom. 11:2 reveals his mind before change came – “Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elijah? how he maketh intercession to God **against** Israel.” He sought the destruction of idolatrous Israel, but Yahweh had preserved a faithful remnant who needed his help (Rom. 11:3-5) – “What are you doing **here**, Elijah?” (1 Kings 19:9).

V.11-17 – Elijah features in the feeding of the 5,000 who were mostly Jews. The multitude was seated in companies of fifty. It is clear that the Lord had 2 Kings 1:9-15 in mind in so doing. Elijah called down fire from heaven and immolated two captains with their cohort of 50 soldiers. He would have done the same with the third band had not Yahweh intervened through an angel. That this incident was on the mind of the Lord (and even perhaps his fiery disciples, the sons of thunder, James and John) is indicated when having been turned away later from a Samaritan village they said – “Lord, wilt thou that we **command fire to come down from heaven**, and consume them, even as **Elijah** did?” (V.54). Christ’s rebuke underscores the theme of this chapter (V.55-56) – “But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not **what manner of spirit** ye are of. For **the Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.**”

V.18-36 – The principle revealed in the two keys of the Kingdom is shown in this context. First the Lord speaks at length of his coming sufferings (V.22-26), and then of the glory that would follow (V.27-35). Peter later understood this and refers to the two **keys of the Kingdom** many times in his 1st Epistle (1 Pet. 1:11) – “Searching what, or what manner of time **the Spirit of**

**Christ** which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand **the sufferings of Christ** (Key 1), and **the glory that should follow**” (Key 2 – see also 1 Pet. 1:1-4,19-21; 3:18,21-22; 4:1,11,13; 5:1).

Elijah appeared “in glory” with Moses at the side of Christ when he was transfigured (i.e. transformed by a **vision** into the way we shall see him in the Kingdom – Matt. 17:9; 2 Pet.1:16-18). The reason for both Moses and Elijah being present in the vision is because of the great lesson of the Transfiguration, namely, that men are not changed for the Kingdom by miracles and signs, but by the persistent “still small voice” of the Word of God. This is Peter’s message in 2 Pet. 1:16-21. We have “a more sure” word of teaching that is able to create and maintain faith and instil over time the characteristics of the God who inspired its writing.

Both Moses and Elijah were taught this lesson probably in the very same cave on Horeb. The mighty power of Yahweh “passed by” in various forms, but it was only His voice that remained. It needed to be persistent because Elijah who had stood by commandment at the lip of the cave was forced out of fear to retreat into its inner recesses. Only after the deafening noise of wind, earthquake and fire had subsided did he hear the persistent “**voice** of a gentle whisper” (Rotherham for 1 Kings 19:12). That **voice** was heard on the mount as the glory was concealed by the cloud and declared – “This is my son the beloved, **hear** him” (V.35). This lesson was driven home when after the healing of the epileptic child at the foot of the mountain at which the people marvelled, the Lord said in V.44 – “Let these **sayings** sink down into your **ears**: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men.” His words, not his miracles, would save them if they appreciated the purpose of his sacrifice.

V.57-62 – The chapter ends with the Lord encountering three potential disciples, but he sifts their motives by simple facts and searching questions. The first potential disciple was challenged by the necessary loss of the everyday comforts of life. The second was invited by the Lord, but advanced family obligations as a delaying tactic. The word “**first**” is important for he had his priorities wrong. The spiritually ‘dead’ can look after their own. The third is a volunteer, but with a caveat. He too uses the term “first” advancing his obligation to farewell his family. These farewells could sometimes take weeks or months (Judges 18). Curiously, Elijah makes another unnamed appearance because Christ alludes to the anointing of Elisha by Elijah (1 Kings 19:19-21). Elisha was permitted to say farewell to his family because his motive was right. This ‘volunteer’ was not sincere, and the Lord knew it.

## March 19

### Leviticus 27 – Laws concerning vows, consecration and tithing

Israelites could offer almost anything for the service of their God, but if their enthusiasm in vowing was unable to be sustained, then provision was made for redemption of their gifts, except in the case of things ‘devoted’. In this way the priests and the services of the Tabernacle/Temple were compensated, but it is wiser to ensure vows can be fulfilled (Ecc. 5:4-5) – “When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.”

Bro. Roberts wrote in ‘The Law of Moses’ the following on this chapter – There are moments in every spiritual man’s life when gratitude yearns for special vent of utterance – times when he feels strongly what David said on a certain occasion, “I will not offer unto the Lord my God that which hath cost me nothing.” Words in a sense cost him nothing: he longs to do something more than offer praise. It is not that he supposes God can be enriched by anything he can give, or that he can put God under obligation, or that he can establish a claim to His favour by anything he can do: for

such a man earnestly recognizes above all things what David also said when he handed over incomputable treasure of gold and silver to the divine service: “All things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee...All this store that we have prepared...cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own” (1 Chron. 29:14-16). Yet he feels an intensity of gratitude that can only find satisfactory expression in deeds of self-deprivation – above and beyond the freewill and thank offerings of sacrifice provided for in the routine service of the tabernacle.

For such times, the law made suitable provision. A man might make “a singular vow” concerning anything not already under divine claim (Lev. 27:2). He might “sanctify to God” anything under his control: himself; an animal (clean or unclean); a house; a field; or part of a field. All these particulars are set forth in Lev. 27. He might not consecrate the firstborn of any beast, because that was already the Lord's, nor for the same reason could he consecrate “the tithe of the land, whether seed or fruit,” Any object lawfully consecrated to God might be purchased back again on payment of a sum to be fixed according to what might be called the tariff of the tabernacle. In that case, the money paid was reckoned as the thing that had been consecrated. This was a convenient arrangement both for the man making the vow, and the priests into whose hands the consecrated things might come for administration.

V.13 – “But if he will at all redeem it, then he shall add a **fifth part** thereof unto thy estimation.” The addition of the fifth part of the valuation for an **unclean** animal is an acknowledgement that God's grace was necessary for the redemption of the ‘unclean’.

V.28-29 (Rotherham) – “Only no devoted thing which any man shall devote unto Yahweh, of all that **belongeth to him**,—of **man** or beast, or of the field of his possession, shall be either sold or redeemed,—as to every devoted thing, most holy, it is unto Yahweh. As touching **any one** devoted, who may be devoted from among **men** he shall not be ransomed,—he **must be, surely put to death**” – We sometimes hear that God hates human sacrifice and would not accept it and Deut. 12:31 is cited in proof. This is definitely the case where children were devoted to false gods and the behaviour of evil kings like Ahaz and Manasseh was abhorred by God. But it must be remembered that Yahweh asked Abraham to offer Isaac his “only beloved son” as a burnt offering on Moriah as a type of His own intended sacrifice of His son in the same place. In this law of V.28-29 it is quite clear that if anyone devoted a person ‘belonging to him’ (and that was key) to God then that person had to be sacrificed (killed). There is only one instance of this occurring in Scripture, and that is the vow of Jephthah in Judges 11:30-31. Examination of Jephthah's faithful and extremely perceptive vow can only conclude that it fell under the provisions of this law (for a full ventilation of this subject, see the booklet “Jephthah – The return of Israel's rejected deliverer” by the present writer that can be found in PDF format under the Study Notes tab of the web site <https://jimcowie.info>).

### **Psalms 140 – Yahweh maintains the course of the righteous**

V.1 – “**To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.** Deliver me, O Yahweh, from the evil man: preserve me from the violent man” – The highlighted phrase is the subscription to Ps. 139. Psalms 140 to 142 appear to deal with the same time period in David's life and their similarity to Psalms 58 and 64 and many others would suggest it was when he was being pursued by Saul. Accordingly, this was another psalm that allowed our Lord Jesus Christ to prepare for the oppression which he was to experience.

Speaking on behalf of Messiah, David reflects on the poisonous men who sought to undermine him (V.3) – “They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; adders' poison is under their lips. Selah.” So it was with Christ (Matt. 23:33) – “Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers.”

V.5 – David’s enemies set snares for him, as did Christ’s enemies (Luke 11:53-54; 20:20; Matt. 22:15), but like his greater son, David had confidence in his God – “I know that Yahweh will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor. Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name: the upright shall dwell in thy presence” (V.12-13).

### **Psalm 141 – The incense of faithful prayer**

V.1 – “**A Psalm of David.** Yahweh, I cry unto thee: make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee” – Internal indications suggest that it was a time when David was in Saul’s court and the subject of Saul’s evil machinations to destroy him. The subterfuge of a dowry of 100 Philistine foreskins and the lure of the king’s “dainties” (V.4) point to that time. David was surrounded by the sycophantic agents of Saul whose lies and hypocrisy was sharply contrasted by the loyalty and honesty of Jonathan perhaps hinted at in the words – “Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil.” Jonathan’s love and loyalty was in such sharp contrast to the rest of Saul’s court who sought his demise – “Keep me from the snares which they have laid for me, and the gins of the workers of iniquity.”

V.2 – “Let my prayer be set forth before thee as **incense**; and the **lifting up of my hands** as the evening sacrifice.” Two things are indicated in this verse. Firstly, incense is clearly used as a symbol for prayer (Mal. 1:11; Rev. 8:2,4). Secondly, the evening sacrifice (the continual burnt offering morning and evening) spoke of dedication at the time when the Lamb of God would be offered (Christ died at 3 pm). Hence, the Apostle writes in 1 Tim. 2:8 – “I will therefore that men **pray** every where, lifting up **holy hands**, without wrath and doubting.” Prayer expressing dependence and thanksgiving coupled with commitment to the service of God after the pattern of the Lamb helps overcome many of the baser tendencies of human nature.

This psalm would have been of great encouragement to Christ as he faced the murderous aims of his enemies.

### **Psalm 142 – David’s prayer when he was in the cave**

V.1 – “**Maschil of David; A Prayer when he was in the cave.** I cried unto Yahweh with my voice; with my voice unto Yahweh did I make my supplication” – The inspired superscription of this psalm not only identifies its author but the circumstances that generated it – isolation, privation and omnipresent danger. David was twice in great peril in caves. On one occasion, in the cave of Adullam, when he fled from Achish king of Gath; and on another, in the cave of Engedi, where he had taken refuge from the pursuit of Saul. It is fairly certain which of these events this Psalm refers to as Ps. 57 has a very similar superscription and it is obviously about the early days of David’s flight from Saul when he escaped from peril in Gath and fled to the cave of Adullam. There he was joined by his family and a collection of misfits and debtors who were tired of the unjust and shambolic reign of Saul (1 Sam. 22:1-2).

V.2-7 – It was in this volatile and troubled environment that David’s “spirit was overwhelmed within” him. He was surrounded by agitated and angry men who were not backward in expressing their opinions (1 Sam. 24:4) but he felt absolutely alone – “I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul” (V.4). It can be like that sometimes (Ps. 73:2-16). That is when prayer becomes so important – “I cried unto thee, O Yahweh: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living” (V.5). There was only one cure for David’s predicament because his enemies (the royal court) were too strong for him – “deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I.” Release from their ‘prison’ could only come

through his God – “Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shalt deal bountifully with me.”

## Luke 10

V.1-12 – Luke wrote for Gentiles (namely Greeks – Acts 1:1), therefore his focus is on their inclusion in the purpose of God in Christ. Using the principle of the Jew first, and then the Gentile, he sent out 70 disciples to similarly preach the Kingdom of God (70 is the number of the nations – Gen. 10; Ex. 15:27). He gave detailed instructions for their mission.

V.13-16 – Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum (all local towns) were condemned for their refusal to accept their Messiah. Their judgement would be worse than that on Tyre, Sidon and Sodom, and so it proved to be. Sodom was destroyed in an hour. The towns of Galilee were besieged, starved and ruthlessly overthrown by the Roman legions between AD 66 and 70 – a long drawn out and horrific affair as Josephus testifies (he was a leader in the defence of a local town).

V.17-20 – When the seventy returned to the Lord excited at the power of God which they had used to heal the sick and the demented, he firstly rejoiced at the prospects for the future – the opposer (Satan) in every form will one day be destroyed, and that very quickly – “I saw Satan falling out of Heaven as lightning!” (a simile for a rapid demise). However, he also gently reminded them of the position they occupied in him (V.20) – “Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, **because your names are written in heaven.**” At the end of the day, the best we can do for others is to pass on what we have received, but salvation is a matter of individual choice. How many of these 70 maintained their faith all through their life we do not know. The Judgement Seat will reveal that. We need to remember that when we were baptized, our name went into the Book of Life. It remains there while we remain faithful and steadfast. Israel in the wilderness having been “baptized unto Moses” had their names removed after only two years of probation (Num. 14). Never undervalue that great privilege – “your names are written in heaven.”

Then Christ advanced Ps. 8 as the psalm of relevance to that theme. Ps. 8 was written by David after he slew Goliath. This is indicated in the superscription of Ps. 9 where the words “To the chief Musician upon Muthlabben” (‘On the death of the giant’) are actually the subscription of Ps. 8. David saw in the death of Goliath the sacrifice of Christ to “crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts,” which is why Ps. 8 is cited in Heb. 2 in the context of Christ’s sacrifice and its aim – the establishment of the Kingdom and its attendant reward to his faithful followers.

Ps. 8 begins and ends with the same words – “O Yahweh our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!” Spelt out this is “O’ **He who will become rulers**, how excellent is thy name in all the earth.” Two things should be noted here. Firstly, the title “Lord” (*adon* – singular meaning ‘ruler’ if you look it up in Strong’s Concordance) is actually *adonynuw* in the Hebrew text in both V.1 and 9. *Adonynuw* is first person plural in number and refers to the glorified saints who will share with Christ the privilege of setting up the Kingdom. That is why the Apostle says in Heb. 2:5 – “For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world (*oikemene* – the inhabited world) to come, whereof we speak.”

Secondly, it is obvious that the ‘earth’ we live in does not reflect the excellence of Yahweh’s name. It lies in wickedness and is defiled by man (1 John 5:19). Ps. 8 is a Kingdom psalm.

V.17-24 – Six words are used of ‘sin’ manifested in human nature in this context – “devils,” “satan,” “serpents,” “scorpions,” “enemy,” “spirits.” Six was stamped all over Goliath who represented all that was in human nature (note the prevalence of brass). So, the Lord draws heavily on Ps. 8 in this discourse. In V.21 he alludes to Ps. 8:1-2 – glorifying his Father’s name and “babes and sucklings” who praise it. Then in V.22 he uses the phrase from Ps. 8:6, “all

things” which points to his role in the Kingdom (1 Cor. 15:24-28). In the process, the Lord uses the term “Father” 5 times. There is no accident in that. David selected 5 smooth stones (representing the mind of God) to kill Goliath. Christ’s victory over sin and death was won by the mind of God manifested perfectly in him – 2 Cor. 5:19; Heb. 2:14; 5:7-9; John 1:14-18 (a gift of grace by Yahweh).

V.25-37 – The parable of the good Samaritan was induced by a self-righteous lawyer quibbling over who constituted his neighbour. Many things in the N.T. have their roots in the O.T. and that is the case with this parable. In 2 Chron. 28:8-15 there is a record of Pekah king of Israel carting off 200,000 men, women and children of Judah into captivity after defeating Ahaz. Some wise heads in Israel prevailed and the captives were sent back to **Jericho** after being clothed, shod, fed and having their wounds treated. The feeble were carried on asses. This is the background to the well-known parable of the good Samaritan. It is aimed at the self-righteous attitudes of the leading class in Israel (represented by this doctor of the Law) who frowned upon tax gatherers and sinners in their ‘misfortune,’ and hated the Samaritans (John 4:9).

The man travelling ‘down’ from Jerusalem to Jericho who “fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him” represents the class in Israel Christ came to save. They were certainly not going to be saved by the Law, as its representatives, priest and Levite “passed by on the other side.” But the Samaritan was different. He followed the example of his forebears who had treated Judah’s 200,000 captives so kindly. He represented Christ who was regarded as a Samaritan by the ruling class of the nation – “Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan” (John 8:48).

V.38-42 – The strife in the kitchen as “Martha was cumbered about much serving” was very quickly settled when in public Christ commended Mary for choosing “that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.” The lesson would have been etched on Martha’s mind – the most important food doesn’t come from the kitchen, but from the Word of God – John 4:31 (Rotherham) “the disciples were requesting him, saying—Rabbi! eat. But, he, said unto them—I, have, food, to eat, of which, ye, know not.”

## March 20

### Numbers 1

The Hebrew title of this book appears in Num. 1:1 – *midbar* – “in the wilderness.” It is therefore a history of Israel’s probation “in the wilderness” that serves as a type of our probation (1 Cor. 10:1-6,11), as well as the laying down of additional laws. It received its KJV title because it contains two numberings of Israel – one at the beginning in the 2nd month of their 2nd year out of Egypt, and the other towards the end of their wilderness wanderings (Num. 26). This first numbering of all males 20 years and older of all 12 tribes (excluding Levi) resulted in an aggregate total of 603,550. This number suggests a community numbering, by extrapolation to include women and children under 20, of about 2 million.

It is interesting to note that in Ex. 12:37 we read, “And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, **about** six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children,” and when the census was actually taken about 12 months later, the total was 603,550.

The largest tribe was Judah as shown in the table below.

V.47 – “But the Levites after the tribe of their fathers were not numbered among them” – A separate census of the families of the sons of Levi (Gershon, Kohath, and Merari) who served Yahweh in His Sanctuary was taken of all males 30 days old and older (Numbers 3:14-39). It was

found that the family of Gershon had 7,500; Kohath had 8,300 and Merari had 6,200 for an aggregate of 22,000.

V.50 – “thou shalt appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of testimony, and over all the vessels thereof, and over all things that belong to it: they shall bear the tabernacle, and all the vessels thereof; and they shall minister unto it, and shall encamp round about the tabernacle” – The Levites had a special role in regard to the Tabernacle. Their inheritance was in Yahweh and they camped close to the

Tribes of Israel	Numbers of fighting men
1. Ruben	46,500
2. Simeon	59,300
3. Gad	45,650
<b>4. Judah</b>	<b>74,600</b>
5. Issachar	54,400
6. Zebulun	57,400
7. Ephraim	40,500
8. Manasseh	32,200
9. Benjamin	35,400
10. Dan	62,700
11. Asher	41,500
12. Naphtali	53,400
Total tribe count men 20 years or older who are eligible for military service.	603,550

Tabernacle compound in a mediatorial role between Yahweh and the tents of the tribes who were arranged in a special order on the four sides of the Tabernacle in groups of three, each group with its own standard, and their tents pitched at some distance (Num. 2:2) – “but the Levites, shall pitch their tents round about the habitation of the testimony, that there be no wrath upon the assembly of the sons of Israel,—so shall the Levites keep the watch of the habitation of the testimony” (Rotherham for V.53).

### Psalm 143 – The prayer of an overwhelmed spirit

V.1 – “**A Psalm of David.** Hear my prayer, O Yahweh, give ear to my supplications: in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness” – God’s integrity headlines David’s appeal for intervention in the crisis that adduced this prayer from an overwhelmed spirit. Yahweh’s promises are based on His faithfulness and righteousness. David knew that he could not save himself from the crisis that confronted him, and so he turned to his God whom he knew would act perfectly consistently with His character.

Twice in this psalm David refers to himself as Yahweh’s servant (V.2,12). This is drawn from 2 Sam. 7:5, although the first of 12 occurrences of the exact phrase “my servant David” in Scripture is in 2 Sam. 3:18. This probably dates the psalm after the promise made to David. Absalom’s rebellion is the most likely setting. There are many psalms that are based on that crisis in David’s reign. They include Psalms 3,39,41,42,55,61,62,63,69,109 and 143, all of which play a part in the unfolding drama from the hatching of Absalom’s plot to dethrone his father to the tragic outcomes for all concerned. There are always consequences for serious sin, even when it is forgiven, and the adultery and murder for which David was suffering exacted a heavy price within his family and for the nation. David knew that and added, “enter not into judgement with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified” (V.2). Up front, David acknowledged that his grievous sin with Bathsheba was at the core of most of his problems.

The psalm has two basis sections: V.1-6 are an appeal for help as David was overwhelmed by the crisis created by the rebellion of Absalom; V.7-12 are a plea for guidance, deliverance and vindication. When the background is appreciated, the sentiments of the psalm largely speak for themselves.

## Psalm 144 – Happy is that people whose God is Yahweh

V.1 – “A Psalm of David. Blessed be Yahweh my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight” – The repetition of Ps. 8:4 in V.3 strongly suggests this psalm relates to David’s victory over Goliath (1 Sam. 17). Mention of the “hurtful sword” (V.10) could well be a reference to Goliath’s distinctive sword (1 Sam. 21:9 – “There is none like that”).

Ps. 8 was probably written shortly after David’s victory over Goliath and has far-reaching prophecies of Christ’s triumph over sin and death, and the establishment of the Kingdom (see its citation in Heb. 2). Ps. 144 appears to have been written later because David was evidently king at the time for he speaks of Yahweh as “My goodness, and my fortress; my high tower, and my deliverer; my shield, and he in whom I trust; **who subdueth my people under me**” (V.2). The repetition of Ps. 8:4 in V.3 using the title of Christ “the Son of man” which speaks of Christ’s delegated authority to exercise dominion over all carnal things is the reason that V.4-10 launch into the future when Christ will be victorious over all his enemies. David had set the pattern for his greater son in the seven campaigns that brought peace to Israel. The events of Armageddon and beyond are indicated by such words as “Cast forth lightning, and scatter them: shoot out thine arrows, and destroy them.” Hence, “I will sing a **new song** unto thee” looks to the day when in immortal glory Christ and the saints will sing the new songs of Ps. 149 and Rev. 4 and 5. For then Yahweh will be seen as the God who “giveth salvation unto kings” (the kings and priests of Rev. 1:5-6; 5:9-10).

David’s triumph over his enemies had a present aim too (V.12) – “That our **sons may be as plants grown up in their youth**; that our **daughters may be as corner stones**, polished after the similitude of a palace.” David had had no choice but to be mature before his time. He aimed to produce **mature young men** in the things of God. Similarly, daughters might be fashioned as “**corner stones**” (*zâvîyth* – in the sense of prominence; an angle, by imp. a corner column), and “polished” (*chatab* – carved). LITV – “hewn like a palace building.” David aimed for the daughters of Israel to be stable, mature and fixed in their position in God’s house. Only then was there any prospect “that there be no complaining in our streets” (V.14). As the psalm concludes – “How happy the people that is in such a case! How happy the people that hath Yahweh for its God!” (Rotherham for V.15). We can agree with that and be content, if we do not push for our children to be in roles Yahweh has not appointed for them.

## Luke 11 – The Lord’s Prayer as a way of life

The presentation of the Lord’s Prayer in this chapter is different from that in Matt. 6. In V.1 the disciples understood their deficiency in the matter of prayer. Though the Lord had told them to seek a private place to pray (Matt. 6:6), there was no chance of that with the Lord who was accompanied by multitudes wherever he went. He needed to pray, and when they saw him pray felt compelled to ask him “Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples” (V.2). The repetition of the phrase “And he said unto them” which occurs again in verses 5,8, and 9 should be noted as in V.14 the Lord casts out a “dumb” spirit. Men are born “dumb” (i.e. unable to communicate anything spiritual). Only the teachings of Christ can change that (John 6:63).

The Lord’s Prayer in Matt. 6:9-13 has **10** clauses. In Luke 11 it only has **seven** clauses. There must be a reason for this. Seven is the Spirit number (“But seven is the Divine Number of the Spirit” – Eureka Vol. 3 Logos Edition page 206) inter-alia, as it is also the number for completeness and covenant. Each clause of the Prayer matches the significance of its number. **One** is the number for God and certainty (Gen. 1:1); **two** is the number for separation and division (Gen. 1:6-8); **three** is the number of fruit or result (Gen. 1:11-12); **four** is the number of righteousness and God manifestation (Gen. 1:16-19; Mal. 4:2); **Five** is the number of grace (John

5:2); **six** is the number of man (Gen. 1:26,31). See below for the significance of this in relation to each of the seven clauses of the prayer.

The seven clauses of the prayer are considered and amplified as **a way of life** each in turn in the following context from verses 13 to 36. Here is a summary:

V.13 – Clause 1 (God) – “Our **Father** which art in heaven” is matched by “your heavenly Father.” God must always be first in our lives in every decision and every choice. He must also be the first to be acknowledged and praised.

Clause 2 (separation) – “**Hallowed** be thy name” is matched by “give a spirit (i.e. attitude) of **holiness** (separation) to them that ask Him.” There is no definite article before the word “holy” as it is the same construction as Luke 1:15 where there is no def. art. We are called to be manifestations of a holy God (1 Pet. 1:15-16 ESV – “but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct”).

Clause 3 (fruit, result) – “Thy **Kingdom** come” is matched by three references to “**kingdom**” in verses 17,18 and 20. There will no greater outcome or result than the establishment of the **Kingdom of God**. Before this section on the Kingdom, his enemies had tried to derail him by blasphemy (ESV – “He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons”), and a demand for a sign, but the Lord stuck firmly to his plan to expand on the principles of the prayer as a whole way of life.

Clause 4 (righteousness, God manifestation) – “Thy **will** be done, as in heaven, so in earth” is matched by verse 23 – “He that is not **with me** is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.” The Lord provided a clue as to where his mind was in V.20 – “But if I with the **finger of God** cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.” This is an allusion to Ex. 8:19 (the 3rd plague) where the magicians of Pharaoh confessed their powerlessness to mimic the plague of lice. Hence, V.21 begins a parable based on the **Exodus**. A paraphrase may help.

V.21-22 – “When a **strong man** (Pharaoh) armed keepeth his **palace** (Egypt), his **goods** (Israel) are in peace: But when a **stronger than he** (Yahweh) shall come upon him, and **overcome him** (in the plagues), he taketh from him all his **armour** wherein he trusted (in the Red Sea), and divideth his **spoils**” (Israel spoiled the Egyptians).

V.24 – “When the **unclean spirit** (Egypt’s ways) is gone out of a man, he walketh through **dry places** (the wilderness of probation), seeking **rest** (the promised Land); and **finding none** (through lack of faith), he saith, I will **return** unto my house whence I came out” (“Let us make a captain, and let us **return** into Egypt” – Num. 14:4).

The insertion of V.23 is to emphasize the choice that his disciples, like Israel of old, had to make – **Yahweh’s will** (“Thy will be done”) or **Pharaoh’s will**. The choice remains the same today.

Clause 5 (grace) – “Give us, day by day, our **daily bread**” is matched by the Lord’s response to a woman who made reference to his mother’s milk – “Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the **word of God**, and keep it” (V.27-28). There is no more important daily bread than the Word of God – “man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of Yahweh doth man live” (Deut. 8:3).

Clause 6 (man, sin) – “And **forgive** us our **sins**; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us” is matched by verses 29-32 and mention of Jonah (3 times), and the “men of Nineveh.” **Jonah** had a problem – he **would not forgive** even though God had forgiven (Matt. 6:14-15 – “if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses”).

Clause 7 (the Spirit) – “And **lead** us not into temptation; but **deliver** us from evil” is matched by verses 33-36 where the light of the Spirit Word illuminates the whole life (“body”) and shines on a path that eschews evil (Eph. 5:8-14; Ps. 119:105).

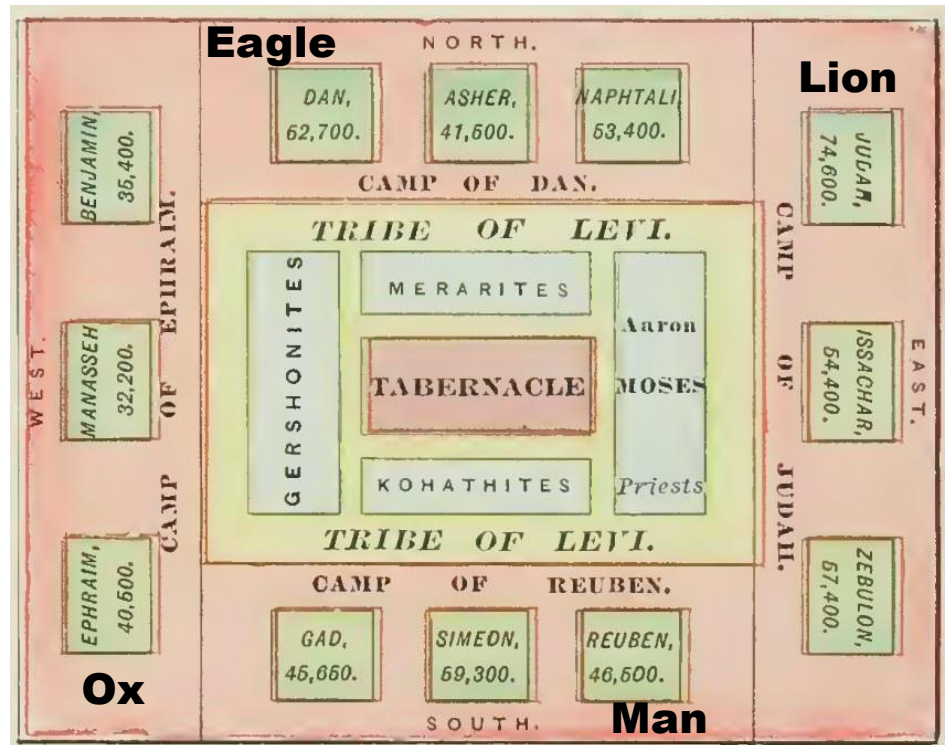
V.37-54 – This section is the equivalent of Matt. 23. See comments on **July 22**.

## March 21

### Numbers 2

In this chapter Israel is organised into a foursquare encampment with three tribes on each side of the Tabernacle “afar off” (V.2). The standard bearing tribes occupied the first place on each side working in a clockwise direction (their marching order – Num. 10). Judah in the NE corner was the first tribe listed consistent with Gen. 49:8-10. Hence, the standard of Judah was the **lion** face of the cherubim.

Reuben on the SE corner had the standard of a **man** (see Gen. 49:3-4); Ephraim on the SW corner the **ox** face (Deut. 33:17); and Dan on the NW corner the **eagle** face (Gen. 49:16).



### Psalm 145 – Praise for eternity

V.1 – “**David’s Psalm of praise**. I will extol thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever” – This is the only psalm of David that is designated a “Psalm of praise” (*tehillah* – a word derived from the same root as *hallelu-yah*). It may be that it anticipates the final group of Hallelujah psalms (Ps. 146 to 150) that conclude the Psalter called ‘The book of praises’ (*cepher tehillim*). It seems likely that the psalm was composed later in David’s life when he reflected on all the things Yahweh had done for him and Israel, and perceived that a normal human lifespan was inadequate to return the praise that was due to his loving God. This is hinted at when he repeats V.1 in a slightly different way in V.2 – “**Every day** will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name **for ever and ever**” (*olahm ad* = for all time into the future). David yearned for the time when human frailty would not get in the way of fulsome and endless praise of his God. The psalm can be summarised as follows: V.1-3 – Praise of God’s goodness; V.4-8 – Praise of God’s wonderful and awesome acts; V.9-13 – Praise of the glory of God’s Kingdom; V.14-20 – Praise of God’s unfailing love for His people; V.21 – The King and his people praise God together.

The sentiments of the psalm speak for themselves. One lesson for stewards of the latter days is V.15-16 – “The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou **givest** them their meat in **due season**. Thou **openest thine hand**, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.” The

Lord draws on this passage in Luke 12:41-46 (N.T. reading for today) and Matt. 24:45-51. The open-handed attitude, and gracious gifts of God, are an example to all who are stewards in the “household” of God (it is the Sabbath principle at work – Isa. 58). The meaning of the word for “household” – *therapia* – is ‘medical service: curing, healing’; hence we get the English word ‘therapy’ from it. The ecclesia (God’s house – 1 Tim. 3:15) should be a place of **spiritual therapy**. It ceases to be so when impatient stewards who lose their faith decide that Christ will not return soon, and close their hand and ‘smite’ their fellow servants in one form or another. Christ warned such would be ‘cut asunder’ (Matt. 24:51) which is the subject of V.20 – “all the wicked will he destroy.”

### **Psalm 146 – Place no trust in man – Individuals praise Yahweh**

V.1 – (Rotherham) “Praise ye Yah, Praise, O my soul, Yahweh” – No authorship is ascribed to this psalm which begins the final group of Hallelujah psalms (Ps. 146 to 150). Each of these psalms begins and ends with “hallelu-Yah,” and as that suggests, are all filled with praise of our God, both in present mortality (“While I live will I praise Yahweh: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being”), and in the endlessness of immortality as V.5-9 clearly imply. The fulsomeness of this praise for God, by contrast emphasizes the unreliability of man – “Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help” (V.3). No praise is due to man for even the ‘best’ of men are likely to fail us, even if that is only by the fact of their ephemeral existence – “His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.” It is for this reason that the psalmist asserts, “Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in Yahweh his God.”

The psalm thus impresses upon mortal man the brevity and vanity of life lived for its own sake (Ecc. 2). We are born spiritually ‘blind’, but Yahweh can open the eyes of the blind by His Word so that they can make wise decisions and choices (V.8; 2 Tim. 3:15).

V.9 – (Rotherham) “Yahweh, who preserveth sojourners, The fatherless and widows, he relieveth” – 16 times in Scripture these three often forsaken classes (in ancient times) are brought together in the same sentence (see comments on Luke 7 on March 16). These who were often left behind, or even taken advantage of (Matt. 23:14) are in the care of Yahweh who is “A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows” that are in covenant relationship with Him (Ps. 68:5).

V.10 – “Yahweh shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Hallelujah!” – To “the God of Jacob” can all the faithful look with the eternal ambition to offer praise to their God forever.

This first of the Halal psalms sees praise offered by individuals. It has been suggested the last five Halal psalms match the five books of Moses upon which the entire Psalter is based. If this is so, the structure would look like this:

Ps. 146 – The praise of **individuals** (like the widows, fatherless and strangers of V.9).

Ps. 147 – The praise of the **nation** of Israel (see V. 2 – “Jerusalem” and “Israel”)

Ps. 148 – The praise of the natural **creation** (angels, stars, clouds, mountains, etc.)

Ps. 149 – The praise of immortal **saints** (“they that are Christ’s at his coming” – 1 Cor. 15:23)

Ps. 150 – The praise of “**everything** that has breath” (V.6).

### **Psalm 147 – The restoration of Israel to unstinting praise of their God**

V.1 – “Praise ye Yahweh: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely” – Again there is no specific authorship ascribed to this Halal psalm. It

becomes very obvious to whom this psalm is directed in V.2 – (Rotherham) “Yahweh, is building **Jerusalem**, The outcasts of **Israel**, will he gather together.” The content of the psalm can be summarized as follows: V.1-2 – Praise is to be given to God for His goodness to Israel; V.3-6 – He should be praised for His mercy towards those who trust in Him; and in V.7-11 for His providential kindness; and in V.12-14 for His love for, and defence of Jerusalem; V.15-18 – Praise is due for His mastery and control of the elements as instruments of judgement; V.19-20 – All of the above hinges on the power and indubitability of His Word.

V.3 – “He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds” – Israel suffered many setbacks in its history because of apostasy, and in the latter days they remain far removed from their God. In the past He saved the meek (V.6), but destroyed the wicked among them. This will happen again when Christ comes to redeem Israel.

One of the greatest problems of God’s people of Israel down through their history was manifested by their forefather Jacob, namely, self-reliance. Jacob always had a scheme; some way of achieving what he sought and of saving himself from the predicaments in which he found himself, until God took away his strength at Jabbok and made him halt upon his thigh. This is why Israel returning under Elijah in the Second Exodus are described as being similarly ‘incapacitated’ – “I will save her that halteth” (Zeph. 3:19; Mic. 4:6-7). God will then be in the process of removing from them the spirit of self-dependence. Hence, He will deal with the whole range of characters from the ‘precarious’ (like starving young ravens) to the proud and preeminent of V.9-10 – Yahweh “giveth to the beast his food, and to the **young ravens** which cry,” but “delighteth not in the **strength** of the **horse**: he taketh not **pleasure** in the **legs** of a **man**.” Ravens are notoriously bad providers for their young (Job 38:41), hence the miracle of ravens feeding Elijah against the order of nature (1 Kings 17:4,6). Yahweh provides even for them while letting the **confident** and **strong** fend for themselves until they learn their frailty and need. Before Israel can be redeemed, the rebels will need to be purged from among them (Ezek. 20:38). The proud and self-reliant will not enter the Land.

V.17 – “He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold?” – The Almighty can easily paralyse the proud. In Job 38:22-23, He reminded Job that no-one can “stand before His cold,” saying, “Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?” God’s enemies will soon feel that power unleashed upon them when they come to destroy His people in the Land (Ezek. 38), and when Babylon the Great seeks to prevent scattered Israel under Elijah from returning to it.

V.19-20 – “He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgements unto Israel” – Israel enjoyed enormous blessings and privileges. One of these was “the giving of the law” (Rom. 9:4) “the word spoken by angels” (Heb. 2:2), but they were unheeding. That must change if they are to praise Yahweh in the manner required by this psalm.

## Luke 12

V.1-3 – Hypocrisy both in the form of ‘play acting’ or following wrong doctrine (Matt. 16:11-12) is inimical to salvation. All secret motivations will be revealed in the day of account (1 Cor. 4:5).

V.4-7 – “Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him” – One of the persistent problems that Christ encountered was the feeble capitulation of ordinary Jews to the overbearing influence of their religious leaders. This is illustrated by the parents of the ‘man born blind’ (John 9:19-23). They feared the repercussions of supporting Christ who had healed their son, illustrating how powerful that fear was.

V.8-12 – “Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God” – Failure to acknowledge Christ through fear or embarrassment will not play well at the Judgement Seat. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, which the Pharisees foolishly did in saying Christ healed through Beelzebub, cannot be forgiven.

V.13-21 – Prompted by a dispute between brothers over an inheritance, the Lord delivered the parable of the rich fool – “Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.” The parable speaks for itself and the lesson is obvious – “So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”

V.22-34 – “do not be anxious about your life” – This segment is much the same as Matt. 6:25-34. There are two phrases with great relevance to us, the final generation who have enjoyed decades of unbroken prosperity likened to the days of Noah and Lot (Luke 17:26-28) – “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also,” and “but rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

V.35-41 – Readiness for that day of judgement is critical to acceptance – “And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. **Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching:** verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat (in the eastern outer halls of the Temple), and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, **blessed** are those servants.” The promised reward far exceeds the deservedness of its recipients, but that reward is also heavily dependent on **a lively spirit of expectation** of the appearance of Christ. The unwatchful jeopardize their hope of sharing in it.

V.42 – “Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to **give** them their portion of meat in **due season?**” One lesson for stewards of the latter days is Ps.145:15-16 – “The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou **givest** them their meat in **due season.** Thou **openest thine hand**, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.” The Lord draws on this passage here and in Matt. 24:45-51. The open-handed attitude, and gracious gifts of God, are an example to all who are stewards in the “household” of God (it is the Sabbath principle at work – Isa. 58). The meaning of the word for “household” – *therapia* – is ‘medical service: curing, healing’; hence we get the English word ‘therapy’ from it. The ecclesia (God’s house – 1 Tim. 3:15) should be a place of **spiritual therapy**. It ceases to be so when impatient stewards who lose their faith decide that Christ will not return soon, and close their hand and ‘smite’ their fellow servants in one form or another.

V.48 – “For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.” This principle is also critical in determining salvation. It is balanced by the principle of Mark 4:25 – “For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.” Great things are promised; a meaningful response is expected. The common vernacular is “Use it, or lose it.”

V.49-53 – “I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?” This harks back to V.1-12 where the Lord warned that it would be necessary to turn against the religious leaders of the nation and attach themselves to him. This would create division in families leading to violent outcomes (Matt. 10:21-22).

V.54-56 – The Lord returns to the theme of hypocrisy of V.1-3.

V.57-59 – This is a balancing principle. There was a need to resist the impositions of hypocritical Judaisers who demanded allegiance to their apostate religion, but if one was found in a situation where the principles of God are not impacted, then submission is the best policy. This is what Christ called upon the man of V.13 to do.

## March 22

### Numbers 3 – The service of the Levites

V.1-4 – A summary is provided of the appointment of the priests in preparation for a more detailed outline of the service of the Levites. The priests were focused inwardly towards the Tabernacle in their role as representatives and mediators, while the Levites were focused outwardly in defence of the holy places of God. Theirs was to be a ministering role.

V.5-10 – The tribe of Levi was formally given to Aaron and his sons to minister unto them. They had no inheritance in Israel except Yahweh (Num. 18:20).

V.12-13 – The Levites replaced the firstborns in Israel who had operated as priests (Ex. 24:5). The latter pointed to the saints as presumptive priests in the Kingdom – Heb. 12:22-23 (note “firstborn” is plural – “firstborns”). So for a time the Levitical order assumed the priestly role, but it will return to the ‘firstborns’ in the Kingdom (the saints).

V.14-39 – The Levites were numbered and appointed to certain roles in relation to the Tabernacle and its services. All above one month old were counted to a total of 22,000.

V.40-43 – The firstborn of Israel when counted numbered 22,273, a differential of 273 with the Levites, and these needed to be redeemed on the principles of Lev. 27 having been given to Yahweh in service as ‘priests’.

V.44-51 – “Of the firstborn of the children of Israel took he the money; a thousand three hundred and threescore and five shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary” – The Levites replaced the firstborn in Israel, but the surplus of firstborns (273) were to be redeemed for the benefit of the Levites at a rate of five shekels per head (V.46). **Five** features again because Divine **grace** is involved. The firstborns had been given to Yahweh (Ex. 13:12), and now that they were to cease their service to Him (in that way) they needed to be redeemed in harmony with the laws of the redemption of vows in Lev. 27. And so, “Moses gave the money of them that were redeemed unto Aaron and to his sons.”

### Psalms 148 – Praise from heaven and earth

V.1-6 – “Praise ye Yahweh. Praise ye Yahweh from the heavens: praise him in the heights” – Again in this third Halal psalm there is no authorship ascribed, nor is there any obvious hint of a historical background. There are two very clear sections to the psalm. In V.1-6, praise is given to Yahweh from the heavens; and in V.7-14, praise is given to Yahweh from the earth.

Yahweh created the firmament and everything above it. This is the realm of the angels who are always praising their God and creator – “Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.” Even inanimate things such as “sun and moon” and “stars of light” praise Yahweh because they testify to His greatness by their very existence. As the Apostle Paul said, “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made” (Rom. 1:19-20). Paul also reminded the idol worshipping people of Lystra that there really was no excuse for idol worship, and they should “turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things

that are therein.” Therefore, the angels of heaven had every good reason to praise their God – “Let them praise the name of Yahweh: for he commanded, and they were **created**” (V.5).

V.7-14 – “Praise Yahweh from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps” – Now attention is focused on things upon earth both inanimate and animate who are called upon to praise Yahweh. The psalmist looks to the future when all creation will praise Yahweh. That can only be in the Kingdom Age. In order to make that possible, severe judgements will need to be brought to bear upon mankind. It seems the process has already begun.

V.8 – “Fire, and hail; snow, and vapour; stormy wind fulfilling his word.” These will be used in “that great day of the battle of God Almighty” (Rev. 16:14; Job 38:22-23). As a prelude (just as there was before AD 70 – Luke 21:11), the angels are likely to be using the elements against mankind in what is commonly attributed to ‘global warming’. God is able to use the folly of man who is destroying the earth against him (Rev. 11:18). As Isaiah said, “when thy judgements are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness” (Isa. 26:9). There is no way that V.11-12 can be fulfilled without those judgements sweeping the earth clean so that the “Kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth: both young men, and maidens; old men, and children” will praise God in concert. That time is not far distant – “Let them praise the name of Yahweh: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven.”

V.14 introduces Ps. 149 – “He also exalteth the horn of his people, the praise of all his saints.”

### **Psalm 149 – This honour have all His saints**

This majestic psalm projects into the future when the glorified saints take over the role of the angels and work on behalf of Christ to establish his Kingdom in the 40 years that follow Armageddon (John 18:36). The psalm deals with the saints in their ‘hiding place’ at Mt Sinai – Isa. 26:20 where they will sing a ‘new song’.

V.1 – “Sing unto Yahweh a new song” – There are 9 occurrences of a “new song” in Scripture. It indicates a song that can only be sung with full meaning by immortals (Rev. 5:9-10).

“His praise in the congregation (*qahal* – the O.T. equivalent for ecclesia) of saints” (*chasiyd* – faithful, kind, godly, holy one, saint. Rotherham – “His men of loving-kindness”). This is a reference to the “Israel of God” (Gal. 6:16), for they are “children of Zion” (V.2; Ps. 87:5-6; Isa. 49:18-21).

V.3 – “Let them praise his name in the **dance**” – *machol* – round dance; root *chul* – twist, whirl about. This is a picture of unrestrained joy when people are beside themselves with happiness. It is difficult to picture a scene when the faithful have been glorified where joy of this kind is absent.

V.4 – “he will beautify (*pa’ar* – to glorify, beautify, adorn) the meek with salvation” – The word for “meek” is *anayv* – (figuratively), in mind (gentle); hence humble, lowly, meek. There are 21 occurrences in the O.T. The first is in Num. 12:3 (of Moses). Other significant occurrences are in Ps. 37:11 (“the meek shall inherit the earth”); 76:9; Isa. 11:4; Zeph. 2:3.

V.5 – “Let the saints be joyful (*alaz* – jump for joy; exult in glory): let them sing aloud upon their beds” (*mishkab* – couch, recliner). The immortal saints will not need to sleep. This is a reference to times when they will sit together reclining and rejoicing in fellowship that will be completely free of any mortal human foibles, misgivings, uncertainties, shyness or any other distraction.

V.6 – (Rotherham) “The high songs of GOD be in their throat” – The word “high” is *romam* – praise, exaltation. The word “mouth” in the KJV is *garon* – neck or throat. That is, their praise comes from deep within their being.

“and a two-edged sword in their hand” – The word “two-edged” is *piyphiyah* meaning tooth, edge, mouth. The only other occurrence is in Isa. 41:15 (“teeth”). It is a reference to the power of the Spirit capable of consuming anything against which it is applied. The saints will wield this power to the destruction of Christ’s enemies – “ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith Yahweh of hosts” (Mal. 4:3). Accordingly, they will “execute vengeance upon the nations, and punishments upon the peoples” (V.7), and “bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron” (V.8).

V.9 – “To execute upon them the judgement written: this honour (*hadar* – honour, glory) have all his saints.” Who would not want to be a participant in the joys of that time?

### **Psalm 150 – Let everything that hath breath praise Yahweh**

V.1-2 – “Praise ye Yahweh. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power” – This fifth and final Halal psalm builds on Ps. 148 as Ps. 149 also did. In Ps. 148, praise came from heaven, and will eventually come in fulness from the earth. Here we see all flesh praising God in His Sanctuary (the House of Prayer for all nations – Isa. 56:7), and the heavens chiming in as well. So the Psalter ends climactically, exultantly with the whole universe praising God and in harmony with Him. It had begun expressing the division of mankind between the righteous and the wicked in Ps. 1, and the determination of the Almighty to correct the situation. His “mighty acts” and “excellent greatness” were seen in the provision of His only begotten Son through whom the problem of sin and death will be overcome. This will then be recognized by all creation, and is above all things, grounds for unstinting praise.

V.3-5 – The psalmist calls on a wide range of wind, stringed and percussion instruments to be used in the praise of our God. That these are symbolic of humans is made clear by the allusions made to them in the N.T. In Eph 5:19, the Apostle made the appeal – “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and **making melody** in your heart to the Lord.” The Greek word for the phrase “making melody” is *psallō* signifying to touch or strike the chord, to twang the strings of a musical instrument so that they gently vibrate; to play on a stringed instrument, to play, the harp, etc. (Thayer). Our heart is likened to a stringed instrument that can be ‘played’ in the praise of our God.

Similarly, when the Apostle Paul wrote to the fractious ecclesia in Corinth where there was a spirit of competition and unrest instead of harmony, he could not resist alluding to Ps. 150. In referring to those in the ecclesia who preferred the flashier Spirit gift of speaking in tongues, but without interpretation, he wrote – “And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?” He likened these folk to musical instruments of the kind used in Ps. 150. This was added to impress the need for ecclesial harmony, for he had already scolded the loud and extroverted in the ecclesia when he wrote about the preeminent quality of *agape* love in chapter 13:1 – “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as **sounding brass**, or a tinkling **cymbal**.” These were precisely the percussion instruments singled out in Ps. 150:5. By themselves they can be discordant and overpowering. Used in sync and harmony with a well conducted orchestra they add an intensity that provides emphasis and gravitas.

V.6 – “Let everything that hath **breath** praise Yahweh. Hallelujah” – To have breath is to be mortal (Isa. 2:22), so this call relates to the Kingdom Age when all flesh will praise Yahweh for the greatness of His redemptive work in Christ that can ultimately deliver eternal life.

It is fitting that the Psalter should conclude with such a psalm of praise to Yahweh. For those interested, a transcript of a talk given by Bro. John Martin on this psalm in 1966 is found in **Appendix 1**. You will probably not hear a better talk on the subject of praise.

### **Luke 13**

V.1-5 – The Lord took the opportunity to say that the slaughter of some Jews by Pilate in Galilee was unexceptional. All will perish without the acceptance of Christ in baptism. His reference to the **18** on whom the tower of Siloam fell is an introduction to an important healing that illustrates the Sabbath principle. It is, like many of his miracles, an enacted parable.

V.10-17 – A woman with Osteoporosis for **18** years (mentioned again V.16) was bowed over with her head pointing towards the ground. This was the extremely slow version of what happened to the **18** beneath the tower of Siloam who were instantly thrust into the ground (head first if their backs were to the wall). All men are heading into the ground sooner or later. This woman was a microcosm of the human race. The Lord used open hands to lift her up. It was a Sabbath. The open hand is the symbol for the Sabbath principle – Isa. 58; 59:1 (see previous notes on Luke 6). This healing pointed forward to the ‘healing’ of the human race in the Millennium.

V.6-9 – The Lord’s frustration with the fruitlessness of his own people is shown in the parable of the fruitless fig tree (one of the symbols for Israel). He had walked among them for three years without acceptance. One more opportunity would be given in the period leading to his crucifixion, and then AD 70 would cut down the fruitless ‘fig tree’ (Mark 11:12-14).

V.20-21 – “And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.” Leaven is normally associated with corruption (e.g. 1 Cor. 5:6), and for that reason it was included in the peace offering (Lev. 7:13) to indicate the sin that had broken fellowship with God. However, it is not the corrupting influence of leaven that Christ is referring to here, but the ability of leaven to spread through “the whole lump” as will the Kingdom of God will one day spread over the whole earth.

V.28-30 – When speaking about the Judgement Seat, Christ uses Esau as a representative of the rejected. Weeping and gnashing of teeth (Gen. 27:34; Heb. 12:16-17); “there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last” (Gen. 25:23 – “the elder shall serve the younger”). He clearly has in mind the Abrahamic promises which Esau rejected, choosing the present (Luke 17:33).

### **Luke 14**

V.1-6 – Another trap is set for “the Lord of the Sabbath.” A man afflicted with dropsy is planted in the house of the Pharisee (against his will, for Christ “let him go” – V.4) as a snare. They knew he couldn’t resist healing on the Sabbath because that was his mission (to prepare for the greater Sabbath – the Kingdom – John 5:16-17). So, he challenged them first and they remained silent. Then he pilloried their hypocrisy to which they had no answer (V.5-6).

Dropsy is a swelling of parts of the body, usually legs and feet, due to the retention of fluid that indicates serious problems with the vital organs of the body – heart, liver, kidneys, etc. As such, this man, forced into a Pharisee’s house, is a representative of all Jews locked up in Judaism with a serious problem in the most vital organ of the body – the brain (= thinking). There is no mention of this man having faith as in John 5:5-15 in the enacted parable of the healing of Israel in the

future. Christ will release the Jews from the prison of rabbinical Judaism when he comes, then he will heal them by faith in “the Lord of the Sabbath.”

V.7-14 – Having been invited to dine with a Pharisee, and seeing their reaction to the healing of the man with dropsy, the Lord continued with a parable criticizing the pride and arrogance that marked the behaviour of the Scribes, Pharisees and Lawyers (doctors of the Law). The parable excoriates their hypocrisy by the lame excuses made. No one bought a piece of land in those days without first inspecting it. No one bought five yoke of oxen (hugely expensive) without testing them. No one in their right spiritual mind would reject marriage to Christ in the future for the temporal benefits of present day marriage. So many Judaistic Jews did, that there was only one option – the Gospel would have to go to the tax gatherers and sinners (V.21) and then to the Gentiles (V.23).

V.25-35 – Two parables conclude this chapter that challenged those who followed him at that time. They equally apply to us. The classic “catch 22” situation is presented.

The parable of the tower builder is a warning that men need to count the cost of following Christ. To make the commitment and start, only to stumble along the way through lack of resources, will lead to rejection at the Judgement Seat and the scorn of others.

The parable of the rebellious king illustrates the folly of opposing the invitation and will of Christ that we should ‘bear his cross’ (V.26-27) and follow him. A king with 10,000 soldiers has no hope opposing another king with 20,000 and more in reserve (Bro. Carter points out that the Greek implies that). The only sensible policy is to submit and seek “conditions of peace.” That peace can only be secured by taking up the cross daily and following in the steps of Christ (Luke 9:23), and “crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts” (Gal. 5:24).

V.34-35 – The problem with Judaism is that, like salt that has lost its potency, it could not preserve from corruption (Rom. 7:5-11), nor did it have the zest (zeal) and ‘taste’ (attitude) that Yahweh desires in His servants (Mark 9:49-50).

## **March 23**

### **Numbers 4 – The duties of the Levites**

This chapter contains the duties that were allocated to the three families of the tribe of Levi. It can be summarised as follows:

V.1-15 – The special role of the Kohathites to carry the furniture of the Tabernacle.

V.16 – The special role of Eleazar (the high priest elect) in the oversight of the Tabernacle.

V.17-20 – Warnings of the limitations of the Kohathites regarding the holy things.

V.21-28 – The duties of the Gershonites to carry the curtains and hangings of the Tabernacle.

V.29-33 – The duties of the sons of Merari to carry the boards, bars and pillars of the Tabernacle.

V.34-49 – The three families of Levi were numbered by Moses.

Previously the Levites were counted from a month old and upwards because they were to replace the firstborn of the other tribes. However now they were numbered for service and the count was to be from 30 years and upward. Maturity was necessary for Tabernacle service. The same principle is seen in 1 Tim. 3:8-13.

Erecting and dismantling the Tabernacle with all its curtains, posts, bars and furniture, including the altar and the laver was heavy work. Hence, the Levites appointed from the three families of Levi began their service at age 30 and retired from it at age 50 while they still had a degree of physical strength.

V.16 – Eleazar, the high priest elect, supervised all the labour of the Kohathites in relation to the holy things of the Tabernacle. In this he foreshadowed the work of Christ who was to supersede the Aaronic priesthood on his resurrection and glorification. During his ministry he supervised the work of the Apostles as they went forth teaching ‘holy things’ and he continues to overlook the welfare of ecclesias (Rev. 2:1).

V.17-20 – One notable ordinance was that the Kohathites who carried the furniture of the Tabernacle were not permitted to see it exposed to view. It had to be covered by the priests before they bore it on their shoulders, and only then by using staves so that they did not touch the holy items themselves. Even Kohathites who touched the holy furniture were subject to the penalty of death, so holy were these things (V.15). Uzzah found this out when assisting David to bring the Ark to Zion in an inappropriate manner (2 Sam. 6:6-7). Respect for Divine things was advocated by this law.

V.34-49 – The numbering only included those in active service “from thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old.” It was found that there were 2,750 Kohathites in that age bracket. The family of Gershon numbered 2,630 in that age bracket, and the family of Merari numbered 3,200. That was just as well because Merari had the responsibility to pack up and carry the heavier parts of the Tabernacle and its compound – the boards, bars, pillars and sockets.

### **Proverbs 1 – The proverbs of Solomon**

The name Solomon which means “peace” comes from the root *shalam* which carries the idea of unity, oneness, was given to David’s fifth son from Bathsheba because of a new phase in his life. The birth of Solomon signalled the restoration of David to Divine favour according to the order of names in 1 Chronicles 3:5. He was the youngest of five sons born to David and Bathsheba. The oldest – the child of the adultery, died in infancy. The other three were Shimea, Shobab and Nathan. The account in 2 Samuel 12:24 passes over the brothers of Solomon and links the death of the first son with the birth of Solomon because of the significance of the latter. A special name was given by Yahweh to the newly born child through the prophet Nathan. He proclaimed that his name was to be Jedidiah or “Beloved of Yahweh” (2 Samuel 12:25). The reason being, we are told, that Yahweh loved him. This suggests two things – Solomon was granted unusual gifts by God, and secondly, the message received by David through Nathan implied David’s full restoration to Divine favour. Solomon was therefore a special vessel to set forth God’s wisdom in this book.

It is obvious from the Book of Proverbs that Solomon was greatly influenced by his mother (see 1 Kings 1:11-12). Indeed her character shines through the book in a very positive light. She is described as joining with David in carefully instructing her young son in the principles of righteousness and in grooming him for kingship. Through Solomon’s reminiscences the reader is taken into the palace of David and told of the careful instructions that the young boy received from both parents. They supported each other in their admonitions to the one ‘born to be king’. Listen to Solomon’s own words – “Heed the instructions of thy father and forsake not the law of thy mother” (Prov. 1:8). “For I was my father’s son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother. He taught me also and said unto me let thine heart retain my words, keep my commandments and live” (Prov. 4:3-4).

The Book of Proverbs has 8 parts. Eight is the number of a new beginning and immortality. The wisdom of this book, if adopted, will lead to immortality in the Kingdom as Paul wrote to his son in the faith, Timothy – “from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you **wise for salvation** through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction,

and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work” (ESV for 2 Tim. 3:5-17).

A summary of the content of the 8 parts of the book is as follows:

Part 1 – 1:1 to 9:18 – In praise of wisdom – Proverbs **for** Solomon – Learnings from his parents

Part 2 – 10:1 to 22:16 – The proverbs of Solomon

Part 3 – 22:17 to 24:22 – The words of the wise

Part 4 – 24:23-34 – Additional words of the wise

Part 5 – 25:1 to 29:27 – The proverbs of Solomon collated by Hezekiah

Part 6 – Chapter 30 – The words of Agur the harvester of experience

Part 7 – 31:1-9 – The oracles of Lemuel’s mother

Part 8 – 31:10-31 – An acrostic on the virtuous woman (type of the Bride of Christ)

In chapter 1 there are four sections; V.1-6 – Introduction of the author and the aims of his writings; V.7-9 – A summary of the core message; V.10-19 – The danger of bad companionships; V.20-33 – The appeal of Wisdom (to choose ‘her’ as a companion). In 1 Cor. 15:33, Paul taught, “Do not deceive yourselves: Evil companionships corrupt good morals” (Weymouth). Fools choose unwisely and “despise wisdom” because they lack a special kind of “fear” (*yir’âh* – reverence, respect).

V.7 – “The fear (*yir’âh*) of Yahweh is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.” The theme of the fear of Yahweh permeates the Book of Proverbs. It is worth following its development and its various aspects as the book unfolds. The word for “beginning” here is *ré’shîyth* meaning “firstfruits” because without Biblical knowledge there is no proper reverence for God.

Wisdom is personified in V 20 and introduces an important theme of the book. There are two diverse ‘women’ presented between whom “simple ones” among the sons of men must choose in life (V.4,22). The choice by Adam of a fallen (and therefore a ‘foolish’ woman at that time – 1 Tim. 2:14) set the pattern for men for all time. Routinely ever since, the majority of men have chosen a woman over God, with few exceptions. Yahweh personified **Wisdom** as a woman (Prov. 8; 9:1-12), contrasted with the **Foolish** woman (Prov. 9:13-18). Choosing the former leads to eternal life (Prov. 9:14); but choosing the latter to eternal oblivion (Prov. 9:18). We can learn much from what David and Bathsheba taught their son.

## Luke 15

This chapter contains two of a series of 5 parables that are linked and culminate in Luke 17:1-5. The audience of “the publicans and sinners” (V.1), and “Pharisees and scribes” (V.2) provide the two distinct classes found in the parables.

The five parables are:

1. The parable of the lost sheep – Luke 15:3-7
2. The parable of the lost coin – Luke 15:8-10
3. The parable of the lost sons – Luke 15:11-32
4. The parable of the unjust steward – Luke 16:1-14
5. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus – Luke 16:19-31

Each parable supports and expands those following. The sheep was lost **outside** the house as was the lost son, but finally became a ‘Lazarus’ who represented the sinners and tax-gatherers who were brought back into the ‘house’. However, the coin was lost **inside** the house as was the elder son whose situation is then amplified by the unjust steward and the rich man (representing

the high priest). There is a progression reaching to the top of the Judaistic Theocracy of Christ's day that culminated in the development of the Catholic apostasy and the papal system. Bro. Thomas demonstrates this progression in Eureka. The Apostasy came from the corrupted Brotherhood through the infiltration of Judaism.

It is important to recognize that the "rich man" of both parables in Luke 16 is the high priest (see notes for Luke 16).

V.11-32 – The parable of the lost sons brings together the two classes that were the subject of the former parables (V.3-10). The tax-gatherers and sinners were lost outside the 'house' like the lost sheep, and the Scribes and Pharisees were lost inside the 'house' because of their misguided religion and covetousness (Luke 16:14-15), hence, a coin (money). The parable of the lost sons amplifies the pitiful state of the sinner who leaves his heritage to pursue a dissolute life in the world, while the elder son who never leaves the house and service to his father is nevertheless hopelessly lost inside the family home because of Judaism.

There are important lessons to be considered. Firstly, when the younger son forsook his heritage, the father could not compromise, nor could he go after him. Our Father will not abdicate His principles or His righteousness if we choose to forsake our heritage. He will wait patiently until the bitter circumstances of life (which He may well choose to influence) result in a drastic rethink of the foolish actions we have taken. Sometimes this leads to recovery. The Father will wait until He sees a humility and remorsefulness that leads to positive steps being taken to return to the family 'home'. Then He goes forth with joy to welcome the returnee (V.20). We too should rejoice when this happens, but the elder son through envy and jealousy and ingratitude would not accept his reformed brother. His self-righteousness and his claim of unbroken service stood in the way. His Judaism blinded him, and his angry outburst – "Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends" exposed a secret life of dubious character. This was not uncommon among the Sadducees and the Pharisees (Rom. 2:1). These were the challenges that the Lord faced in dealing with the two classes of V.1-2.

It was Judaism that ultimately corrupted the 1st century brotherhood and eventually morphed into the Roman Catholic Church (see comments on Luke 17:1-2).

## March 24

### Numbers 5

This chapter contains three laws concerning "a man or woman" as a prelude to the law of the Nazarite in Num. 6. It is fascinating that this phrase only occurs 6 times in the KJV translation – Lev. 13:29 of leprosy, matched by "male and female" in Num. 5:3; in Num. 5:6 in relation to a trespass against Yahweh; Deut. 17:2 in relation to breakers of the covenant; 2 Chron. 15:13 of the deadly zeal of all involved in Asa's reformation; Esther 4:11 of Ahasuerus's apoplectic fear of assassination. The Nazarite vow was the only positive initiative under the Law in which a woman was treated equally with men (more on that later). However, sin (leprosy and bodily issues); trespass against God, and betrayal and disloyalty (the law of jealousy) are common among all mankind, both men and women.

The law of jealousy had a particular relevance in a national sense because Yahweh had taken Israel as His wife at Mt Horeb (Ex. 19:1-8; Isa. 50:1; Jer. 3:1,8,14), and as the Isaiah and Jeremiah references show, she had committed adultery consistently against Him.

Its application to us is spelt out very well by the ESV translation of James 4:4-5 – "You **adulterous** people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?"

Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, ‘He yearns **jealously** over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us?’” The KJV tends to hide this meaning.

The effect of the “holy water” (a mixture of water and dust speaking of the Word suspected of being adulterated by the dust of human behavior) had an effect like ‘pointing the bone’ once used by Australian aborigines. Where an evil conscience exists, the mind can produce from its mental torture, sickness and even death. David understood that. After his sin with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah his conscience tore him apart and resulted in a sickness that many thought would kill him (Ps. 38:1-7; 41:3-5).

V.30-31 – “when the spirit of jealousy cometh upon him, and he be jealous over his wife, and shall set the woman before Yahweh, and the priest shall execute upon her all this law. Then shall **the man be guiltless** from iniquity, and this woman shall bear her iniquity” – It is noticeable that the man is exonerated from any suspicion of failure although in real life it is rarely that way. The reason for this is simple. The law is really about Yahweh’s relationship with His wife Israel who regularly failed Him and committed adultery (Jer. 3). For that reason, the man in the scenario presented is “guiltless,” for that is the case with God.

## Proverbs 2

V.1-2 – “My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding” – Bro. Roberts wrote concerning these verses: Nothing more unpalatable in the way of advice could be uttered in Gentile circles, and there are scarcely any other than Gentile circles. But here and there, there is a responsive ear, in which the words are uttered not in vain. “My words,” the words of God, are received and embraced, and stored deep in the inner man; and here they must remain to be effectual for their work. And here they cannot remain without steady renewal in the daily readings of the Scriptures. The human mind is very weak, especially to divine ideas. A constant supply is the cure. Nothing else will finally satisfy the taste which they generate. Nothing else will so secrete the commandments of God in the heart as that. They will be an ever-living and available power of action. But for this, a man must stoutly fight, else this wise policy will be taken out of his hands through the chronic oppositions and revolts of the Gentile mind, within and without. Having taken the right cue from the Spirit’s voice, let him close his ears to the devil’s din that would call him in other directions. and go straight onward to the heavenly city.

V.3-4 – “Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures” – Silver is the Biblical symbol for redemption. Bro Roberts wrote about these verses: Exertion is never so energetic, perseverance never so tenacious, skill never so thorough, as when money is to be got. This is the divine measure of the industry we are called upon to exercise in the quest for the precious mental attainment variously expressed as knowledge, understanding, and wisdom. Such earnestness and activity with such an object is repugnant to modern maxims. “Take it easy,” is the world’s prescription concerning “the one thing needful.” As to making money, there is no bound to the diligence it will allow and advise you to put forth. We have to choose between what the world advises and what God advises. We are naturally more inclined to take the world’s advice because it is more pleasant. But we do not require to go far to see that what is the most pleasant is not necessarily the best, but in all probability the worst. The time will come when it will be manifest to all men that he only has acted the wise part who has made wisdom his friend at

whatever labour and cost; for wisdom will crown her children forever when sinners rot in dishonoured dust.

The theme of choosing a life-long companion called 'Wisdom' so as to avoid the catastrophic companionship of the "evil man" (V.12), and his partner "the strange woman" (V.16) continues in this chapter. Its exhortations speak for themselves.

## Luke 16

Two parables allied to the three that precede them in chap. 15 make up this chapter, with an interlude for the condemnation of dishonesty and betrayal due to greed and lust.

The "certain rich man" of verses 1 and 19 refers to the **high priest Caiaphas** at the time. He was made high priest by the Roman authorities because his father-in-law Annas was too influential. Annas however, remained the true power behind the office as is illustrated in the trials of Christ (John 18:13,24). The proof of this assertion lies in the words put in the mouth of the rich man in Luke 16:28 – "For **I have five brethren**; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment." Annas had 5 sons, all of whom became high priest in their turn later. So, Caiaphas had five brothers-in-law (the power was kept in the family).

The Pharisees (whose name means 'strict') were in many cases notoriously dishonest (Matt. 23:14; Luke 20:47; 18:3). They were "covetous" (V.14). The unjust steward represents them. There is one requirement of stewards – "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:2). Dishonesty disqualifies.

The key exhortations are found in the behaviour of the unjust steward in writing down the amount his master's servants owed to their master, namely, the high priest (V.4-7) who ostensibly represented God. Oil and wheat are both symbols for the Word of God. We all owe 100% to the provider of it, for it is the 'staff of life' to all who serve our 'Master'. There is much 'writing down' or granting of 'discounts' on Divine statutes nowadays. The Humanistic age in which we live has no problem in granting 20% or 50% discounts on God's principles. You just need to "sit down quickly" (i.e. don't think about it for too long), and the discount will be attractive to the flesh.

It is critical therefore to understand V.8 – "And **the lord** commended the unjust steward, because he had done **wisely**: for the children of this world (*aion* – age) are in their generation **wiser** than the children of light." The 'lord' here is not Christ, but the "rich man" (the high priest) who was just as corrupt as his steward. The word "wisely" is *phronimos* – prudently. It is not about integrity, but rather the consistency of human nature. You can trust human nature to be consistent with its evil ways. The problem for the "children of light" is that they are all too often inconsistent with the higher ways they have chosen to follow.

It is Christ who speaks of the learnings of this parable when he says – V.9 (Rotherham) – "And, I, unto you, say—For yourselves, make ye friends, with the unjust riches, in order that, as soon as it shall fail, they may welcome you into the age-abiding tents." He then explains in verses 10 to 13 what he means. Faithful use of the things that belong to this life, in matters small or large, with money or obligations, is the training and proving ground for our preparation for the Kingdom. If we cannot show integrity and honesty in the things of the present, it is unlikely God will grant us the things of the future that belong to Him.

V.18 – The covetousness of the Pharisees was not confined to avarice ("the love of money is the root of all evil"), but extended to immorality. They were notorious for dismissing their wives so they could marry a more attractive woman (Matt. 5:27-32), and for adultery without consequences to themselves – John 8:3-5 (where was the male partner in this crime? Obviously,

he was a fellow Pharisee). This is why Christ extends the condemnation of their covetousness to divorce and remarriage.

V.22-31 – “the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom” – The Pharisees, like the Sadducees, had become very Hellenized in their doctrinal views of what happens at death. They believed that the soul of an accepted individual went to what they termed “Abraham’s bosom.” The Pharisees taught that there were three places of prospect for them by echelon: (1) Abraham’s bosom; (2) “under the throne of glory”; (3) and, in the garden of Eden (Greek ‘Paradise’). Speaking of death, they would say “this day he sits in Abraham’s bosom.” Christ uses their doctrinal corruption against them (Matt. 16:12) and paints a picture of Lazarus in ‘Abraham’s bosom’ while the rich man roasts in the fire of Hades (another Greek theory). The ludicrous scenario of discourse across the divide and the prospect of interchange demonstrates the baselessness of the doctrine. All of this was designed to lead to one conclusion, that it was a waste of time and effort to send a resurrected individual to the Scribes and Pharisees and their compatriots because if they believed not Moses and the prophets, they would not believe that either. The proof lay in the fact that they tried to kill Lazarus within weeks of this incident (John 12:10-11).

## March 25

### Numbers 6 – The law of the Nazarite

V.2 – “**Speak** unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When **either man or woman** shall separate themselves to vow a vow of a **Nazarite**, to separate themselves unto Yahweh.” Taking a Nazarite vow was not a command. There was no pressure or imposition to do so. It was voluntary, hence, “speak unto the children of Israel” (not “command”).

The Nazarite law had two primary purposes:

- (1) It enabled a **man or a woman** to dedicate themselves exclusively to God for a specified time. No other law permitted this kind of involvement for a woman. Hence, the Apostle makes the statement in 2 Cor. 6:17-18 – “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye **separate**, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my **sons and daughters**, saith the Lord Almighty.”
- (2) It made possible the realization of the ideals of priesthood in one who had no access to the altar.

All Israel were “a kingdom of priests” (Ex. 19:6). Becoming a Nazarite enabled them to act out the part of the high priest while not possessing the physical qualifications. Saints in Christ are perpetual Nazarites and a royal priesthood (2 Cor. 6:16-18; 1 Pet. 2:9). All three bans placed on the Nazarite had their origin in the laws governing the high priest. Avoiding products of the grape (because of the drunkenness of Nadab and Abihu); not approaching a dead body (like Aaron); having the head separated by a mitre (the uncut hair of the Nazarite was formed into a ‘mitre’). Some notable Nazarites in Scripture were Samson, Samuel, John Baptist and Christ.

“Inferior though the Nazarite was, as a layman, to the anointed priest, in one way he was decidedly **superior**. Aaron was the high priest as a matter of hereditary duty and not from choice. Not so the Nazarite: his consecration was essentially **voluntary**, a course of life and service willingly and cheerfully undertaken as an expression of his love for God and his desire to live in absolute holiness before him.” (Bro. W.F. Barling – Law and Grace).

The focus in this law is on the **head**. There are 8 occurrences of “head,” but “hair” only occurs twice (V.5,18). Note the use of *nezer* (“crown”) in Ex. 29:6; 39:30; Lev. 8:9; 21:12 highlighting “Holiness to Yahweh” in the mind. The Nazarite law is all about separating the “head” (our thinking) from the body (the biased and carnal nature we all have – see Rom. 8:5-8).

V.9-12 – (Young’s Lit.) “And when **the dead dieth** beside him in an instant, suddenly, and he hath defiled the head of his separation” – This is curious. What might this unintentional defilement of the vow indicate? It is a testimony that God understood the weakness of human nature. As Paul said in Rom. 7:15-25 – “what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I” for he was saddled with “this body of death” that when he would do good, evil was present with him. It was as though ‘the dead died suddenly’ beside him. All men (bar one) stumble into sin from time to time.

In our baptism into Christ, we made a vow to follow and mimic our great High Priest. Inevitably, we will occasionally (if not often) fail because of the bias and weakness of the nature we possess. As Solomon rightly said, “There is no man that sinneth not.” So, one very important tenet of the Nazarite law was the process undertaken when a vow had been broken or not fulfilled due to the intervention of some impediment (V.9-12). The Nazarite had to perform the whole period of separation all over again. So it is with us. Sin interferes with the vow made at baptism. We must make a new start once the appropriate actions to erase the sin have been taken. In the case of the Nazarite, an offering was made for sin, another for rededication (burnt offering), and a trespass offering followed to signify that God had been robbed of service. The Nazarite’s hair being shaved, the originally specified duration of the vow was started all over again. The days previously served had been lost. Perceptive Israelites would see in this the principle later expressed in Ezek. 18:24. Bro. Barling commented in “Law and Grace” – The lesson for every reflective Israelite was plain: each time that by sinning he was false to his status as one of a dynasty of priests, he had to begin afresh, and make good his failure by consecrating himself anew to God. The lesson was a salutary one indeed, and a real education in acceptable worship.

The emphasis on “the days of his separation” is a key element in regard to the above. The aim of our call to emulate our High Priest is that we might share eternity with him to the glory of God. As shown in the chart at right, the days of the vow are referred to 8 times which is the Biblical number of immortality.

V.13-21 – “this is the law of the Nazarite, when the days of his separation are **fulfilled**” – The process undertaken when a Nazarite vow was successfully completed were aimed at granting the Nazarite the privilege of priesthood for a short time, and projected him/her into the Kingdom as an immortal.

The whole range of sacrifices was made (except for trespass), including meal and drink (bread and wine) emphasizing the need to match profession by performance. There was one unusual feature – no leaven was allowed with the peace offering as permitted in Lev. 7:12-13. The ceremony was clearly based on Aaron’s consecration (Lev. 8:2,26).

*Nezer* occurs 6 times in the section suggesting in type the end of mortal probation. Also, “unleavened” (the symbol of incorruptibility) occurs 5 times pointing to Divine grace, for the gift of God is eternal life (Rom. 6:23).

### All the days of his separation

**V.4 – “All the days”**

**V.5 – “All the days”, “the days be fulfilled”**

**V.6 – “All the days”**

**V.8 – “All the days”**

**V.12 – “the days”, “the days”**

**V.13 – “when the days....are fulfilled”**

**8 times the days of the vow are referred to (8 is the number of immortality) – this is the objective of the Nazarite principle – to bring men and women to eternal life.**

**Based on Lev. 8:33,35**

V.14 – “one he lamb of the first year without blemish for a burnt offering” – Every day a lamb was offered morning and evening for the continual burnt offering (Ex. 29:38-39). The completed vow modelled the continual burnt offering and represented continual dedication.

“one ewe lamb...for a sin offering” – This was the sin offering for “any one of the common people” who had sinned in ignorance (Lev. 4:27,32). It was a reminder not to allow the hubris of human pride to enter the scene (Rom. 12:3) – “to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think.” No boasting about success was fitting.

“one ram without blemish for peace offerings” – This was modelled on the consecration of Aaron (Lev. 8:22-29). All of this reinforces the notion that the whole purpose of a Nazarite vow was to mimic Israel’s high priest. It is easy to see how this applies to us today.

V.18 – “the Nazarite shall shave the head of his separation” – The Nazarite’s hair was burnt with the peace offerings showing that fellowship with God depends on the state of mind, namely holiness. This ordinance typified the surrender of mortality to take up immortality because of the “head of separation.”

V.19 – The Nazarite was then given the priest’s portion of the peace offering – the right thigh (Lev. 7:34), and was thus acknowledged as a ‘priest’ – “the priest shall take the sodden (boiled) shoulder of the ram” – Again this was based on Aaron and his sons (Lev. 8:31).

V.20 – The priest placed his portion on the Nazarite’s hands to wave it as a wave offering (Lev. 7:30). Accordingly, the Nazarite acted as the priest for the wave offering (= consecration) and heave offering (= surrender) – Ex. 29:24; Lev. 7:29-34. The Nazarite was then allowed to drink wine. This was typical of immortality, for mortal priests were forbidden wine while serving (Lev. 10:9). At the successful completion of the vow, the Nazarite received the blessing of Aaron and his sons (V.22-27). The blessing is relevant to us, for to be ‘blessed’ means being turned away from iniquity (Acts 3:26). To be ‘kept’ means to be preserved from iniquity by the light of God’s character and grace; and for His “face to shine” means we receive His teaching statutes (Ps. 119:135). Finally, to be given “peace” (*shalom* – peace through unity) is to have fellowship with God. This foreshadows the eternal fellowship with God that faithful Nazarites of every generation can look forward to.

Any doubt about the above is removed by a simple fact. The three words used in the chapter for Nazarites occur 24 times in aggregate – the number of priesthood.

(For those who desire more detail, there are Bible marking notes on Num. 6 in **Appendix 2**).

“ <b>Nazarite</b> ” ( <i>nazir</i> ) occurs	6 times
<i>Nazar</i> occurs	5 times
<i>Nezer</i> occurs	<u>13 times</u>
Total occurrences	<b>24</b>
24 is the number of the priests – see 1 Chron. 24:4; 25:1,31; Rev. 4:4	

### Proverbs 3

This chapter can be summarised as follows:

V.1-10 – The rewards of wisdom

V.11-20 – The search for wisdom

V.21-26 – The security of wisdom

V.27-35 – The application of wisdom

V.3 – “Let not **mercy** and **truth** forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart.” This sums up all that Yahweh seeks in His

Wisdom is a safe guide even now. The man who disregards her is exposed to evils and dangers from which the child of wisdom is by the very exercise of wisdom ‘preserved’ and ‘kept.’ The wicked destroy themselves by their folly and live not out half their days. Life, even as it now is, is a thing of conditions. Compliance with them is a necessity. If a man allow not himself sufficient reflection to note and consider what they are, and humility enough to conform to them, he will suffer inevitably for his neglect. Bro. Robert Roberts

children. The word for “mercy” is *chesed* – lovingkindness, and is the word used in Ex. 34:6-7 of Yahweh’s gracious characteristic of mercy. The word “truth” is *emeth* – faithfulness, stability, truthfulness and is the counterpart to *chesed* in Ex. 34:6. These were fully manifested in Christ (John 1:14), and is what we are called upon to imitate (Eph. 5:1). Hence, we need to bind them around our neck. The four occurrences of the word for “neck” in Proverbs (1:9; 3:3,22; 6:21) are the only occurrences in the O.T. of this Hebrew word. According to Strong the word *gargerôth* is the Feminine plural from H1641; the throat (as used in rumination). The bride of Christ needs to ruminate on these characteristics so as to weave them into our way of life (see Mal. 3:16 where “thought” is *chashab* – to plait or weave). Truly, “the wise shall inherit glory” (V.35).

## Luke 17

V.1-4 – “Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come!” – The “offences” (stumbling-blocks) the Lord has in mind culminate in the final destruction of the Catholic system that has caused so many to lose their chance of eternal life. Accordingly, that judgement is severe – “It were better for him that a **millstone** were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these **little ones**”, and compares with Rev. 18:21 – “And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great **millstone**, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.” Note that the self-appointed judge Abimelech (“father-king” – a type of the papacy) is killed with a **millstone** (Judges 9:53). Reference to the “little ones” is drawn from Zech. 13:7 where the shepherd (Christ) would be killed and the flock scattered, “Howbeit I will turn back my hand over the **little ones**” (Rotherham) said Yahweh (i.e. He would protect them). It is also no accident that the context of Zechariah 12 to 14 dealing with Armageddon and the redemption of the remnant of Israel is preceded by Zech. 11:15-17 where “a foolish shepherd”, also called “the **idol** shepherd that leaveth the flock” assumed idol status after offering 30 pieces of silver for the betrayal of “the good shepherd” (Zech. 11:13). That system finally developed into the papacy who sits “in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.”

V.7-10 need to be highlighted at a time when ‘grace’ is used as a vehicle to deny the importance of works (meaning works of faith). We will be judged according to our works (Matt. 16:27; Rev. 22:12; Rom. 2:6-11). When after having done all that is required of us we say, “We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do,” it is not a devaluing of the works pertaining to those duties, for we are required to bring forth much fruit (John 15:1-2). It is our attitude that is important. We are sinful creatures and any fruit of value we produce is the work of God (John 15:3-6; Phil. 2:13; Eph. 2:10). We should take the Apostle’s advice to the Roman brethren for one “not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.” It is a faithful saying that “faith without works is dead” (James 2:26).

V.16,18 are useful in demonstrating that Christ regarded Samaritans as Gentiles. It is a hint that the Gentiles would be far more responsive to his work of salvation than his own people.

The KJV translation of V.21 bears a whiff of Orthodox doctrine. The ESV does better – “behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you” (as it was indeed in the person of Jesus).

V.22-37 present a vivid picture of the circumstances existing when the Lord comes to judge the household. There will be prosperity right up to the last day before Christ comes unseen to the world to raise the dead and take the responsible living to the Judgement Seat. This is proven by the likeness to the times of Noah and Lot where prosperity ended only after the servants of God were removed from danger and hidden away (V.26-30). That will be repeated again. Otherwise,

his exhortation “Remember Lot’s wife” (V.32) would have no meaning. She wanted to retain the present with all its prosperity regardless of its moral depravity (V.33). The Lord does expect to find faithful people who are watching when he comes because he speaks of some being on the **housetop** which was used in those days for prayer and meditation. That aspect of their lives takes precedence over “the stuff in the house.” The word for “stuff” is *skeuos* and means a vessel, implement, equipment or apparatus. In the modern era it refers to all the gadgets we have that make life ‘easier’ and provide so much distraction.

Then comes reference to the Judgement Seat in V.34-37. Leaving out the italicized words, it is clear the Lord is referring to a married couple, like Lot and his wife. The proof of this is in the fact that he shifts from speaking about days to night (ESV) – “I tell you, in that **night** there will be two in one bed. One will be **taken** and the other **left**.” The Lord had used the word “day” **5** times and “days” **5** times in this discourse. If the **days** of opportunity are used wisely, then **grace** will be received in the **day** of judgement. He now turns to **night** because that is when the angels came to Lot’s house to collect his family (Gen. 19:1). They can similarly be expected by us in the evening, for that is when most are likely to be at home.

All responsible people go to judgement. No one will be left behind. To be “taken” means to be taken into the marriage of Christ to his Bride. The word is *paralambano* – to receive near, that is, associate with oneself (in any familiar or intimate act or relation). The word is first used in Matt. 1:20 when the angel said to Joseph “fear not to **take unto** thee Mary thy wife” (also in Matt. 1:24). However, the word “left” is *aphiēmi* – to be dismissed from a marriage, hence Paul uses it in 1 Cor. 7:11,12,13 of being put out of a marriage. That will be Lot’s wife’s fate.

To the question “Where Lord?” (i.e. where are they left), the answer is – where they really wanted to be. That was true of those who ignored Christ’s warning to flee from Jerusalem when the Roman armies with their eagle banners arrived in AD 68; it was true of Lot’s wife who wanted to “save” her life (V.33 – i.e. preserve her present way of life). She was left there after her ‘judgement’.

## March 26

### Numbers 7

V.1 – “And it came to pass on the day that Moses had fully set up the tabernacle, and had anointed it, and sanctified it” – This was the first day of the first month (Abib) of Israel’s second year out of Egypt and it began with 12 days of the most intense activity of their sojourn to that point. There were three concurrent events.

1. 1st day of the 1st month of the 2nd year – Moses set up the Tabernacle and sanctified it (Ex. 40:1,17; Lev. 8:10-12). This was typical of the glorification of the saints (1 Cor. 15:52 – the saints will be all glorified together just as the Tabernacle was raised in one day after a lengthy period of preparation).
2. The first 7 days of the 2nd year – The consecration of Aaron and his sons to the priesthood (Ex. 40:9-16; Lev. 8:10-12,33-36). This was typical of the anointing of the Millennial priesthood (Rev. 5:9-10; 20:4-6).
3. The first 12 days of the 2nd year – The princes of the 12 tribes brought identical offerings for the Tabernacle and its services – Num. 7 (note V.1,10). This was typical of the role of the saints as kings.

These 12 days culminated in the most wonderful way for Moses who had faithfully guided all these events (V.89) – “And when Moses was gone into the tabernacle of the congregation to speak with him, then **he heard the voice of one speaking unto him from off the**

**mercy seat** that was upon the ark of testimony, **from between the two cherubims:** and he spake unto him.”

Num. 12:7-8 – “My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of Yahweh shall he behold.”

Acts 7:37 – “This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.”

#### Proverbs 4

This chapter contains the following themes:

V.1-9 – The value of wisdom

V.10-19 – The path of wisdom

V.20-27 – The benefits of wisdom

V.1 – “Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding” – This is very similar to chapter 1:8 – “My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother” on which Bro. Roberts comments – This presupposes that the paternal instruction is wise and

The bright spot in the situation is the advent of wisdom with a mission. It is not without an object she cries to “the simple ones,” the “scorners,” and “the fools.” There is a good time coming, for which her mission is a preparation. In the good time coming there will be no death. But to make this tolerable, there must be no folly; and so wisdom has gone out. She calls to them to leave their simplicity want of discernment which bring disappointment; their scornfulness, which scorches and blights the heart; their folly, which only ends in death. Some among them respond to the call, and will be found at last among the joyous guests at the king’s table.

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and that the mother’s law is according to the truth. It is unfortunately the case, in the present evil age, that fathers and mothers do not always afford to their offspring a guidance that is wholesome to follow. In a sense not very important, it is doubtless safe as a general rule for children to follow the counsel of their parents, who by experience know the workings and issues of things better than children can. But in the higher sense, it rarely happens that this proverb can be applied to one’s immediate family circle. What is to be done? The remedy is obvious. Solomon, in these spirit-dictated maxims, stands well in the place of a wise father and mother, and therefore supplies any natural lack there may be. Let children young or old, adhere to the instruction afforded by the law laid down in these proverbs, and they will, at the last, experience the sweetness of wisdom and the profitableness incalculable of walking in her ways.

The personification of Divine Wisdom continues in this chapter, but the emphasis is not just on choosing and heeding ‘Wisdom’ as a companion, but on “exalting” ‘her’ (V.8). This requires more than conscious choice. It requires diligent application to the Word of God as a matter of priority. The evidence that progress is being made is noted in V.18 – “But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” The path to eternal life in the Kingdom should get brighter and brighter as we near that day. Going in the other direction because “the cares of this life” choke the Word makes that path dimmer and dimmer. The Apostle makes a similar point in 2 Cor. 3:18 (Weymouth) – “And all of us, with unveiled faces, reflecting like bright mirrors the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same likeness, **from one degree of radiant holiness to another**, even as derived from the Lord the Spirit.” Consistent with this is V.25 (RSV) – “Let your eyes look directly forward, and your gaze be straight before you.”

V.23 (Rotherham) – “**Above all that must be guarded**, keep thou thy heart, for, out of it, are the **issues** of life.” The word “issues” is *tôtsâ’âh* – outgoings; i.e. works, deeds (Luke 6:45 – “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh”).

## Luke 18

The warning about impending judgement in Luke 17:34-35 is the source of the following parable of the unjust judge and the oppressed widow of V.1-8. In this parable Christ provides the antidote to the days of Lot as noted by Bro. John Carter in his book “Parables of the Messiah” page 252 – “The background of the parable is the idea of a time of waiting, of apparent delay, which would be perplexing to men of faith in every age. The conditions of the world would be conducive to disappointment and despair, when disciples might lose hope in his coming again. Jesus therefore prescribes the antidote to counteract the effects upon the disciples of the conditions prevailing around them. Men must pray – must keep in touch with God....” “Prayer, earnest and continual ‘in faith expressed’, keeps the mind fixed on divine things....”

V.1 – “And he spake a parable” – In the Greek the preposition *kai* (“and”) occurs after the word “spake.” Lit. “And he spake **also** a parable”; i.e. the parable was to reinforce the previous words in Luke 17; “to this end” – *pros* – toward (this end); “that ~~men~~ ought” – *dein* = it is necessary; “always” – *pantote* – at all times, constantly, consistently; to pray and not “to faint” – *ekkakeo* – to lose one’s courage, to lose heart, be faint-hearted.

V.2 – “There was in a city a judge” (Lit. “in a certain city a certain judge”) who “feared (*phobeo* – to frighten; to be in awe of; revere) **not** God, neither regarded (*entrepo* – respect) man.” This may be a reference to a Roman judge – a godless pagan.

V.3 – “there was a widow in that city” – She is the exact opposite to the judge – a pathetic, totally dependent figure; often oppressed by the Scribes and Pharisees (Matt. 23:14; Luke 20:47); “and she came” (Lit. “and she was coming”); i.e. continually and repeatedly; desperately appealing to him to “Avenge” (*ekdikeo* – vindicate, retaliate) her of the “adversary” (*antidikos* – opponent at law).

V.4 – “he said within himself” – i.e. in contrast to his proud boast of V.2.

V.5 – “troubleth me” – *kopos* – a cut; wear out with toil; hence to cause one trouble; “lest by her continual coming” (*eis telos* – Lit. – “unto the end”. Rotherham – “persistently coming”); she “weary me” (*hupopiazō* – to hit under the eye; buffet, beat and bruise. The only other occurrence is in 1 Cor. 9:27 – “keep under”). This is clearly hyperbole for emphasis.

V.6 – “And the Lord said” – There is a distinct pause providing time for the lesson to sink in. “Hear what the unjust” (*adikias* – unrighteous) judge saith,” i.e. do you get the point?

V.7 – “shall not” – *ou me* – the intense negation in Greek; God will “avenge” (Lit. – “shall execute the avenging”); for His “elect” (*eklektos* – chosen ones – Rotherham); “though he bear long with them” (*makrothumeo* – long-spirited; i.e. forbearing). God delays, not to frustrate, but only to fulfil His predetermined plan.

V.8 – “the Son of man” – This is the title of Christ as judge in the exercising of dominion over all carnal things (John 5:22,27); “shall he find faith” – The definite article is present but the AV translation gives the correct sense. Literally it should read – “**shall he find this faith**”; i.e. the kind of faith displayed by the persistent widow of the parable. Christ will find faithful believers when he returns – see Ezek. 47:22-23, Rev. 16:15; Luke 12:37; 1 Thess. 4:17. That is not the

question. Will he find the kind of faith that cries out to Him “day and night?” (V.7). Only we can answer that question.

The simple message of the parable is that persistence and constancy (otherwise known as importunity) in prayer is absolutely essential to overcome in the days of Lot which are upon us. Bro. Carter commented – “We prevail with men by importunity because they are displeased with it, but with God because He is pleased with it.”

V.9-14 – The parable of the prayers of the Pharisee and the ‘publican’ sets forward contrasting attitudes toward God. The repeated use of the pronoun “I” by the Pharisee shows that he is his own God. He is praying to **himself** (Rotherham) – “these things **unto himself was praying.**” So, if the five “I’s” are added to “himself” there are six = man/flesh. However, the publican uses 6 words in the Greek text translated “God be merciful to me a sinner,” but out of embarrassment and remorse he could not even look up to heaven because he really believed in “the God” (as the text has it) that was there.

V.18-27 – The encounter with the rich young ruler whom Jesus loved will be considered in more detail when commenting on Mark 10, but a key to understanding is noting the particular commandments of the **10** that Christ refers to, namely, commandments 5,6,7,8,9. Omitted are 4, the Sabbath (taken for granted for a strict Jew); namely, 1,2,3,10. Like the Pharisee in the previous parable, this zealous and upright young man had **another god** in his life – his wealth. It displaced Yahweh (1st commandment); created objects of adoration (2nd); undermined his service to God (the word “take” is *asah* – to lift, bear up, carry; i.e. to accept the responsibilities of bearing the Name – 3rd). Similarly, commandment 10 is not mentioned because he didn’t have any need to covet the things of others. He was self-dependent.

V.31-34 – The disciples had no concept of a crucified Messiah. Such was a mystery and dichotomy to them. They expected the Kingdom to be established by Christ immediately (Luke 24:21). He was preparing them for a huge shock that would test their faith and loyalty to him.

V.35-43 – On arrival in Jericho (“the city of palm trees” – a symbol for the nations – Ex. 15:27; Rev. 7:9), blind Bartimaeus (“the son of the unclean” – the Jewish view of Gentiles) appealed to Christ to be cured of his blindness. His perception of Jesus as the son of David revealed a faith absent in many Jews. The beggar (lowest in society) was howled down by many, but persisted with his loud appeals. Christ paused on his journey to the cross to heal this man who then followed Jesus “in the way” as many enlightened Gentiles have done ever since.

## March 27

### Numbers 8 – The Lampstand and the Levites

This chapter instructed Israel about the importance of causing the light to shine brightly in the Holy Place, and of the Levites to meticulously carry out their duties before the people. It records the manner in which the Levites were ceremonially cleansed in readiness for their sacred duties whilst on the march. Some of the instructions had already been given to Moses, and this is now recapitulated in the final preparation of the Levites.

V.1 – “And Yahweh spake unto Moses, saying” – Yahweh spake to Moses when he entered the Most Holy as recorded in Num. 7:89, so that all that follows was delivered to him then. Earlier, when the Tabernacle was first set up, Moses was not able to enter because the cloud of glory filled it. However that was subsequently withdrawn, and the privilege of entering was granted.

V.2 – (Rotherham) “Speak unto Aaron, and thou shalt say unto him,—When thou lightest up the lamps, over against the front of the lampstand, shall the seven lamps give light” – The seven branched lampstand sat against the southern wall of the Holy Place and when lit

cast a light into the otherwise darkness of that place. The lampstand represented the ecclesia (Rev. 1:20) and the saints have an obligation to “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 5:16). In order for this to be the case, every member must contribute the oil of the Word obtained by diligence (Lev. 24:2).

The light illuminated the darkness of the Holy Place, causing the table of shewbread, the lampstand, the incense altar, the elegant walls and patterned ceiling to be seen in their full glory. In similar manner, the illumination of the Word brings every aspect of Divine service into proper and beautiful focus. To obtain the best view, the light needs to shine brightly: the Word needs to be understood, and to be proclaimed with simplicity and vigour.

V.5-22 – Having replaced the firstborn as the priestly ministers, the Levites themselves were consecrated to the service of Yahweh (V.16-18). Their cleansing ritual involved water (the Word); shaving all their flesh (a new birth); and washing their garments (a covering for sin).

V.23-26 – “from twenty and five years old and upward they shall go in to **wait upon** the service of the tabernacle of the congregation: and from the age of fifty years they shall cease waiting upon the service thereof, and shall serve no more” – Previously the age of commencement was given as thirty years. Some have suggested that the age of 30 had relationship to the work of transporting the items of the Tabernacle as that was heavy work, and that the earlier age of 25 provided additional numbers for the duty of educating the people and so forth. However, no specific reason is given for the change.

The term "wait upon" is of tremendous significance. It is from the Hebrew *tsaba*, signifying "to mass (an army or servants) assemble, perform, do service." In Ex. 38:5; 1 Sam. 2:22 it is rendered “assembled”; and in Isa. 29:7-8; 31:4 it is translated “fight.” The Levites were to be as an army, ready to be called upon for active service at any moment. All could not serve at the same time, but all could hold themselves in reserve for that purpose. The KJV marginal rendition illustrates the significance of this comment: “they shall return from the warfare of the service.” At the age of fifty years Levites retired from active service in their spiritual warfare and engaged in less arduous labour such as that of teaching. In such activity experience was of paramount importance. In their service the Levites foreshadowed the spiritual warfare in which saints are engaged (1 Tim. 1:18; 2 Tim. 2:4; 2 Cor. 10:3-5; Eph. 6:12-15).

### **Numbers 9 – The Passover to be kept and the cloud followed**

V.1-14 reiterates some of the ordinances pertaining to the Passover of Ex. 12, but also makes provision for those who could not keep it on the 14th of Abib due to uncleanness. V.6-7 identifies those who had buried Nadab and Abihu on the 8th day of this first month (Lev. 10:4-5). They needed seven days of cleansing (Num. 19:11) so missed the Passover by one day. Provision was made for them to keep the Passover on the 14th day of the second month (Num. 9:11). Hezekiah found it necessary to call his Passover on that day as well (2 Chron. 30:1-3). There were to be no excuses for failing to keep the Passover otherwise sin was committed, just as we have an obligation to keep the feast (1 Cor. 5:7-8), as did the Hebrews – “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching” (Heb. 10:25).

V.15-23 – “when the cloud was taken up from the Tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed: and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents” – The ever-present cloud, the symbol of Yahweh’s presence, was to lead the people through the wilderness. It was a symbol of Divine guidance: direct, continuous, unmistakable, infallible. All plans, all routes, all camping, all marching was subject to a simple

governing principle – “If the Lord will...” (James 4:15). To watch the guiding pillar is all that Israel was required to do, and obey its command. On that guidance the people were entirely dependent, and by following it they were absolutely safe. The lesson is clear to our times. The eyes of believers must ever be towards Yahweh (Col. 3:1), whose eyes are constantly upon them (Num. 33:2; Ps. 32:8).

### Proverbs 5 – Wisdom’s protection from unfaithfulness

This chapter focuses on the disaster awaiting those who choose the wrong ‘woman’ as their companion. The ways of the ‘strange woman’ are destructive, yet strangely attractive to the simple and unwary. V.12-13 – Instruction (hearkening to the voice of sound teachers); and humble acceptance of the reproof of the Word are the key elements to repudiate the appeal of ‘the strange woman’ and ultimately attain salvation in the company of ‘Wisdom.’

V.8 – “Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house” – The best way to ensure safety from the machinations of the “strange woman” is to stay well clear of her ‘abode’ (the world with all of its attractions). The Apostle counselled – “have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Eph. 5:11), but should we stumble upon ‘her’ he advised – “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make **a way to escape**, that ye may be able to bear it. Wherefore, my dearly beloved, **flee from idolatry**” (1 Cor. 10:13-14).

V.13 – The last thing we would want to have to do at the Judgement Seat is make the following confession – I “have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!”

### Luke 19

V.1-10 – The salvation of Zacchaeus (Thayer – “pure”) presages the conversion of the Gentiles. Zacchaeus was doubtless a Jew, but was regarded as a Gentile by his Jewish compatriots because he was so closely allied with their hated Roman masters. He was “the chief among the publicans” (tax-gatherers), meaning that he was the manager of all the local agents of the Roman authorities to collect tax for Caesar. They were hated. Herod had a palace on the road to Jerusalem from Jericho. It was a little distance from ancient Jericho, hence there were two parts to Jericho. Zacchaeus obviously lived in the administrative suburb towards which the Lord and his company were heading. So small of stature was he that he had to climb a sycamore tree along the route to see Jesus.

Hearing the criticism of the locals about the Lord abiding in his home, Zacchaeus provided evidence that the meaning of his name (“pure”) aligned with his character (V.8). “This day is salvation come to this house, forso much as he also is a son of Abraham.” Cast out and considered lost by his own people, he was nevertheless confirmed to be a son of Abraham whose faith was manifested by his works (James 2:21-24).

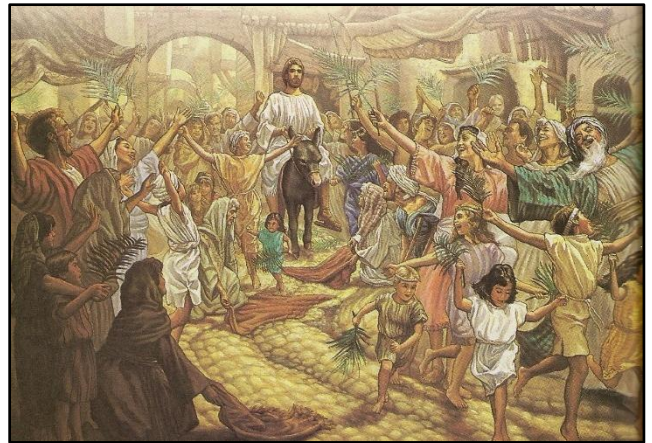
V.11-27 – The parable of the pounds is based on the experiences of Archelaus who was hated by his subjects. Bullinger comments – “This parable is peculiar to Luke. The point of it was that Herod the Great and his son Archelaus had actually gone from Jericho (where the parable was spoken; and where the latter had just rebuilt his palace (Josephus, *Antiquities* xvii. 13,1) to Rome to receive the sovereignty (see Josephus, *Antiquities* xiv. 14. 3,4; xvii 9 4). Herod Antipas subsequently did the same thing (Josephus, *Antiquities* xviii. 7:2).”

The ‘pounds’ differ from the ‘talents’ of Matt. 25:14-30 inasmuch as the talents represent opportunities, abilities and other individual advantages of Christ’s disciples and therefore differ

accordingly for each one. Each of the servants in this parable received exactly the same amount. It therefore stands for the Gospel message (the seed of the Word). Some make good use of the 'deposit', others do not. The accusation that the master was too harsh ("austere"), and unfair compared Christ to Archelaus. If that had been true, then fear should have motivated protective action by depositing the 'pound' in the "bank" (the ecclesia). Whether we simply have the Truth, or just a single 'talent' there is always a repository for it to prosper – the ecclesia of similarly endowed fellow servants.

(The entry of Christ into the city on the Sabbath was considered in the record of Mark 11)

V.41-48 is based on a prominent theme of Jeremiah. The word *paqad* translated mostly as "visit" is used 49 times in Jeremiah. A cognate word *pequdah* translated "visitation" occurs 9 times. These words which foretell a time of Divine judgement are associated with the laying of a **siege** (Jer. 6:6); a cry from false prophets "**Peace, peace**; when there is no **peace**" (Jer. 6:14; 8:12); spiritual **blindness** (Jer. 5:21); the destruction of **families** (Jer. 6:11), and the bitter **weeping** of Jeremiah (Jer. 9:1; 13:34-35; 14:17). Jeremiah, as a priest, had inspected Yahweh's leprous house twice (Jer. 2 to 14; 16 to 29). The time had come for the third inspection (Lev. 14:36,39,44) when the decree would be to dismantle the leprous house **stone by stone** (Lev. 14:45). Christ delivered that decree here. Note the bold words below relating to the passages from Jeremiah listed above.



Luke 19:41-44 – "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and **wept** over it. If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy **peace!** but now they are **hid from thine eyes**. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall **cast a trench about thee**, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy **children** within thee; and they shall not leave in thee **one stone upon another**; because thou knewest not the time of thy **visitation**." It is not surprising therefore that the Lord cites Jer. 7:11 in V.46.

## March 28

### Numbers 10 – Silver trumpets and Israel's marching order

One last item of preparation remained: the making of silver trumpets according to the Word of God, and instructions on their use. Moses was commanded to make two trumpets of silver, and was instructed that they were to be used in times of war and of worship. They learned that readiness to move, or to act, was not enough; their movements and actions must be governed by God, and they needed to learn to co-operate with Him. When that lesson was learnt the Israelites were ready to commence their march to the Land of Promise like the army they were supposed to be.

V.2 – "Make thee **two trumpets of silver**; of a whole piece shalt thou make them: that thou mayest use them for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps" – There were two principal kinds of trumpets: those called *chazozerah* – made of silver (symbol for redemption), and used for four purposes: (1) assembly; (2) journeying; (3) for war; (4) for the feasts; the other, *shophar*, a ram's horn. These must be distinguished. The other words

rendered 'trumpet' are *yobel*, a jubilee horn (Ex. 19:16); and *tako'a* – the blast of a trumpet (Ezek. 7:14).

The two silver trumpets represent the witness of the Spirit Word in its two-fold use of instruction and prayer: (1) as preached to mankind; (2) as pleaded before Yahweh. Therefore, it is both the voice of Yahweh in search of His people; and the voice of His people in search of Him. The primary use was: (1) for ordering the march; (2) for endorsing the worship. The Spirit Word calls people from their cares and pleasures to walk to the Kingdom, and helps to present them acceptable before the throne of Grace.

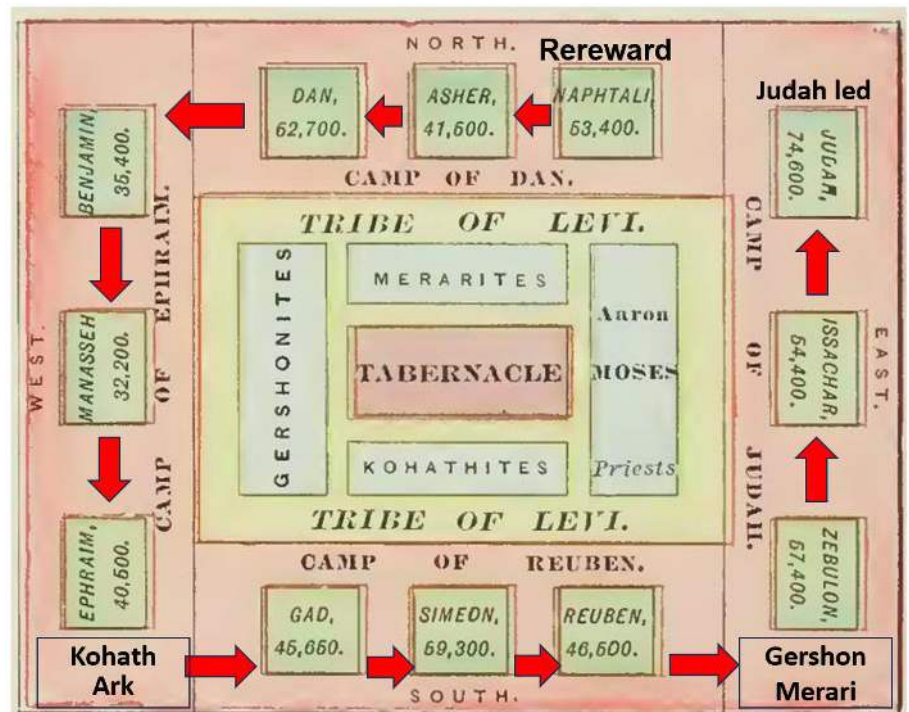
A distinction of sound was made in each case. So it is with the urgent summons of the Spirit Word, or in its various expressions as its influence is made evident in prayer. In 1 Cor. 14:8, Paul makes reference to the use of the trumpets as relating to the clear, certain instruction regarding the will of God (V.9); as well as the necessity for plain, direct, easily-understood, Scripture-motivated expressions in prayer (V.14). He declared: "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle." The reference obviously is to the two silver trumpets. The sounding of the *chatsotserath* trumpets brought the Assembly before Yahweh (Num. 10:3), guided the people in their wanderings (V.5), regulated their order of march (V.6), brought them into remembrance before Yahweh in times of need (V.9), ensured relief from oppression (V.9), and presented them acceptably before Him in memorial worship (V.10). They sounded forth clear and decisive, and were easily understood. Exposition of the word, and prayer, should be like the sound of those silver trumpets: clear, fervent, determined, insistent (see 2 Chron. 13:14; Phil. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:8; James 5:16).

V.11 – "And it came to pass on the **twentieth day of the second month, in the second year**, that the cloud was taken up from off the tabernacle of the testimony." Israel had been at Mt Sinai for eleven and a half months.

V.14-28 – The marching order of Israel is set out (at right). Judah led the nation on their march to the Land, except for the first three days (see V.33). Issachar and Zebulun followed and Gershon and Merari having taken down the Tabernacle and loaded it on carts came next. Then the tribes of Reuben, Simeon and Gad came next, followed by Kohath carrying on their shoulders the furniture of the Tabernacle. Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin came next followed by Dan, Asher and Naphtali in the rereward.

V.29-32 – Moses pleaded with Hobab his brother-in-law to accompany Israel to the Land.

The record here does not say whether he was finally successful, but subsequent history reveals he was, for the Kenites (later called Rechabites) played an important role in Israel (Judges 4:11; 1 Sam. 15:6; 1 Chron. 2:55; Jer. 35).



V.33 – “And they departed from the mount of Yahweh three days' journey: and the ark of the covenant of Yahweh **went before them in the three days' journey**, to search out a resting place for them.” The Ark normally journeyed in the middle of the tribes (V.21), but here it prefigured Christ who would go **three days** journey ahead of his people towards their inheritance.

## Proverbs 6

This chapter continues the theme of the value of wisdom. It can be analysed as follows:

V.1-5 – Wisdom's protection from suretyship

V.6-11 – Wisdom's warning against slothfulness

V.12-19 – Wisdom's warning against discord

V.20-35 – Wisdom's defence against adultery



**Prov. 22:26** – “Be not thou one of them that strike hands, or of them that are sureties for debts.”

V.1-5 are a dire warning against being a guarantor for anyone outside the family. History has shown the wisdom of this advice. “The love of money is the root of all evil” (1 Tim. 6:10). Just as salvation is a matter of individual responsibility, so no one can ransom anyone else (Ps. 49:7) – “None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him.” It is very unwise to take on the financial obligations of someone else.

V.6-11 may have been in the mind of Christ in Luke 8:16 – “No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a **vessel**, or putteth it under a **bed**.” The vessel was used in trading, buying and selling, hence there is a hint of V.1-5 (over enthusiastic involvement in other's affairs), and its antithesis – laziness – “Go to the ant thou **sluggard**.”

V.20-35 – “For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life” – The chapter concludes with the most basic human weakness that has ruined the lives of many people. Adultery and other sexual proclivities nearly always appear at the top of any list of what comes out of the heart of man. Loyalty in human relationships is essential for happiness and ultimate salvation (unless the sin is forsaken and forgiven). The classic example of the price that can be paid for adultery is that of David. Even his closest companion, Ahithophel, the grandfather of Bathsheba, could not overcome his anger and sense of grievance and proved the truth of V.34-35 – “he will not spare in the day of vengeance. He will not regard any ransom; neither will he rest content.” Adultery doesn't pay.

## Luke 20

V.1-8 – “Tell us, by what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority?” – The way Christ deals with the disingenuous question about authority is an example of how to handle dubious interactions with those seeking to undermine truth. If they are not prepared to make a genuine response to a reasonable question due to ‘politically biased’ considerations, they are unlikely to accept anything more challenging. Christ counselled (Matt. 7:6) – “Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.”

V.9-18 – The Lord draws heavily on Isa. 5:1-7 when delivering the parable of the vineyard, and on Isa. 28:16 when citing Ps. 118:22 in V17. He also seems to have in mind Dan. 2:45 in V.18 – “Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.”

V.19-26 – It is not difficult for deceivers to “feign themselves just men” (V.20). What follows are three attempts to undermine the Lord by subtle questions. His ability to fend off hypocritical

questions by advancing simple facts lays down an example for all time – there is nothing complicated about truth. Just state the simple facts (as did the blind man in John 9:24-27).

The mealy-mouthed introduction by the Pharisees on the propriety of paying taxes to the Romans, receives a disarming response – “Shew me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it?” Stunned, they have no option but to say, “Caesar’s” and were blown away when he said, “Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar’s, and unto God the things which be God’s.” What could he say? – “they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace.”

V.27-30 – The Sadducees, seeing the Pharisees humiliated, thought they could do better. They laid out a scenario involving the Levirate law about a woman who ends up having seven brothers as husbands who all die childless. “Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife,” they asked, doubtless confident they had Jesus stumped. The Lord’s response was brilliant. Firstly, he points out that immortals in the Kingdom will not marry like the **angels** (which they did not believe in, but knew they existed because the Scriptures said so), and then hits them with – “Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him,” for He calls “those things which be not as though they were” (Rom. 4:17). Even the Scribes marvelled at his response because they knew the Scriptures – “after that they durst not ask him any question at all.”

V.41-44 – Finally, the Lord uses straight-forward Scripture on his dishonest interlocutors. Ps. 110 is the most quoted O.T. passage in the New Testament. David in that psalm called his son ‘Lord’. That was totally unacceptable to a Jew with a Biblical heritage – the father was always superior in authority than a son (John 14:28). His detractors were stymied.

V.45-47 – “Then in the audience of all the people he said unto his disciples” – The time had come to publicly expose the proud Scribes who had commended his response to the Sadducees. They were motivated by pride and covetousness even to the oppression of widows, and cloaked their evil with hypocritical “long prayers.” These were not to be honoured or followed.

## March 29

### Numbers 11

Israel murmured 13 times in the wilderness (13 is the number of rebellion – Gen. 14:4; etc). The complaining at Taberah (“burning”) resulted in fire ravaging “the uttermost parts of the camp.” Invariably, it is those on the fringes of a community who resort to complaining.

V.4-15 – The “mixt multitude” (Egyptians who had joined Israel when they departed) were foremost in complaining about the harshness and privations of ‘**the way**.’ They had not left Egypt behind with its “cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick.” They took aim at the manna which was unattractive to their palate. It was a test for all Israel (Deut. 8:2-3) – “And thou shalt remember all **the way** which Yahweh thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to **humble** thee, and to **prove** thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no. And he **humbled** thee, and **suffered thee to hunger** (i.e. of the delights of Egypt), and **fed thee with manna** (the Word of God), which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every **word** that proceedeth out of the mouth of Yahweh doth man live.” The manna

represented the Word of God. It is not palatable to the natural man who hungers for the delights of this life. In the wilderness, God made them hunger for the things of Egypt in order to test their attitude to His Word. We have a choice between the temporary pleasures of the present or the permanent prospects of the future. Our attitude to God's Word indicates which we have chosen.

Like Israel, we walk through a “waste howling wilderness” where there is no water (a drought of the Word – Amos 8:11); poisonous ‘serpents’ (Matt. 3:7); and deceptive ‘scorpions’ who present as harmless, but whose ‘sting’ is in their tail, all designed to test our attitude to the Word (Deut. 8:15-16).

V.10-17 – Moses, exasperated and overwhelmed by a rebellious people pleaded his case and Yahweh provided help through seventy elders. He described himself as a “**nursing father**” which is what Yahweh is. See Acts 13:18 where the word for “suffered their manners” is *tropophoreō* perhaps for *ετροφοφορησεν*, bore, or fed them as a **nurse** beareth or feedeth her child (Deut. 1:31); according to the Lxx (see Margin KJV). Paul described himself similarly to the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 2:7) – “But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children.” El Shaddai, the title Yahweh used in Gen. 17:1 when He made the 5th promise to Abraham (“father of a multitude of nations”), and began to build His family, is primarily a title of a nourisher of children (Gen. 49:25).

V.31-34 – The provision of quail in abundance saw some in Israel gather astonishing amounts. “He that gathered least gathered ten homers” (one homer = 10 ephahs – Ezek. 45:11; one ephah = 10 omers – Ex. 16:36); therefore 10 homers is 1,000 omers. An omer of manna was one day's worth of food, therefore the least gathered was 3 years-worth of quail! Little wonder Yahweh punished their unbelievable greed (Ps. 78:31) – “The wrath of God came upon them, and **slew the fattest of them**, and smote down the chosen men of Israel.”

## Proverbs 7

This chapter contains two sections:

V.1-23 – Wisdom's defence against indiscretion

V.24-27 – Wisdom's description of the house of folly

Bro. Thomas in *Elpis Israel* pages 83-84 used Proverbs 7 to illustrate what happened at the time of the fall – The effect produced upon the woman by the eating of the forbidden fruit, was the excitation of the propensities. By the transgression of the law of God, she had placed herself in a state of sin; in which she had acquired that maturity of feeling which is known to exist when females attain to womanhood. The Serpent's part had been performed in her deception; and sorely was she deceived. Expecting to be equal to the gods, the hitherto latent passions of her animal nature only were set free; and though she now knew what evil sensations and impulses were, as they had done before her, she had failed in attaining to the pride of her life—an equality with them as she had seen them in their power and glory.

In this state of animal excitation, she presented herself before the man, with the fruit so “pleasant to the eyes.” Standing now in his presence, she became the tempter, soliciting him to sin. She became to him an evil woman flattering with her tongue; “whose lips dropped as a honeycomb, and her mouth was smoother than oil.” She found him a young man void of understanding like herself. We can imagine how “she caught him, and kissed him; and with an impudent face, and her much fair speech, she caused him to yield.” He accepted the fatal fruit, and ate “with her,” consenting to her enticement, not knowing that it was “for his life” though God had said, transgression should surely be punished with death.

V.4-5 – “Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman: that they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words” – Consistent with the theme that dominates the first nine chapters of Proverbs, the choice between two representative women continues in this chapter. We must choose a life-long ‘companion’ in the spiritual realm where destiny is ultimately determined. It can either be “Wisdom” our “sister” and “understanding” our “kinswoman,” or “the strange woman” alongside whom we were born together with all men. The latter is a very natural choice, the former is a conscious spiritual choice.

### Luke 21 – The Olivet Prophecy

The harmony of the three records of the Olivet Prophecy in **Appendix 3** will assist understanding. It is important to see that events prophesied concerning AD 70 go to V.24. The persecution and tribulations referred to in V.12-19 occurred in the first century. The latter days just prior to the return of Christ will be days of prosperity and not persecution (at least for the vast majority). “Remember Lot’s wife” can only mean that, for she did not desire to leave Sodom.

V.11 – “And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be **from** heaven” – One aspect of the events leading to AD 70 is being repeated in the latter days. The prevalence of earthquakes, famines, all kinds of pestilences and many fearful sights characterise the days in which we live. There is no surprise in this, for the Greek preposition *apo* translated “from” is the preposition for origin (i.e. where things originate). The unprecedented events that preceded AD 70 are being matched today. They are normally attributed to ‘Global Warming’ or some such phenomena, but the fact is they are being Divinely manipulated as a prelude to the “time of trouble such as never was” (Dan. 12:1) which will commence at the time of the resurrection of the responsible dead (Dan. 12:2).

V.24 – The capture of the Old City of Jerusalem by Israel in June 1967 saw the fulfillment of Dan. 8:13-14. To the question how long were “both the sanctuary and the host to be **trodden under foot?**” – the answer was 2,300 day/years (on the day for a year principle). When Alexander the Great entered Jerusalem (circa BC 332-3) to its freeing of armies ‘treading it down’ (the meaning of the name Jebus) was 2,300 years. The ‘cleansing’ is not about a moral cleansing (Christ will do that), but rather a freeing from Gentile political control. Zech. 14:2 is clear that Jerusalem will not be fully trodden down again.

V.25 refers to events that were to follow 1967. It is universally accepted that **1968** was the year that “severed the past from the future” (to quote Time Magazine in 1988). Governments, ecclesiastical systems and notable leaders represented by sun, moon and stars were shaken in a way not experienced before. The “sea and the waves” of humanity roared in endless protests and riots which continue to this day.

V.29-33 – The sign of the fig tree (symbol of Israel – Joel 1:7,12; Hos. 9:10) – “Behold the **fig tree**, and **all the trees.**” When Israel became a nation in 1948 there were 57 nations in the U.N. There are now 193.

“Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled” – There are those who argue that the phrase “this generation” can only apply to the generation to which Christ’s disciples belonged in the 1st century. That this is obviously incorrect is shown by this context. The freeing of Jerusalem (1967); the chaos of the world since 1968 (V.25); the shooting forth of leaves on the fig tree of Israel, and the imminence of the Second Advent of Christ (V.27-28) all combine to demonstrate that that suggestion is wrong. If that is true here, it is also true in Matt. 24 and Mark 13. Let us look a little deeper. The word for “generation” does not exclusively

apply to one generation of people, but also to a race of people within the human race. That is why Adam Clarke in his commentary says – “This generation shall not pass – *Η γενεα αυτη*, this race; i.e. the Jews shall not cease from being a distinct people, till all the counsels of God relative to them and the Gentiles be fulfilled.” He goes on to make the same arguments made above about latter day events. Similarly, the word “this” can just as easily apply to the generation that saw the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 as it can to Christ’s generation. Strong says of the word *houtos* – “Including the nominative masculine plural (second form), nominative feminine singular (third form), and the nominate feminine plural, (fourth form). From the article G3588 and G846; *the he (she or it)*, that is, *this or that* (often with the article repeated): - he (it was that), hereof, it, she, such as, the same, these, they, this (man, same, woman), which, who.” It is unwise to make an argument based on one possible meaning of a Greek word. Had the translators used “that” or “they” or similar, this false theory would never have arisen.

V.28 – “look up” – *anakupto* – to raise oneself up (fig. being elated in joyous expectation). See use in John 8:7,10 – “lifted up himself” (4 occs. N.T.). This is essentially about standing ready at the door (Song 5:4-5), for the arrival of Christ’s angelic messengers.

“lift up” – *epairo* – to lift up, to raise. This is about lifting up our head to look into the future – i.e. looking beyond the present (Luke 17:33).

Luke 21:35 – “For as a snare shall it come on all them that **dwell** on the face of the whole earth.” The word “dwell” is *kathemai* – to **sit**. There are 89 occurrences in the N.T. It is always rendered “sit” or “sat” except here! There is a theme of **standing** versus **sitting** in this context, and it concludes in V.36 – “Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to **stand** before the Son of man.” Readiness to leave behind the present, a world wholly given to ‘sitting’ in one form or another, is a key to finding acceptance in the presence of Christ, and holding one’s position before him. “I will give thee **places** to walk among these that **stand by**” (Zech. 3:7).

## March 30

### Numbers 12

In Num. 11:35, Israel were encamped at Hazeroth when Miriam was stricken with leprosy (Num. 12:10). Hazeroth means “yards” i.e. enclosed by a fence. And so it is. A deep wadi only accessible from steep passes makes it an easily defendable refuge for a vast multitude of people. To this day, Bedouins live near the only water source – a well. (Those interested can see the movie of our visit there using this link and going to minute 21 to 28.20 – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PLsmUZDAPxHVEdzpbDM5T2QaWOH8PQwTrO&v=SzR5oljff5l>).

Moses’ older siblings used his marriage to Zipporah called an “Ethiopian” but really a Cushite, as grounds for asserting their right to equal status as prophets as Moses. It is apparent that Zipporah was a faithful woman and was an influence for good on Moses (Ex. 4:24-26). It seems they were envious of her influence and decided to push for greater influence on Moses. It was a serious mistake. In dealing with the rebellion and its outcome, three things are noteworthy.

Firstly, the character of Moses is declared in V.3 in parenthesis – “meek” is *anayv* – depressed (figuratively), in mind (gentle). This is the first of 21 occurrences of this word in the O.T. It is most often rendered “meek” but also “humble.” This meekness is not weakness, for Moses was strong to defend the things of God, but slow to defend himself (see its final use in Zeph. 2:3).

That is a rare characteristic among men. Hence, he was “faithful in all mine house” (V.7 is cited in Heb. 3:2).

Secondly, Yahweh does speak through prophets, but Moses was different. V.8 – “**With him will I speak mouth to mouth**, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and **the similitude of Yahweh shall he behold**” (Ex. 33:11; Isa. 63:9). This is why Christ would be a prophet like unto Moses (Deut. 18:18).

Thirdly, it seems Miriam was the principal antagonist against Moses, given she is the one struck with leprosy (one symbol for sin). Sometimes the sins of others can interrupt **the way** to the Kingdom for others. So it was in this case (V.15) – “And Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days: and **the people journeyed not** till Miriam was brought in again.”

V.14 – “If her father had but **spit in her face**, should she not be ashamed seven days?” – This describes an act of extreme contempt (Job 30:10; Isa. 50:6). Miriam had set an extremely bad example. Her petulance had got the better of her, and she had spoken against her brother in a manner unbecoming any Israelite, let alone a woman. She was deserving of the public rebuke and disgrace she subsequently experienced (Deut. 25:9). To ignore her sin might have encouraged others to sin in a similar fashion.

### Numbers 13

V.2 – “Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel” – It was not Yahweh’s, or Moses’ idea that suggested spies should be sent to spy out the land of Canaan (Deut. 1:22-23 – “**ye came near unto me** every one of you, and said, We will send men before us, and they shall search us out the land”). Though Moses was initially pleased with the idea, it was actually an insult to Yahweh who had already spied out the Land for them (Deut. 1:32-33; Ezek. 20:6,15).

V.3-16 – Twelve “heads” of the tribes were chosen, including Caleb of the tribe of Judah (V.6) and Oshea (Joshua = “Yahweh’s salvation”) the son of Nun (“perpetuity”). Only these two presented a faithful report – one with a Gentile background (Kenezite – Num. 32:12; Gen. 15:19), and the other a type of the Lord Jesus Christ.

V.22 – Hebron, the resting place of three giants of faith and their wives, became the stumbling-block for 10 of the spies because of three giants of the flesh who represent “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 John 2:15-16). Their names were “Ahiman (brother of a portion; that is, a gift = lust of eyes for “a gift doth blind the eyes” – Deut. 16:19), Sheshai (“whitish” – like leprosy – 2 Kings 5:27 = the flesh), and Talmai” (ridged, from root to accumulate, bank up = pride). Caleb understood that an inheritance in the Land promised to Abraham requires fighting against these three ‘giants’ of the flesh until they are finally destroyed (V.30). Salvation depends on “crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts” (Gal. 5:24).

V.25-33 – “they returned from searching of the land after forty days” – Forty is the probation number in Scripture. As a result of the faithless report of the 10 spies, the nation was condemned to wander in the wilderness for 40 years on the day for a year principle (Num. 14:33-34). However, the spies initially confirmed the promise of God that he commanded Moses to pass on to the children of Israel (Ex. 3:8,17) that the land to which they were going would be “a land flowing with milk and honey.” The stumblingblock was – “Nevertheless the **people** be strong that dwell in the land” – They listed “the children of Anak” (the three giants); “the Amalekites” (the serpent power – Ex. 17); “the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites” and “the Canaanites” (the humiliators – Phil. 3:21) as an insurmountable hurdle. There is a principle here. There stands between us and an inheritance in the Promised Land

many giants of wickedness, and three of these are within – “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 John 2:15-16). If we balk at the struggle with these giants, we will not find a place in God’s Land “flowing with milk and honey.”

“Caleb stilled (*hâsâh* – hushed) the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it” – It is obvious there was much murmuring directed towards Moses. The faith of Caleb and Joshua was manifest against a very strong opposition – “We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.” As often happens, such arguments escalate until the most serious charges are made – “they brought up an **evil report** of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is **a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof**; and all the people that we saw in it are **men of a great stature**” and the chief of these were “the sons of Anak” (1 John 2:15-16). As our Hymn 352 encourages, “There is a battle to be fought, An onward race to run, A crown of glory to be sought, A vict’ry to be won.”

### Proverbs 8 – Wisdom’s appeal, its blessings and its origin

‘Wisdom’ is beautifully personified in this marquee chapter of Proverbs. Its promise is well expressed in the final verses (V.34-36) – “Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of Yahweh. But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.”

There are two sections to the chapter – V.1-21 – A strong appeal is made to all men to seek wisdom and understanding for its benefits and its promise of eternal life – “That I may cause those that love me to **inherit substance**; and I will fill their treasures”; V.22-36 – Wisdom was with God when he created the heavens and the earth of Gen. 2:1 (our solar system), and therefore its origin preceded mankind. It therefore makes logical sense that the creation should make the wise choice to accept its benefits and the promises that sin and death initially interrupted in the garden – “Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not,” for those “watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors” will find eternal life (V.33-34).

### Proverbs 9

The content of this chapter can be summarised as follows:

V.1-12 – Wisdom’s house has seven pillars of strength and invites willing guests

V.13-18 – Folly’s invitation appeals to the natural man who stumbles on to his doom

This chapter pursues the theme of choosing for a life-long companion ‘Wisdom’, and eschewing the natural bent of our nature towards the ‘sinful woman’ of folly. Unfortunately, the appeal of forbidden things is often too strong with the ‘simple’ and ‘her’ mantra prevails (V.17) – “Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.” There is a wiser choice which must be made against the natural tendencies.

V.1-12 – ‘Wisdom’ has established seven (covenant) pillars of strength in ‘her’ house because the appropriate sacrifices have been made, and she has “furnished her table” with “bread” and “wine” and “sent forth her maidens” to usher in the willing for a fellowship meal with her. All that is necessary is for the “simple” to make the right choice, which they must do for themselves – “If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself,” but scorners pass on to destruction in the house of folly – “but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it” (V.12). One critical element stands between success and failure. The fear of God.

V.10 – “The fear of Yahweh is **the beginning of wisdom**: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding” – This is a progression from chapter 1:8 – “The fear of Yahweh is the beginning of knowledge.” Knowledge is the foundation of wisdom and understanding because it creates a greater reverence for God and His Word. It is only when the Almighty looms large in our consciousness that we receive motivation to grow and increase in His wisdom by application to His Word. This is a defence against the folly that is so natural to us.

V.14-15 – (ESV) “She sits at the door of her house; she takes a seat on the highest places of the town, calling to those who pass by, who are going straight on their way” – Folly appeals to the natural man who is going ‘straight’ on the broad way to oblivion (Matt. 7:13 – “for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat”). Wisdom calls them to divert to the narrow way – “Enter ye in at the strait gate.”

## Luke 22

This chapter contains the preparation for, and the holding of the memorial supper; the Lord resorting to the garden to pray and wrestle with the awful prospects before him; his arrest and the healing of Malchus; and the first three of the six trials Christ underwent before his crucifixion. It largely speaks for itself, but some things prompt additional comment.

V.10-13 – This was Christ’s Passover (“With desire I have desired to eat **this passover** with you before I suffer” – The Jews’ Passover was the next day), so he had already prepared for it through the “goodman” (housemaster) of a unique character – “bearing a pitcher” (the work of women normally). The room and the ‘supper’ were ready when the disciples arrived. Similarly, Christ has prepared everything for us. We need to join him with humility and gratitude in the ‘**upper** room’ and not be hatching betrayal like Judas (V.3), or jousting with others about our importance in the community as his disciples did (V.24).

V.19-21 – Some have questioned whether Jesus would have fellowshiped Judas Iscariot by partaking bread and wine with him. These verses put an end to that debate. It is short-sighted to think that way. We all share the emblems regularly with some who may at some point forsake and/or betray their Lord. Fellowship is with the Father and Son (1 John 1:3). There was still a chance (though unlikely) that Judas could be turned around. He had the free will to do so. Our obligation to refuse fellowship is when the apostasy or departure is in the open and declared (2 John 9-11; 1 Cor. 5:1-5).

V.54-62 – The three denials by Peter are chilling reminders of the weakness of the flesh. All the loud assertions of loyalty and aspersions on the loyalty of others comes back to haunt him. Hurtful as it may be, it was a necessary phase in the life of Peter. His spontaneous zeal and enthusiasm needed to mature and produce a humility that was absent it seems from all the disciples who strove along the way over their importance (V.24; Rom. 12:3; Matt. 18:1-4).

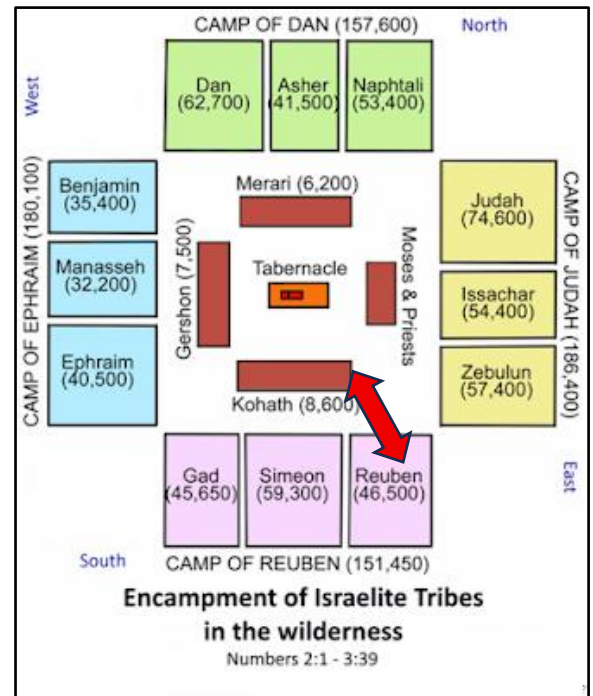
## March 31

### Numbers 14

This chapter proved terminal for an entire generation over the age of 20, except for Caleb and Joshua and a handful of Levites. Ten times the nation had “tempted” (*nasah* – to test) Yahweh after having seen His glory manifested many times, in many different ways in the wilderness in the previous two years (V.22). They were condemned to perish in the wilderness over the next 38 years (V.29). Christ spoke of their situation in John 6:49 – “Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are **dead**.” Of course they were dead, but he didn’t mean their first death in

the wilderness. Their names had been erased from the Book of Life, and so they were “twice dead” (Jude 12) or Second Death ‘dead’. They will appear alive again in the same wilderness at the Judgement Seat, but be dismissed to die there again.

V.4 – “And they said one to another, Let us make a **captain**, and let us return into **Egypt**.” Having accused Yahweh of having called them out of Egypt to kill them in the wilderness (a blasphemy against God), they then decided to appoint a captain to take them back there. There was an ideal candidate for the job already hatching a plot to evict Moses and Aaron from the leadership and lead Israel back to Egypt, namely, **Korah** a Kohathite (Num. 16:1-3). This is evident from the accusations of Dathan, Abiram and On, sons of Reuben who lived adjacent to Korah in the camp (Num 16:13-14) – “Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey (meaning **Egypt**), to kill us in the wilderness.” They had obviously been consorting with Korah and left it to him to deal with Moses, refusing to come up and put their case – “thou hast not brought us into a land that floweth with milk and honey, or given us inheritance of fields and vineyards: wilt thou put out the eyes of these men? we will not come up.” How twisted men can become in their delusions!



V.21 – “But ~~as~~ truly, ~~as~~ I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of Yahweh” (He who will become). Leaving out the italicised words “as” gives the proper sense. It is an oath like that of Gen. 22:16 grounded on the undeniable existence of Yahweh (Heb. 6:13). It is a declaration that God lives which guaranteed their Second Death oblivion, while others would see “all the earth....filled with the glory of Yahweh.” That will include Caleb and Joshua (V.38).

V.30 – Both Caleb and Joshua appear in this verse, but Caleb is singled out in V.24 as having “another spirit.” It would appear Caleb was the foremost spokesman for the two who stood against the 10 faithless spies who met a just fate (Num. 13:30; 14:36-37 – “those men that did bring up the evil report upon the land, died by the plague before Yahweh”).

V.39-45 – The ill-fated expedition to take the Land in the absence of Yahweh, the Ark and Moses illustrated the folly of faithless possessors of a promise. That promise was rejected, but when the realisation of what had been lost came upon them, a pleading foolishness took over. This was the case with Esau (Heb. 12:17), and is the scenario for the foolish virgins in the parable (Matt. 25:8-9). The presumptuous fools were destroyed at Hormah meaning “utter destruction” (V.45). The Land of Promise is unattainable without faith and obedience.

## Proverbs 10

V.1 – “The proverbs of Solomon. A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother” – Having laid out the instructions he had received from his father and mother, Solomon now records some of the 3,000 proverbs he composed (1 Kings 4:32). He began by noting from whence his wisdom had been derived. The chapter contains a long list of contrasts between the wise and the foolish; the righteous and the wicked; and their respective destinies. The proverbs speak for themselves.

V.26 – “As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to them that send him” – Another theme emerges in this chapter that is allied to chapters 1 to 9, and that is the need for diligence in pursuit of wisdom. The antithesis of diligence is slothfulness and that will become the focus of many subsequent parables. The word for “sluggard” is *’âtsél* from a root meaning to lean idly; i.e. to be indolent or slack. It first occurs in chapter 6:6,9 translated “sluggard” but in its 14 occurrences in Proverbs it is translated “sluggard” six times, but “slothful” eight times.

V.27 – “The fear of Yahweh prolongeth days” – This is another step in the theme of “the fear of Yahweh.” It is the firstfruits of knowledge and the foundation on which wisdom and understanding can grow. Now we see that it leads to eternal life (the real meaning of “prolongeth days”).

## Luke 23

This chapter contains the last three trials of the six that the Lord faced before being crucified – Pilate, Herod and Pilate again.

V.27-31 – The encounter with the weeping women reveals where the mind of the Lord was as he stumbled towards Golgotha. It was in Hosea. Grieved, but not surprised by his complete rejection by the leaders of Israel, Christ’s mind went right back to “**the days of Gibeah**” when Israel having not dealt with the brazen manifestations of idolatry by Micah (Judges 17), supported by Moses’ grandson (Judges 18:30), then allowed a portion of the tribe of Dan to set up that apostasy in Dan breaking Yahweh’s covenant (Deut. 31:16,20). They then failed to keep their own oaths when reacting to the dreadful sin of Gibeah (Judges 19-21).

### Gibeah and Christ

- ❖ **Hos. 9:9** – “They have deeply corrupted themselves as in the days of Gibeah.”
- ❖ **Hos. 9:10** – Israel likened to the fruit of the vine and fig tree. Cp. **Luke 13:6-7** – “a fig tree planted in his vineyard.”
- ❖ **Hos. 9:12,14,16** – “Though they bring up their children, yet will I bereave them.” Cp. Christ’s warning - **Luke 23:28-29** – “...weep for yourselves and your children.... Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare...”

*Gibeah of Saul*

### Gibeah and Christ

- ❖ **Hos. 10:8** is cited by Christ on the way to Golgotha - **Luke 23:30**.
- ❖ **Hos. 10:9** – “O Israel, thou hast sinned from the days of Gibeah...”
- ❖ The context of **Hos. 10** is apposite:
  - ◆ **V.3** - “We have no king...” - Cp. **John 19:15** – “The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.”
  - ◆ **V.8** - “thorn and thistle” - Cp. **John 19:2,5** – “...the soldiers platted a crown of thorns...”

*Gibeah of Saul*

Christ’s rejection and message to the weeping women had been prophesied in Hosea, hence the citations and allusions in Luke 23:28-31. Gibeah was the place where covenants were made and broken in Israel’s history (Judges 19-21); Saul of Gibeah was a serial breaker of oaths and covenants (1 Sam. 19, etc.).

V.30 – “Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.” This direct citation of **Hosea 10:8** by Christ seals the matter. His mind was on the incredible perfidy of a people who could reject the very promises that were the basis of their existence. The slides here illustrate.

V.38 – “And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.” The mention of Greek first is consistent with the assertion by commentators that Luke uses the Greek form of the inscription; Mark the

Latin; Matthew and John the Hebrew. This is because of the respective audiences of each Gospel writer – Matthew for Jews; Mark for Romans; Luke for Greeks, and John for the spiritual (note in John 19:20 “Hebrew” is ranked first).

In John 19:15 the leaders of God’s people repudiated the Davidic covenant when they said, “We have no king but Caesar.” The accompanying slides show how deeply the Lord had been impacted by the rejection, not only of him as their Messiah, but by the total rejection of the covenants of promise by the spiritual leaders of Israel. It could not get worse than that, except for them to crucify their king.

V.43 – Rotherham – “And he said unto him— Verily, **I say unto thee this day:** With me, shalt thou be in Paradise.” This translation removes the Apostasies’ concept that the thief was promised heaven that day. His future will be with Christ in the Kingdom.

V.44-49 – “And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour” – At midday (6th hour) darkness descended giving the Lord some respite from the abuse hurled at him over the first 3 hours on the cross. The crowd dispersed except for the Roman soldiers and their centurion who heard the final words of Christ on the cross at 3 pm (9th hour) when the evening sacrifice was made. These final words (the seventh saying on the cross) were a citation from Ps. 31:5 – “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit” (it is fitting that right to the very last moment of his life it should be a “thus it is written” from the mouth of our Lord and Master). But this citation also strongly suggests the very first words that Christ said when he was awakened in the tomb and the head wrapping was removed – (Rotherham) “thou hast redeemed me, O Yahweh God of truth.” At least the centurion got it right – “Certainly this was a righteous man.”

V.50-56 – Before the sun went down “a man named Joseph, a counsellor; and he was a good man, and a just” who had not consented to Jesus’ condemnation by the Sanhedrin, requested of Pilate the release of the body and gave the Lord a decent burial in his own tomb. Another prophecy was fulfilled – “he made his grave with...the **rich** in his death” (Isa. 53:9). Wound in graveclothes and laid in Joseph’s new tomb, the three days and three nights of his sleep began, closely monitored by the women from Galilee who had ministered unto him.

### **The ultimate repudiation John 19:15**

**“We have no king but Caesar.”**

**These words, uttered by the chief priests, are very significant. These chief representatives of the theocratic government of Israel thus formally and expressly renounce it, and declare their allegiance to a temporal and pagan power. This utterance is “the formal abdication of the Messianic hope.”**

**Vincent’s Word Studies**

*Gibeah of Saul*

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1

#### Praise

*An address delivered by Bro John Martin of the Enfield ecclesia to the young people gathered at the Victor Harbour Study Weekend on 1 October 1966.*

Brother Chairman, Brethren and Sisters, and my dear Young People,

If someone was to ask you what was the highest form of voluntary worship that you could offer to God in heaven, what would you say?

No doubt, Young People, according to our temperament and in accordance with the facets of the Word which have been impressed upon our various mentalities, the answer would be accordingly.

If someone was to ask you further, that if anywhere in the Word of God it could be found to describe for us what is the highest form of worship, would you say that there is a verse that could describe that for you? We read ... we read Young People, and it's in the Scripture that is profound and significant, that without a shadow of a doubt there is no higher form of worship which we as human beings can offer unto God than that of thanksgiving. There isn't any higher form than that, and God Himself is He who has set forth in His Word this principle. You can't offer anything higher than that, than thanksgiving.

And how do we know that? I want every one of you to turn to Leviticus 7, and I want to show you Young People, that this principle is clearly and beautifully set forth in the elements of the Law. Now remember this, that this verse of Scripture is going to put beyond all doubt the fact that as far as God is concerned, there is no higher form of worship than thanksgiving. Now in this verse which I am going to quote to you, Young People, it deals with what is known in the Law as the Peace Offering. Now, you ask yourself the question, what has this got to do with the Psalms? I am going to show you it's got everything to do with the Psalms, for I believe the Psalms were written on and around this very verse of Scripture.

Now it deals with the Peace Offering. What was the Peace Offering? It was the one offering under the Law of Moses which was offered as a spontaneous gesture on the part of the offerer. He had been called to offer the sin offering; he had been obligated to do that. He couldn't escape it, he had to make a sin offering. Under the various aspects of the Law, he was obligated to make a burnt offering, but one thing he could give of his own heart, which he was under no compulsion to give, and that was the Peace Offering. This was essentially the man's own offering. Out of his own heart he could give this offering, and there were three distinct types of Peace Offerings, and they were: (1) the thanksgiving offering, (2) the vow offering, and (3) the voluntary offering.

Now look at chapter 7:15 and note this point; "And the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offerings for thanksgiving shall be eaten the same day that it is offered. He shall not leave any of it until the morning, but if the sacrifice of his offering be a vow or a voluntary offering,

it shall be eaten the same day that he offereth the sacrifice, and on the morrow also the remainder of it shall be eaten, but the remainder of the flesh of the sacrifice on the third day shall be burnt with fire."

Now Israel were told, Young People, that they could offer peace offerings, and the peace offering was offered, Young People, because a person was so thrilled with the truths of God, and he was so bursting over with thanksgiving that God allowed him to offer this spontaneous voluntary offering. He could offer a thanksgiving offering, a vow that he would do good, a voluntary offering in which he exercised his participation in fellowship with God. But God said, "Look, mark the differentiation between the offerings". A thanksgiving offering must be eaten the same day that it is offered, a vow offering or a voluntary offering could be eaten after two days, but none of them could be eaten after the third day. In other words, God was telling them thanksgiving stood at the head of the list followed by the voluntary and the vow, and that's the order they took under the Law of Moses, and as far as God was concerned, thanksgiving stood pre-eminent as the highest form of voluntary worship that any person could offer unto the Creator of Heaven and earth, and the Jew had to understand that in the very elements of the Law which were given unto him.

What's this chapter got to do with the Psalms? The Psalms, Young People, are the expressions of a man and other men's hearts. They are the things which are welled up in their hearts so that they are bursting forth to tell the people of what they have learnt from God, and the things which God has done for them. Spontaneously they speak forth of the glories of God's Name.

David describes his reaction in the 39th Psalm (don't turn to it now), but he describes his reaction in the 39th Psalm. He was speaking about God's word, and his heart was getting hotter and hotter and hotter, until it BURST into flames, and his tongues spoke like the flame of a fire and spread the glory of God! That was the effect of the Word of God in David's life.

And the highest form of worship in the Psalms, what is it? It is already there; it's through the Psalms, it permeates the whole – thanksgiving. Look what David says, now mark this, he's speaking about the Peace Offering. He's bringing this principle of the Peace offering into the Psalms, and he's saying that as far as he's concerned this is the highest form of worship. He recognises it, and he pours forth his heart unto God.

Now look at these references: Psalm 50:14 firstly; notice how David speaks of the glorious principle which has been set forth to Moses through the Law. What is the greatest thing we can offer God? David knew, and so in Psalm 50:13, he says, "Would I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?" No! Those things are mere formalism. "Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most High." They are the two things, Young People. Will God eat and drink our formalism? Will He eat and drink our attendance at Victor Harbour? Will He accept the offering of the fact that we have gone out of our way to come down here to enjoy ourselves, as an offering? Does God look upon these things in a mere formalistic way and say, "I am pleased?" Not a bit of it! David says, "Will He eat the flesh of a bull?" Is He interested in the blood of the goats of the offerings? "No", says David. He knew and he extracted from the Law the essential principle.

Offer unto God thanksgiving, and then pay your vows unto the Most High. Thanksgiving, vow, voluntary – David knew the order, and he saw that this was the highest form of praise.

Again, in Psalm 107 (and there are many references which we can multiply on this particular theme) David calls upon us, Young People, to offer unto God that which is most acceptable to him, and in Psalm 107:21 he says, "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to

the children of men. And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare His works with rejoicing." And David saw, didn't he, the whole fundamental element of praise. "Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness", if they would only offer that which was pre-eminent under the Law, the sacrifice of thanksgiving, says David, and these are the things of which the Psalms are full ... the offering of thanksgiving.

Look what the Apostle says in Hebrew 13, also using this principle of the Law, and speaking of this wonderful principle of praise and of thanksgiving. In Hebrews 13, the Apostle Paul also dealing with this principle of which we are speaking, he speaks of two offerings. He speaks in verse 10 of the altar, the Lord Jesus Christ upon which the sin offering has been made. You can't make a sin offering: I can't make a sin offering: God has made the sin offering, God has made the sin offering, young people. Jesus Christ is our altar and upon that altar the sin offering has been made, and we are obligated to that offering, but there's one thing you and I can give, and that's our peace offerings. And in verse 15 the Apostle Paul like the beloved David of old saw that this was the essential thing under the Law of Moses that this is what God requires. He says, v15, "By him therefore, let us offer". What can we give? Will God be pleased with ten thousand rivers of oil? The cattle upon a thousand hills are His. But Paul says, "Let us offer (and what are we going to offer?) the sacrifice of praise to God continually", ie. The fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. And there's Paul's exposition of praise. The sacrifice of praise, that is, giving thanks to His Name. There's your offering, and he follows it with two others: to do good, and to communicate (or as the word literally means, to have fellowship one with each other), and there's the three offerings under the Law of Moses: the thanksgiving, the vow to do good, and the voluntary offering to participate in fellowship, but he puts highest on the order, to give thanks to His Name because the Apostle knew that this is what God demanded above all else, and that God was respected in men's offerings. "Oh that man might praise the Lord for His goodness, and offer thanks unto the Most High", and David saw this principle.

And as a final reference come back to Psalm 119 and see how these things were uppermost in David's mind. The Peace Offering was also called "the free will offering", because it was a voluntary offering and David says in Psalm 119:108 in speaking of this very principle, he says, in Psalm 119:108, he says, "Accept, I beseech thee the free will offerings of my mouth, O Lord, and teach me thy judgments". Now, Young People, what I have set forth before you in those few references (and I can multiply them), is not an opinion. There's no gainsaying that; and I don't think you intend to gainsay it, but what I want you to understand is this, there is no higher form of worship that you can offer as a human being than thanksgiving, and I say to you as I say to myself, how often do you offer that form of worship? How often, Young People, do we offer that form of worship? Prayer to God in trouble – O very easy! Very quick on our knees, Young People, when we are oppressed and under trial. Prayer to God for some benefit – always! When the benefit has been conferred, when the trouble is passed, and deliverance

has come, what about the highest form of worship? Thanksgiving? How often (you answer that question for yourself), and yet as far as God is concerned, there is no higher, and the Psalms are full of that ... the Psalms are full of that, from 1 to 150. Thanksgiving is the theme of those Psalms where a man pours out his heart unto God. Now that, I think, is the essential idea which is contained in these Psalms: praise in the sense of giving thanks to His Name as the Apostle describes it. That's praise. It's

not praise to mouth platitudes concerning God, and to say that we revere Him, that we worship Him, that we love Him, if we are not prepared Young People, with our heart to THANK Him.

That's the highest form, and which will test the sincerity of every young person's heart and mind; and David's Psalms are full of it.

And you know, when I was asked to do this address, I thought to myself, how am I going to speak upon the subject of 'praise'? It's such a vast subject, 'praise'. You can take it from any aspect of the Psalms, but what I did Young People, I thought you never want to waste your preparation you know; no good preparing this address and then going home, and saying that's all over. As far as I am concerned, I wanted to put something into my Bible that was indelible. I wanted to put it there that it would be forever with me, that I could carry it round with me so that this might as far as I was concerned, would be a great success, irrespective of what you get out of it.

But what I did, I got out my Concordance, and I said, "Praise", this is my theme, all right, let's speak about praise. I looked up my Concordance. I am not a Hebrew student; I don't know anything about Hebrew. I depend upon those who do know something about Hebrew, and I got my Concordance, and I looked up the word 'praise', and I noted from my Concordance that there were many Hebrew words that are translated 'praise', in my Bible in the Psalms which come from different Hebrew words. So, I went to the trouble of looking them up – I was intrigued. I saw that this particular word meant something, that particular word meant something, and I thought to myself, now an excellent thing for me to do would be to take those words, and with my Concordance, go right through the Psalms and colour in the words, to put in the front of my Bible this is the Hebrew word, it means that, and it would be found in a colour red, for example, so that wherever I see the word 'praise' coloured in red, I know the Hebrew word is a particular word, and I did that, it took me a couple of nights. I went through the Psalms and I took my six coloured pencils and I marked in colours in my Bible everywhere where the word 'praise' was found, so that when I turn over the Psalms now, and I see the word 'praise' in a certain colour, I know the Hebrew word is a particular word which means something to me, and the Psalms came ALIVE, for I found there were six words in the Hebrew language which are translated by our translators the word 'praise', and they are interesting. And now when I turn up my Bible, and in future when I turn it over, I will know what these words are, and I can see it for myself, and in the very context in which the words are used, you can see the fullness of meaning of them.

Now I want to speak about these words, and I want to show you what praise is, as though I had learnt it in a very small way myself. Now you take the major word that is used, "Halal". Some of you may have heard about the Jewish Halal. The Jewish Halal is a term they use to describe the songs of the Psalms which they sing during the Passover season. They call that the Halal, and there are these Psalms which they sing from the book of Psalms during the

Passover season, and they call them the "Halal". Now the word "Halal" is the word of course, which is translated "Hallel-ujah". "Hallelujah" – "Praise the Lord." "Hallelujah" – "Praise be to the Lord." Now this word "Halal" is a word which means "to be clear in sound, or in colour". When a person makes a sound, it is a clear sound, or a colour, it is vivid – is the idea of "Halal", and it really means "to celebrate", and the word has the meanings of "to make a show", "to raise", "to glory", "to be clamorous", and you get the idea don't you, not that we rave in the sense that the Gentiles outside this place rave, not that we be

clamorous or make a show as the Gentiles make a show, Young People, but that we be moved by the power of God to such an extent that we celebrate Him with such clarity of meaning and feeling that we halal, praise God, Hallelujah. And that's how that word is translated. It is used in the sense of glory, clear, crystal clear glory, nothing nebulous about the praise which is offered to God, and you will find that word in the psalms used in that sense. And when I turn my Bible over that word appears in red everywhere, and I notice, young people, that the further I get into the Psalms, the more that word appears, until finally, when I get to Psalm 150, what do we find? "Halal" is used 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 times in the 150th Psalm, and there's only one word for praise in the 150th Psalm, and that's "Halal", and it concludes the Psalms on that note of "Hallelujah".

Then I found this word "Tehillah" (not that the Hebrew word itself means anything to you). I am not quoting it for that purpose, but I do this for this purpose that really the name "Tehillah", is the Jewish name for the Psalms. You see, we read "The Book of the Psalms", don't we? That's the name given to the book by the Septuagint translators. They gave the name to the Psalms 200 years before Christ, but the Psalms were written some centuries before Jesus Christ. The Jews wouldn't call them "The Psalms", they'd call them "The Tehillah", and this word "Tehillah", means "a laudation, or praise". Not in the sense of Halal "to celebrate", "to make a show", "to be moved", but in the sense of a calculated intelligent praise. And the book was called by the Jews, "The Praises of Israel".

Now the Jewish title appears of all places in Psalm 22, and you have a look at this. Here's where you find our title, "The Praises of Israel", and strangely enough, we find this word, "Tehillah", coloured in my Bible green, and staring me in the face. Now this word "praise", coloured in green – and I know this word "Tehillah", and it means a lot. I can see that this is a title. This is a calculated title. It is a word which means a "calculated, deliberate, meditated praise". A praise based on the fact that people have thought about God, they have assessed the worth of His word, and having assessed all these things, they make a calculated, planned, and deliberate praise to His Name.

Now look where it is found in Psalm 22:3, "But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel". What's so marvellous about that appearing there? Well, this is what's marvellous about that, Young People, because in verse 1 is the fervent, anguished cry of a man hanging upon a stake with nails driven through his hands, blood streaming all over him, stark-naked before the populous, in agony of mind and body, tortured upon that stake. "My God, my God", he says, "Why has thou forsaken me?" And he knew why. He knew why, and he thought about it, and the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ asked that question on the cross, and it is put in his mouth by the Gospel writers, "My God, my God why has thou forsaken me". The fact that that question there, Young People, doesn't mean that he didn't know the answer. HE KNEW THE ANSWER, for the spirit had left him.

He hung there as Brother Thomas beautifully expounds, the man, the crucified Nazarene, to declare the righteousness of God, the glory of God, the mercy of God, but only through this way, could we have salvation. There, in absolute torture of mind and body, the anguished cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me", and he knew the answer because he said, "Thou art holy". The holiness of God demanded this. God is not indifferent to His holiness, and His mercy could only be extended if this man was prepared to sacrifice himself for the sins of the world, and to declare for all time, that the flesh profits nothing, that the Spirit gives life, and the one upon the cross who had just shrieked out that tormented cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me", and we believe the thoughts of Psalm 22

must have been his thoughts, and as we go through that Psalm, and we see the expression of anguish, could also say, "Thou art holy, thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel". And the word means as I said before, "a calculated, meditated thought upon the goodness and mercy and greatness of God". It wasn't the scream of a madman upon that cross, one beyond himself. It wasn't a man, Young People, who was so tortured by pain he didn't know what he was saying. He meditated, he knew why God had forsaken him. And when he asked that question, the answer came to his own lips; "Because You are holy", and he says that God inhabited the praises of Israel. That word "inhabitest", is rendered in the RSV and can be rendered according to the Hebrew, "enthroned"; and there is one hanging on that cross ... you picture that scene, just picture it in your mind, and he saw God, Young People, ENTHRONED on the praises of Israel.

God sitting upon a throne of praise, that the praises which were coming up from that stake were like a throne over which God was sitting there accepting that praise and sitting upon that praise enthroned in the praises of Israel. And what are we doing this weekend, we are not hanging on stakes! We are not asked to do very much for the truth. We are not asked to give our life, Young People, we are not asked to go without wives or husbands. We are not asked to have all our friends deny us, we are not asked to be spat upon. We are not asked to do any of these things that he did. And how often do we, and I, lift up our voices in praise that God might sit enthroned on that praise? Do you think it is possible between 150-odd young people on this weekend, that what is wafted up from this place, God may inhabit and sit upon it as a throne to be pleased and honoured to sit there? And we are not in a situation like that. What do we do under pressure? Our cry would have been one of for help, for deliverance! He couldn't be delivered, because thus it must be fulfilled. And he realised that all this was in the mercy and love of God, and he said, "You are enthroned on the praises of Israel". A beautiful word, isn't it?

There are other words uses. You have got the word, "Yahdah", and "Towdah". Again the Hebrew words don't mean a thing to us. I merely use it because you can see, can't you, the relationship between the words, one comes from the other. Now the word "Yahdah" means to worship God with extended hands. As David says, "I lift up my hands as the evening sacrifice", and we have seen an illustration tonight of the word "Towdah" when Brother Phil Wilson was up here, he was conducting the choir.

I was intrigued as I watched this, because I knew that this was going to come into my address, and so I watched him closely, and I not only watched him but I watched the singers as well (the little Palmer girl I particularly noticed; she was very emblematic of this particular word).

Because the word means the same as "Yahdah" with a difference. It means to worship God with the extension of the hands all right, but it is used in the sense of choirs. Now David was the chief musician; he was the sweet Psalmist of Israel, to whom all the Psalms were committed. He had other musicians: Heman, Asaph, and so forth, the sons of Korah, and into their hands the Psalms were given, and what did they do? They got the choirs together, and this word "Towdah" was used. They conducted the choirs with extended hands. And tonight as I watched Bro Phil there conducting that choir, he was the chief musician. The words they were singing were, "how excellent is Thy name in all the earth". In the Psalms, Young People, David would have been standing out in front of that choir. He'd have been the inspiration of that choir. And every eye would have been riveted on him watching him ... his hands, and all singing in time, so that there would have been a glorious melody. But useless if the singers or the choirmaster didn't understand what they were doing. Useless without that! And this is how that word was used.

This is the word which is used, by the way, for the word, "Thanksgiving". It is the very term from Leviticus, so that thanksgiving came from the choir. It wasn't an offering in Israel which was an individual offering, their offerings of thanksgiving.

Then there was another word used for the word "Praises". This word means to address in a loud voice. It means to shout the praises of Israel, and it is interesting to see how this word is used, for example, in the 145th Psalm and verse 4. And you can see, can't you, when we read this, the applicability of this word to the context. Psalm 145:4 the word stands out here because it is coloured in yellow in my Bible. This means to shout aloud with a loud voice. So Psalm 145:4 says, "One generation shall shout thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts". Young People, there is a marvellous significance in this. You see, the complete generation which has been succeeded by another generation, but one generation is shouting aloud the praise of God to the next generation, and that generation takes up the praises of God and shouts it aloud to the generation following, and so it goes on from generation to generation.

Israel did this when Joshua brought Israel into the land before they ever commenced the conquest of the land, and they conquered the centre of the land, the south of the land, and in the north of the land. He took all the people first, and he put six tribes upon Mt Ebal, and he put six tribes upon Gerizim. He put the priests in the middle of the body ... the priests chanted the blessings and the curses of the Law, and Israel, one generation and another generation spoke to each other across that valley, and they said, "Cursed is he that doesn't practice the Law", and "Blessed is he that does practice the Law", so that reverberating across that valley would be the shouts of loud voices, one telling the other the blessings and curses of Almighty God.

And here in Psalm 145:4, this word is used. This loud voice ... and let me tell you this. We are a generation of Christadelphians. All of you are in the same age group, and you are a generation of Christadelphians. And you don't have to think back very far or to read the works of the Pioneers very long to know this, that the generation which preceded us Young People, shouted to us concerning the glories of God. There's no doubt about that. Some may scoff and some may say, that's nonsense and ridiculous.

Pray God, Young People, if the Lord Jesus Christ tarries any longer, and we live to grow up to young manhood or womanhood, as you Young People must do if the Lord tarries, that this

generation shall shout to the one coming up, the glories of God. And David says that one generation shall shout aloud thy works to another, and that's how that word is used in the Psalms.

Psalm 117 again, is an illustration of how this word is used. It is like a chorus when all the orchestra, and all the singers come together with a loud voice to praise God, and so Psalm 117 contains the word, "praise" three times. It opens and closes with the word "praise" – the word "halal", but the word in verse 1 which is the second word "praise" is the word "Shabach", which means "to shout with a loud voice". So David says, "Celebrate the Lord all ye nations, and shout aloud all ye people". And you can see him calling to the people to make clear their celebrations. To make it clear in sound and colour, the celebrations of God, and come ye nations, shout aloud concerning the praises of our God. This, of course, is how that word is used. I have left the most interesting one until the last.

It is the final word which is used in the Psalms for the word “praise”. It is a word pronounced “zamar”, and it literally means to strike with the fingers, or to pluck with the fingers, and of course, you don’t have to let your mind go very far to understand from that that David here in this word “praise” is speaking of the use of musical instruments, particularly harps.

But, Young People, when you come to look at this word it is intensely interesting, because invariably when you find this word translated, it not only speaks of harps, and of psalteries and other musical instruments, but invariably it is used in the sense of both musical instruments and voice, as the voice with accompaniment – it is always used in that sense. Let me give you a couple of illustrations: Psa 98:4-5. David says, “Make a joyful noise until the Lord all the earth”. Make a loud noise and rejoice, and sing praise, sing unto the Lord with the harp. Now I the word or words, “sing praise”, is the Hebrew word; there’s only one word there, and the word “sing” in verse 5 is the same Hebrew word, so what David is saying is this, that we have got to make a joyful noise unto the Lord with the voice, but we also sing unto the Lord with the harp. You can see how that word is used both for the voice and for the instruments for music and accompaniment.

And now we come to a classic interpretation of Scripture by the Apostle Paul. It is a beauty. And to me, Young People, it was a thrilling exhortation, for this verse alone which I am now going to show you, is a thrilling exhortation because it was Paul’s exposition of that word. What does it mean that we both sing with the voice our praises unto God, and we can do it with a musical instrument? We don’t play musical instruments, well a lot of us don’t anyway. What does it mean, therefore, can we enter into the spirit of this? The Apostle says we can, and in the 5th chapter of Ephesians and in verse 19, the Apostle says, “Speaking to yourselves in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord”. Singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord!

Now we know this, don’t we, that the Old Testament was written in Hebrew and the New Testament is written in Greek. The Apostle wasn’t using the exact Hebrew word, but the word in the Greek literally means exactly as the Hebrew word, the word “melody” means to pluck the strings, and this is what the Apostle’s saying as translated by Rotherham. Now you listen to this: “speaking to yourselves with Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and striking the strings of your heart unto the Lord”. In other words, Young People, that when

this mouth is opened to praise God, and the word “zamar” is brought into play, if those fingers in a spiritual sense are not plucking the strings of the heart to make a melody as far as God is concerned, it is a discordant noise. And that’s what that word means, as interpreted by the Apostle Paul. In other words, we have got to mean what we say otherwise it is a discordant noise.

Can you imagine what would have happened tonight, if young Clive who was playing the piano for the item which we heard, was playing the tune to one of our hymns, hymn 13, while the young people were singing, “How excellent is Thy name in all the earth?” Can you imagine the noise? Can you imagine the discordant note? Can you imagine the anger of Brother Phil Wilson, being his son?! But this is exactly what Paul’s saying. But you see he didn’t, he played the tune to which they sang. They were the voice. He was the heart of the thing. He was the heart of the thing. They were singing, “How excellent is thy name in all the earth”, while upon that musical instrument, in the sense of “zamar”, there was their heart beating time. They meant when they sang, “How excellent is thy name in all the earth”, they meant

in their heart, "How excellent is thy name in all the earth". That's what they meant when they sang that. And so Paul says we sing with the voice, and we play upon this (heart) Young People, and it plays a beautiful melody. Anything less is a discordant note, and that's how David uses that term in the Scripture.

Now come to the book of Revelation and see how this principle operates. Here's people singing Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, and they have got a good reason to sing them too. Here are the redeemed and you have heard these words quoted in lectures, and Revelation 5, "And when he had taken the book the four living creatures (not beasts, but living creatures), the cherubim and four and twenty elders, the four and twenty courses of the priesthood, and the singers in David's time, fell down before the Lamb having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odours which are the prayers of saints, and they sung a new song, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth."

Now what have they got in their hands? A harp, and a golden vial, and we are told what the vial means the prayers of saints. What's that harp? Well, it is their heart, the harp is their heart, and they are singing a new song, and they mean every word of it, because they have got that harp there, and that harp is being plucked by the fingers, and it is playing the tune, and out of their mouth comes "Thou art worthy to take the book", and they mean that.

You have got the same thing in Revelation 14:2; here they are in v1. "He looked and saw the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with him an hundred and forty-four thousand, the Israel of God, having his father's name indelibly imprinted in their foreheads, and I heard the voice from heaven as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder, and I heard the voice of harpers, harping with their harps, and they sung as it were a new song." What were they doing? John heard a voice, and what did he hear? He didn't hear the voice of people, he heard the voice of harps. And in a vision as it were, he sees one hundred and forty-four thousand, and he sees a choral group, and the choral group consists of harps. And he sees the harps all singing with human voices. Why? Because they were singing with human voices

which were based upon what they thought in their heart, and what they meant. They were the redeemed from among the earth.

Revelation 15:2 says the same thing: "And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire, and them that had gotten the victory over the beast and over his image and over his mark, and over his name, stand upon the sea of glass, having the harps of God, and they sang the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways thou king of saints." Did they mean that? Of course they did because they are standing on a sea of glass, and they have got harps. They have got the harps of God. They have got harps that have been touched by the power of the Word, Young People, and YOU WAIT! You wait 'til you are standing there on the sea of nations, and in that sea it is calm. It is crystal clear. It is calm and it is like glass, it is flat. There's no waves, there's no turbulence there, but in that glass you can see the fire, you can see the symbol and the sign of fire there. You know that that sea has only been calmed down by that fire, and in the Word of God, the nations are represented as a troubled sea whose waters have cast

up mire and dirt. Then they are represented by a sea of glass in which there is no sign of fire, but it is crystal clear. The nations are at peace and it is represented by no more sea, because the nations are cast away, and you will only have upon the face of the earth, and you wait 'til you're standing there, and the smoke of Armageddon is rising, and blow away, Young People, the dreaded judgment is over, and the nations have settled down, and you are standing on a sea of glass, and you see the result of the victory which Christ has gained over the beast to bring peace and tranquillity to the earth.

You wait 'til that day, and your heart will VIBRATE like a harp, and you will sing, "GREAT and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty", and you will mean every word you say, because in that day you will be moved by the power of Christ to sing as you have never sung before.

And you will notice that all these are styled – new songs. But they are not new. The words have been there for centuries. Our forefathers knew that song. Why, a Roman Catholic priest could read that song. There's nothing new about the words. What then does the Revelation mean when it says they shall sing a "new song?" The word means to "rebuild". There's nothing new. It is something which has been "rebuilt". It means "fresh". And won't it be fresh because this is the song as Revelation 14 says, that will be sung by no other but these people, and yet the words are there. We are going to stand up tonight, I believe, and hear the "Hallelujah Chorus" sung. It will be wonderful. I like it. But it will NEVER be sung the way we are going to sing it. The people who will sing this Hallelujah Chorus know nothing about it, and it can only mean something to us if we translate the terms of that music in the sense of how we see it, and we are the people of all the people on the face of the earth that the Lord God Almighty has condescended to call from the dust of the ground. Who are we, Young People? We are the vapour that appears for a little time, and is gone forever. We are the dust of the earth. We are nothing in God's sight. We are of all men miserable, we are sinners – few and evil have thy days been upon the earth. WHO ARE WE that the Lord God Almighty should condescend to draw from the dust of the earth? When we realise that we are going to sing a song.

And do you know there's seven new songs in the Old Testament Scriptures, and no doubt the Psalms and the Revelation draws upon them, and I want to briefly, and very briefly, take you over six of those songs, because six of those new songs are found in the book of Revelation. What then are we going to sing in the age to come? We are going to sing a new song, new because for the first time, we are going to experience these things. And our hearts will be there because they are symbolised by the harps, and our hearts will VIBRATE with meaning.

Now look at these new songs quickly. Psalm 33:3, and I want to show you that there's a theme in each song. Now we are going to sing these songs with our heart as symbolised by the harp. What are we going to sing? Psalm 33:3 – "Sing unto him a new song". What's this new song all about? Verse 5: "He loveth righteousness and judgment, the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord". Notice the margin for the word "goodness". The word really means "mercy". Verse 18: "Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy". Verse 22: "Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we hope in Thee". Young People, this is going to be a new song, and the theme of that new song, the title of that song is MERCY. We experience the mercy of God now. You wait! You wait 'til the Lord Jesus Christ points to you, and says, "Come ye blessed of my Father, enter into the joy prepared for you from the foundation of the world". You wait, you wait 'til your heart vibrates with the glory and

praise to God – thanks be to Him for His mercy, and you will sing that like you have NEVER sung it before, because you will know in its fullness, what the mercy of God means.

Psalm 40. What's the theme of this one? Verse 3 tells us that it is a new song. "He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." What's the theme of this song? It's DELIVERANCE. Verse 2: "He brought me out of the horrible pit". Verse 3: "Many shall see it and shall fear and shall trust in the Lord." Verse 13: "Be pleased O Lord to deliver me." Verse 17: "I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me." And the theme of that new song is DELIVERANCE. We have been delivered now. We are made free from the bondage of sin and death. The truth, says Jesus Christ, will make you free and it does. It gives us a freedom, Young People, of conviction, a freedom of mind, it gives us a freedom from fear. We don't fear what the world can do to us. Let them do what they like. We are free of the fear of the world, but we fear God. And the day is going to come when at the Judgment Seat of Christ, when we are delivered from EVERY fear, and we stand absolutely and completely delivered, and won't your heart vibrate on that day when it plays a tune to that song, when you sing that for the first time.

Psalm 96:1 is our next new song. What's the theme of this new song? In Psalm 96:1, "Sing unto the Lord a new song". What's the theme of this one? Verse 3: "Declare His glory among the heathen." Verse 7: "Give unto the Lord O ye kings of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength." Verse 8: "Give unto the Lord the glory due to His name." And the theme and the name of that Psalm obviously is GLORY. Won't we celebrate that glory in that day, Young People.

Psalm 98:1: "Sing unto the Lord a new song." What's the theme of this Psalm? Verse 4: "Make a joyful noise." Verse 5: "Sing unto the Lord with the harp, and the voice of the Psalms with the trumpets and the sound of the cornet." Verse 8: "Let the floods clap their hands, and the hills be joyful together." The title of that Psalm is JOY. Joy, Young People, and you

imagine in that day when you are standing upon the earth, and you see the righteousness of God propounded on every side, and God's glory upheld and the blasphemers put down, and the deserts blossoming as the rose, and Israel returning back to the Land, the nations being suppressed, and the Lord Jesus Christ in glory, and your heart will just literally bubble over with joy, and you will sing that new song as you have never sung before. I am sure we will.

Psalm 144:9 is our next new song. In verse 9 it speaks of a new song, a new song unto God, upon a psaltery and instruments of ten strings will I sing praises unto thee. Why is the Psalm singing praises? In verses 12-15: "That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth, that they may be as cornerstones polished after the similitude of a palace, that our garners may be full, that our sheep may bring forth thousands, that our oxen may be strong, that there may be no going in or coming out." There be no complaining, most happy is that people, in such a case. And the name of that Psalm is BLESSEDNESS. That's a new song, and how blessed shall we be in that day when we see the wonderful blessings that will overflow the Israel of God.

And the final new song in the Psalms is Psalm 149. Verse 1 tell us it is a new song. "Praise the Lord, sing unto the Lord a new song, and praise in the congregation of the saints." And why are we going to sing this new song? What's the theme of this new song? CONQUEST. VICTORY. Verse 4: "For the Lord taketh pleasure in His people. He will beautify the meek with salvation. Let the saints be joyful in glory. Let them sing aloud upon their beds." Why? "Because the high praises of God are in their mouth, and a two-

edged sword in their hand to execute vengeance upon the heathen, punishments upon the people, to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron, to execute upon them the judgments written. This honour have all the saints. Praise the Lord.” And Young People, the challenge of this, you’re going to sing that with a harp in your hand, if you have been redeemed. Not a literal harp of course, but symbolised in the Revelation. You are going to sing that with your heart on your sleeve, because when you sing that, you are going “to execute judgment upon the nations, punishment upon the people, to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron”, you are going to mean it. Otherwise, you are not going to sing it. And where does the young brother and the young sister stand, who can’t see the need for the judgments of God upon the earth?

Where is the young brother, or the young sister, who is so thrilled with the things in the world that they want things to continue? Where is their place in a chorus that sings those words? And will it be possible for them to mouth sentiments like that, plucking the strings of their heart and meaning every syllable of what they are singing? It won’t be possible, and that song will only be sung as a new song by those who know and understand, Young People, that the society in which the Christadelphian youth moves today, has got to be OBLITERATED. It’s got to be! Or, we will perish with it. It is a rotten, filthy, vile society in which we live and move, and thank God for weekends like this, that as the youth of Christadelphia in Adelaide we can come here and enthrone God on the praises of Israel, when our counterparts, the teenagers in this word are out there debauching themselves with immorality which is almost unnameable! And if we cannot see through the eyes of God, the necessity for the judgments to come upon this world, make sure of this, we will form no part of that choir. And that’s got to be sung with your heart on your sleeves, meaning every word you say.

I want to make a final point, Brother Chairman (exceeding my time as the tradition is), but I do want to make a final point in Psalm 150, because Young People, if we need something today, then it is unity. It is really! Honestly! We need unity. A unity of purpose and of mind that is based upon the Scriptures of truth, and as we moved around among the study groups today, we thought that was in evidence here at Victor Harbour; young people all pouring over the Psalms, nobody arguing the point as to what constitutes fundamentals, because we all agree. Wonderful! Terrific! Thrilling! Nobody bickering and arguing over what this means, or that means, because we are all doing our utmost in all honesty and sincerity, to rightly divide that word of truth, and to grow together in the bonds of the Gospel.

And that’s what Psalm 150 is all about – unity. Because, you see, it brings together all the Psalms, and David thinks back upon the Psalms, and upon the musical instruments they use, and he comes to the great Hallelujah, and he brings together in Psalm 150 all the new song, all the Hallelujah Psalms, all the glories, all the praises of Israel, every musical instrument he can think about. And he brings them all together and he says, we have got to be clear in sound and colour; celebrate Yahweh in the name of halal.

How do we do it? If Brother So-and-so is singing base, and someone else (I don’t know anything about music, Phil) and someone else is singing double-base (or whatever you call it), and there’s a chorus of voices, and then all of a sudden in the middle of all this someone blares forth on the trumpet all out of tune, all out of place, and you get a complete discordant sound. You might think I am making this up. I am really you know, quoting the Apostle Paul, who I believe quoted that Psalm, and did you know why I think he quoted this? And I want you to turn to 1st Corinthians 13. And you know what that’s all

about, don't you? "The greatest of these is love." (Don't lose Psalm 150. We have been given two hands. It's a good idea to use them when you compare Scripture with Scripture.) You stay in Psalm 150, put one finger there, and come with me to 1 Corinthians 13 – and I don't think we could finish on a better note than this. The Apostle says in 1 Corinthians 13v1: "Though I speak with the tongues of men, yea, even of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass and a clanging gong". This idea of a tinkling cymbal ... by the way, the Greek doesn't convey that idea. The idea conveyed by the Greek is two sets of cymbals, one louder than the other; one set of set cymbals, and one high sound cymbal is the Greek phrase.

Now without losing 1 Corinthians 13, you will notice in Psalm 150, and in the Septuagint version, and in the Greek construction of Paul's words it is almost identical with verse 5 which says: "Praise him upon the loud cymbals, praise him upon the high sounding cymbals". Now Paul takes verse 5 and he says, (1 Cor 13), "Though I speak with the tongues of men, and have the eloquence of angels", he says, "if I haven't got the melody of love, I am like two men who roll up to play in an orchestra, and they were the only two who turned up, and they walked up on the stage, they took their places in the respective orchestra. It may have been a hundred-piece orchestra, who knows what the Apostle had in his mind, and they took their two places. One played a big clang on the cymbal when his turn came, and the other went one louder, and there they were with their music in front of them. The conductor never turned up; nobody else turned up, but these two fellows. The orchestra, well, imagine it started. Not a word is heard, and you are sort of mentally seeing this music played until their turn comes – CLANG! And Paul says a man who hasn't got the principle of love in his heart is

like a piece of an orchestra which plays spasmodically; it contributes its part, true, if the rest of the orchestra is playing with it, but on its own, it is just a great big noise.

Now Psalm 150 says this in verse 3: "Halal, celebrate him with the sound of the trumpet, celebrate him with the psaltery (a stringed instrument), and the harp. Celebrate him with the timbrel and the dance, celebrate him with stringed and reed instruments. Celebrate him with loud cymbals and with higher sounding cymbals." Now you put the trumpet there, the psaltery there, the harp there, the timbrel, young people dancing or in accompaniment with the orchestra (and we don't by any means mean here that we can turn this into a ballroom). This is not the dancing of which we understand. This is dancing in ecstasy for the greatness of God. You put the stringed instruments there, the reed instruments, you put the cymbals in their right place, and you let the brother take his part in the orchestra, and you let all the orchestra swell in glorious strains. When he clangs his cymbal it is all in accord.

"Let everything that has breath", says David, in complete unity, "Let everything that has breath", Young People, "Praise Yahweh, Hallelujah". That's what he's saying, and we are going to stand, of course we are going to stand, this is the confidence we have got, Young People. This is the hope that drives us on and on despite the weaknesses of the flesh. This is the hope which overcomes all difficulties. We are going to stand, of course we are going to stand at the end of that millennial age when everything that God has done, as David wrote in the 150th Psalm, when he looks back over the panorama of the orchestras which he conducted, when he thinks of all the musical instruments, when he could think of nothing else, he said: "Let everything that hath BREATH CELEBRATE YAHWEH".

What a wonderful thing, Young People, to be associated with a hope like that, and praise God that we have been called to that hope. And it is my earnest prayer, and I know it is your earnest prayer for each and every one of us that together we shall form that orchestra, nobody without the other part, all of us with different temperaments, with different intellects, different ways, different aspirations, different ambitions maybe, but one and all a glorious orchestra, and may it be said of this Conference:

“Let everything that hath breath praise Yahweh.”

“Hallelujah! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever. King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. Hallelujah.”

## Appendix 2

# THE LAW OF THE NAZARITE

## Numbers 6

Numbers Chapter 6	<u>The Law of the Nazarite</u>										
1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,	<sup>1</sup> An appeal for Israelites to volunteer. Contrast Num.5:2.										
2 <sup>1</sup> Speak unto the <sup>2</sup> children of Israel, and say unto them, When <sup>3</sup> either man or woman shall <sup>4</sup> separate themselves to vow a <sup>5</sup> vow of a <sup>6</sup> Nazarite, to <sup>7</sup> separate themselves unto the LORD:	<sup>2</sup> ben – family builder (of princes with El).										
3 He shall <sup>7</sup> separate himself <sup>8</sup> from wine and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried.	<sup>3</sup> Male and female equal opportunity under this law – unusual (see 2 Cor.6:18).										
4 All <sup>9</sup> the days of his <sup>10</sup> separation shall he eat nothing that is made of the <sup>11</sup> vine tree, from the kernels even to the husk.	<sup>4</sup> pala – to separate; i.e. distinguish; the doing of something extraordinary (used Lev.27:2).										
5 All the days of the vow of his separation there shall <sup>12</sup> no razor come upon his head: until the days be fulfilled, in the which he separateth himself unto the LORD, he shall be holy, and shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow.	<sup>5</sup> nadar – a promise.										
6 All the days that he separateth himself unto the LORD <sup>13</sup> he shall come at no dead body.	<sup>6</sup> nazir – from nazar – separate; i.e. consecrated. Translated “undressed vine” (Lev.25:5,11).										
7 He shall not make himself <sup>14</sup> unclean for his father, or for his mother, for his brother, or for his sister, when they die: because the <sup>15</sup> consecration of his God is upon his <sup>16</sup> head.	<sup>7</sup> nazar – to hold aloof; abstain.										
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>“Nazarite” (nazir) occurs</td> <td>6 times</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nazar occurs</td> <td>5 times</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nezer occurs</td> <td>13 times</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total occurrences</td> <td>24</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">24 is the number of the priests – see 1 Chron.24:4; 25:1,31; Rev.4:4</td> </tr> </table>	“Nazarite” (nazir) occurs	6 times	Nazar occurs	5 times	Nezer occurs	13 times	Total occurrences	24	24 is the number of the priests – see 1 Chron.24:4; 25:1,31; Rev.4:4	
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	<sup>8</sup> After the pattern of the High Priest (Lev.10:8-11) whose first day of ministration was impacted by the effects of strong drink. See the effect of drink – Isa.28:7-13; 29:9-12; Prov.23:29-34.										
	<sup>9</sup> The phrase occurs 7 times to v.12 and then an 8 <sup>th</sup> time in v.13. Faithfulness to ‘covenant’ (7) leads to ‘immortality’ (8).										
	<sup>10</sup> nezer – set apart; i.e. dedicated. All 4 previous occurrences are translated “crown” of the high priests mitre encircled by a crown (plate of gold) – Ex.29:6; 39:30; Lev.8:9; 21:12. Translated “thine hair” in Jer.7:29.										
	<sup>11</sup> Lit. “vine of the wine”.										
	<sup>12</sup> High priest was not to shave his hair (Lev.21:5). His anointed hair was a “crown” (nezer) – Lev.21:12. The anointing oil ran down Aaron’s hair and beard (Lev.8:9,12; Ps.133:2; Gen.49:26). In place of Aaron’s mitre and crown the Nazarite had a full growth of hair for a crown (perhaps worn like a mitre), and as a symbol of his consecrated separateness (Ex.28:36-38).										
	<sup>13</sup> Priests could bury close relatives (Lev.21:1-3), but not the high priest (Lev.21:10-11). Nazarite imitated the high priest in avoiding all contact with death which symbolizes spiritual death and the defilement pertaining to the unredeemed (Luke 9:59-62; Eph.2:1; Heb.2:15).										
	<sup>14</sup> Cp. principle 2 Cor.6:17.										
	<sup>15</sup> nezer – set apart; dedicated.										
	<sup>16</sup> Occurs 8 times in context. 8 is number of a new beginning and immortality. Separation of the ‘head’ or mind is the basis of a life of separation leading to life.										
	<sup>17</sup> qadosh – sacred (root - clean); a sanctuary (2 Cor.6:16).										

<p>8 All the days of his separation he is <sup>17</sup>holy unto the LORD.</p> <p>9 And if any <sup>1</sup>man die <sup>2</sup>very <sup>3</sup>suddenly by him, and he hath defiled the head of his consecration; then he shall <sup>4</sup>shave his head in the day of his cleansing, on the <sup>5</sup>seventh day shall he shave it.</p> <p>10 And on the <sup>6</sup>eighth day he shall bring <sup>7</sup>two turtles, or two young pigeons, to the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation:</p> <p>11 And the priest shall offer the <sup>8</sup>one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering, and make an atonement for him, for that he sinned by the dead, and shall hallow his head that same day.</p> <p>12 And <sup>9</sup>he shall consecrate unto the LORD the days of his separation, and shall bring a lamb of the first year for a <sup>10</sup>trespass offering: but the days that were before shall <sup>11</sup>be lost, because his separation was defiled.</p> <p>13 And this is the law of the Nazarite, when the days of his separation are <sup>1</sup>fulfilled: he shall be brought unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation:</p> <p>14 And he shall offer his offering unto the LORD, one he lamb of the first year <sup>2</sup>without blemish for a <sup>3</sup>burnt offering, and one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish for a <sup>4</sup>sin offering, and one ram without blemish for <sup>5</sup>peace offerings,</p> <p>15 And a basket of <sup>6</sup>unleavened bread, cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, and wafers of unleavened bread anointed with oil, and their <sup>7</sup>meat offering, and their <sup>8</sup>drink offerings.</p> <p>16 And the priest shall bring them before the LORD, and shall offer his sin offering, and his burnt offering:</p> <p>17 And he shall offer <sup>9</sup>the ram for a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD, with <sup>10</sup>the basket of unleavened bread: the priest shall offer also his meat offering, and his drink offering.</p> <p>18 And the Nazarite shall shave the head of his separation at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall take the hair of the head of his separation, and <sup>11</sup>put it in the fire which is under the sacrifice of the peace offerings.</p> <p>19 And <sup>12</sup>the priest shall take <sup>13</sup>the sodden shoulder of the ram, and one unleavened cake out of the basket, and one unleavened wafer, and</p>	<p><b>Accidental Defilement by Death</b></p> <p><sup>1</sup> In the Hebrew “man” is the same word as “die”. Ygs. Lit. “when the dead dieth”. Roth. “but if one that is dying should die by him in a moment suddenly, then shall he count...” This is a representation of sin striking unexpectedly in a man’s life (Rom.7:18-25; 1 Cor.10:12-13).</p> <p><sup>2</sup> pithom – instantly.</p> <p><sup>3</sup> petha – a wink; a moment.</p> <p><sup>4</sup> galach – to be bald; i.e. to shave. A ritual confession that sin had disannulled his original consecration. Cp. Cleansing of leper (Lev.14:9).<sup>5</sup> Period of exclusion from camp (Num.5:2-3; 19:11-13; 31:19).</p> <p><sup>6</sup> Time for a new beginning (8).</p> <p><sup>7</sup> Cp. the cleansing of the leper (Lev.14:22).</p> <p><sup>8</sup> Both made atonement but the sin offering acknowledged sin while burnt offering spoke of rededication.</p> <p>In Num.6 “head” is mentioned 8 times = the key to immortality is the separation of the mind.</p> <p><sup>9</sup> The Nazarite made a new beginning by commencing the vow all over again.</p> <p><sup>10</sup> To acknowledge that God had been robbed of his due and deprived of the lost days of service.</p> <p><sup>11</sup> The days up to defilement are lost (not counted). The Nazarite went back and started again. This teaches a wonderful lesson of restoration from sin by the grace of God.</p> <p><b>Completion of Days of Separation</b></p> <p><sup>1</sup> Typical of the bestowal of immortality at the end of a life of Nazariteship.</p> <p>The ritual at the end of a successful vow of separation sets forth the principles of acceptance at the Judgement Seat and glorification. The ritual finds the Nazarite acting as a priest and drinking wine (acting as an immortal).</p> <p><sup>2</sup> tamiyn – entire (3 occs. in context).</p> <p><sup>3</sup> Spoke of dedication to God mentally, morally and physically.</p> <p><sup>4</sup> Declared that entrance to the Kingdom will be as forgiven men, not faultless men.</p> <p><sup>5</sup> Spoke of the fullness of fellowship acknowledged with thanksgiving.</p> <p><sup>6</sup> Referred to 5 times = Grace. The gift of God is eternal life; i.e. incorruption of nature (symbolized by unleavened bread).</p> <p><sup>7</sup> Meal offering spoke of a man’s labours devoted to God (Lev.2).</p> <p><sup>8</sup> Labours poured out in dedication to God. Fitting that “bread” and “wine” should be associated with completed vow.</p> <p><sup>9</sup> Ram was used in the consecration of Aaron (Lev.8:22). The Nazarite had striven to emulate the High Priest.</p> <p><sup>10</sup> Used in the consecration of Aaron and his sons (Lev.8:2,26). Contrast Lev.7:12-13 in which peace offering made with leavened bread. Eternal fellowship with God contingent on the absence of sin (through forgiveness).</p> <p><sup>11</sup> Token of the fact that the realization of his vow had brought him true fellowship with God. The fire which accepted his sacrifice also accepts the symbol of his head of separation. Typical of the surrender of mortality to take up immortality.</p> <p><sup>12</sup> An acknowledgement of his dependence on mediatorship to reach this point.</p> <p><sup>13</sup> This was the presiding priest’s portion of the peace offering (Lev.7:34).</p> <p>The aim of Nazariteship was to separate the head (thinking) from the body (sin/death). Note “his separation” v.19.</p> <p><b>Examples:</b></p> <p>John Baptist - Mk.6:17-29</p> <p>Hannah/Samuel - 1 Sam.1:11-15</p> <p>Christ - John 19:30</p>
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<p><sup>14</sup>shall put <i>them</i> upon the hands of the Nazarite, after <sup>15</sup><i>the hair of his</i> <b>separation</b> is shaven:</p> <p>20 And <sup>16</sup><i>the priest shall wave them for a</i> <sup>17</sup><i>wave offering</i> before the LORD: this <i>is</i> holy for the priest, with the wave breast and <sup>18</sup><i>heave shoulder</i>: and <sup>19</sup><i>after that the Nazarite may drink wine</i>.</p> <p>21 This <i>is</i> the law of the Nazarite who hath vowed, <i>and of his offering</i> unto the LORD for his <b>separation</b>, beside <i>that</i> that his hand shall get: according to the vow which he vowed, so he must do after the law of his <sup>20</sup><b>separation</b>.</p> <p>22 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,</p> <p>23 <sup>1</sup><i>Speak</i> unto <sup>2</sup><i>Aaron and unto his sons</i>, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the <sup>3</sup><i>children</i> of Israel, saying unto them,</p> <p>24 The LORD <sup>4</sup><i>bless</i> thee, and <sup>5</sup><i>keep</i> thee:</p> <p>25 The LORD make his face <sup>6</sup><i>shine</i> upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:</p> <p>26 The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee <sup>7</sup><i>peace</i>.</p> <p>27 And they shall <sup>8</sup><i>put my name upon the children of Israel</i>; and <sup>9</sup><i>I will bless them</i>.</p>	<p><sup>14</sup> The priest's portion is given to the Nazarite in recognition that he had fulfilled his vow in emulating the high priest. The Nazarite had become a priest for a brief moment.</p> <p><sup>15</sup> These words are not in the text. Omitted they give finer point to the head as the source of separation.</p> <p><sup>16</sup> i.e. the Nazarite acting as the priest waves the shoulder (Lev.7:29-34).</p> <p><sup>17</sup> Spoke of consecration. Cp. Aaron and sons (Lev.8:26-27).</p> <p><sup>18</sup> Heave offering spoke of surrender.</p> <p><sup>19</sup> God's way of saying he was now typically immortal – wine would not adversely affect his thinking. Mortal priests were never allowed to drink wine while ministering (Lev.10:9).</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>This law and its outcome prefigures the Millennial priesthood of the Saints when the days of our separation are fulfilled.</p> </div> <p><sup>20</sup> Fitting that this key idea is the last word of the law of the Nazarite.</p> <p><b><u>The Blessing of True Nazarites</u></b></p> <p><sup>1</sup> Cp. v.2. An appeal, not a command.</p> <p><sup>2</sup> The object of priesthood as representative men was to multiply themselves – cp. Lev.8-10.</p> <p><sup>3</sup> ben – family builders.</p> <p><sup>4</sup> barak – the word used in Gen.12:2. The blessing (as for Abraham) was to be “turned away from their iniquities” (Acts 3:25-26).</p> <p><sup>5</sup> shamar – hedge about; guard.</p> <p><sup>6</sup> ohr – give light; become bright. Trans. “gave light” – Ex.14:20; Neh.9:12,19.</p> <p><sup>7</sup> shalom – unity; hence peace – i.e. fellowship (cp. v.17-20).</p> <p><sup>8</sup> Cp. High priest's mitre (Ex.28:36-38; 39:30). The object of Nazariteship was to replicate the High Priest. Cp. Rev.14:1.</p> <p><sup>9</sup> See note v.24. Blessed ultimately with redemption.</p>
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## ADDITIONAL NOTES

### Purpose of the Nazarite Vow

1. Enabled a man or a woman to dedicate themselves exclusively to God for a specified time.
2. Made possible the realization of the ideals of priesthood in one who had no access to the altar.

All Israel were a kingdom of priests (Ex.19:6). Becoming a Nazarite enabled them to act out the part of the high priest while not possessing the physical qualifications. Saints in Christ are perpetual Nazarites and a royal priesthood (2 Cor.6:16-18; 1 Pet.2:9). Some notable Nazarites in Scripture were Samson, Samuel, John Baptist and Christ.

“Inferior though the Nazarite was, as a layman, to the anointed priest, in one way he was decidedly superior. Aaron was the high priest as a matter of hereditary duty and not from choice. Not so the Nazarite: his consecration was essentially voluntary, a course of life and service willingly and cheerfully undertaken as an expression of his love for God and his desire to live in absolute holiness before him.” (Bro. W F Barling – Law and Grace)

## Appendix 3

### The Olivet Prophecy

<b>The Olivet Prophecy – AD 70 (Mostly)</b>		
<b>Matt. 24:1-28</b>	<b>Mk.13:1-23</b>	<b>Luke 21:5-24</b>
<b>1</b> And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.	<b>1</b> And as he went out of the temple,	<b>5</b> And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts
<b>2</b> And Jesus said unto them	<b>2</b> And Jesus answering said unto him	He said
See ye not all these things	Seest thou these great buildings?	<b>6</b> As for these things which ye behold
Verily I say unto you, There shall not be one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.	There shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down	The days will come in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down
<b>3</b> And as he sat upon the mount of Olives	<b>3</b> And as he sat upon the mount of Olives over against the temple	
The disciples came unto him privately, saying	Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately,	<b>7</b> And they asked him, saying
Tell us when shall these things be? <b>(1.)</b>	<b>4</b> Tell us when shall these things be	Master but when shall these things be?
And what shall be the sign of thy coming? <b>(2.)</b>	And what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled	And what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?
And of <b>the end</b> of the world? <b>(3.)</b>		
<b>4</b> And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive <b>you</b>	<b>5</b> And Jesus answering them began to say, Take heed lest any man deceive you	<b>8</b> And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived:
<b>5</b> For <b>many</b> shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive <b>many</b> <b>(2Thess.2:3)</b>	<b>6</b> For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.	For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.
<b>6</b> And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass but <b>the end</b> is not yet.	<b>7</b> And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars Be ye not troubled For such things must needs be  But <b>the end</b> shall not be yet.	<b>9</b> But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions Be not terrified For these things must first come to pass But <b>the end</b> is not by and by
<b>7</b> For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom	<b>8</b> For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom	<b>10</b> Then he said unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom
And there shall be famines		
And pestilences		
And earthquakes in divers places	And there shall be earthquakes in divers places	<b>11</b> And great earthquakes shall be in divers places
	And there shall be famines and troubles	And famines and pestilences
		And fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.
<b>8</b> All these are the beginning of sorrows	These are the beginning of sorrows	

<b>Matt. 24:1-28</b>	<b>Mk.13:1-23</b>	<b>Luke 21:5-24</b>
	<b>9</b> But take heed to yourselves	<b>12</b> But before all these
<b>9</b> Then shall they deliver <b>you</b> up to be afflicted	For they shall deliver you up to councils	They shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you
	And in the synagogues ye shall be beaten	delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons
	and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake	being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake
	for a testimony against them	<b>13</b> And it shall turn to you for a testimony.
	<b>10</b> And the gospel must first be published among all nations	
	<b>11</b> But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up,	
	take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate	<b>14</b> Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer
	but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye	<b>15</b> For I will give you a mouth and wisdom
		Which all your adversaries shall not be able to resist
	for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Spirit	
	<b>12</b> Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son and children shall rise up against their parents	<b>16</b> And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks and friends
and shall kill <b>you</b>	and shall cause them to be put to death	and some of you shall they cause to be put to death
and <b>ye</b> shall be hated of all nations for my names sake.	<b>13</b> And ye shall be hated of all men for my names sake	<b>17</b> And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake
<b>10</b> And then shall <b>many</b> be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another		
<b>11</b> And <b>many</b> false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive <b>many</b> .		
<b>12</b> And because iniquity shall abound, the love of <b>many</b> shall wax cold.		
<b>13</b> But <b>he</b> that shall endure unto <b>the end</b> , the same shall be saved.	but he that shall endure <b>to the end</b> shall be saved	
		<b>18</b> But there shall not an hair of your head perish
		<b>19</b> In your patience possess ye your souls
<b>14</b> And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations,		
and then shall <b>the end</b> come.		

<b>Matt. 24:1-28</b>	<b>Mk.13:1-23</b>	<b>Luke 21:5-24</b>
<b>15</b> When ye shall therefore see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth, let him understand).	<b>14</b> But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not (let him that readeth understand)	
		<b>20</b> And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.
<b>16</b> Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains	then let them that be in Judea flee to the mountains.	<b>21</b> Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains
		and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto
		<b>22</b> For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.
<b>17</b> Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house	<b>15</b> And let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter therein, to take anything out of his house.	
<b>18</b> Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.	<b>16</b> And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment	
<b>19</b> And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!	<b>17</b> But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!	<b>23</b> But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days!
<b>20</b> But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day.	<b>18</b> And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter.	
<b>21</b> For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be	<b>19</b> For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be.	for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people
<b>22</b> And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved, but for the elect's sake  those days shall be shortened	<b>20</b> And except the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved, but for the elects sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days	
<b>23</b> Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo here is Christ, or there; believe it not.	<b>21</b> And then if any man shall say to you Lo, here is Christ, or, lo, he is there believe him not.	
<b>24</b> For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets and shall shew great signs and wonders Insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.	<b>22</b> For false Christs and false prophets shall rise and shall shew signs and wonders to deceive, if it were possible,	

Matt. 24:1-28	Mk.13:1-23	Luke 21:5-24
	even the elect	
<b>25</b> Behold I have told you before	<b>23</b> But take ye heed Behold, I have foretold you all things	
<b>26</b> Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold he is in the desert, go not forth Behold he is in the secret chambers, believe it not.		
<b>27</b> For as the lightning cometh out of the east, And shineth even unto the west, So shall also the coming of the Son of man be.		
<b>28</b> For whithersoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together		
		<b>24</b> And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled
<b>The Olivet Prophecy – The Latter Days (Mostly)</b>		
Matt.24:29-36	Mark 13:24-32	Luke 21:25-33
<b>29</b> Immediately after the tribulation of those days	<b>24</b> But in those days, after that tribulation	
shall <b>the sun</b> be darkened	<b>the sun</b> shall be darkened	<b>25</b> And there shall be signs in <b>the sun</b>
and <b>the moon</b> shall not give her light	and <b>the moon</b> shall not give her light	and in <b>the moon</b>
and <b>the stars</b> shall fall from heaven	<b>25</b> And <b>the stars</b> of heaven shall fall	and in <b>the stars</b>
		and upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring. <b>26</b> Men's hearts failing them for fear , and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth
and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken	and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken	for the powers of heaven shall be shaken
<b>30</b> And then shall appear the sign of the son of man in heaven; and then shall all the		

<b>Matt.24:29-36</b>	<b>Mark 13:24-32</b>	<b>Luke 21:25-33</b>
tribes of the earth mourn		
and they shall see the son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory	<b>26</b> And then shall they see the son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.	<b>27</b> And then shall they see the son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.
		<b>28</b> And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.
<b>31</b> And he shall send his angels	<b>27</b> And then shall he send his angels	
with a great sound of a trumpet		
and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds	and shall gather together his elect from the four winds	
from one end of heaven to the other	from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.	
<b>32</b> Now learn a parable of <b>the fig tree</b>	<b>28</b> Now learn a parable of <b>the fig tree</b>	<b>29</b> And he spake to them a parable; Behold <b>the fig tree</b>
		and all the trees
When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves	When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves	when they now shoot forth
ye know that summer is nigh	ye know that summer is near	Ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand
<b>33</b> So likewise ye when ye shall see all these things	<b>29</b> So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass	<b>31</b> So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass
know that it is near, even at the doors	know that it is nigh, even at the doors	know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand
<b>34</b> Verily I say unto you, <b>This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled</b>	<b>30</b> Verily I say unto you, that <b>this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.</b>	<b>32</b> Verily I say unto you, <b>This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled</b>
<b>35</b> Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.	<b>31</b> Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.	<b>33</b> Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.
<b>36</b> But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels of heaven	<b>32</b> But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven	
	neither the son	
but my Father only	but the Father	

APPENDIX 4

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Psalm 110</h2> <h3 style="margin: 0;">A Priest for Ever after the Order of Melchizedek</h3>		
<b>Structural Analysis</b> Vv.1-4 Yahweh's supremacy through a King Priest Vv.5-7 Final triumph over sin assured		<b>Abbreviations</b> IB - The Interlinear Bible Roth. - J.B. Rotherham's Emphasised Bible Ygs. - Young's Literal Translation RSV - Revised Standard Version RV - The Revised Version
Translations/Comments	Psalm 110	Expositional Notes
<p><b>The most quoted psalm in the New Testament - there are 10 citations in all - Matt.22:44; Mark 12:36; Luke 20:42; Acts 2:34; 1 Cor.15:25-27; Heb.1:13; 5:6; 7:17; 10:12,13.</b></p>	<p>A Psalm of <sup>1</sup><u>David</u></p>	<p><sup>1</sup> Christ introduced his quotation of verse 1 by saying, "For David himself said <b>by the Holy Spirit</b>,..." (Mark 12:36). By divine inspiration David thus set forth the work and dominion of his greater son.</p>
<p><b>A</b> IB "A statement of Yahweh unto my Lord". Roth. "The declaration of Yahweh unto my Lord"  <b>David acknowledged the supremacy of his son and Lord - This was an impossibility unless he was also the Son of God - Matt.22:42-45; Mark 12:35-37; Luke 20:41-44. Based on the promise to David - 2 Sam.7:12-16</b>  <b>B</b> IB "until I place your enemies at your footstool"  <sup>8</sup> <b>The great enemy is sin; the last enemy is death - 1 Cor.15:25-26. The scope of Christ's work is thus foreshadowed - it required a king ("he must reign") to subdue sin, and a priest to atone for it.</b></p>	<p><b>A</b>The LORD <sup>2</sup><u>said</u> unto my <sup>3</sup><u>Lord</u>, <sup>4</sup><u>Sit thou</u> at my <sup>5</sup><u>right hand</u>, <sup>6</sup><u>until</u> I <sup>7</sup><u>make</u> thine <sup>8</sup><u>enemies</u> thy <sup>9</sup><u>footstool</u>.</p>	<p><sup>2</sup> <i>ne'um</i> - an oracle; rt. that which is whispered into the ear.  <sup>3</sup> <i>Adon</i> (singular) - ruler  <sup>4</sup> Cp. Heb.1:3; 10:11-14. Refers to success of his mission and work as mediator - and guarantee of final triumph over sin  <sup>5</sup> Symbol of divine power (Ps.18:35; 20:6; 44:3; 73:23; 118:15; 139:10). Hence he received power when exalted to right hand - Acts 2:33-36  <sup>6</sup> <i>ad</i> - as far as, even unto, during, while, until. Duration required will be to end of Millennium - 1 Cor.15:24-28. There are stages to this work - Eph.1:20-22  <sup>7</sup> <i>shiyth</i> - to place. IB "set"  <sup>8</sup> <i>yeb</i> - hating; i.e. hostile. 1st occ. in O.T. is Gen.22:17. Cog. word occs. Gen.3:15  <sup>9</sup> Two words - <i>hadom</i> - to stamp upon; a footstool &amp; <i>regel</i> - a foot. Lit. "a stool for your feet". See use 1 Chron.28:2; Isa.66:1</p>
<p><b>C</b> Roth. "Thy sceptre of strength will Yahweh extend out of Zion, tread thou down in the midst of thy foes". RSV "The LORD sends forth from Zion your mighty sceptre. Rule in the midst of your foes"  <sup>4</sup> <b>This qualifies V.1. Christ will be active in the conquest of his</b></p>	<p><b>2 C</b>The LORD shall send the <sup>1</sup>rod of thy strength out of <sup>2</sup><u>Zion</u>: <sup>3</sup><u>rule</u> thou <sup>4</sup><u>in the midst of thine enemies</u>.</p>	<p><sup>1</sup> <i>mattah</i> - a branch (as extending); fig. a tribe, also a rod. Trans. "rod" (49); "staff" (16); "tribe" (182). Refers here to the king-priestly tribe of the saints (Ps.68:35; 2:6)  <sup>2</sup> "conspicuous". The elevated Zion - Ps.48:1-2  <sup>3</sup> <i>radah</i> - to tread down; i.e. to subjugate. Trans. "have dominion"</p>

<p><b>enemies, not sitting until they are subdued.</b></p>		<p>Gen.1:26,28; Num.24:19; Jud.5:13; Ps.49:14; 72:8; "ruler" Ps.68:27</p>
<p><b>D</b> Roth. "Thy people will freely offer themselves in the day of thine army". RV "Thy people offer themselves willingly in the day of thy power"</p> <p><b>5</b> Bro. Thomas uses the phrase of natural Israel - Eureka vol.1 pg.140; vol.2 pg.551, 554, 299; vol.3 pg.405</p> <p><b>E</b> Roth. "In the splendors of holiness out of the womb of the dawn". Bro. Thomas "In the splendors of holiness the dew of thy birth (shall be) to thee from the womb of the dawn" - cp. similar phrases - 1 Chron.16:29; 2 Chron.20:21; Ps.29:2; 96:9</p> <p><b>Holiness the principle governing Christ's resurrection - Rom.1:4; 6:4. Is also an essential moral requirement in the saints - Rom.6:22; 2 Cor.7:1; Eph.4:24; Heb.12:10,14; 1 Pet.1:15-16</b></p> <p><b>F</b> Roth. "to thee shall spring forth the dew of thy youth"</p>	<p>3 <b>D</b> <b>5</b>Thy people shall be <b>6</b>willing in the day of thy <b>7</b>power, <b>E</b>in the <b>8</b>beauties of holiness from the womb of the <b>9</b>morning: <b>F</b>thou hast the <b>10</b>dew of thy <b>11</b>youth.</p>	<p><b>5</b> Primarily refers to the saints - raised and glorified after resurrection</p> <p><b>6</b> <i>nedabah</i> - spontaneous. Used of freewill offering. Trans. "freely" Ps.54:6; Hos.14:4. Based on Abraham's 318 trained servants who willingly followed him into battle - Gen.14:13-14.</p> <p><b>7</b> <i>chayil</i> - force. IB "might". Refers to the Day of Yahweh - Armageddon</p> <p><b>8</b> <i>hadar</i> - magnificence; i.e. ornament or splendor. Trans. goodly, glory, honour (Ps.8:5), beauty, majesty (Ps.45:3,4), excellency, comeliness.</p> <p><b>9</b> <i>mishchar</i> - dawn; the breaking day. Rt. to rise and seek early. Cp. Isa.26:17-19; 66:5-9. Refer Eureka vol.1 pg.140-141</p> <p><b>10</b> Symbol of resurrection - Isa.26:19 (Eureka vol.1 pg.140-142, 312-313)</p> <p><b>11</b> <i>yalduwth</i> - boyhood. Rt. to bear young, be born. Refers to the resurrection of Christ's multitudinous body - Isa.26:19</p>
<p><b>3</b> Quoted Heb.5:6; 7:17. The former stresses God's selection, the latter the reason for his choice. Not by descent, but by <b>righteous-ness</b> for which he was raised to <b>immortality</b> - the two essential elements of the Melchizedek priesthood.</p> <p><b>4</b> Roth. "unto times age-abiding". Ygs. "to the age"</p>	<p>4 The LORD hath <b>1</b>sworn, and will not <b>2</b>repent, <b>3</b>Thou art a priest <b>4</b>for ever <b>5</b>after the <b>6</b>order of <b>7</b>Melchizedek.</p>	<p><b>1</b> <i>shaba</i> - to seven oneself; i.e. swear. Yahweh's oath to Abraham (Gen.22:16-18) &amp; David (2 Sam.7:12-16) promised a redeeming seed who would be a King-Priest. This is the first record of the oath in these terms - based on Gen.14.</p> <p><b>2</b> <i>nacham</i> - to sigh, i.e. to breathe strongly; hence be sorry, repent. A divine guarantee underpinned this oath.</p> <p><b>4</b> <i>olam</i> - the hidden period; i.e. the Millennium</p> <p><b>5</b> Lit. "according to"</p> <p><b>6</b> <i>dibrah</i> - a reason, suit, or style. Roth. "the manner". Not just an order but a manner or type of priesthood with special qualities.</p> <p><b>7</b> "King of righteousness" (Heb.7:2) - dual role of king and priest unique in Israel.</p>

<p><b>G</b> Roth. "My Lord on thy right hand, hath shattered - in the day of his anger - kings". RSV "The Lord is at your right hand; he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath"</p>	<p>5 <b>G</b>The <b>8</b>Lord at thy <b>9</b>right hand shall <b>10</b>strike through kings in <b>11</b>the day of his wrath.</p>	<p><b>8</b> Should be "Yahweh" (Companion Bible).  <b>9</b> Symbol of power and authority to perform (cp. V.1). Yahweh's power to provide the victory - Ps.16:8; Ex.15:6  <b>10</b> machats - to dash asunder; to crush, smash. Trans. "wound" V.6 &amp; Ps.68:21; "pierced" Jud.5:26; "woundest" Hab.3:13. Suggestive of crushing the serpent's head - Gen.3:15; Rom.16:20 (cp. Ps.2:9).  <b>11</b> Armageddon and subsequent 40 years of war to subdue the nations (Zech.14).</p>
<p><b>H</b> Roth. "He will judge among the nations - full of dead bodies!"   <b>J</b> Roth. "he hath shattered the head over a land far extended". IB "he shall shatter chiefs over much land"</p>	<p>6 <b>H</b>He shall judge among the <b>1</b>heathen, he shall fill the places with the <b>2</b>dead bodies; <b>J</b>he shall <b>3</b>wound the <b>4</b>heads over many <b>5</b>countries.</p>	<p><b>1</b> goyim - nations  <b>2</b> Cp. Jer.25:33; Isa.66:16; 34:2-3  <b>3</b> machats - as in V.5 ("strike through")  <b>4</b> rosh - the head. Roth. &amp; Ygs. translate in the singular form "head". Christ's first triumph is over Rosh (Ezek.38).  <b>5</b> erets - the land; earth.</p>
<p><b>K</b> Ygs. "From a brook in the way he drinketh, therefore he doth lift up the head". Roth. "Of the torrent in the way will he drink - for this cause will he lift up his head"   <b>The psalm concludes on a positive note of final victory. Christ's ultimate triumph over the power of sin depended entirely on his personal victory over sin and death.</b></p>	<p>7 <b>K</b>He shall <b>6</b>drink of the brook in the way: <b>7</b>therefore shall he <b>8</b>lift up the head.</p>	<p><b>6</b> Bro. Thomas says Christ drank of the brook during his probation and suffering - Heb.5:7  <b>7</b> His successful probation fitted him for his role as judge - as a King-Priest  <b>8</b> i.e. in triumph over all enemies - Ps.3:3; 27:6.</p>

APPENDIX 5

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Psalm 116</h2> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Messiah's Thanksgiving for Deliverance from Death</h3>		
<p><b><u>Analysis of the Psalm from a Messianic Perspective</u></b></p> <p><b>Vv.1-11 - Messiah recalls his sufferings and deliverance</b></p> <p>V.1-2    Messiah's love for his God</p> <p>V.3-4    A cry to be delivered out of death</p> <p>V.5-6    Messiah's cry for help answered</p> <p>V.7-9    Threefold deliverance brings life and rest</p> <p>V.10-11 Christ's faith vindicated and declared</p> <p><b>Vv.12-19 - Messiah pays his vows before all his brethren</b></p> <p>V.12-14 Christ's response to Yahweh's deliverance</p> <p>V.15-16 A precious death provides life for many</p> <p>V.17-19 Christ praises Yahweh in the presence of all his brethren</p>		<p><b><u>Abbreviations</u></b></p> <p>IB - The Interlinear Bible</p> <p>Roth. - J.B. Rotherham's Emphasised Bible</p> <p>Ygs. - Young's Literal Translation</p> <p>RSV - Revised Standard Version</p>
Translations/Comments	Psalm 116	Expositional Notes
<p><sup>A</sup>Roth. &amp; Ygs. "because he heareth"</p> <p><sup>B</sup>Roth. "my voice, my supplications" (mgn. "the voice of my supplications")</p> <p><b>Messiah heard by God - John 11:41-42</b></p>	<p>I <sup>1</sup>love the LORD, <sup>A</sup>because he hath <sup>2</sup>heard <sup>B</sup>my voice <i>and</i> my <sup>3</sup>supplications.</p>	<p><sup>1</sup>ahab - to have affection for</p> <p><sup>2</sup>shama - to hear intelligently</p> <p><sup>3</sup>tachanuwath - earnest prayer; rt. chanan - to implore</p>
<p><sup>C</sup>Roth. "therefore, throughout my days will I call"</p>	<p>2 Because he hath <sup>4</sup>inclined his ear unto me, <sup>C</sup>therefore will I call upon <i>him</i> as long as I live.</p>	<p><sup>4</sup>natah - to stretch; to bend. IB - "bowed"</p>
<p><sup>D</sup>IB "the cords". Roth. "the meshes". RSV "the snares"</p> <p><sup>7</sup>Ygs. "straits". Roth. "distresses"</p> <p><sup>E</sup>RSV "I suffered distress and anguish" cp. Ps.18:4-5</p>	<p>3 <sup>D</sup>The <sup>5</sup>sorrows of death <sup>6</sup>compassed me, and the <sup>7</sup>pains of <sup>8</sup>hell gat hold upon me: <sup>E</sup>I found <sup>9</sup>trouble and <sup>10</sup>sorrow.</p>	<p><sup>5</sup>chebel - a rope (as twisted); a noose</p> <p><sup>6</sup>aphaph - to surround</p> <p><sup>7</sup>metsar - something tight; i.e. trouble</p> <p><sup>8</sup>sheol - the grave</p> <p><sup>9</sup>tsarah - tightness; i.e. fig. trouble</p> <p><sup>10</sup>yagown - affliction</p>
<p><b>Messiah proclaims his dependence upon Yahweh to be saved out of death - Heb.5:7</b></p>	<p>4 Then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech thee, <sup>1</sup>deliver my soul.</p>	<p><sup>1</sup>malat - to be smooth; i.e. by imp. to escape (as if by slipperiness); to release, rescue</p>
<p><sup>F</sup>Roth. "and our God is full of compassion" (cp. Ex.34:6-7)</p>	<p>5 Gracious <i>is</i> the LORD, and righteous; <sup>F</sup>yea, our God <i>is</i> merciful.</p>	
<p><sup>G</sup>Roth. "to me he granted salvation". Ygs. "to me he giveth salvation"</p> <p><b>God's way is to bring 'low' in order that His faithful servants might be 'lifted up'. Cp. Luke 2:34; Ruth 1:21; 1 Sam.2:6-8 (context)</b></p>	<p>6 The LORD <sup>2</sup>preserveth the <sup>3</sup>simple: I was brought <sup>4</sup>low, <sup>G</sup>and he <sup>5</sup>helped me.</p>	<p><sup>2</sup>shamar - to hedge about; i.e. guard</p> <p><sup>3</sup>pethaiy - silly (i.e. seducible). From rt. to open; i.e. be roomy. By fig. in mental &amp; moral sense to be simple. Refers to the open and uncomplicated who trust in God with singleness of mind</p> <p><sup>4</sup>dalal - to slacken; be feeble; to be oppressed</p> <p><sup>5</sup>yasha - to be open, wide or free, i.e. to be safe.</p>

<p><sup>H</sup>Ygs. "hath conferred benefits on thee" <b>The word "rest" in the plural form suggests the rest reserved for Christ and his brethren - Heb.4:1</b></p>	<p>7 <sup>6</sup>Return unto thy <sup>7</sup>rest, O my soul; for the LORD <sup>H</sup>hath <sup>8</sup>dealt <u>bountifully</u> with thee.</p>	<p><sup>6</sup>shuwb - to turn back <sup>7</sup>manowach (plural) - quiet; i.e. a settled spot <sup>8</sup>gamal - to treat a person well; i.e. benefit</p>
<p><sup>J</sup>Roth. "For thou hast rescued my soul from death - mine eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling"  <sup>10</sup>Ygs. "overthrow"</p>	<p>8 <sup>J</sup>For thou hast <sup>9</sup>delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, <i>and</i> my feet from <sup>10</sup>falling.</p>	<p><sup>9</sup>chalats - to pull off; to deliver  <sup>10</sup>dechiy - a push; i.e. a fall</p>
<p><sup>K</sup>Ygs. "I will walk habitually before Yahweh". Roth. "I will walk to and fro before Yahweh"  <sup>L</sup>Roth. "in the lands of life". Ygs. &amp; IB - "in the lands of the living"</p>	<p>9 <sup>K</sup>I will walk <sup>1</sup>before the LORD <sup>L</sup>in the land of the <sup>2</sup>living.</p>	<p><sup>1</sup>paneh - the face; i.e. the presence <sup>2</sup>chay - living (with def. art.). Eternal life is intended here.</p>
<p><sup>M</sup>IB "I have believed, so I speak". Ygs. "I have believed, for I speak". Cited 2 Cor.4:13 (note context)</p>	<p>10 <sup>M</sup>I <sup>3</sup>believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly <sup>4</sup>afflicted:</p>	<p><sup>3</sup>aman - to be firm, to trust, believe; to be permanent or quiet (morally, to be true) <sup>4</sup>anah - to depress. See use Ps.89:22; 119:67,107; Isa.53:7</p>
<p><sup>N</sup>Roth. - "I said in mine alarm, all men are false". IB "I said in my alarm, every man is a liar" cp. Rom.3:4  <b>Messiah's alarm at the utter depravity of men displayed in the events leading to his crucifixion</b></p>	<p>11 <sup>N</sup>I said in my <sup>5</sup>haste, <sup>6</sup>All <sup>7</sup>men are <sup>8</sup>liars.</p>	<p><sup>5</sup>chaphaz - to start up suddenly; to hasten away; to fear <sup>6</sup>kowl - the whole; hence all, any or every <sup>7</sup>adam <sup>8</sup>kazab - to lie (i.e. deceive). The word is used of acting inconsistently with promises or past performance. Cp. Ps.89:35; Prov.14:5; 30:6; 2 Kings 4:16; Job 6:28</p>
<p><sup>P</sup>Roth. "How shall I give back to Yahweh all his benefits unto me?"</p>	<p>12 <sup>P</sup>What shall I render unto the LORD <i>for</i> all his <sup>9</sup>benefits toward me?</p>	<p><sup>9</sup>tagmuwl - a bestowment.</p>
<p>See use of cup - Ps.16:5; 23:5; Jer.16:7 - A figure for the portion of God's benevolence towards man</p>	<p>13 I will take the cup of <sup>10</sup>salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD.</p>	<p><sup>10</sup>yeshuwah - saved; i.e. deliverance. Almost identical with "Joshua" - 'he will save'</p>
<p><sup>Q</sup>Ygs. "My vows to Yahweh let me complete"  <sup>R</sup>Roth. "might it be in the presence of all his people"  <b>Christ anticipates worshipping in the company of all his brethren in the courts of the Temple - see Vv.18-19</b></p>	<p>14 <sup>Q</sup>I will <sup>1</sup>pay my vows unto the LORD <sup>R</sup>now in the presence of all his people.</p>	<p><sup>1</sup>shalam - to be safe; to be completed. This vow both memorializes the commitment of Christ to the work of redemption which has led to this glorious outcome and embrace the work yet to be done to complete the divine purpose in the earth.</p>
<p><sup>S</sup>Roth. "Costly in the eyes of Yahweh is death for his men of lovingkindness"  <sup>T</sup>Ygs. "is the death for his saints"; i.e. <b>Christ's death</b></p>	<p>15 <sup>S</sup><sup>2</sup>Precious in the sight of the LORD <sup>T</sup>is the death of his <sup>3</sup>saints.</p>	<p><sup>2</sup>yaqar - valuable <sup>3</sup>chaciyd - kind; i.e. pious</p>
<p><sup>5</sup>Used of Mary - Luke 1:38,48 (cp. 1 Sam.1:11)  <sup>6</sup>Ygs. "opened"  <b>Christ now free from the bonds of human nature</b></p>	<p>16 O LORD, truly I <i>am</i> thy servant; I <i>am</i> thy servant, and the <sup>4</sup>son of <sup>5</sup>thine handmaid: thou hast <sup>6</sup>loosed my <sup>7</sup>bonds.</p>	<p><sup>4</sup>ben - builder of a family name  <sup>6</sup>pathach - to open wide; spec. to loosen <sup>7</sup>mocerah - chastisement; i.e. a halter; fig. restraint. Used as a figure of death.</p>

Comments on the daily readings in March

<p><sup>U</sup>Roth. "To thee will I sacrifice a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and on the name of Yahweh will I call."</p>	<p>17 <sup>U</sup>I will offer to thee the sacrifice of <sup>7</sup>thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD.</p>	<p><sup>8</sup>towdah - used of the peace offering (Lev.7; 2 Chron.33:16). Used also Ps.69:30; Jer.17:26; 33:11</p>
<p><sup>V</sup>Ygs. "My vows to Yahweh let me complete, I pray you, before all his people". Roth. "My vows - to Yahweh will I pay, might it be in the presence of all his people"</p>	<p>18 <sup>V</sup>I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people,</p>	<p>Cp. the same theme in Ps.22:22,25</p>
<p><b>The psalm concludes with a final vision of Christ in glory praising Yahweh before all his resurrected and immortalized brethren in the Temple</b></p>	<p>19 In the courts of the LORD's house, in the <sup>8</sup>midst of thee, O Jerusalem. <sup>9</sup>Praise ye the LORD.</p>	<p><sup>8</sup>tavek - to sever; a bisection; i.e. the centre <sup>9</sup>halal - to be clear; to shine; hence praise</p>