

May 1

Deuteronomy 18

There is a strong focus on the Levites in Deuteronomy due to their crucial role in the spiritual life of the nation. This chapter reinforces much that has already been said in Deut. 10 and 12. A summary of the contents is as follows:

V.1-2 – Levi to have no tribal Land inheritance

V.3-5 – Levites to be supported by the people

V.6-8 – All Levites to have opportunity to serve at the Altar

V.9-14 – The abominations of the nations to be sternly suppressed

V.15-19 – Israel to await the Prophet and Mediator to come

V.20-22 – False prophets to be put to death

V.3 – In addition to the right shoulder and breast of the offering required in the wilderness (Lev. 7:30-31), the offeror was to “give to the priest the **leg**, and the **two cheeks**, and the **stomach**” (Green’s Literal Translation). The front **leg** being the main support of the animal indicated that the offeror’s salvation was absolutely dependent upon the mediation of the priest. The two cheeks (sides of the face) signified that the offeror was prepared to hearken to Divine instruction given by priest or Levite. The word “maw” is from the Hebrew *qebah* signifying hollow. It refers to the fourth stomach of ruminants in which digestion is completed and represented the complete absorption of the Word.

V.6-8 – Provide for a Levite who decides to sell his property within a Levitical city (Lev. 25:33) so that he might serve in the place of the Sanctuary. He was permitted to receive tithes without having to commit the sale of the asset (called “patrimony”) to anything else.

V.13 – “Thou shalt be **perfect** with Yahweh thy God.” No man is perfect except for the “prophet like unto Moses” (V.15). The word “perfect” is *tâmîym* – entire; i.e. single in purpose as in the first two occurrences in Gen. 6:9; 17:1.

V.18 – “I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee.” Israel has never regarded any prophet greater than Moses in their entire history. They rejected Jesus Anointed who claimed to be this Prophet (John 12:49-50), and it will not be until he reveals himself to them after Armageddon that he will be accepted – Zech. 12:10; 13:4-6.

Ecclesiastes 10

Solomon has commenced a series of proverbs (or aphorisms) in chapter 9:17 which illustrate the superiority of wisdom over folly. These form an appendage to his essay in which wisdom has been reconsidered in the light of experience. The section covers a variety of topics mostly surrounding attitudes of rulers and those ruled by them, and concludes in chapter 11:6.

THE EXCELLENCY OF WISDOM

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| 1. | 9:17-10:3 | Wisdom’s superiority |
| 2. | 10:4-9 | Folly in high places |
| 3. | 10:10-11 | Forethought |
| 4. | 10:12-15 | Contrast of wisdom and folly |
| 5. | 10:16-20 | Un-wisdom in rule |
| 6. | 11:1-6 | Spiritual husbandry – “Preach the word; be instant in season and out of season” (2 Timothy 4:2) |

V.2 – “A wise man’s **heart** is at his **right hand**; but a fool’s **heart** at his **left**” – In the human body the heart is set to the left of the chest. This is the natural order. The heart is the intellect or seat of understanding and it is here in the arena of thought that a man’s ways are determined. Christ taught that “out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts” (Mark 7:21). When men think naturally or carnally, they think as the fool. Therefore, it can be said the fool’s heart is at his left. But the wise man’s heart is at his right which is not its natural position. Wisdom is not natural to man it has to be acquired from an external source. Christ confirmed this configuration in Matt. 6:3 – “But when thou doest alms, let not thy **left hand** (natural man) know what thy **right hand** (spiritual man) doeth.”

Acts 9

The conversion of the rabid Judaiser Saul of Tarsus to become Paul the Apostle to the Gentiles is one of the most important events recorded in Acts. Few events had more far-reaching ramifications than this one.

V.1-2 – “And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest.” Saul of Tarsus had reached the pinnacle of his hatred for, and desire to eradicate all followers of Christ. He even went to the high priest (a Sadducee) with whom strict Pharisees had a difficult relationship. Having received the authority of the Sanhedrin, he made the long journey on foot to Damascus (168 miles or 270 km). So deep was his hatred that he did not discriminate between men and women. It is evident by his own admission he had been complicit in the deaths of quite a few believers – Acts 26:9-11 – “I myself, however, thought it a duty to do many things in hostility to the name of Jesus, the Nazarene. And that was how I acted in Jerusalem. Armed with authority received from the High Priests I shut up many of God’s people in various prisons, and **when they were about to be put to death I gave my vote against them**. In all the synagogues also I punished them many a time, and tried to make them blaspheme; and in my **wild fury** I chased them even to foreign towns” (Weymouth).

V.9 – Having seen the resurrected and glorified Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:8), Saul was blinded for three days. It was necessary for him to experience the blackness of a ‘tomb’ after the pattern of Christ. This was later complemented by three years (on the day for a year principle) of lonely instruction and preparation in the Arabian wilderness – Gal. 1:18.

V.15 – “he is a **chosen vessel** unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.” Direct intervention was necessary to turn Saul around, but Christ knew that the same zeal and commitment seen in the persecutor would be manifested in an even greater way to fulfil the commission from his risen Lord – Rom. 1:1; Gal. 1:1,15-16; 1 Cor. 9:17; 15:9-10.

V.20 – Rotherham – “And, straightway, in the synagogues, he began proclaiming **Jesus**, that, This, is **the Son of God**.” The KJV translation needs correcting. All Jews believed Messiah (Christ) was the son of God. It was **Jesus** they did not believe in.

V.23-31 – Saul now became the target of Judaistic Jews and suffered the same treatment he had dealt to believers. As the Lord said – “I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name’s sake” (V.16). (The balance of the chapter will be held to later in the year)

May 2

Deuteronomy 19

V.1-13 – Laws concerning cities of refuge laid down in Num. 35 are repeated – see Deut. 4:41-43.

V.14 – “Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour's landmark.” Property disputes are frequent among men in every country. In Israel, they had to do with inheritance from God – Lev. 25:23. One of the most notable was Ahab's seizure of Naboth's vineyard – 1 Kings 21:1-3,15-16. So important was this principle that it was to be vocalized by the tribes on Mount Ebal – Deut. 27:17. It is repeated in Prov. 22:28; 23:10.

V.15-21 – The 9th commandment was, “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour” – Ex. 20:16. As a deterrent, those “which should feign themselves just men” (Luke 20:20) were to be given the same treatment they sought for others with their false testimony (V.18-19).

Ecclesiastes 11

The first six verses of chapter 11 are part of the proverbial sayings that Solomon commenced in chapter 9:17. Though there is a wide application in them, the theme of rulership continues to run through Solomon's thoughts. Then Solomon turns to youth to give his final advice based on the findings of his extensive research. This section is carried through to verse 8 of chapter 12.

Ecclesiastes 11:1-6 – Cp. 2 Tim. 4:2

V.1	Cast your bread (preach)	V.6	In the morning sow your seed
V.2	Give a portion to seven (given to hospitality)	V.6	In the evening withhold not thy hand
V.2	Thou knowest not what evil (pessimistic)	V.6	Thou knowest not what shall prosper (RSV) – (optimistic)
	Future in God's care		
V.3	Cloud burst – Stormy winds – Sudden mishap – trees fall		“this or that” circumstances of life

1 Timothy 6:18-19 – “That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.”

Solomon has advanced from pessimism that stifles action, to optimism, which encourages cheerfulness and hospitality.

V.4	Pessimism stops sowing and will deny reaping	Optimism encourages progress and initiative resulting in harvest
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V.5 – “God's ways unsearchable (John 3:3-10)

V.3 – “and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be” – Strong winds can topple a tree, especially after rain. Depending on the direction of the wind so the tree will fall. Once it is down it cannot be moved. This sounds very fatalistic but teaches a very important lesson. Solomon has shown in Ecclesiastes that man is subject to time and chance, and to vanity and events he cannot control. The wise man learns to expect random events that bring set-backs and takes these in his stride. He avoids the danger of reacting negatively and becoming over-

cautious, tentative and pessimistic. What cannot be changed must be endured and must not be allowed to undermine faithful initiative.

V.7-10 – In his final exhortation to youth Solomon drives home the lessons of his discoveries to those who still have the opportunities of life before them – the young.

V.9 – “Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes” – Several words are used in this passage for youth to emphasize the vitality of early life. The word for “young man” is the Hebrew *bachur* signifying selected; i.e. a youth. The idea is of being selected because of youthfulness. Interestingly, there are two separate words rendered “youth” in this passage. The first is the word *yalduwth* meaning boyhood (or girlhood). It comes from the root *yeled* signifying something born; hence a lad or offspring. The second word is *bechuwrowth* of which *bachur* is the root. It means simply youth. Youngs. Lit. translates this passage: “Rejoice, O young man, in thy childhood, and let thy heart gladden thee in days of thy youth.” Again the analogy of the rising sun can be seen. There is birth, childhood and the vitality of youth with a myriad of awakening opportunities presented for exploration that are new and interesting.

To walk in the “ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes” does not necessarily suggest the choosing of evil. It is a way of describing the scope of youthful venture. Bro. L.G. Sargent describes it this way – “Youth is a time for desire, for venture, for seizing on new experience – so long as the desire is controlled and directed by knowledge of a judgement to come.”

Acts 10

The story of the conversion of the centurion Cornelius and his household is well known. He was clearly an outstanding character and his prayers had “come up for a memorial before God” (V.4), so an angel was sent to direct him to Peter. It reveals an important fact that if someone is genuinely looking for truth, God will ensure it crosses their path. However, there is another important theme in this record, and that concerns Peter.

The prevalence of the number **three** in Acts 10 and 11 is too prominent to ignore. Beginning with Cornelius’s vision at the **9th** hour (V.3,30), and Peter’s in the **6th** hour (V.9) which was done “**thrice**” (V.16); “**three** men” arrive from Caesarea (V.19; 11:11) and Peter then took “**six** brethren” with him to Caesarea (Acts 11:12). In referring to Christ there he says, “Him God raised up the **third** day.” Why this emphasis on three?

Peter’s whole life as a disciple was framed by **three**. There were **3 calls**; firstly as a disciple – John 1:42; then as a companion – Matt. 4:19-20; and finally as an Apostle – Mark 3:14-16; Luke 6:13-14. There were **3 confessions** by Peter – Matt. 14:24-33; 16:13-20; John 6:66-69. There were **3 denials** recorded **3 times** – Matt. 26:69-75; Mark 14:66-72; Luke 22:54-22. There were **3 declarations** of love – John 21:15-19. These were matched by **3 stages** of development in Peter’s life – (1) Training; i.e. discipleship; (2) Leadership – Acts 2:14; 3:12; Gal. 2:9; (3) Shepherding of the flock – John 21:15-17; 1 Pet. 5:2.

Three is the Biblical number for fruit, results and outcomes – see Gen. 1:11-12 where “**fruit**” occurs **three times** for the outcomes of the **third day** of Creation. The fruit comes from seeds producing fruit after their own kind. This is why Peter wrote – 1 Pet. 1:23 – “Being born again, not of corruptible **seed**, but of incorruptible, by **the word of God**, which liveth and abideth for ever” – see context V.22-25 and 2 Pet. 1:3-8 where incremental character development comes by the power of the Word. Only the Word of God can make the huge changes that took place in Peter’s life.

The dramatic changes that overtook the entire household of Cornelius were effected by the power of the Word of God supported by the evidence of the resurrection of Christ.

V.1-8 – “There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band” – This was a cohort of the Roman legions with a serious reputation, and this centurion was a remarkable character – “A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.” In a vision of an angel he was directed to Peter in Joppa because as the angel said, “Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God,” i.e. he had no covenant relationship with God, but possessed the necessary requirements for one.

V.9-33 – Peter’s threefold vision of a great sheet of unclean animals which he was invited to eat was designed to remove his Jewish aversion to have any dealings with Gentiles (John 4:9). The timing was perfect because as he was ruminating on the meaning of the vision, the messengers from Cornelius arrived at the door. Peter went with them next day to Caesarea.

V.34-43 – Peter’s use of the two keys of the Kingdom mentioned in the comments for April 26 (page 55) dominate Peter’s speech. The keys of the Kingdom are “the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow” (1 Pet. 1:11). The sufferings of Christ (“whom they slew and hanged on a tree”) culminated in, “God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly.” It is obvious what is recorded here is a slim version of the actual speech.

V.44-48 – Any lingering doubt in the mind of Peter and the six brethren with him about the inclusion of Gentiles in the purpose of God was instantly removed when “while Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all them which heard the word.” This was before they were baptized! Little wonder “they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter,” for “They heard them speak with tongues” like Peter and the apostles had done in Acts 2. The amazement of Peter and his companions is understandable. The challenge for Peter now was to convince his Jewish brethren in Jerusalem as chapter 11 reveals – “they that were of the circumcision contended with him, saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them.”

May 3

Deuteronomy 20

This chapter deals with laws concerning warfare. Fear through lack of faith is the main theme. The words “fearful and fainthearted” (V.8) occur again in Judges 7:3 as Gideon’s army was thinned out.

V.10-20 – Rules are laid down for the treatment of different enemies and their cities. Those outside the land could receive a degree of clemency, but not those within the Land of Canaan. Their idolatry and practices would be destructive of Israel’s loyalty to Yahweh.

Ecclesiastes 12 – The conclusion of the whole matter

The chapter division artificially breaks the train of thought and should be ignored. Solomon goes on from his counsel to remember darkness and judgement to show that there is a better way than applying merely negative restraint. The best defense against evil is to fill the mind with positive good. So, he exhorts young people to remember their Creator in the

days of their youth. Solomon then presents a graphic portrayal of the encroachment of old age and death as a warning of the foolishness of wasting the opportunities of youth.

Ecclesiastes 12:3-5 – PORTRAIT OF A DECLINING HOUSE AND AN OLD MAN

V.3 – Keepers of the house **tremble**

Arms and **hands** once strong, now shaking.

“The strong men” **bow** themselves

Legs – formerly upright, now bent at the knees.

The **grinders cease**

Teeth – fall out and fail to masticate food.

Those that **look** out of windows
darkened

Eyesight deteriorates

V.4 – Doors shut in the street

Loss of interest in everyday affairs – **no communication**.

Sound of grinding low

Deafness: causing misunderstanding

Rise up at the voice of a bird

Nervous – bad sleepers (awake to hear the cock crow)

Daughters of **music** brought low

Cannot sing – **no pleasure**. Incapacity to join in.

V.5 – Afraid of that which is **high**

Fear of height (giddiness)

Fears shall be in the way

Slow reactions. Jostling crowds unsettle

The almond tree shall flourish

Grey headed

Grasshopper **shall drag** itself along

Stiff legged, clumsy

Desire shall fail

Body **impulses** grow **inactive**

The **mourners** go about the streets

Visible signs of death (physical and psychological)

Everyone can see the end approaching!

For those seeking more detail, the full exposition of Ecclesiastes 12 is appended in **Appendix 1**.

V.13-14 – The Conclusion of the Whole Matter

Having reminded the reader of his qualifications and that this writing is not among the “many books” which weary men both in their production and study, Solomon now concludes his book with a pithy statement of conclusion. In a few words he sums up all his findings and homes in on the simple message for all who would be wise and belong to the “whole man” class. This represents one of the simplest yet most profound exhortations in Scripture. The challenge for us is not only to see the rightness of his words, but to choose to do them.

V.13 – “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter” – There is a tone of authority here which challenges our attention. Who better to make this outright assertion of the true values of human life than Solomon? He had everything life can offer, and had systematically tried everything, yet found by experience that there is only one course worth pursuing in life. And that course can be pursued by anyone, whether they are young or old, rich or poor. Everything Solomon had discovered in his research is now focalized in this final summary statement.

“Fear God and keep his commandments” – There is nothing new in these words. They have been the consistent teaching of the Scripture from the very beginning (Deut. 6:4-9). Hence the mark of the “one Shepherd” is seen in Solomon's conclusion. All his

experiences and study had shown that the greatest good in life is to be derived from a wholesome fear of God and obedience to His commandments. Outside of this lay only vanity, failure, misery and permanent death.

“for this is the whole duty of man” – The word “duty” in italics is not in the text. Youngs Lit. – “for this is the whole of man”. Man cannot be complete (or “whole”) without God. Solomon had found that when man lives for himself he will be empty and incomplete. It is only when man fears God and observes His commandments that life “under the sun” is given a value that can be appreciated, despite its limitations. When God enters the equation a man's life can be rightly directed so that he derives benefit and pleasure from what other men see as drudgery and vanity. In this way he becomes “**the whole man**” – he is able, because of his perspective and choice, to extract the very best from vain human life “under the sun” while placing himself in a position related to eternity and unending fullness of life in God's Kingdom. This is a secret few understand.

V.14 – “For God shall bring every work into judgement, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil” – Solomon harks back to chapter 11:9 and his warning to youth on the threshold of adult life. It is at that point in life that crucial decisions must be made. It is important to understand that he is only talking about those amenable to divine judgement. The bulk of men live out their vain lives in ignorance only to perish forever. They will never again see light. But those who have seen light will rise again to answer for their actions (Dan. 12:2-3; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15; Rev. 22:12). It is this class to whom the exhortation is directed. Every work, open for public gaze or practiced privately, that reveals the fundamental choice we have made in life will come under scrutiny in the day of judgement (1 Tim. 5:24-25). The reward will be received bodily according to the choices we have made (2 Cor. 5:10). It will then be seen whether we are of the “**whole man**” class who have chosen to fear God and keep His commandments.

Acts 11

V.2-3 – “Thou wentest in to men **uncircumcised**, and didst eat with them.” This objection to Peter entering the house of Cornelius sowed the seeds for the Jerusalem Conference about 6 years later – Acts 15:1-2. It underscored how deep Judaism was ingrained in many converts. Ultimately, it was this problem that led to the development of the apostasy that almost expunged the truth from the earth.

V.4-18 – Peter recounted the story of what happened in Joppa and Caesarea. The most convincing argument was that the Holy Spirit had fallen upon the Gentiles before they were baptized. That surely was the Divine imprimatur on their acceptance.

V.19-30 – The vicious persecution that followed Stephen's murder caused many to flee and some made Antioch in Syria their new home. Many Jews were converted and the Gospel then spread to the Gentiles. Barnabas was sent from Jerusalem to support the work and he sought out Paul (still known as Saul) in Tarsus to assist him. This was the beginning of a companionship that lasted nearly a decade before it was broken by a dispute over John Mark (Acts 15:36-39).

Acts 12

V.1-5 – Herod Agrippa I was a grandson of Herod the Great and Herod had killed Aristobulus his father. After the banishing of Archelaus and Herod Antipas to Gaul and Spain, Agrippa was granted their tetrarchies by Emperors Caligula and Claudius (AD 43) and became ruler of basically all that Herod the Great had ruled. He was very powerful as V.20 indicates. Being a Jew (with Edomite heritage) he was a meticulous observer of the

Law, and was anxious for the good opinion of the Jews. Hence, the persecution that led to the killing of “James the brother of John” and the imprisonment of Peter (with 16 guards – “four quarternions”). It was Passover time (“Easter” – *pascha*). The ecclesia feeling helpless leaned on the power of prayer “without ceasing” – *ektenēs* – intently, earnestly, assiduously.

V.6-11 – The themes of the Passover dominate the events leading to the release of Peter from prison. Like Israel, Peter was bound in chains in a prison (Deut. 4:20); the angel of Yahweh who had brought the ninth plague of darkness on Egypt for three days appeared to Peter in the prison (Cp. Ex. 10:22-23 – “And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt **three days** [as there was for the Roman soldiers]: they saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for **three days**: but all **the children of Israel had light in their dwellings**” [as there was for Peter]. Christ had spent 3 days in the tomb from Passover to resurrection); The angel “smote Peter on the side, and **raised him up**, saying, **Arise up quickly**” as did Christ after 3 days and nights when the “chains” of mortality fell from him; “Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals” was the instruction given to Israel for the evening of the Passover – Ex. 12:11; “Cast thy garment about thee, and **follow me**” is redolent of the angel guiding Israel out of Egypt by the movement of the cloud in which he dwelt (Ex. 13:21-22; 14:19,24; 19:9).

V.12-19 – The great lesson of the almost hilarious events at the house of John Mark where Rhoda (“rose”) failed to convince those inside continuing to pray for Peter’s release that their prayers had actually been answered. We need to have confidence in earnest prayer (James 5:15-18). Our prayers may not always be answered in the way we seek, but there will always be an answer for the faithful, even if that is ‘silence’ from heaven. In their incredulity, they suspected it was his “angel” (V.15). Did they mean a simple human messenger as the word can mean, or were they referring to the angel appointed to each ‘heir of salvation’ – Heb. 1:14? Whatever, that angel will soon say to Peter in the grave, “Arise up quickly” and his companions will come to collect us for the Judgement Seat. The 16 soldiers killed by Herod for suspected treason will never see the light of day again (V.19).

V.20-23 – Herod’s pride and brutality finally brought him undone. Fearful of retribution, the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon declared him a god when he spoke to them. He accepted the plaudits and was immediately struck by an angel with an infestation of worms. All through Scripture proud men are consumed by worms – Isa. 14:11; 66:24; Mark 9:44-49. Josephus records Herod Agrippa died after 5 days at age 54 (it was AD 44).

May 4

Deuteronomy 21

V.1-9 – This law concerning unsolved murders sent shivers down the spine of the elders of Bethlehem when Samuel turned up to anoint David king – 1 Sam. 16:1-4.

V.15-17 – The inheritance rights of the firstborn were to be strictly upheld. Personal preferences were to be set aside. Obedience to this law cost faithful Jehoshaphat the murder by his eldest son Jehoram of all his brothers – 2 Chron. 21:3-4.

V.18-21 – Recalcitrant and disobedient sons, after due chastening, were to be killed on the initiative of the parents under the hand of the local elders. This practice is so far removed from the ways of the Humanistic world of today that it would be roundly condemned by almost everyone. However, it will be reintroduced in the Kingdom Age – Zech. 13:3.

V.22-23 – This is a most remarkable law. It foreshadowed the method of death of the Son of God by crucifixion – Acts 2:23. It also made provision for the setting aside of the Law “for he that is hanged is accursed of God.” God’s righteousness was upheld in the death of Christ, but His righteousness could only be upheld by abolishing the Law of Moses so that Jesus Anointed could be raised from the dead and given eternal life – Gal. 3:13.

Song of Solomon 1

The Hebrew title is *Shir Hashshirim* = Song of Songs. There are 12 songs by Solomon that are an allegory of the relationship between Christ and his prospective Bride. It is not based on any relationship of Solomon with one of his wives, but on the first marriage of Adam and Eve which was a type of Christ and his Bride – Eph. 5:30-32. The 12 songs are as follows:

1. The Bride in the King’s chambers – Chap. 1:2-8
2. The Bridegroom and Bride in a garden retreat – Chaps. 1:9 to 2:7
3. The Bridegroom’s call and her response – Chap. 2:8-17
4. The Bride’s midnight search for her Beloved – Chap. 3:1-5
5. A State visit to the Bride – Praises her beauty – Chaps. 3:6 to 4:7
6. The Bride compared to a lovely garden – Chaps. 4:8 to 5:1
7. A portrait of her Beloved and his reply – Chaps. 5:2 to 6:10
8. The Bride overtaken by a sudden impulse to hide herself – Chap. 6:11-13
9. Description of the Bride’s person by the virgins – Chap. 7:1-9
10. The Bride’s invitation to the Bridegroom – Chaps. 7:10 to 8:4
11. Love unquenchable – Chap. 8:5-7
12. Conclusion – Chap. 8:8-14

It is not intended to attempt exposition of this relatively complex book. For a sound exposition Bro. R.W. Ask’s book reprinted by Christadelphian Study Service in 1987 is recommended.

Songs 1:13 – Rotherham – “A **bag of myrrh**, is my beloved to me, between my breasts, shall it tarry the night!” This translation clarifies that it is the **bag of myrrh** that is retained in the bosom, a common practice of women at the time.

Acts 13

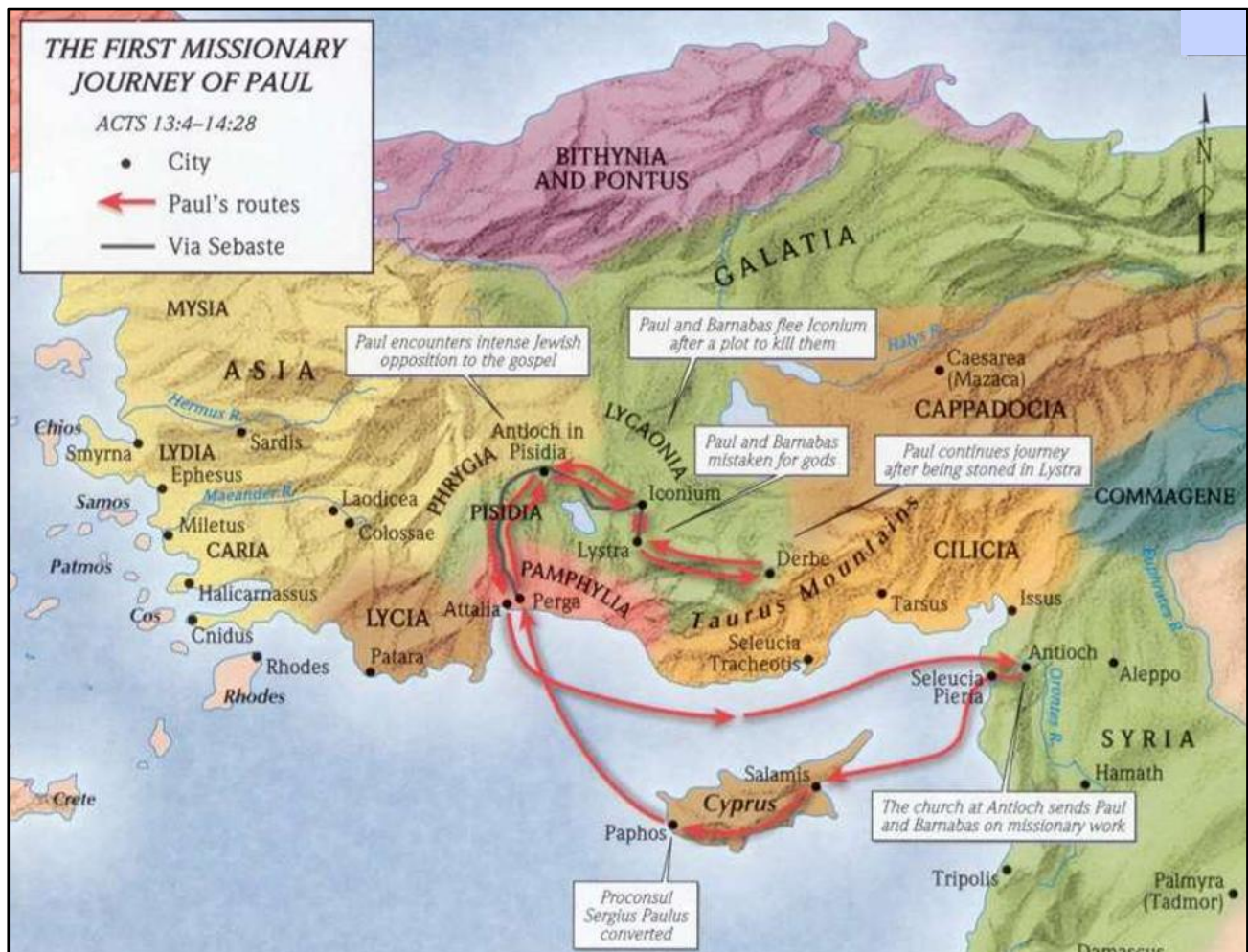
V.1-3 – The ecclesia in Antioch was prospering with many coming from different parts to share the work. These included “Manaen, which had been **brought up** with Herod (Antipas) the tetrarch.” The word *suntrophos* denotes one who is educated or nourished at the same time with another (perhaps a foster brother). It is not used elsewhere in the N.T. Heaven intervenes to call Barnabas and Saul for the upcoming missionary journeys.

V.7 – “deputy of the country” – *anthupatos* – a proconsul; the emperor Augustus divided the Roman provinces into senatorial and imperial. The former were governed by proconsuls; the later by legates of the emperor, sometimes called *propraetors* (Thayer Definition). The Proconsul Sergius Paulus was “a prudent man” (*sunetos* – intelligent, having understanding, wise, learned) and responded to the preaching of Saul and Barnabas when the false Jewish prophet “Elymas the sorcerer” was blinded (V.8-12). This was an auspicious start to the campaign.

Perga was the capital of Pamphylia situated a few miles up the River Cestrus, which flows into the bay of Attalia. The lowlands near the coast were a swampy area that bred mosquitoes and malaria was a common disease. Paul probably contracted malaria here (Gal. 4:13 – “Ye know how through **infirmity of the flesh** I preached the gospel unto you at the first”) as he refers to the Galatians being willing to “pluck out your own

eyes, and have given them to me” (Gal. 4:15 – malaria can affect the eyes in various ways). There is no record of preaching on arrival in Perga, only the departure of John Mark. Paul may have been too unwell to preach and Mark may have taken fright when he saw Paul’s condition. What is not in question is that Paul saw his premature departure as unwarranted (Acts 15:38-39).

The following map will assist to establish locations.



V.13 – “Now when **Paul** and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and **John** departing from them returned to Jerusalem.” A name change occurred in V.9 – “Then Saul, (who also is called Paul).” Saul means “desired” (Thayer) or “demanded” (Hitchcock), and Paul means “small, little.” Paul may have been small of stature (2 Cor. 10:10), but it is more likely he had made the name change due to his remorse over the past and its resultant humility (1 Cor. 15:9; Eph. 3:7-8).

V.14-41 – “when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day” – Invited to speak, Paul delivered a lengthy address in which he covered the call of the Patriarchs and the deliverance from Egypt leading to the time of the Judges; the demand for a king and the ultimate accession of David. All this to introduce David’s promised son – “Of this man’s seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus.” The balance of the address is about the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ; his death, resurrection and glory in fulfilment of the promises made to the fathers of Israel and to David. Doubtless reading the

body language and whisperings in the Judaistic congregation of law-keeping Jews, he concluded with a warning and rebuke should they reject his words. There are some things needing comment along the way.

V.18 – In the margin for “suffered he their manners in the wilderness” we read “he fed them as a nurse beareth or feedeth her child” with reference to Deut. 1:31 – “Yahweh thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son.” This is also consistent with Yahweh’s title “El Shaddai” (a nourisher of the Abrahamic family – Gen. 17:1; 49:25-26), and Moses’ words in Num. 11:11-12 – “as a nursing father beareth the sucking child.”

V. 21 – On pages 23&24 of Chronikon Hebraikon (an appendix to Elpis Israel), Bro. Thomas under a heading “A reign of forty years impossible for Saul” says – “All the chronologies extant, as far as I am informed, assign 40 years to Saul’s reign. They are led into this egregious mistake by a misinterpretation of Acts 13:21,” and then proceeds to provide the Scriptural evidence. He postulates that Saul could not have reigned any longer than 13 years and 4 months and explains that the 40 years is from the 13th year of Eli. Careful study of the records of the life of Saul strongly suggest his reign was not 40 years.

V.33 – “God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that **he hath raised up Jesus again**; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee” – Is the citation from Ps. 2 about God raising His son from birth, or from the grave? Certainly, Paul had been labouring the point – “But God raised him from the dead” in the previous verses, but this is not the only time Paul cites Ps. 2:7. He does so in Heb. 1:5-6; and 5:5 where the context is clearly about begetting and being raised up from birth. It seems Paul is using Ps. 2 in the same way here, as the next verse begins, “And as to His having raised Him from among the dead” (Weymouth); i.e. a change of subject suggesting the former was about begetting, not resurrection.

V.42-52 – The outcome was mixed – “many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas,” but perhaps the most encouraging aspect was the response of the Gentiles who “besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath.” However, this request stirred envy and anger among the Jews who “spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming,” causing Paul and Barnabas to claim (rightly) Isa. 49:6 to themselves and go to the Gentiles. A surge of persecution organized by recalcitrant Jews saw them expelled to Iconium.

May 5

Deuteronomy 22

There is a saying in the world – “Finders keepers” meaning that if you find someone’s lost property you have no obligation to return it. Not so under the Law. Avarice and greed are basic human failings that prove the saying “The love of money is the root of all evil” over and over again. Lost property was to be returned to its owner if known, or held until he came looking for it (V.1-3).

V.4-12 – A range of laws governing behavior follow, including consideration for others; care for the creation; use of discrimination and avoiding confusion. All teach simple lessons. For example, “Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together” teaches not to be unequally yoked – 2 Cor. 6:14.

V.13-30 – The lessons from these ordinances are that ‘virginity’ and loyalty in marriage are extremely important. At the practical level whoredom and adultery will be judged – Heb.

13:4 – “whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.” In the spiritual realm this teaches that maintaining **doctrinal purity** is critical to salvation – 2 Cor. 11:2-3.

Song of Solomon 2

The following extract from Bro. H.P. Mansfield's Expositor may be useful in appreciating **The Characters of the Songs**

THE BRIDE – She is called the Shulamite (or Shulamith), the feminine form of Solomon, meaning "peaceable" (Ch. 6:13). She is also given the name of the Beloved (Ch. 5:2), which is from a common root with that of David, and is expressive of the warmth of love. She is also given the title of sister-spouse to her royal Groom (Ch. 5:1). She was selected and taken out of Egypt — Ch. 1:9. She is praised by the Groom (Ch. 6:9), and ultimately by the world (Ch. 6:10). Numerous titles are given to her throughout the book, each of which provides some aspect of her character and destiny.

THE GROOM

He is called Solomon (peaceable — Ch. 1:1), and also the Beloved, David's name, which is expressive of one who is warm in love, or full of feeling. Many other titles are given him throughout the book. His description is given in Ch. 5:10-16, and is summed up in the statement: "He is altogether lovely; this is my beloved and my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem."

THE MOTHER OF THE BRIDE

She is sympathetic to the courtship (Ch. 3:4), and types the Abrahamic covenant, or Jerusalem from above (Gal. 4:26).

THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM

These are the attendant virgins, and therefore part of the Bridal party. They relate to individual members of the multitudinous Bride, whilst she represents the whole community. They are found admiring the Bride; seeing in her their ideal; questioning her; attending on her. They are warned against artificially stimulating love — Ch. 2:7. They are invited to behold the King and the Chariot paved with love for themselves — Ch. 3:9-10. They are instructed to inform the Groom that the Bride is lovesick — Ch. 5:8. They seek to know the Groom better — Ch. 5:9. They are anxious that the Groom should come — Ch. 6:1. They ardently desire the manifestation of the Bride in full glory — Ch. 6:13.

THE DAUGHTERS OF ZION

They watch the Bridal procession as it moves out of the wilderness — Ch. 3:6-11; 8:5. They represent Israel after the flesh — Isa. 3:16.

QUEENS, CONCUBINES, VIRGINS

The world without, which ultimately is compelled to praise the Bride – Ch. 6:9-10 (cp. Rev. 3:9).

WATCHMEN

They represent those in power. They have the Bride under inspection (Ch. 3:3); and are found persecuting her — (Ch. 5:7).

THE YOUNG SISTER

She has not yet reached maturity, and evidently types those in the Kingdom who will be honoured if found worthy — (Ch. 8).

Acts 14

V.1-7 – Success in converting both Jews and Gentiles at Iconium was attended by bitter persecution as the city was divided. Increasing persecution and riots made flight to Lystra and Derbe necessary.

V.8-18 – The healing of an impotent man (some think Timothy) at Lystra sparked a riot as Paul and Barnabas were declared to be gods – “they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker.” The “priest of Jupiter” prepared sacrifices to worship them, and only by frantic appeals did they dissuade them. During the appeal, Paul made a statement worth noting – “**he left not himself without witness**, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.” The Lord Jesus Christ had made a similar observation in the Discourse on the Mount – Matt. 5:35 – “he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” Paul was to weave this same message into future epistles; e.g. Rom. 1:20 – “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse,” and 1 Tim. 2:1 – “I exhort therefore, that, **first of all**, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and **giving of thanks, be made for all men.**” One thing we can be sure about today is that few people in the world give thanks for the abundant blessings we have, and still largely enjoy in the lands where we live. If **we** do not thank God for His daily blessings showered upon us and those around us, who will?

V.19-23 – Typical of the fickleness of human emotions, Paul not long before having been declared a god was stoned by the same people on the arrival of extremist Jews from Antioch and Iconium (2 Cor. 11:25 – “once was I stoned”). Left for dead, his grief stricken companions marveled as Paul arose and dusted himself off and continued with the work (V.20), pressing on eastwards to Derbe, and then retracing his steps to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch (the source of persecution) he set about confirming the believers and setting in order arrangements for the establishment of the ecclesias. Paul was not concerned for his own well-being, but rather the eternal well-being of his brethren – 1 Cor. 10:24,33; Phil. 2:4. It was typical of the Apostle that as he preached in these places following his near death experience he could say with unchallengeable genuineness – “that we must through much tribulation (*thlipsis* – pressure) enter into the kingdom of God.”

V.24-28 – Returning to Antioch in Syria after finally getting to preach in Perga, the report delivered to the sponsoring ecclesia was very positive, but Paul and Barnabas needed rest and recovery so “they abode long time with the disciples.”

Acts 15

It is evident a couple of years passed before the major challenge to the truth that inspired the Jerusalem Conference came along. It arose from ingrained Judaistic converts visiting Antioch in Syria to peddle their new doctrine (V.1-2). It is thought the Jerusalem Conference was convened in circa AD 51. It was undoubtedly a crucial crossroad for the fledgling 1st century Brotherhood. The contributions of Paul, Barnabas and Peter had a moderating effect on the extremist sect within the community with strong Pharisaical heritage, but the issue was not resolved until the intervention of James. His speech is a marvel of the use of Scripture to defend the truth.

V.1-3 – “Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved” – This huge issue arose from converted Jews who had not left behind the Law of Moses and

Jewish tradition. The determined opposition of Paul and Barnabas to the Judean brethren in Antioch gave rise to the call for a conference to resolve the dispute. On the way to Jerusalem the group from Antioch related to all they met the conversion of the Gentiles in many parts. It is significant that the term “Gentiles” occurs 7 times in the context – Acts 15:3,7,12,14,17,19,23. 7 is the covenant number, particularly the Abrahamic Covenant – “And in thy seed shall **all the nations** of the earth be blessed” – Gen. 22:18.

V.4 – “they declared all things that God had done with them” – The Antioch delegation continued to emphasize Gentile conversion without a demand for circumcision.

V.5-6 – “there rose up certain of sect of the **Pharisees**” – So called from *perishin*, the Aramaic form of the Hebrew word, *perushim* meaning “separated”. This class was ultimately to lead the apostasy that corrupted the Truth in the late 1st century and during the 2nd century – Gal. 1:6-7; 2 Tim. 1:15. Their call was “to command them (the Gentile converts) to keep the law of Moses” which was an additional requirement to V.1. The gravity of the issues at stake necessitated a conference at the highest levels of the Brotherhood.

V.7-12 – The conference began with “much disputing” (*suzetesis* – mutual questioning, disputation, discussion) until “Peter rose up” as he perceived the need for personal testimony – “God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel.” Surely this would bring an end to the dispute, for God had clearly acted to include Gentiles by “giving them the Holy Spirit” (Acts 10:44-45), a unique event in the conversion of Cornelius and his household. However, Peter’s testimony did not resolve the issue, but did bring silence allowing Paul and Barnabas to recount their experience among the Gentiles as well, supporting Peter’s testimony. The issue however was not resolved by personal testimony, and this teaches an important lesson. Personal testimonies may have their place in certain circumstances, but it is only sound exposition of God’s Word that resolves issues of this magnitude. That is what James provided.

V.13-18 – “And after they had held their peace James answered” – James the Lord’s half brother was “a pillar” in the Jerusalem ecclesia (Gal. 2:9). He first summarized Peter’s testimony of events in Cornelius’s house, and added, “And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, **After this I will return.**” This is the first of two citations. This phrase is from Jer. 12:15 – a citation of genius. The context concerns Gentile nations around Israel (Jer. 12:14) who were judged by God for their treatment of Israel and Judah (V.15) – “after that I have plucked them out” – i.e. Yahweh would judge the nations who oppressed His people, but the time would come when “**I will return**, and have compassion on them.” Yahweh looked to the time when He would have compassion on Gentile nations. When might that be? Quite obviously, by the call of the Gospel they were now receiving through the work of the Apostles. Jer. 12:16 says, “if they will diligently learn the ways of my people, to **swear by my name**, Yahweh liveth.” It is not difficult to see why James cites this passage – “God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name” (V.14). Even the phrase “**built** in the midst of my people” in Jer. 12:16 is relevant to Acts 15:15 – “I will **build** again.” Prophecy was being fulfilled.

Next came Amos 9:11-12 – “and will build again **the tabernacle of David**, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up; that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the **Gentiles**, upon whom my name is called (V.14 – “a people for His name”), saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.” The context of Amos 9 is remarkable and important. Amos 9:13 envisions the

abundance and plenty of the Kingdom Age, while V.14 foresees the restoration of Israel through the mission of Elijah and their settlement in an abundant inheritance. V.15 prophesies the fulfilment of the primary promise made to David (2 Sam. 7:10), namely, Israel's permanent inheritance. The context is clearly about the Kingdom Age, so its citation by James in the context of the ecclesia is curious. Why would James quote Amos 9:11-12 given this context?

The context of Amos 9 before the passage that James quoted provides the reason and addresses the issue at stake, namely **circumcision**. Look at V.7 where "Ethiopians" (*kushiy* – i.e. Cushites – Gen. 2:13; 10:8-10 = Babylonians) come into view. God is saying His people were like Babylonians to Him. God also brought "the Philistines from Caphtor." At the same time Yahweh brought Israel out of Egypt He was bringing Philistines from Crete to be their closest neighbours, as well as "the Syrians from Kir" as Israel's next closest neighbour to the east.

The point Yahweh makes is that His people were behaving like the children of Nimrod through the adoption of Babylonian idolatry and practice. At the same time as Yahweh was fulfilling His promise to Abraham (Gen. 15:13-16) He was also bringing the Philistines and Syrians from afar to be Israel's closest neighbours. He was suggesting He could have been more successful in the spiritual realm with uncircumcised Philistines and Syrians than He was with Abraham's children, just as David had been in erecting his tabernacle to house the Ark for the purpose of including uncircumcised Gentiles into the Hope of Israel without the restrictions of the Law. Truly he could now add, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the age." James' conclusion seals the matter at issue. Yahweh had intended the inclusion of Gentiles from the beginning. When Yahweh made the promise to Abraham to bring Israel out of Egypt (Gen. 15:13-14) he was not circumcised (Rom. 4:10). The "Tabernacle of David" ended all debate about "uncircumcised" Gentiles needing to keep the Law for salvation.

V.19-31 – The decree of the Jerusalem Conference settled the matter as to whether the converted Gentiles should be circumcised and keep the Law. This outcome must be regarded as the most important event in the 1st century since the resurrection of Christ.

May 6

Deuteronomy 23

V.1 – Exclusion of someone with injury or disability in the generative organs would be utterly rejected as unfair and reprehensible by the Humanistic society in which we live. There were substantial reasons for such laws. Ordinances and rituals were designed to teach principles. Any physical blemish disqualified a son of Aaron from operating as a priest, and this included the blemishes mentioned here – Lev. 21:17-21. Israel were "a kingdom of priests" (Ex. 19:6), as is Christ's ecclesia (1 Pet. 2:9). Physical blemish in a priest represented a moral blemish in the spiritual realm. This was an important teaching mechanism as was the demand that no animal with a blemish should be sacrificed to Yahweh – Lev. 22:22-24. Perceptive Israelites would understand why God could not countenance blemish, but the natural tendency of man is to see nothing in it. Malachi's generation could say with incredulity "Wherein have we despised thy name?" To which Yahweh responded – "And if ye offer the **blind** for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the **lame** and **sick**, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith Yahweh of hosts" (Mal. 1:6,8). The principle involved is paramount and not negotiable.

V.2-3 – Similar treatment was given to a “bastard” (*mamzêr* – to alienate; a mongrel, that is, born of a Jewish father and a heathen mother), and to Ammonites and Moabites. They were excluded from the congregation (*qahal* – assembly. The O.T. equivalent of ecclesia) for ‘all time’ (10th generation). This of course did not in fact happen in the case of Ruth the Moabitess and others who found their way into Israel (see 2 Chron. 24:26). It was the principle behind the law that was important. Moabites did not show kindness to Israel as they passed by towards the Land (V.4-6). It is a fundamental principle that those who curse Israel (Abraham’s children) will be cursed by God (Gen. 12:3). Ruth showed great kindness to Naomi and was rewarded for it – Ruth 2:11-12.

V.7-8 – An apparent dichotomy then appears. Why would Edomites and Egyptians be allowed to join Israel in the third generation? Esau was the brother of Jacob and there was a “brotherly covenant” (Obad. 10,13), and the Egyptians had showed kindness to Jacob and his family for a very long time when they dwelt as strangers there (Gen. 45:17-18).

V.9-14 – There was an old saying that “cleanliness is next unto godliness.” Again, the Law sought to use the physical to teach spiritual principles. Issues from the flesh had been dealt with in Lev. 15:16. It stood to reason that a military encampment required sanitation, but there was another reason why excrement had to be buried. It is hinted at in V.14 – “that he see no **unclean** thing in thee” where the word “unclean” is *’ervâh* – nakedness, nudity, shame, pudenda. This word is used again in Deut. 24:1 in the matter of marriage where a husband is dissatisfied with the sexual performance of his wife and puts her away (as we will see in Deut. 24 the problem was not with the wife). Yahweh (through His angels) walked through the camp and unburied human excrement (no such law for animal waste) was physical evidence of human nakedness, and nakedness pointed to the origin of sin going right back to the Garden of Eden – Gen. 3:7; 4:1; Ex. 20:26 – Elpis Israel pg. 85 – “the parents of Cain, in their transgression, having served themselves of the members they afterwards concealed.” Hence, there is a link in this context between the issue of V.10 and the law of sanitation.

V.15-25 – Miscellaneous laws conclude the chapter with obvious links to what has gone before. For example, V.15-16 hark back to V.7. Israel had been slaves in Egypt. They were to be kind to freed slaves. V.17-18 about sexual immorality hark back to V.10-14 and its ‘nakedness’. V.19-20 hark back to the ‘brotherly covenant’ of V.7. V.22-23 concerning vows hark back to the V.4-5 which refer to Yahweh’s faithfulness to His vows to Abraham; etc.

Song of Solomon 3

Bro. R.W. Ask commenting on V.1-5 writes – This song shows the true spirit of love and anxiety for the presence of the Beloved One, which should characterise all those who are part of the Bride. Without this intense love of the appearing of the King-Messiah there can be no entrance to the marriage feast. There comes a time in the life of every saint when the cares, worries and difficulties of their life press heavily upon them; become impatient for the coming of the Lord and the end of all our troubles; we seek every avenue to get some knowledge as to the day of his coming; we consult God’s watchmen – especially those whose words are found in God’s Word.

Living on the cusp of the return of Christ, we can relate to these wise words.

Acts 16

V.1-5 – Paul’s second missionary journey (see map below) with Silas brought them to Derbe and Lystra where they delivered “the **decrees** for to keep, that were ordained of

the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem” that had arisen from the Jerusalem Conference (Acts 15:19-29). At Lystra, Paul seconded Timothy from a faithful family (2 Tim. 1:5) and circumcised him so that his Greek paternity would not be a hurdle with Jews along the way. This was consistent with Paul’s policy – “And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews” (1 Cor. 9:20).



V.6-10 – After confirming the Galatian ecclesias, the Spirit guided them to Troas where Paul had a dramatic vision during the night – “There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into **Macedonia**, and help us.” This brought Paul’s company to Macedonia with Luke the physician (V.10 – no longer “they” but “we”).

V.11-15 – The conversion of the itinerant “seller of purple” Lydia from Thyatira and her companions brought into existence the ecclesia at Philippi which supported the Apostle throughout his difficult time in Macedonia and Greece (Phil. 4:14-16).

V.16-24 – Philippi being a Roman colony full of retired veterans of the legions was not a friendly place to religion. Superstition made money; religion brought persecution as the healing of the demented “slave girl” (ESV) demonstrated. The over-zealous magistrates cast Paul and Silas into prison because they were Jews without inquiring whether they were actually among the two-thirds of the Roman world who were slaves.

V.25-40 – Bleeding and in pain from a brutal whipping, Paul and Silas sang hymns of praise unto God until an earthquake opened the prison. About to commit suicide, the jailer interrupted by Paul did what all who can see judgement coming should do – “he called for a **light**, and **sprang in**, and came **trembling**, and **fell down**....and said, Sirs, **what must I do to be saved?**” Care for the beaten, and careful listening to the Gospel message led to the conversion and baptism of his whole house (V.31-34). Meanwhile, the

over-zealous magistrates had had a restless night (earthquake and all) wondering whether they had overstepped the mark. By-passing an embarrassing public trial, they sent a message to release Paul and Silas immediately. However, Paul was not going to miss the opportunity to seek some respite from persecution for the fledgling Philippian Ecclesia. He asserted his freeborn status as a Roman citizen knowing the abuse they had received could have serious consequences for the magistrates, which they knew as well. Fearful, the magistrates attended the prison and gently appealed to Paul and Silas. However, Paul deliberately went to Lydia's house where the ecclesia met, for two reasons – to comfort and confirm them, and to make sure the authorities knew that any future persecution might have ramifications.

Acts 17

V.1 – “when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews” – Fruit abounded to the Gospel message in Thessalonica, but not without much tribulation. Unlike Philippi with its predominantly Roman population, this city was a kaleidoscope of nationalities, and not the least of these was the strong Jewish contingent. Macedonians were tough nuts as Philip I and Alexander the Great had shown. Violence and bullying were common among them, and the shallow worship of Greek gods who were alleged to inhabit the 48 peaks of Mt Olympus visible off to the south west captivated them. It was not going to be easy once Paul and his companions were offside with the local Jews.

V.2-9 – After three Sabbaths preaching Jesus as Messiah in the synagogue, a measure of success was attained when “some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.” But the intransigent Jews revolted and hired the lay about bullies of the market place to harass them, and this led to a riot and the involvement of city leaders before whom these Jews repudiated their Messiah and king as their brethren in Jerusalem had done (John 19:15).

V.10-15 – There being no option but to move on, Paul and Silas came to Berea where they preached in the synagogue. “These were **more noble** than those in Thessalonica, in that **they received the word with all readiness of mind**, and **searched the scriptures daily**, whether those things were so. **Therefore many of them believed.**” What an encouraging example this was to all successive generations. “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (1 Thess. 5:21) remains as important today as it ever was. We must let the Word of God speak for itself and not do what so many do – impose upon it what they want it to say, or “heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears” (2 Tim. 4:3). But the extremist Jews from Thessalonica gave Paul no peace and came to disrupt his labours. While some conducted him to Athens for safety, Silas and Timotheus stayed in Berea for a time until he called them later to Corinth (Acts 18:5).

V.16-21 – Paul was no stranger to Greek philosophy and idolatry, but he was deeply stirred by what he encountered in Athens – “his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.” He disputed with Jews in the synagogue seemingly without much success, and daily in the Agora (market place) stirring the passions of legally minded philosophers of two diverse groups – the Epicureans and the Stoicks.

Barnes makes the following comment firstly about the **Epicureans** and then the Stoicks – “This sect of philosophers was so named from Epicurus, who lived about 300 years before Christ. They denied that the world was created by God, and that the gods exercised any care or providence over human affairs, and also the immortality of the soul. One of the

distinguishing doctrines of Epicurus was that pleasure was the summum bonum, or chief good, and that virtue was to be practiced only as it contributed to pleasure. By pleasure, however, Epicurus did not mean sensual and groveling appetites and degraded vices, but rational pleasure, properly regulated and governed. But whatever his views were, it is certain that his followers had embraced the doctrine that the pleasures of sense were to be practiced without restraint. Both in principle and practice, therefore, they devoted themselves to a life of gaiety and sensuality, and sought happiness only in indolence, effeminacy, and voluptuousness. Confident in the belief that the world was not under the administration of a God of justice, they gave themselves up to the indulgence of every passion the infidels of their time, and the exact example of the frivolous and fashionable multitudes of all times, that live without God, and that seek pleasure as their chief good.

And of the **Stoics** – This was a sect of philosophers, so named from the Greek στοά stoa, a porch or portico, because Zeno, the founder of the sect, held his school and taught in a porch, in the city of Athens. Zeno was born in the island of Cyprus, but the greater part of his life was spent at Athens in teaching philosophy. After having taught publicly 48 years, he died at the age of 96, that is, 264 years before Christ. The doctrines of the sect were, that the universe was created by God; that all things were fixed by Fate; that even God was under the dominion of fatal necessity; that the Fates were to be submitted to; that the passions and affections were to be suppressed and restrained; that happiness consisted in the insensibility of the soul to pain; and that a man should gain an absolute mastery over all the passions and affections of his nature. They were stern in their views of virtue, and, like the Pharisees, prided themselves on their own righteousness. They supposed that matter was eternal, and that God was either the animating principle or soul of the world, or that all things were a part of God. They fluctuated much in their views of a future state; some of them holding that the soul would exist only until the destruction of the universe, and others that it would finally be absorbed into the divine essence and become a part of God. It will be readily seen, therefore, with what pertinency Paul discoursed to them. The leading doctrines of both sects were met by him.”

If we were looking for counterparts in our time for the successors of the Epicureans it would be those imbued with Humanistic ideology. There are four pillars to Humanistic doctrine. They are; (1) Man is not natively depraved; (2) The end of life is life itself, the good life on earth instead of the beatific life after death; (3) Man is capable, guided solely by the light of reason and experience, of perfecting the good life on earth; and (4) The first and essential condition of the good life on earth is the freeing of men’s minds from the ignorance and superstition, and their bodies from the arbitrary oppression of the constituted social authorities.

Both these sects felt sufficiently threatened by Paul’s teaching to take him up the Acropolis to the Areopagus (the Mars’ hill of V.22), the highest court in Athens.

V.22-34 – “Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious” – Paul began by pointing to an altar bearing the “inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD” which he had passed on the journey to the Areopagus. Using Gen. 14 as his source (“seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth” – Gen. 14:19,22) he declared the greatness of the God who “giveth to all life, and breath, and all things” and “hath made of **one blood all nations** of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath **determined the times before appointed**, and **the bounds of their habitation**” an allusion to Deut. 32:8 which is an explanation of what happened when God

confused the language of the builders of the tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1-9). Paul's mind is dwelling on Melchizedek and the purpose of God surrounding him. It has been suggested that Paul was at a low ebb in Athens, citing local poets and frustrated by idolatry and philosophy. Nothing could be further from the truth. His address on Mars Hill is one of the finest in the N.T. as it brilliantly says more about O.T. testimonies than many others.

V.31 – “Because he hath appointed a day, in the which **he will judge the world in righteousness** by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath **raised him from the dead**” – This is one of the most ‘loaded’ verses in the N.T. The phrase “he will judge the world in righteousness” is cited from Ps. 9:8, an Armageddon psalm because it has in it the title “Most High” (*elyon* – V.2). This title of God first occurs in Gen. 14 where it is used of “Melchizedek priest of the Most High God” (*el elyon*) and wherever it occurs in both the O.T. or the N.T. (in its Greek equivalent form – *hupsistos*) the subject matter of that context is drawn from Gen. 14. The themes of righteousness, a throne of righteous judgement, and particularly of Armageddon (see V.3,19-20) permeate Ps. 9. Paul's mind is here, so he alludes to many verses in the psalm. Note V.6 – “their memorial is perished with them” (Acts 17:22-23); V.11 which is what he does in Acts 17:23-28; V.12 – “the cry of the humble” (Acts 17:16); V.16 – “the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands” (Acts 17:23,29); V.17 – “all the nations that forget God” (Acts 17:30). It is not hard to see where Paul's mind was on that day. There is also clear reference to Melchizedek in V.31. The Melchizedek order has two vital characteristics; they are “righteousness” (moral); and immortality (physical – see Heb. 7:2,16). These are found in Paul's concluding words cited above.

May 7

Deuteronomy 24

V.1-4 – An accurate translation is essential in understanding this much misunderstood passage – “When a man has taken a wife and married her, and it happens that she finds no favour in his eyes because he has found some matter of nakedness in her, and he writes her a bill of divorce, and puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house; and if she leaves his house and goes and becomes another man's, and the latter man hates her and writes her a bill of divorce, and puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house; or if the latter man dies, who took her to be his wife; her former husband who sent her away is not able to take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for it is an abomination before Yahweh, and you shall not cause the land to sin which Yahweh your God is giving to you as an inheritance.” (Interlinear Bible - amended)

Three things need to be noted from this translation:

1. In the Hebrew there is no break in the text to the end of verse 4. The passage must be considered in its entirety.
2. There is no command or implied permission for a man to divorce his wife or permission for the woman, or the man, to remarry. That is not the purpose of this law.
3. Verses 1-3 constitute the protasis (the conditional clause of a statement) while verse 4 provides the legislation – a prohibition on remarriage to a previously divorced and remarried wife who had been dismissed because of sexual dissatisfaction.

This law is not about any moral fault in the woman as seen in the Rabbinical misinterpretation of Christ's day (Matt. 5:31-32), but rather about ‘the hardness of the heart’

(Matt. 19:8) of those husbands who dismissed their wife due to dissatisfaction with the sexual relationship indicated by the words “some uncleanness” – *ervah dabar* – Lit. “a matter of nakedness.” *Ervah* signifies nakedness (see notes Deut. 23:14), and is the normal word for the nakedness of the sexual organs. Its first occurrence in Gen. 9:22-23 leaves no doubt as to its meaning, nor does its use on 20 occasions in Lev.18. Hence, the problem here is the man, not the woman. This law is about regulating the flippant practice of the times of Moses. It was still happening in Christ’s day as Pharisees following the teachings of Rabbi Hillel found ways to justify and make it “lawful for a man to put away his wife for **every cause**.” Christ condemned the practice.

V.5 – “When a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, neither shall he be charged with any business: but he shall be free at home one year, and shall cheer up his wife which he hath taken.” No mortal man ever did this! Not even Solomon. Only one man will ever succeed in doing this, and that man is Jesus Christ. He will “**cheer up**” his ‘Bride’ at Sinai after granting each member of it eternal life. The words for “cheer up” are *sâmach eth* – to brighten up with himself; to rejoice with (LITV – “shall gladden”). Having spent 1 year in the process of judgement (see notes on Ex. 40 – February 26), the Lord will spend the next year doing nothing else but personally meeting every member of his Bride. There will be no preparations for war; no distracting external business, only rejoicing with the redeemed – Ps. 149; Isa. 61:10; Rev. 19:7-8.

V.6-22 – A variety of laws governing behavior in the everyday affairs of life follow. Considerate and gentle treatment of others less fortunate was to be governed by the memory of the nation’s slavery in Egypt – V.8 – “But thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and Yahweh thy God redeemed thee thence.” Responding positively towards others in gratitude for what has been done for us is the key.

Song of Solomon 4

V.1 – “Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast **doves’ eyes**.” Eyes are a good indication of intelligence and character (Ecc. 8:1). Dove’s eyes suggest gentleness, humility and simplicity. The dove is a symbol of the Spirit (Matt. 3:16). It is the Spirit Word of God that produces character in the members of the Bride.

V.7 – “Thou art all fair, my love; there is **no spot** in thee.” This is what the Bride of Christ will be when displayed to the world (Eph. 5:27; Rev. 21:9; 14:1-5). Bro. Ask comments – “Surely we ought to recognize that it is necessary **now** to develop some of the lovely characteristics of the Bride.”

Acts 18

V.1-17 – Paul’s long and productive relationship with fellow tent makers Aquila and Priscilla began in Corinth after Claudius evicted all Jews from Rome. Paul spent 18 months in Corinth preaching, initially in the Synagogue, but when stiff resistance forced change, he went next door. The eventual conversion of “Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue” saw a dangerous situation arise necessitating Divine reassurance (V.9-10). The volcano of Jewish hatred finally erupted and Paul was dragged before Gallio the Proconsul of Achaia. He had no interest in religious disputes and dismissed the case with corporal punishment being dispensed to “Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue” which did the latter no harm. When Paul later wrote to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 1:1), he includes in his opening greeting Sosthenes who had obviously been converted himself.



V.18-23 – Paul visited Ephesus briefly with Priscilla and Aquila leaving them there as he hastened to Jerusalem to keep a feast (probably the Passover). After returning to Antioch in Syria he began his third missionary journey from there (V.23) – see map above. Travelling through Galatia and Phrygia, he strengthened the ecclesias that had been formed during his first missionary journey.

V.24-28 – Meanwhile, “a certain Jew named **Apollos**, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.” Knowing only the baptism of John, Aquila and Priscilla filled out his understanding and he became a powerful ally of Paul in the work – 1 Cor. 3:5-6; 4:6; Titus 3:13.

Acts 19

Paul spent two years in Ephesus with extensive results all through Asia Minor as is testified in V.10 – “this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.”

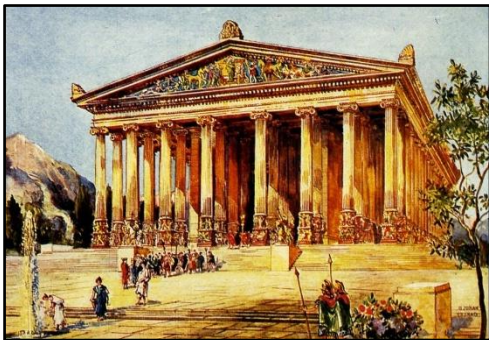
V.2-10 – Paul’s first encounter was with 12 disciples of John the Baptist who having been informed of the need for baptism into Christ immediately obeyed and received the gifts of the Holy Spirit. After three months “disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God” in the synagogue and finding stiff resistance from hardened Judaisers, Paul adjourned to “the school of one Tyrannus” where he preached for two years.

V.11-20 – “God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul” – The scandal of the sons of a Jew named Sceva arose when certain “vagabond Jews, exorcists” sought to replicate Paul’s miracles and took upon themselves “to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus.” It didn’t work and they almost met a sticky end when one mentally unwell man said, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.” Incidents like this only increased the exposure of Paul’s labours and resulted in “the name of the Lord Jesus” being magnified. Many believed and confessed their conversion by burning huge quantities of pagan books – “So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.” Ephesus was being turned upside down like Thessalonica (Acts 17:6). It led to an unmanageable riot.

V.21-41 – Paul was already planning his next moves after two productive years in Ephesus when there “arose no small stir about that way” which culminated in the famous riot in the Amphitheatre in Ephesus. The “love of money is the root of all evil” and the local silversmiths led by Demetrius “which made silver shrines for Diana” had experienced a serious downturn in profits from their trade due to Paul’s success in converting many Ephesians. They fomented strife and ended up in the Amphitheatre (picture at right) with a



multitude of pagan devotees shouting for two hours, “Great is Diana of the Ephesians” after a Jew named Alexander tried to defend the Jewish position. Initially, confusion reigned and many who went along with the crowd did not know what was going on. Paul saw this as an opportunity to preach, but his brethren and some wise leaders in the community with whom he enjoyed a strong relationship prevailed upon him to stay away. The town clerk finally appeased the people with the declaration that Diana remained the god of Ephesus and declaring there was no legal basis for the riot, and that the defendants were not temple robbers (“churches” in KJV) or blasphemers of Diana (her temple pictured at right).



May 8

Deuteronomy 25

V.1-3 – Pristine justice was required of Yahweh’s people. Honesty and integrity is the principal requirement of all who espouse the truth – Mic. 6:8 – “what doth Yahweh require of thee, but **to do justly**, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” – Gen. 18:19 – “they shall keep the way of Yahweh, to **do justice and judgment**”; Prov. 21:3 – “To **do justice and judgment** is more acceptable to Yahweh than sacrifice.”

Deut. 25:4 – “Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.” This was not written for oxen – “Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he *it* altogether for our

sakes?” – 1 Cor. 9:9-10. Like Deut. 24:5, this law was not laid down for the present but for the future sustenance of preachers of the Gospel. The principle involved was – 1 Tim. 5:18 – “For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, the labourer is worthy of his reward.” Also see Luke 10:7 – “And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for **the labourer is worthy of his hire.**”

V.5-10 – The ordinances concerning the Levirate law are laid out. So important was inheritance in Israel that when one brother died without an heir, his living brother was to take his wife and raise an heir for the deceased. Refusal to do so was a family disgrace.

The repudiated wife of the deceased could call her recalcitrant brother-in-law before the elders and remove his shoe from his foot and spit in his face (cp. Num. 12:14). Planting the foot on a thing was a symbol of lordship and of taking possession (Gen. 13:17; Josh. 10:24), and loosing the shoe and handing it to another in like manner signified a renunciation and transfer of right and title (Ruth 4:7-8; Ps. 60:8; 108:9). Thus the reluctant brother was denied any access to his brother's possessions.

V.11-12 – That this law related to the generative organs should come immediately after the Levirate law is suggestive of a connection. Respect for the rightful use of the power of regeneration is in view in both cases. Disrespect and immodesty deserved punishment even if the motive was the saving of the woman's husband from injury.

V.13-16 – These laws hark back to the principles of V.1 – honesty and integrity.

V.17-19 – It is interesting that Amalek is introduced in this context. The motive behind the unrighteous actions of the previous verses was **self-interest**. Amalek is the national representative of the serpent in Scripture (see comments on Ex. 17 – February 9). Self-interest motivated the Amalekites when they attacked Israel in the wilderness. In cowardice they “smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and he feared not God.” They attacked stragglers “in the way” (an exhortation to stay with the main body and not fall behind), and were merciless. Accordingly, Israel was never to forget, and be ready always to utterly destroy Amalek (the serpent), just as we must the serpent within.

Song of Solomon 5

The Seventh Song which begins in Chap. 5:2 through to 6:10 is not like the Fifth and Sixth Songs which are wholly related to the things that happen after the coming of Christ the second time; the Resurrection, Judgement, the Marriage of the Lamb, and the destruction of the hordes that invade God's Land. This song goes back to the first advent of Christ and reflects on the state of Israel, especially the real “Israel of God” (the Bride) when he came the first time. It was a time when darkness had fallen on God's people, and just before they had filled up their iniquity. Only a few responded and acted in the way depicted of the Bride in this song.

Acts 20

V.1-6 – When the riot in Ephesus had been quelled, Paul escaped to Macedonia and visited the fledgling ecclesias there as he had planned (Acts 19:21). Then after 3 months in Greece (mostly in Corinth) it became too dangerous as extremist Jews were plotting to kill him. That imminent danger altered plans to take ship from Cenchrea to Syria. Paul with at least 8 companions decided to travel through Macedonia and take ship from Philippi to Troas after keeping the Passover with the ecclesia there. The record says seven brethren

(mostly Gentile converts) preceded him and Paul sailed later with Luke who had been in Philippi for some time (V.5-6 – note the pronoun “we”).

V.7-12 – The resurrection of Eutychus gave real meaning to one of the longest memorial meetings of all time. After seven days in Troas and on the day before Paul’s departure, the ecclesia came together – V.7 – “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread.” Given that Eutychus fell from a third floor window at midnight, and that Paul continued to speak “till break of day” (5 am there), and then departed, it may be that the meeting started at the end of the Sabbath at 6 pm when the Jewish “first day of the week” began. When the young man was revived and they had “broken bread” (partaking of the emblems) “they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted.” Few memorial meetings have been attended by such excitement, relief and gratitude. The death and resurrection of Christ had been graphically portrayed in the remarkable events of that long night.

V.13-16 – Paul, keen on walking, went by foot from Troas to Assos (36 miles/58 kms) and took ship there to a number of ports, including Miletus. In a hurry to get to Jerusalem for Pentecost, Paul had decided to bypass Ephesus, but wanted to see the leaders of the ecclesia. He knew he would not see them again (V.25).

V.17-31 – Having reminded the elders of Ephesus of the effort and tribulations of three years of labour amongst them, Paul gave a parting exhortation of unparalleled significance typical of a ‘father’ who will not see his ‘family’ until the resurrection. In his absence, they had a solemn responsibility (Rotherham) V.28 – “Be taking heed unto yourselves, and unto all the little flock in which the Holy Spirit hath set you, as overseers,—to be shepherding the assembly of God which he hath acquired through means of **the blood of his own**” (namely, Christ). Then looking at their surprised countenances he warned of coming apostasy – “For I know this, that after my departing shall **grievous wolves** enter in among you, **not sparing the flock**. Also **of your own selves** shall men arise, speaking **perverse things** (*diastrepho* – to distort, i.e. to misinterpret. The root *strepho* means to twist), to draw away disciples after them” (V.29-30). Such is the perversity of human nature.

V.32-38 – In one sentence, Paul sums up the keys to finding an eternal inheritance in the day of account – “And now, brethren, I **commend** you to God, and to **the word of his grace**, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.” Two things are absolutely critical – (1) A genuine personal relationship with God. The word “commend” is *paratithēmi* – to place alongside, beside or near; i.e. present. This is consistent with Rom. 5:1-2 – “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also **we have access by faith into this grace** wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” (2) The power of “the Word of God’s grace which is able (*dunamai* – powerful) to **build**” us up (*epoikodomeō* – to build upon, build up) and to set us apart from the world. This is a threefold cord that is not easily broken – God, His Word and a receptive believer.

Finally, Paul advances his own selfless example after the pattern of Christ and concludes with words of the Lord Jesus Christ that are not recorded in any other place – “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” Human nature does not naturally think that way, but practicing it proves its truth. Strong emotions attended the separation of the Apostle and the brethren of Ephesus, somewhat different to those that will be experienced at the Judgement Seat when Paul’s warning of apostasy will be seen to have come true – 2 Tim. 1:15 – “This

thou knowest, that **all they which are in Asia be turned away from me**; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.”

May 9

Deuteronomy 26

V.1-4 – Previous ordinances concerning the offering of the firstfruits of the Land are extensive – Ex. 23:16; 23:19; 34:26; Lev. 2:12,14; Num. 18:12-13; Deut. 16:10; 18:4. Why then another chapter on this subject? One reason is to define the place to bring the firstfruits to – “the place which Yahweh thy God shall choose to place his name there.” Another is to indicate the **humility** required on such visits with bundles of produce.

V.5-10 – In the script provided here the mightily blessed Israelite confessed his humble origins; a ‘Syrian’ father!!; an oppressed slave in Egypt; saved by the powerful arm of Yahweh (due to no strength of his own); brought into a land flowing with “milk and honey” (which they did not deserve because of their behavior in the wilderness); and bearing the blessings of the land which Yahweh had given (by His grace). And if that humble confession was not enough, after making the offering of the firstfruits, another confession was to be made asserting that absolute integrity in keeping the commandment had been practiced and that it was done in a true spirit of gratitude (V.12-15). We are reminded of “what doth Yahweh require of thee, but to do **justly**, and to love **mercy**, and to walk **humbly** with thy God?” (Mic. 6:8). The focus was not to be on the achievements of men despite the fact that the people of God enjoy a marvelous status – V.18-19.

Song of Solomon 6

The Seventh Song terminates at V.10 of this chapter (see previous comments). The Eighth Song consists only of V.11-13. The Bride comes to “a garden of retirement” (as the Hebrew has it – not “nuts”) and meets a company of virgins who have come to escort her to the Bridegroom. It is the time all the faithful long for.

Acts 21

As seen in Acts 20, all through the areas where Paul had preached, vicious opposition had arisen to him among the Jews. He doubtless knew this was true of Judea as well. On arriving at Tyre, disciples there warned him through the Spirit of the mood in Jerusalem (V.4). Again, at Caesarea in the house of Philip a prophet from Judea named Agabus gave him an enacted warning that he would be bound in Jerusalem (V.8-12). Deflecting the emotional appeals from the brethren, Paul said – “What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to **die** at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.” Paul had reached that point in life expressed to the Philippians – Phil. 1:21 – “For to me to live is Christ, and **to die is gain**” and Phil. 1:23 – “For I am in a strait betwixt two, having **a desire to depart**, and to be with Christ; which is far better.” However, God and Christ had a different plan for him. His work was not yet complete among the Gentiles, though it would yield little fruit among the Jews.

V.17-26 – The visit to James in Jerusalem was not encouraging. Though the brethren received him gladly and rejoiced at the outcomes of his preaching to the Gentiles, it became clear very quickly that the whole situation was on a knife edge. Jerusalem was about to erupt. They prevailed upon Paul to implement his mantra “unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews” (1 Cor. 9:20). Having four men who had

taken and completed a Nazarite vow (Paul had done so himself in Cenchrea – Acts 18:18), they asked him to accompany them into the Temple as a demonstration that the rumors that he had abandoned the Law were untrue. The performance did not work.

V.27-36 – A riot erupted as false accusations of Paul bringing an uncircumcised Gentile into the temple were made. He was only saved from being torn apart by the intervention of the chief captain of the Roman garrison in the Tower of Antonio (see **Appendix 2**). Chained and carried overhead by Roman soldiers for safety, Paul typically asked permission to address the riotous crowd (see Acts 19:30-31). He would miss no opportunity to preach and receiving permission stood on the stairs to do so – V.37-40.

Acts 22

V.1-21 – Quieting the crowd below in the court of the temple as he spoke in Hebrew, Paul recounted his life from childhood right through to his persecution of believers and dramatic conversion on the way to Damascus, and then his subsequent visit to Jerusalem. They listened until he repeated the warning of Christ, “Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.” That was the end. The mention of Gentiles threw them into a foaming rage and Paul was whisked away into the tower – V.22-24.

V.25-29 – Only Paul’s freeborn Roman citizenship saved him from a brutal scourging, and the chief captain who was a redeemed slave was fearful he had overstepped the mark. The next day he commanded the Sanhedrin to convene and brought Paul down to them (V.30).

May 10

Deuteronomy 27

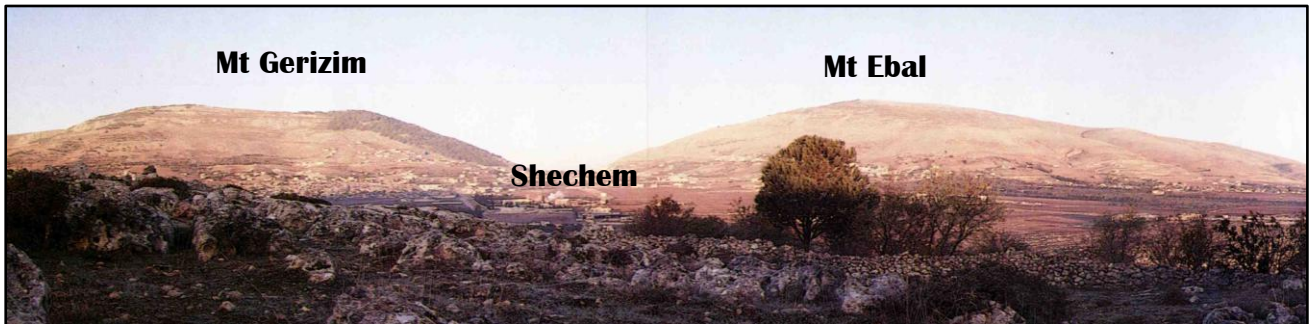
The following summary from the Deuteronomy Expositor is useful – Chapters 27 and 28 comprises the third section in the Book of Deuteronomy indicated by the new commencement: “And Moses with the elders of Israel commanded the people” (Chap. 27:1). Each of the suggested divisions in the book commences with a similar preamble (cp. Chap. 1:1; 4:44; 27:1; 29:1; 31:1). This third section outlines the instructions for a solemn ceremony to be performed on entering the Promised Land; and it gives warning of the consequences to the people if they failed to keep the Covenant which they have accepted. Great privileges having been granted the people of Israel, great responsibilities rested upon them to fulfil their part of the agreement. “You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities”, Yahweh warned the nation through Amos the prophet (Chap. 3:2). This section of Deuteronomy lists the cursings and blessings of the Law, and urges the need to seek the latter so as to enjoy the felicity of Yahweh in the Land which the nation is about to enter.

The section is divided into three parts: (1) A ceremony of remembrance in the Land (Chap. 27); (2) The blessings of the Law (Chap. 28:1-14); (3) The cursings of the Law (Chap. 28:15-68).

V.1-8 – Huge stones on Mt Ebal (near Shechem) were to be plastered so that the Law could be inscribed upon them, and an altar of unhewn stones beside them was to receive burnt (dedication) and peace (fellowship) offerings. This was fulfilled in Josh. 8:30-35 in one of the most amazing mass movements in history. The nation of around two million people was camped on the plain of Jordan near Jericho adjacent to the Valley of Achor (Josh. 7:26). After the defeat of Ai and Bethel in Josh. 8:1-29, the very next thing stated is Josh. 8:30 – “Then Joshua built an altar unto Yahweh God of Israel in mount Ebal.” The

whole nation was present – Josh. 8:35. The distance was around 30 miles (48 kms). This was a huge physical undertaking, but demonstrates Joshua's determination to obey the instructions laid down in Deut. 27.

V.9-26 – The curses of the Law were to be recited by the Levites (V.14) as half the nation stood on the lower slopes of Mt Gerizim (blessing) and the other half on the lower slopes of Mt Ebal (cursing). Between them was Shechem the place of decision making (see Gen. 12:6; Josh. 24:1; John 4, etc.). To each blessing and cursing the people were to give a firm and loud shout of Amen (Heb. verily, truly, so be it). The disposition of the tribes is interesting.



V.12-13 – On Mt Gerizim were “Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Joseph, and Benjamin” – These were sons of Leah and Rachel, whereas those on the Mount of Cursing (Ebal) included the sons of their handmaidens. As is often the case the names of these sons, in order, spell out a sentence – “Those who hear (Simeon), and unite (Levi) in praise (Judah) will be rewarded (Issachar) by increasing (Joseph) the Son of His right hand (Benjamin).” On Mt Ebal, two sons of Leah and the sons of Jacob's handmaid wives stood. Similarly, the meanings of their names in a sentence is – “See a son (Reuben) with a company (Gad) of the blessed (Asher) dwelling (Zebulun) with the Judge (Dan), after wrestling (Naphtali) against sin,” notwithstanding the sin that had blotted the life of Reuben (Gen. 35:22), and the disgraceful idolatry that was to shame the tribe of Dan (Judges 18).

Song of Solomon 7

This chapter contains the Ninth Song from V.1-9 where the Virgins give a description of the Bride, and part of the Tenth Song from V.10-13 where through to chap. 8:4 the Bride extends an invitation to the Bridegroom.

Acts 23

V.1-11 – Using the ‘divide and conquer’ principle, Paul divided the Sanhedrin by highlighting the doctrinal differences between the Sadducees (the ruling class) and the Pharisees (the religious class). The assembly descended into chaos and the chief captain again rescued Paul. The next night while Paul must have been contemplating his future, a similar situation to Acts 9:3-5 occurs – “the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome” (V.11).

V.12-22 – Gamaliel had made the point in Acts 5:38-39 – “if this counsel, or this work be of men, it will come to nought: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.” The forty conspirators who bound themselves with an oath that they would not eat until they had assassinated Paul should have heeded this advice, or at a minimum added a caveat “as long as he is in Jerusalem.”

Providentially, Paul's nephew overheard their machinations and reported it to the chief captain who was still keen to repay his debt for the mistreatment of a Roman citizen.

V.23-35 – Accordingly, Paul was spirited away under a massive contingent of soldiers to Caesarea where he was to be incarcerated for two years. However, his 'debt' being repaid to Paul, the chief captain in his communication could not bring himself to tell the pure truth as he wrote – "This man was taken of the Jews, and should have been killed of them: then came I with an army, and rescued him, **having understood that he was a Roman.**" This is so typical of the defense mechanism in the human brain. It will lie and scheme in blatant self-protection.

Acts 24

V.1-9 – Five days after arriving in Caesarea (the assassins would be getting hungry by now), "Ananias the high priest descended with the elders and with a certain orator named Tertullus" who presented the case against Paul. Oratory without facts and substance rarely impresses intelligent men, and Felix, married to a Jewess (V.24), had a good knowledge of what was happening in Judea (V.10). The flowery oratory of Tertullus accused Paul of being – (1) "a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world," and; (2) "a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes"; and (3) "Who also hath gone about to profane the temple." He presented no actual evidence (V.13).

V.10-21 – When called upon to defend himself, Paul systematically pulled apart the fabric of lies by presenting incontrovertible evidence that his accusers knew was correct. Paul had been in Jerusalem for just one week (12 days minus 5 – cp. V.11 and 1) and his visit to the temple did not involve preaching or arguments either there or anywhere else, hence he was not "a mover of sedition" (V.11-13 answer the first charge). In V.14-16, Paul answered the charge that he was "a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes" by asserting that he, like many others, was a believer in the promises God had made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the resurrection which guaranteed their fulfillment. He was not therefore a political leader. In V.17-20, he sweeps away the charge that he had defiled the temple noting the absence of any witnesses to the contrary.

V.22-27 – Felix was a politician and deferred judgement in order to have opportunity to hear more from Paul in private, and to manipulate the case for political and financial purposes. It is not uncommon for human rulers to deflect the workings of their conscience for personal gain – V.25 – "And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, **Felix trembled**, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."

May 11

Deuteronomy 28

In this chapter, the **outworking** of the blessings and cursings of the Law are described. They form a pattern of prophecy that has seen its fulfilment in the wide sweep of Israelitish history, and therefore, present both warnings and predictions. It is significant that as Ebal (the Mount of Cursing) overtopped Gerizim (the Mount of Blessing), the blessings occupy only 14 verses, whilst the cursings are spread over 54 verses.

V.1-14 – Blessings for obedience are listed which speak for themselves.

V.15-68 – The cursings listed are the antithesis of the blessings. V.25-35 warn that continuing disobedience will result in Yahweh withholding His protection so that marauding armies would devastate the nation. It is the prophetic structure that grabs our attention.

V.32 – Anticipates the Assyrian captivity of the northern tribes of the Kingdom of Israel.

V.35-36 – The Babylonish captivity of Judah in BC 586 is foreshadowed.

V.49-57 – The oppression of Roman rule and the ultimate destruction of AD 66-70 is prophesied. Obvious identifiers of the Roman Empire are noted – the “eagle” (heraldry of the Roman legions); Latin the most diverse language from Hebrew; the rugged Roman countenance with its hooked nose manifested in brutality and cruelty; the ravaging of the land and long sieges of towns and cities leading to cannibalism by the desperate characterized the Roman invasion.

V.62-68 – These verses seem to foreshadow the long period of dispersion of the Jews after AD 70. Wherever they have been they have been persecuted for centuries in pogroms and a holocaust in the 20th century. Truly, it has come to pass – “And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life.”

V.47 – A key exhortation as to why these tragedies would overtake God’s people is as relevant today as it was then – “Because thou servedst not Yahweh thy God with **joyfulness**, and with **gladness of heart**, for the abundance of all things.” Gratitude, manifested by joy and continual thanksgiving is a key indicator of spiritual well-being. It is the ungrateful for what has been done for them that complain and grumble.

Song of Solomon 8

The first four verses conclude the Tenth Song. V.5-7 constitute the Eleventh Song but has three speakers. The Virgins speak the first sentence of V.5, but the Bridegroom the balance of the verse. The Bride responds in V.6, and the Bridegroom in V.7.

The Twelfth Song completes the chapter, but again the Bride and Bridegroom are involved. V.8 the Bride; V.9 the Bridegroom; V.10-12 the Bride; V.13 the Bridegroom; and V.14 the Bride. The last three songs look to the time of the return of Christ and the establishment of the Kingdom. Then the Bridegroom will have taken his Bride and will rejoice with her in the glorious Land promised to the Fathers.

Acts 25

V.1-12 – The leaders of the Sanhedrin prevailed upon Festus to bring Paul to Jerusalem plotting to assassinate him, but Festus refused. The trial that followed in Caesarea was manipulated by Festus and forced Paul’s hand. He appealed to be heard by Caesar which was the right every Roman citizen had. This was the Divinely overshadowed means by which Paul would reach Rome as promised by the Lord – Acts 23:11.

V.13 – This king Agrippa was the son of Herod Agrippa (Acts 12:1). Upon the death of his father’s youngest brother, Herod, he succeeded him in the kingdom of Chalcis, by the favor of the Emperor Claudius. Afterwards, Claudius removed him from that kingdom to a larger one, giving him the tetrarchy of Philip, which contained Trachonitis, Batanea, and Gaulonitis. He gave him, likewise, the tetrarchy of Lysanias, and the province which Varus had governed. Nero made a further addition, and gave him four cities, Abila, Julias in Peraea, Tarichaea and Tiberias in Galilee (Josephus). (Agrippa’s territory is shown in orange on the map below).

Bernice was Agrippa's sister. She had been a courtesan of kings, but spent most of her life living with her brother. Josephus accused them of incest.

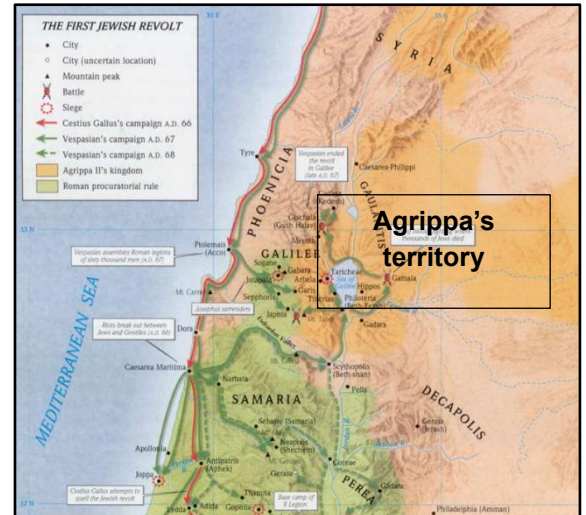
V.14-27 – An unscheduled trial was held as Festus searched for something to write to Caesar concerning the charges against Paul. Agrippa, though an Edomite by heritage was nevertheless well versed in Jewish laws and customs.

Acts 26

V.1-11 – Paul recounted his life story before Agrippa as he had done on previous occasions with particular emphasis on his persecution of the believers. In V.10 he uses the phrase “I gave my **voice** against them” – the word is *psephos* – the pebble used for voting. It is found only here and Rev. 2:17 – “a white stone.”

V.12-23 – Paul told the story of his conversion and the persecution he then suffered in turn from the Jews. Just as in Acts 22:21, when Paul used the word “Gentiles” Festus interrupted him suggesting he was insane.

V.24-32 – Agrippa knew Paul spoke “words of truth and soberness” and upon being asked whether he believed the Prophets confessed that he was swayed by Paul's speech. Privately he advised – “This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds.” Festus's problem of what to write to Caesar had not been resolved.



May 12

Deuteronomy 29

V.1 – “These are the words of the **covenant**, which Yahweh commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, **beside the covenant which he made with them in Horeb.**” The question is raised as to what covenant is being referred to. There are only two covenants that God has made to His nation – that made to their fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – the **Abrahamic Covenant**, and the **Mosaic Covenant** which is the subject of Deuteronomy. This then cannot be a reference to an entirely new covenant. Israel went into the Land of Promise under the Mosaic Covenant and it was not abolished until the death and resurrection of Christ (Gal. 3:13). However, the Law of Moses was “a schoolmaster” to bring Israelites unto Christ that they might be justified by faith in the Abrahamic promises (Gal. 3:24), and it ran, as it were, **parallel** with the Abrahamic Covenant which preceded it by 430 years, but was not ratified by blood until the death of Christ (Rom. 15:8). This is explained by Gal. 3:17 – Weymouth – “I mean that the Covenant (Abrahamic) which God had already formally made is not abrogated by the Law which was given four hundred and thirty years later--**so as to annul the promise.**”

Moses had commenced Deuteronomy by emphasizing that their imminent entry into the Land of Canaan was in fulfillment of the promises God made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. See Deut. 1:8 – “Behold, I have set the land before you: go in and possess the land which Yahweh swore unto your fathers, **Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**, to give unto them and **to their seed after them.**” He had repeated this in Deut. 6:10; 9:5,27; and now in this chapter he brings it to attention again – Deut. 29:13 – “That he may establish

thee today for **a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God**, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to **Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob**.” This is Abrahamic Covenant language drawn from Gen. 17:7 – “And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, **to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee**.”

The covenant confirmed by blood in Horeb (Ex. 24:7-8) consisted of the Ten Commandments and sundry laws given in Ex. 20 to 23. Much had been added to it in the balance of Exodus, the books of Leviticus and Numbers, and now repeated and augmented in Deuteronomy with a number of additions. This is what Moses is referring to in V.1. It is the **Mosaic Covenant in its completed written form** now yoked with the Abrahamic Covenant which is the key to an eternal inheritance in the Land. That is why Moses says in V.9 – “Keep therefore the words of **this covenant**, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do.” See also V.20 – “all the curses that are **written in this book** shall lie upon him” – a clear reference to the book of the Law of Moses. These laws were for them and their unborn children and successive generations (V.14-15).

What follows in this chapter can be summed up in a single sentence. If the principles of the Law were kept and they remained faithful to Yahweh, then they would ultimately receive a permanent inheritance in the Land through the Abrahamic promises. We marvel with Moses at the things that have been revealed.

V.29 – “The **secret things** belong unto Yahweh our God: but those things which are **revealed** belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.”

Isaiah 1

When Isaiah’s opening words – Isa. 1:1 – “The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he **saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem** in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah” are compared with Isa. 2:1 – “The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz **saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem**,” there is reasonable ground to accept the long held view that Isa. 1 is actually a preface or foreword to the book added much later. This is also supported by echoes in Isa. 1 drawn from chapter 66. For example, compare 66:16 (“by fire”) with 1:7 (“your cities are burned with fire”); 66:17 (“purify themselves in the gardens”) with 1:29 (“the gardens that ye have chosen”); 66:20 with 1:3; 66:22 (“new heavens and the new earth”) with 1:2 (“Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth”); 66:23 (“one new moon to another”) with 1:13-14 (“the new moons and sabbaths”); etc. If this is so, then the book actually opens with the wonderful vision of the Kingdom established in Isa. 2. That is an Apocalyptic structure so often found in Scripture.

V.1 – The message is addressed to “heavens” (i.e. leaders of government) and “earth” (the rest of the nation – see Isa. 24). They are also described differently in V.10 as “**rulers** of Sodom” and “**people** of Gomorrah.”

V.2-6 – By the time of Manasseh, the whole nation was as faithless as Ahaz and leprous as Uzziah the would-be Messiah. Like Saul’s asses they had lost their way and had the worst form of leprosy – that in the forehead (brain). The land had been ravaged in the days of Ahaz and Hezekiah (V.7-9). The daughter of Zion looked like a “cottage” (*sukkah* = booth) left stranded in the field – V.8.

V.10-15 – Yahweh repudiates their hypocritical worship, likening them to Sodom and Gomorrah. This blistering condemnation of their religious practices can be summed up in

the words of Solomon – Prov. 21:27 – “The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination: how much more, when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?”

V.16-20 – There is always a way back for the repentant. This means cessation of evil practices; learning a new way and overcoming evil with good (Rom. 12:21). The key to recovery is turning to Yahweh’s Word (“Come now, and let us reason together, saith Yahweh”). It is as true today as it was then – V.19 – “If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land.”

V.21-31 – The Sodom-like character of Jerusalem would see its timely demise, but it would have a much brighter future in the coming day described in Isa. 2:1-5.

Tradition has it that Isaiah was “sawn asunder” by Manasseh (Heb. 11:37). If that is the case, and it is true that chapter 1 was written after the whole prophecy was completed in the days of Hezekiah, then a motive for his brutal death is revealed. It is truly an unsparing condemnation of the condition of the nation in the days of Ahaz and of Manasseh (son of Hezekiah).

Acts 27

Paul’s dramatic voyage to Rome illustrated in the map below is a demonstration that while God’s servants are subject to all the same trials that confront mankind, the promises God makes will always bring them through to the desired end. Paul had been told he would get to Rome (Acts 23:11), so he could have complete confidence that whatever the storm would do to the ship, its cargo and passengers, the promise to him would be fulfilled. We need a similar confidence as an incredible ‘storm’ looms over ‘the sea of nations.’ Christ will come and calm the storm and fulfil the promises God has made in him.

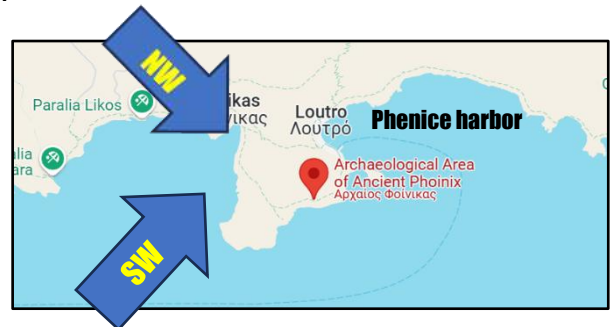
V.1-8 – Luke provides details of the transport arrangements for Paul and uses the pronouns “we” and “us” a number of times, so what we have is a personal witness account.



V.9 – “Now when much time was spent, and when **sailing was now dangerous**, because the **fast** was now already past.” The seas were closed from 11 November to 10 March during the winter months. It was deemed risky from 15 September to 10

November and from 11 March to 26 May. The safe season was from 27 May to 14 September. The “fast” is a reference to the Day of Atonement which fell on 24 September in AD 60. Hence, Paul “admonished them” (V.10).

V.11-12 – Forsaking ‘The Fair Havens’ due to its lack of winter ‘distractions’ and a 2 hour walk to Lasea, they made for Phenice (Phoenix), a larger city with a safer port. Its port had protection from NW and SW winds. Being late September their plan was foiled by Euroclydon (Thayer – “a violent agitation”).



V.13-15 – “there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called **Euroclydon**” – It was evidently a wind not blowing steadily from any quarter, but a hurricane, or wind veering about to different quarters. Such hurricanes are known to abound in the Mediterranean. The ship, depending on wind for propulsion, became unsteerable, so they “let her drive.”

V.16-44 – RV – “And running under the lee of a small island called Cauda, we were able, with difficulty, to secure the boat” – Note the island is actually called Cauda (not Clauda), and is a small island about 20 miles (32 kms) southwest of Crete. They passed to the north of that island and struggled to lift the life boat aboard to save it from being smashed by the waves.

After 14 days trying everything possible to lighten the ship with its 276 passengers who had not seen the sun or stars for most of that time, morale and hope were at the lowest possible ebb. However, when soundings at night revealed that land was near and the sailors were prevented from using the boat to flee, Paul told all on board of the message he had received from an angel that God’s promise to him would be fulfilled – “thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.” This galvanized everyone to take some sustenance and prepare for the events of the new day. And so it came to pass that all 276 were washed up on the island of Malta.

May 13

Deuteronomy 30

V.1 – “when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse” – Moses knew that the curses of chapter 28 would ultimately fall upon his people as they indeed have. His hope was that they would “call them to mind among all the nations, whither Yahweh thy God hath driven thee” and ultimately be redeemed – V.2-3.

V.4 – That redemption will only be possible when Christ returns and sends Elijah with many saints to recover Israel from their dispersion in the Second Exodus of Israel. That is why the phrase “the outmost parts of heaven” is used by Christ in the Olivet Prophecy – Matt. 24:31 – “And he shall send his angels (Elijah and saints) with a great sound of a trumpet (Isa. 18:3; 27:13; Zech. 9:14), and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds (Zech. 2:6), from **one end of heaven to the other.**”

V.5-10 – What was required was obedience to the principles of this law – V.6 – “And Yahweh thy God will **circumcise thine heart**, and the heart of thy seed, to love Yahweh thy God with all thine **heart**, and with all thy **soul**, that thou mayest live” (Deut. 6:5).

V.11-20 –The word “hidden” – *niphlaith* implies, not too wonderful for thee to comprehend or perform; but easily to be acquainted with, and understood, because clearly revealed. Paul picks up some of the words of V.11-14 and weaves them into his argument about “Christ (being) **the end of the law for righteousness** to everyone that believeth” (Rom. 10:4). Rom. 10:5-8 (the italicized words are from Deut. 30) – “For Moses describeth **the righteousness which is of the law**, that the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the **righteousness which is of faith** speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, *Who shall ascend into heaven?* (that is, to bring Christ down from above); or, *Who shall descend into the deep?* (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). But what saith it? *The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart:* that is, the word of faith, which we preach.” Simplifying Paul’s argument, he is saying that obtaining righteousness by law was impossible. However, if his preaching of the Gospel of a resurrected Christ, now in heaven, was believed then all the strenuous efforts of law keeping would be replaced by faith in the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

As in all ages, when people are called to the Truth, they have a choice between life and death – V.15.19 – “See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil.” This is the principle Christ so often stressed – Luke 9:24-25; 17:33; Matt 10:39; Mark 8:35-37; 16:25; Rev. 2:10.

Isaiah 2 – The glory of Yahweh’s House

V.2 – “all nations shall flow unto it” – Water naturally flows downhill into the sea (Ecc. 1:7), but when the Kingdom is established and the Temple built, the attitude of all peoples will change. They will say “**let us go up** to the mountain of Yahweh, to the house of the God of Jacob” seeking to be educated in **higher** things (V.3). However, this will only come about by the severity of Divine judgements dispensed in the earth (V.4), and these judgements are the subject of the balance of the chapter.



V.6-9 – The ungodliness (Rom. 11:26) of Israel of the latter days will need to be purged by severe judgements (Ezek. 39:21-26; Zech. 13:8-9).

V.10-22 – The judgements of Armageddon and beyond will be of such magnitude that a good proportion of the world’s population will perish (Jer. 25:32-33; Ps. 110:6). If Yahweh intends to wipe out two thirds of Jews in the Land at the time of Armageddon, it is unlikely that it will be less in the rest of the world. Three times in this bracket of verses it is stated that men “shall go into the **holes of the rocks**, and into the **caves of the earth**, for fear of Yahweh, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to **shake terribly the earth**.” They will cast away all the things in which they trust and seek refuge in “the **clefts of the rocks**, and into the **tops of the ragged rocks**.” This suggests the destruction of dwellings by earthquakes and the consequent tsunamis that will act like a giant vacuum cleaner. Mankind has been given a taste of this in recent times.

Acts 28

V.1-10 – Safe on the island of Malta, Paul and his 275 companions were treated well by the local population for their winter sojourn of several months. Mark 16:18 comes into play – “They shall **take up serpents**; and if they drink any deadly thing, **it shall not**

hurt them; they shall **lay hands on the sick**, and they shall recover.” This is exactly what happened. Gathering sticks for the fire, Paul had a viper seize on his hand. He calmly walked it to the fire and shook it off. The locals knowing how potent the venom of the snake was attributed evil worthy of death to him and watched amazed as Paul experienced no effects. There is a lesson and a prophecy in this. The serpent represents human nature and the fire judgement. “The sting (venom) of death is sin” (1 Cor. 15:56). In Christ, there is forgiveness of sin, and in the case of spirit-gifted Apostles, a miraculous way to deal with its consequences. The ‘serpent’ in all its forms will one day be destroyed from the earth – Rev. 20. Paul employed the same power to cure the severe dysentery of the father of the ruler of the island – “Paul entered in, and prayed, and **laid his hands on him**, and healed him.”

V.11-16 – About the beginning of February AD 61 Paul and his Roman guard board a ship whose sign was Castor and Pollux. This seeming unnecessary detail by Luke suggests he saw some significance in it. These were two semi-deities. They were reputed to be twin brothers, sons of Jupiter and Leda, the wife of Tyndarus, king of Sparta. After their death, they are fabled to have been transported to heaven, and made constellations under the name of Gemini, or the Twins. They then received divine honors, and were called the sons of Jupiter. They were supposed to **preside over sailors**, and to be their protectors; hence it was not uncommon to place their image on ships. Paul and his companions had a far greater protector – Ps. 107:23-31. Stopping at several ports, they finally arrived at Puteoli the port of Rome. They met brethren along the way and finally reached Rome in fulfilment of Acts 23:11.

V.17-31 – Paul’s encounter with the Jews in Rome was not particularly fruitful. Extensive teaching surrounding “the Hope of Israel” for which he was bound (V.20) yielded only a few Jewish converts, so Paul focused on the Gentiles (V.28). Sadly, in relation to his Jewish brethren he was moved to cite Isa. 6:9-10 again as Christ had done in John 12:40. Paul had to wait two years to get a hearing before the emperor Nero and having his own residence used it as a haven for “Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him” (V.31). By the time he was released there was an ecclesia of Jews and Gentiles in Rome – Rom. 1:7-8.

May 14

Deuteronomy 31

V.1-23 – The fifth discourse of Deuteronomy can be summarized as follows:

1. The people are exhorted to faith and courage (V.1-6);
2. Joshua is appointed to succeed Moses and given a charge (V.7-8);
3. The Law is delivered to the priests for instruction of the people (V.9-13);
4. Yahweh warns of coming apostasy and instructs Moses to write a song (V.14-22);
5. Moses’ personal charge to Joshua (V.23).

V.24-29 – 6th discourse – Moses instructed the Levites to deposit the completed book of the Law in the side of the Ark as a witness against Israel, for he prophesied a serious falling away after his death.

V.30 – Introduced the Song of Moses – Deut. 32:1-43.

Isaiah 3

While it is evident that the judgements to fall on God's people considered in this chapter are applicable to numerous periods of Israel's history, it should be kept in mind that Isa. 2 is clearly about the judgements of Armageddon, and that Isa. 4 looks to the redemption of a remnant of Israel; the glory of Zion and the wonder of the Temple of the future Age. Therefore, there are clearly elements of chapter 3 that have a latter day application. As Solomon observed, "there is no new thing under the sun" (Ecc. 1:9). Human behavior is always consistent. The only thing that is different are the circumstances and culture of the era in which it is manifested. Do we not observe identical patterns of behavior in the Humanistic era in which we live?

V.4 – "I will give **children** to be their princes, and **babes shall rule over them**"; and V.5 – "the **child** shall behave himself proudly against the **ancient**"; and V.12 – "**children** are their oppressors." Young people and children virtually 'rule' the world in the modern era, and respect for elders is a thing of the past.

V.12 – "**women rule over them**"; and V.16 – ESV – "the **daughters** of Zion are haughty and walk with outstretched necks, glancing wantonly with their eyes, mincing along as they go." Since 1975, the International Women's Year, the world has been subjected to continual anti-Scriptural pressure to secure what is called "equality" for women. After half a century 'the jury is no longer out'. The ruin of the 'nuclear family' (the Biblical ideal); resultant massive rates of divorce; decades of Noah era "marrying and being given in marriage" (ESV); 'positive' discrimination to elevate women into executive roles and government, and the shameless exploitation of the 'image' of women in multiple forms of media and fashion have brought human society to the brink of the "time of trouble such as never was" (Dan. 12:1). Judgement is coming to cleanse the world. As Bro. Roberts commented on this chapter – "When God rules in the heart, everything is in place; when He is dethroned, nothing is right. Life itself is unlawful."

Isaiah 4

V.1 rightly belongs to chapter 3 as it is the consequence of Isa. 3:25 – "Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war."

V.2-4 – Once the cleansing judgements of the future have purged Israel, a remnant will be revealed in two separate forms; (1) The mortal survivors of Armageddon – Zech. 13:8-9; and, (2) Those "written among the living in Jerusalem"; i.e. whose names are in the Book of Life (V.3); namely, the faithful remnant from past eras who resisted the apostasies that marked Israel's history. The theme of a remnant will dominate the book of Isaiah from here on. For example, when Isaiah brought his son Sheerjashub (a sign to God's people – Isa. 8:18) to faithless and apostate Ahaz (Isa. 7:3), it was a message that despite the judgements that would fall on Judah because of Ahaz, "a remnant will return" (the meaning of the name Sheerjashub).

V.5-6 – Rotherham – "Then will Yahweh, create—over all the home of Mount Zion and over her assembly, A cloud by day and a smoke, And the shining of a fire-flame, by night,—For over all the glory, shall be a canopy; and a pavilion, shall there be for a shade by day, from the heat,—and for a refuge and for a shelter, from storm and from rain." This is a reference to the Temple of the Future Age.

Bro. Sulley in his book 'The Temple of Ezekiel's Prophecy states – "Applying these premises to the Ezekiel description, there should be no difficulty in comprehending how the large

central area of the Temple becomes a 'tent' when the necessary element obtains which justifies the application of that term. The provision of this element is predicted in the prophecy of Isaiah" (and then cites V.3-6 from the RV). He continues – "The fulfilment of this prophecy converts the arena of the Most Holy into a tent. The prophecy also foretells an unprecedented manifestation of glory when Israel is restored. The coming glory was typically portrayed in the tabernacle in the wilderness, and in Solomon's Temple. (See Ex. 40:34-38; Num. 14:10; 16:42; 2 Chron. 5:13,14.) But as then, so in its future manifestation, this glory is not to be fully exposed to view. It is to be covered, or surrounded by a means of protection, or 'defence.'" He later explains why such a 'defence' is necessary – "All the shadows of such a cloud may be gradations of light, and from the inside may display prismatic colours, while from the outside appearing as *thick darkness* to the human beholder, veiling the glory, and providing a *defence* for mortals in order that they may not be consumed while worshipping their Creator." The vision is illustrated below.



Colossians 1

The epistles known as Ephesians and Colossians are very similar in content and complementary to each other, which is why Paul says epistles of this type were for general circulation – Col. 4:16. It is suggested the Epistle to the Laodiceans is actually what is called the letter to the Ephesians, but this is of little moment because of their general nature.

V.9-12 – Paul mentions several indispensable fundamentals of life in the Truth that had been observed in the Colossian ecclesia – (1) The need to “be **filled** with the knowledge of his (God’s) will in all **wisdom** and **spiritual understanding**”; which leads to (2) Walking “worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being **fruitful** in every good work, and **increasing** in the knowledge of God”; but there being room for improvement he encourages; (3) “**Strengthened** with all might, according to his glorious power (through the Word), unto all **patience** and longsuffering with **joyfulness**” (remember Deut. 28:47 – “Because thou servedst not Yahweh thy God with **joyfulness**, and with **gladness** of heart”); and finally in gratitude “give **thanks** to the Father who has made us fit to receive our share of the inheritance of God’s people in Light” (Weymouth).

V.13-14 – While the Diaglott translation is a little clunky, it gets to the root of V.13 – “who delivered us from the authority of the darkness, and **caused a change of sides** for the kingdom of the son of the love of himself.” We are not there yet, but we are now on the right side, and in Christ “the son of His love” we have forgiveness of sins.

V.15-23 – Paul launches into a beautiful description of the status of the glorified Christ. This section becomes more intelligible when the bias of the 1611 translators is set aside. V.16 (Weymouth) – “For **in Him** was created the universe of things in heaven and on earth, things seen and things unseen, thrones, dominions, principedoms, powers--all were created, and exist **through and for Him.**” In other words, as he said, “thou lovedst me **before the foundation of the world**” – John 17:24. Though not born until the end of the fourth millennium after Creation, he was always in the mind of his Father.

V.19 – “For it pleased the Father that in him should **all fulness dwell.**” It needs to be remembered that there was no difference in the mental and moral ‘glory’ of Christ before and after his immortalization. This is the point of Rom. 6:3-5. We are called upon to follow the glorified Christ, for nothing changed morally when he was glorified – “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever” (Heb. 13:8).

V.24-29 – Paul’s numerous sacrifices and sufferings to preach the Gospel were designed to duplicate in many others the same commitment to Christ that they saw in him.

May 15

Deuteronomy 32

Much of the Song of Moses speaks for itself, but there are many important facets to it. Here are a few. It is addressed to leaders (“heavens”) and common people (“earth”) in V.1. Cp. Isa. 1:2.

V.2 – Yahweh’s Word (His doctrine) is likened to water (rain) and dew – water is a symbol for God’s Word throughout Scripture.

V.4 – Yahweh is described as “the Rock” (*tzur* – a great boulder). Rocks have a distinctive and unchangeable character like Yahweh (Mal. 3:6), but His children did not bear his image (“spot” – V.5), just like the Apostles’ generation – Acts 2:40.

V.8 – “When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel” – This is a key verse in the O.T. It opens up a plethora of important lines of thought. It is a reference to the scattering of the family of Noah into 70 nations after Nimrod’s rebellion (Gen. 10; 11:1-9). Jacob had 12 sons, but when he went to Egypt he had 70 progeny (Gen. 46:27). This formula – to the Jew first, and then to the Gentile runs all through Scripture (Ex. 15:27; Luke 9:1; 10:1). This foreshadows that Yahweh is determined to reverse Nimrod’s rebellion by ultimately bringing all nations back into one (Israel) through the Abrahamic promises – Jer. 30:10-11; Rev. 21:1.

V.21 – The salvation of the Gentiles is described – cited Rom. 10:19.

V.41-43 introduce Armageddon and its outcomes.

V.44 is picked up in Rev. 15:3 – “And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb” (Hoshea = “salvation” the son of Nun = “perpetuity”).

V.48-52 – Moses is given instructions concerning his imminent death which is to be mollified with a view of the Land of Promise which he will later enter as an immortal.

Isaiah 5

V.1-7 – The parable of Yahweh’s vineyard became the source of Christ’s parables of the vineyard – Matt. 21:33-44; Mark 12:1-12; Luke 20:9-18; John 15:1-8. In Isaiah’s time, Israel

was Yahweh's vineyard – V.7 – “For the **vineyard** of Yahweh of hosts is the house of **Israel**.” He had planted in it “the choicest vine” – Israel – Ps. 80:8.

V.1 (ESV) – “Let me sing for my beloved my love song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill.” The final three words of the verse are *ben shemen qeren* – Lit. the son (family builder) of a horn (symbol for power) of oil (symbol for the Word). In other words, a family built through a Son by the power of the Word of God. This was Christ's message in John 15:1-8. The people of his time refused the Son of God; rejected his words (from God) and had the vineyard taken from them and given to the Gentiles – Matt. 21:43; interpreted in Isa. 65:1; Rom. 10:20.

V.8-25 – **Six woes** follow that describe the condition of the keepers of the vineyard in that day – V.8,11,18,20,21,22. These same evils dominate the Humanistic world of our day (**6** being the number of **man**) and are impacting the vineyard of the latter days. What are they?

V.8-10 – **Greed** that takes **no care** for others; V.11-12 – **Inebriation** and frivolous **entertainment** to the exclusion of God (V.13); V.18-19 – Determination to sin and unrepentant; deliberately provoking Divine judgement; V.20 – Complete inversion of God's principles = Humanism; V.21 – High-mindedness, leaning on their own understanding and dismissive of God's Word = Humanism; V.22 – Giants of wickedness through inebriation; justifying the wicked and undermining the righteous. It is significant that Christ warned of the possibility of once faithful stewards doing exactly that just before he returned – Matt. 24:48-49 – “But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to **smite his fellow servants**, and to eat and drink with the **drunken**.” The root of the problem is revealed in V.24 – “because they have cast away the law of Yahweh of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.”

V.25 – The earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah (who thought he was Messiah) would signal the arrival of Divine judgement in that day and ours – “the hills did **tremble**, and their carcasses were torn in the midst of the streets” – Amos 1:1; Zech. 14:4-5. The words that end this verse – “For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still” are repeated in Isa. 9:12,17,21; 10:4 and are worth highlighting as they clearly point to greater events to come in the latter days foreshadowed by what happened to Judah and Israel of old.

V.26-30 – The concluding verses speak of the judgements that would fall on God's people through successive ‘lion-like’ invasions – Assyrian, Babylonian (Jer. 50:17), and Roman – “And he will lift up an ensign (a flag) to the nations from far, and will hiss (pipe) unto them from the end of the earth: and, behold, they shall come with speed swiftly” to destroy Israel and Judah, and darkness would prevail (V.30).

Colossians 2

Most ecclesias in the first century were troubled by the activities of Judaisers who having come to the faith in Christ had not abandoned their commitment to the Law of Moses, and also by Gentiles who had not entirely given up Greek philosophy. Paul leads into this subject by writing in V.4 – “And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with **enticing words**” and followed up with V.8 – “Beware lest any man spoil you through **philosophy** and vain deceit, after the **tradition** of men, after the **rudiments** of the world (law-keeping – Gal. 4:3), and not after Christ.” The answer was to walk in Christ being “**Rooted and built up in him**, and **stablished** in the faith, as ye have been taught” (V.7).

V.10-15 – Exalting Christ, Paul makes some very important points. Firstly, he compares baptism into Christ to circumcision (V.11-13), for it is, like the death of Christ, the cutting off of the flesh. Secondly, he demonstrates the fulfilment of Gen. 3:15 in V.14-15.

V.15 – “Having spoiled” – *apekduomai* (singular, masculine, middle voice) – to divest wholly one’s self; wholly to strip off for one’s self. Lit. – “having stripped.” (Cp. “spoil” V.8 – *sulagogeō* – to lead away as booty).

“principalities and powers” – *arche* = chief (akin to *arkon*), and *exousia* = authorities. Both these words are preceded by the definite article.

“made a shew” – *diegmatiszo* – to exhibit. Bearing their nature but denying it.

“openly” – *en parrhesia* – Lit. “in public.” Denotes the deportment by which one becomes conspicuous or secures publicity. Christ did that on the cross.

“triumphing over” – *thriambeuo* (singular, masculine) – to make an acclamatory procession; i.e. to conquer. Lit. “leading in triumph.”

“them” – *autous* (plural, masculine) – Lit. “themselves.”

“in it” – *en auto* (singular, masculine, dative case – the case of personal interest). Lit. **“within himself.”**

Christ's triumph over the serpent in himself was complete on the tree – thus he triumphed over the power that motivated Jewish and Roman principalities to crucify him. How many perceived who was the true victor on that day?

V.16-23 – Paul repudiates Judaism (V.16). and Greek philosophy (V.18). Weymouth’s translation notes that these false prophets claimed to have seen visions (different to KJV) – “Let no one defraud you of your prize, priding himself on his humility and on his worship of the angels, and taking his stand on **the visions he has seen**, and idly puffed up with his unspiritual thoughts.”

V.19 is very similar to Eph. 4:13-16.

V.20-23 is a final rejection of Judaism with its outward show of observance of law by negativity that he called “will worship.” The final phrase of V.23 is better rendered by the ESV – “but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.”

May 16

Deuteronomy 33

The blessing of the tribes is Moses’ last public act, and parallels with the blessing by Jacob of his sons before his death (Gen. 49). Before ascending Mount Nebo, to view the land he was not then permitted to enter, and then to die, Moses pronounced a blessing upon the people he had guided and ruled for 40 years. Each tribe is mentioned but not in order of birth with the exception of Simeon who is not mentioned. The word for “hear” – *shama* (Deut. 6:4) is used 91 times in Deuteronomy. Moses’s song had begun with “hear, O earth” (Deut. 32:1), but Moses knew the nation would not hear (Deut. 31:29), so Simeon (which means “hearing”) is omitted from the blessings. The tribe of Simeon had also been most prominent in the shameful apostasy of Israel at Baal-Peor.

V.2-3 – These verses combined with Ps. 68 and Habakkuk 3 are used by Bro. Thomas in Eureka (Vol. 3 pgs. 179-180 – Logos Edition) to expound the March of the Rainbow Angel from Sinai to the Sanctuary. The following slides summarize the content.

i.e. Israel Deut. 33:2

Heb. *zarach* – to irradiate (or shoot forth beams), i.e. to rise (as the sun)

Bro. Thomas – “Yahweh came in from Sinai”

2 And he said, The LORD came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them.

Heb. *athah* – to arrive, to appear speedily, suddenly and unexpectedly

Events Subsequent to the Return of Christ

Psalm 68:17

Heb. *shinan* – to change, reiterate, a repeating; thousands of repetitions, i.e. myriads. Roth. – “the chariots of God are two myriads, thousands repeated”. Alternative – “the changed ones”.

17 The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place

Ginsburg – “the Lord hath come from Sinai into the Sanctuary”. Comp. Bible – “Yahweh among them hath come from Sinai into His Sanctuary”. Jerusalem Bible – “The Lord has left Sinai for His Sanctuary”.

Events Subsequent to the Return of Christ

Habakkuk 3:3-4

Heb. *yahvo* – ‘shall come in’

Heb. *Eloah* – the mighty one

Bro. Thomas – “Eloah shall come in from the south”.
The South (Sinai)

3 God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise.


4 And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand: and there was the hiding of his power.

Heb. *qeren* – a horn (as projecting); a ray of light

Heb. *chebyown* – a concealment. Jer. Bible – “that is where his power lies hidden”

The path taken by Yahweh Sabaoth as seen by Moses, David and Habakkuk

1. Subdues Sinaitic Arabs – Hab. 3:7
2. Smites and heals Egypt – Isa. 19
3. To the Sanctuary



The map shows the path of Yahweh Sabaoth starting from Egypt (labeled 2), moving through Sinai (labeled 3), and finally reaching the Sanctuary in Jerusalem (labeled 1). Other locations marked include Amman, Jordan, Aqabah, and the Dead Sea.

V.3 – Rotherham – “Yea he loved the **tribes**, All his holy ones, were in thy hand,— Yea, they, were encamped at thy feet, **Each one bare away some of thy words.**” These blessings were on “the children of Israel” (V.1). They are the “them” of V.2 and the ‘hearers’ among them will form part of the army of Yahweh Sabaoth in the day when these prophecies are fulfilled.

V.5 – The name “Jeshurun” (“the upright one”) occurs 3 times in Deuteronomy. The first in Deut. 32:15 – “But **Jeshurun** waxed fat, and kicked.” This was not encouraging for Moses who was ‘king’ (ruler), but there is more hope expressed in V.26 – “There is none like unto the God of **Jeshurun**, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky.” “Israel then shall dwell in safety alone.” The ultimate redemption of Israel is assured when ungodliness is turned away from Israel by the true ‘upright one’ – Rom. 11:26.

The blessings on the tribes largely speak for themselves. Levi’s blessing though has far-reaching ramifications for the future mission of Christ.

V.8-11 – Bro. Thomas expounding on the relationship of this passage with Ex. 17:6 and 1 Cor. 10:4 in Eureka Vol. 2 pgs. 328-329 – Logos Edition, says this – The Holy man, *ish khasid*, with whom they strove, stood upon the rock, and thus, in a figure, made the rock a part of himself; and representative of something afterwards to be smitten by certain, who, like Moses, should speak unadvisedly with their lips. In that way, it became a “spiritual rock.” Paul says, “the Rock was Christ;” that is, it was representative of him. The Holy Man upon the rock was the Elohist representative of the Deity dwelling in light whom no man hath, or can see

(1 Tim. 6:16). He spoke the words of the Invisible One, by whose power, placed at his disposal, water was made to flow. Hence, Eternal and Almighty Power pervaded the rock in Horeb so long as the water gushed forth and followed them in their wanderings. The Holy Man himself was an embodiment of this power; and as the same power was afterwards to be manifested in the nature of Abraham, and thus become his Seed, the Rock became highly typical of Christ.

V.13-16 – Compare Jacob's blessing of Joseph – Gen. 49:22-26. Many similarities.

Moses' blessing of Levi – Deut. 33:8

- ❖ "Levi" – "joined to".
- ❖ "Thummim" – "perfection", "fulness" (5 occs.)
- ❖ "Urim" – "lights". 7 occs. O.T., although it is said **Ex. 28:30** is the singular *ur*.
- ❖ "holy" – *chasiyd* – faithful, kind, godly, holy one, saint, pious. 1st occ. **Rotherham** translates as "man of loving-kindness". Used of Christ – **Ps. 16:10; 89:19**.
- ❖ "prove" – *nasah* – to test, try, prove, tempt, assay, put to the proof or test. 1st occ. **Gen. 22:1** "tempt". Used **Ex. 15:25; 16:4; 17:2,7**.
- ❖ "strive" – *riyb* – to strive, contend. The word used **Ex. 17:2**.

Deuteronomy 34

Moses is given the blessing of seeing the Land he will one day inherit and Joshua assumes the leadership of Israel. Given the propensity of Israel for idolatry, the burial place of Moses is concealed. He had been faithful unto the end – "Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant" (Heb. 3:5) and "there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom Yahweh knew face to face" except for the greater than Moses – the Lord Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 6

Isa. 6:1 – "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord (should be Yahweh) sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple." The presumptuous king Uzziah who thought he was Messiah, and sought to add the high-priesthood to his titles (knowing that Messiah would be a king-priest after the order of Melchisedec), was a type of **modern Israel** who since the mid-19th century have claimed to be "the Messiah" as historians testify. They attribute their achievements to their own strength as modern secular Israel does.

"Not until they came to perceive, beginning in the 1860's, that they would have to act as their **own Messiah** did the return to Israel actually become realizable..." – 'Bible and Sword' – Barbara Tuchman

"The Jewish people must be their **own Messiah**," wrote the historian Heinrich Graetz in 1864.

Asked if the Jews still awaited Messiah, Rabbi Abrahams said in Jerusalem in the early 1970s; "**We are the Messiah**".

Like Uzziah, they need to be humbled so they realize that like him they have leprosy in the forehead (2 Chron. 26:20). Hence, Zech. 14:5 – "ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of **Uzziah** king of Judah," and Zech. 13:1 – "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for **uncleanness**" (such as leprosy). It is highly significant therefore that the vision of Christ in glory (John 12:41) as a king-priest in the company of his glorified saints should be introduced with the words, "In the year that **king Uzziah died**." It will require the 'death' of the proud and 'leprous' nation of Israel today before Christ can sit among the humbled remnant and rule over them.

The chart carried over from comments on John 12 on April 19 (pg. 39) provides the detail.

Isaiah 6:1-4	Revelation 4
V.1 – “I saw also Yahweh (as it should be) sitting upon a throne , high and lifted up.”	V.2 – “a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.” The Greek word <i>thronos</i> occurs 14 times in Rev. 4 and another 5 times in Rev. 5.
ESV – “and the train of his robe (priestly garment) filled the temple.” For a priestly robe to fill a temple indicates a multitude in one body = the Bride of Christ.	V.4 – “ four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment ; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.” 24 is the priestly number (1 Chron. 24 & 25). These are king priests – Rev. 5:9-10.
V.2 – “Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings .” The Cherubim of Ezekiel 1 – 4 wings = warfare role.	V.8 – LITV – “And the four living creatures (Seraphims) each one had six wings around.” i.e. 4 x 6 = 24 (V.4)
V.3 – “And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy , is Yahweh of hosts.” = Access to the Outer court, Holy Place and Most Holy Place.	“And they had no rest day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy , Lord God Almighty.” Access to all three courts of the Temple = Immortal beings.
“the whole earth is full of his glory .”	V.11 – “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour.”

It should be noted that the difference between the Cherubim of Ezekiel 1 and the Seraphim of Isa. 6 and Rev. 4 is in the nature of their role. The Cherubim of Ezekiel are involved in the setting up of the Kingdom (their military role – John 18:36), which is why the chapter ends with a throne encircled by a rainbow (Ezek. 1:26-28; cp. Rev. 10:1). Once the Kingdom is established, the role of the saints turns to administration and priesthood = king-priests, hence Seraphim (once ‘burning ones’) with an aggregate 24 wings = priests.

V.5-7 – Confronted by such a magnificent vision, Isaiah senses his personal unworthiness as a ‘leper’ = sinner – “unclean lips” (Lev. 13:45). “Then flew one of the Seraphims (perhaps with Isaiah’s face!) unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the **altar** (this was done on the Day of Atonement – Lev. 16:12): And he laid it upon my mouth.” Christ’s sacrifice cleanses sin. If we can see ourselves in the Kingdom with Christ, we are given greater impetus to be there. To the question, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” (V.8), we should enthusiastically reply, like Isaiah – “Here am I; send me.”

V.9-13 – The words of V.9-10 cited in John 12:40 and by Paul in Acts 28:26-27 were present in fact in Isaiah’s time and in the 1st century and led to “a great forsaking in the midst of the land” in BC 587-6 (Babylonian captivity) and AD 70 (Roman captivity), but as always, a remnant was preserved for a better day (V.13) like the one prefigured in V.1-4.

Colossians 3

V.1-4 – “If ye then be **risen** with Christ (being baptized into his death and resurrection), seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your **affection** (*phroneo* – to exercise the mind), on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead (to sin), and **your life is hid with Christ in God**. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” Like the dormant, but prospectively beautiful Monarch butterfly, the once

insatiable grub (its original self) will be displayed in all its glory when it bursts forth from the 'chrysalis' of mortality, providing we now "Mortify therefore (our) members which are upon the earth" (V.5), which uncontrolled proclivities constitute a form of idolatry.

V.6-17 – Paul lists a series of behaviors of "the children of disobedience" which must be eschewed by those who have "put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." They must, as "the elect of God, holy and beloved," put on "bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering," and "over all these put on love, which is the perfect bond of union" (Weymouth). They were exhorted to "let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom" so that Christ dominated every aspect of life.

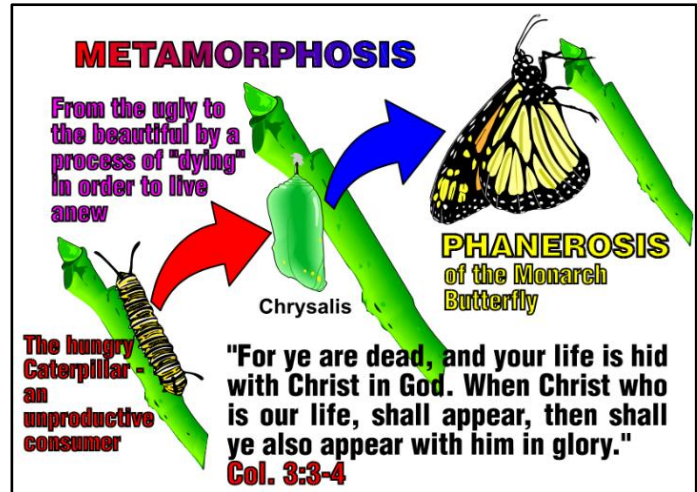
V.18-25 – Paul follows on to the apply the above principles to everyday practical life in the home and in the workplace (through to chapter 4:1).

Colossians 4

V.1-6 – "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with **thanksgiving**" – Paul emphasized the importance of prayer and highlighted one of its most critical elements – thanksgiving. Wisdom towards those "without" is enjoined and this is best shown by sound speech – "Let your language be always seasoned with the salt of grace, so that you may know how to give every man a fitting answer" (Weymouth). Salt preserves from corruption, and our speech should be free of it.

V.7-18 – Unlike its companion epistle to the Ephesians, this epistle ends with salutations and admonitions as it is written specifically to an ecclesia.

V.9 – Interestingly, the epistle was carried by Tychicus "with Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you," along with the letter to Philemon concerning Onesimus.



May 17

Joshua 1

Josh. 1:1-2 – "Now after **the death of Moses** the servant of Yahweh it came to pass, that Yahweh spake unto **Joshua** (Yahweh's salvation) the son of **Nun** ("perpetuity"), Moses' minister, saying, **Moses my servant is dead**; now therefore **arise**, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel." There is clearly a type here of the transition from the Law to Christ in order to obtain an inheritance in the Land. Moses was the law-giver. Law cannot give life, so an inheritance cannot be obtained in the land promised to Abraham by law keeping. Only by faith in Christ who confirmed the Abrahamic promises by his sacrifice (Rom. 15:8) is it possible to have an inheritance in the Land. Hence, it was Joshua (Yahshua = Jesus) who led the people into the Land. As the nation waited on the eastern side of the Jordan to enter the land, with the death of Moses, they became one in Joshua or

Jesus. In crossing the Jordan, they would be figuratively baptized into him, and as part of his corporate body would engage upon the conquest of the Land of Promise.

V.6-9 – “Be strong and of a good courage” – This admonition to Joshua is repeated three times in this bracket of verses emphasizing that it was not going to be an easy task to secure an inheritance for his people. The key to success would be his diligent attention to the Word of God – “This scroll of the law **must not cease out of thy mouth**, but thou must **talk to thyself** therein, day and night” (Rotherham). The mouth is the spokesman of the heart (Luke 6:45). No one can speak the Word if it is not in the heart.

V.10-18 – Joshua assumed control and reminded the two and a half tribes of their obligation to go with the other tribes across Jordan to secure the latter’s inheritance. The response from them was very encouraging – “Whosoever he be that doth rebel against thy commandment, and will not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death: only be strong and of a good courage.”

Isaiah 7

Isaiah chapters 7 to 12 constitute the **Immanuel Prophecy**. It begins with the massive problems confronting one of the worst kings of Judah – “And it came to pass in the days of Ahaz.” The exasperation of Yahweh towards this king is expressed in 2 Chron. 28:22 – “And **in the time of his distress** did he trespass yet more against Yahweh: **this is that king Ahaz.**” That time of distress is the subject of Isa. 7:2. Ahaz passed his son and successor Hezekiah through the fire to Molech (2 Kings 16:3), but immolated all his other children to the same god (2 Chron. 28:3). Wherefore, Yahweh gave him up to heavy defeats at the hands of Rezin king of Syria (2 Chron. 28:5), and to “Pekah the son of Remaliah” who slew 120,000 men of Judah in one day (2 Chron. 28:6), and carried off into captivity “two hundred thousand, women, sons, and daughters” who were later freed. While Ahaz was the culprit, the use of the phrase “the house of David” in V.2 and 13 indicates the prophecy embraced the future of the monarchy that would ultimately see Immanuel (Christ) ascend the throne of David.

V.3-9 – God’s promises to David precluded the overthrow of his throne at this point, so Isaiah (“the salvation of Yah”) is instructed to take his eldest son Sheerjashub (“a remnant shall return”) to confront Ahaz “at the end of the conduit of the upper pool, in the highway of the fuller’s field” (evidently on the NW side of the city). The message was of deliverance from his enemies if he would put his trust in Yahweh, but with a warning – “If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established” (RV for V.9).

V.10 suggests hesitancy on the part of Ahaz – “Moreover Yahweh spake again unto Ahaz” and this was due to a complete lack of faith in Yahweh, for Ahaz’s god was Molech, and it would not be long and he would add the gods of the Syrians (2 Chron. 28:23) and of the Assyrians (2 Kings 16:10-16). Offered a sign in the earth or from heaven, he refused both (V.11-12). “This is that king Ahaz.”

V.13-16 – Wearied by the complete lack of faith by Ahaz, Yahweh through Isaiah, delivered the Immanuel Prophecy to the “house of David.” “Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel” we are informed was fulfilled at the birth of Jesus – Matt. 1:23. The presence of the definite article before the word “virgin” is fitting, for Mary humbly accepted for herself the title “the handmaid of the Lord” (Luke 1:38). That is its most important fulfillment, but in what follows it becomes obvious there was a reason why Isaiah was accompanied by his son Sheerjashub (“a remnant shall return”). “Butter and honey shall he eat” indicates a spiritual diet – “Words that in their

reading, marking, learning, and inwardly digesting thus establish and delight the new man, are 'butter and honey.'" (Ministry of the Prophets pg. 101). Not only was Christ to eat this diet, but so would the **remnant** in Israel – see V.22 – “for butter and honey shall **every one** eat that is **left** in the land.”

V.17-25 – The coming desecration of the Land by the Assyrians in what might be called “a close shave” (V.20 – “In that day the Lord will **shave with a razor** that is hired, beyond the River, by the king of Assyria, the head, and the hair of the feet, and also it shall sweep away the beard”), would nevertheless leave a faithful remnant. It has nearly always been so.

1 Thessalonians 1

The epistles to the Thessalonians are said to be the earliest preserved letters written by the Apostle Paul to ecclesias. The fascinating thing is that the first letter was apparently written a little over 5 months after he had formed the ecclesia on his second missionary journey (Acts 17). The ecclesia was already suffering serious persecution. Like us, they needed the return of Christ, and it has often been pointed out that, though chapter divisions are not from the Spirit, every chapter of these epistles mentions the return of Christ.

The 5 chapters of 1 Thessalonians might be summarized this way:

1. The model **Ecclesia** and the Christ-based life – Faith, love, patience.
2. The model **Servant** and his reward.
3. The model **Brother** and the believer's sanctification.
4. The model **Walk** and the believer's hope.
5. The model **Walk** and the day of the Lord.

The layout of this epistle can be expressed another way - 1:1 – Salutation

A. Characteristics of the Ecclesia – 1:2-9 – In public – Its walk before men; 1:10 – Motivation – The advent of the Lord

B. The advent of the Apostle – 2:1-16 – The power of his presence; 2:17-3:13 – The empathy of his absence (2:19-20 – Rationale – The advent of the Lord)

C. Characteristics of the Ecclesia – 4:1-12 – Individual walk before God

D. The advent of the Lord – 4:13-18 – Promise of resurrection and glory; 5:1-11 – The moral demands of his absence

E. Characteristics of true brethren – 5:12-13 – Honour those who show the way; 5:14-22 – Behaviour in the house of God; 5:23-24 – The objective – Sanctification; 5:25-28 – Final appeal and greeting

The two key messages of Chap. 1 are V.5 – the power of Paul's example; and V.9 – the power of true and complete conversion which had turned the Thessalonian brethren and sisters away from the deeply ingrained idolatry of the Greeks enshrined in the 52 peaks of the Mount Olympus range (visible from Thessalonica) where the Greek gods were said to reside.

1 Thessalonians 2

V.1-16 – Paul makes three basic points – (1) His **integrity** – no deceit, moral impurity, guile or self-interest; (2) His **gentleness and concern** as a nursing father of his children; (3) The murderous **persecution** of the Judaistic Jews who sought to deny salvation to the Gentiles. All three have roots in the life of Abraham in Genesis 16 and 17.

V.7 – Paul’s gentleness among them “as a **nurse** cherisheth her children” and a comforting **father** (V.11) is grounded in Gen. 17 where Yahweh revealed himself to Abram as “El Shaddai” and demanded absolute integrity if he was to be delegated with Yahweh’s fatherhood (Gen. 17:1; Rom. 4:17). The title **El Shaddai** is derived from *shad* – the breast (as nourishing); and *shadad* – burly; i.e. powerful; hence to devastate, destroy. However, the primary meaning of El Shaddai is the strength of the nourishers = building the Divine family – Gen. 49:25. In Num. 11:11-12, Moses is represented as a forerunner of Paul after God’s own example – Acts 13:18 (KJV margin).

V.14-16 – Paul’s criticism of the Jews who were “contrary to all men” is based on the Allegory he outlines in Gal. 4:22-31. **Ishmael** is the type of circumcised law-keeping Jews. He is described in Gen. 16:12 as “a wild **ass** (symbol of Israel) of a man, his hand, **against every one**, and every one’s hand against him” (Rotherham).

V.17-20 – Paul’s earnest desire was to be with his Thessalonian brethren and sisters but relentless and vicious persecution prevented it. His deep love for them is revealed in the closing words of the chapter – “For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy.”

May 18

Joshua 2

The story is well known. Two spies take refuge in a “harlot’s house, named Rahab.” The word for “harlot’s” is two words in the Hebrew *ishshah zânâh* – Lit. a woman a harlot. Perhaps the rationale was that they would not seem out of place as visitors to such an establishment (V.1).

V.4 – Some have quibbled and claim that telling untruths as Rahab does here justifies the telling of lies when convenient for self-preservation by those in Christ. They seem to miss the point that Rahab was a harlot and that this was pre-conversion. Both whoredom and lies disqualify for the Kingdom unless forsaken and forgiven – Heb. 13:4; 1 Tim. 1:10; Eph. 4:25; Rev. 21:8.

V.9-13 – Rahab confesses her faith based on reports of Yahweh’s mighty works on behalf of Israel – Rom. 10:17. However, faith without works is dead, so she took action at the risk of her own life – James 2:24-25 – “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and **not by faith only**. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by **works**, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?”

V.18 – The safety of Rahab and her family could only be guaranteed by a **red cord** displayed in the window on the wall of Jericho. Long shadows had been cast by the **red cord** tied to the hand of baby Zarah – Gen. 38:28-30. That was an allegory like Gal. 4:22-31. There are three places in Genesis where the same allegory is presented – Gen. 16-17; 38:28-30; 48:14-19. The **red cord** represents the **Abrahamic Covenant**.

Rahab’s faith was an Abrahamic faith. She openly displayed this in her window for all to see. However, ironically, a descendent of **Zarah** displayed an ‘un-Abrahamic’ faithlessness by seizing upon the riches of Jericho that Rahab sought to leave behind – his name was **Achan** – Josh. 7:1. He met the fate of Jericho and its inhabitants while Rahab survived.

The slides below set out the structure of allegory in Genesis. Paul’s use of Gen. 16:12 in Gal. 4 is only one of three occurrences of the very same allegory in Genesis.

Structure of allegory in Genesis		Zarah - Abrahamic	
Abrahamic Covenant	Mosaic Covenant	❖ Unlike Esau and Jacob (diverse twins) Pharez and Zarah were probably normal twins (i.e. virtually identical).	
Called the 'second' though first to be 'born'	Called the 'first' though 430 years later – Heb. 8:7	❖ Like the Abrahamic Covenant , Zarah appeared first but was not 'confirmed'.	
Represented by Sarah (free) – Isaac = children of faith – Gal. 4:21-28	Represented by Hagar (bondwoman) – Ishmael = slaves to law	❖ 430 years later the Mosaic Covenant superseded the Abrahamic for a time as a 'school-master' to lead Israel to Christ – Gal. 3:24 (see context V.17-29).	
Zarah ('born' first – red cord) = Abrahamic order	Pharez (became 'first' by breach) = Mosaic order	❖ Christ finally confirmed the Abrahamic Covenant by his sacrifice – Rom. 15:8 .	
Ephraim the youngest is type of Abrahamic 'seed'	Manasseh the firstborn type of Israel under law		

Isaiah 8

V.1-4 – The second sign to “the house of David” was the naming of Isaiah’s second son before he was conceived. Mahershalalhashbaz means “in making speed to the spoil, he hasteneth the prey.” This is quite a mouthful, but stresses the imminence of judgement. Isaiah and his sons were men of sign to Israel – V.18. Their names and their actions spoke prophetically, even pointing to the work of Christ – Heb. 2:13-15.

V.5-10 – Ahaz refused “the waters of **Shiloah** that go softly” (a reference to the abundant water beneath Jerusalem, Hezekiah’s tunnel not yet built). The following comment by one commentator about the metaphors used in this section has merit.

The waters of Siloam denote the reign of Yahweh, as manifesting itself in the administration of the family of David – a mild, gentle, and munificent reign, beautifully represented by the unfailing and gently flowing waters on which the happiness of Jerusalem so much depended. That reign a large part of the nation – the ten tribes – had rejected, and had set up a separate kingdom, and had sought the aid of the king of Damascus. The remainder – the kingdom of Judah – were in like manner now disposed to reject the aid of Yahweh, and sought an alliance with the king of Assyria – beautifully represented here by the river Euphrates. The waters of Siloam – a gentle, small sweetly-flowing stream, represented the government of Yahweh. The waters of the Euphrates – violent, rapid, impetuous, and overflowing, represented the government of Assyria. The one they despised; the other they sought and admired. The power of the kingdom of David was then feeble and decayed. That of the Assyrian monarch was vigorous, mighty, vast. They despised the one, and sought the alliance of the other.

V.8 – “And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck.” This came to pass in the 14th year of Hezekiah when the Assyrians invaded, and became the basis of vast prophecies of the latter days and the Gogian invasion of the Land – Isa. 10:5,24; 14:25; 30:31; 31:8; Mic. 5:5-6.

V.9 – Youngs Literal – “Be friends, O nations, and be broken.” Ahaz contemplated an alliance with the Assyrians. It was doomed to failure.

V.11-22 – Isaiah is warned off participating in any way with the political influencers of his day who were counselling a confederacy with Assyria against Israel and Syria. Even Immanuel, promised by Yahweh, would be rejected by his people who would refuse to hear the Word (V.14-16 – cited 1 Pet. 2:8 – “And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which **stumble at the word**, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.” They preferred to listen to “wizards that peep, and that

mutter” rather than “To the law and to the testimony! If they speak not according to this word, it is, because they have no **dawning day**” – Rotherham – Isa. 8:20.

1 Thessalonians 3

Chapter 2:17-3:13 – As a nursing father dealing with young children, Paul shows his deep feelings for the Thessalonians as they suffered persecution. His agitation and worry in Athens as he waited for news from Thessalonica was proof that those who accused him of fleeing too early, lacking concern for them, was incorrect. Sending Timothy in his stead was a mark of Paul’s concern (Phil. 2:19-23). Timothy’s report gave Paul great consolation.

Thessalonians 4

Paul’s admonition in chapter 3:12 – “And the Lord make you to **increase and abound** in love one toward another, and toward all men” is expanded in chapter 4:1-12.

V.1 – “how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would **abound** more and more” – *perusseuo* – to abound, overflow. Interlinear Scriptural Analyzer – Lit. “ye may be **super-abounding**”. The word occurs 39 times in the N.T. – 3 in this letter (3:12; 4:1,10).

V.2-12 – Knowing how recently the Thessalonians had come to the Truth, Paul counseled integrity in all human interactions, the chief of these being moral purity in relationships. With a morally devoid Greek philosophical background, the danger was moral looseness (V.5). There was a need “that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel (*skeuos* – used metaphorically for the human body) in **sanctification** and **honour**” (V.4). “In a great house there are not only **vessels** of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore **purge** himself from these (i.e. vessels of dishonour), he shall be a vessel unto **honour, sanctified**, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work” (2 Tim. 2:20-22). The hallmark of the quality of the vessels would be observed when no man went beyond to defraud his brother in any matter (V.6). Integrity was paramount.

V.13-18 – It is evident that persecution had resulted in the death of some local believers. For a young ecclesia, vital questions had emerged. The Thessalonian’s belief in the resurrection was firm – what concerned some of them (through ignorance) was: (1) The relative position of the dead and living at the return of Christ; (2) Who would be called to him first; and (3) What would happen as a result of that call to his presence.

Paul confirmed to them that there will be a resurrection of the responsible dead, which gave hope for an end of their present sorrows, and that the purpose would be to form an **army** for the establishment of the Kingdom – “even so them also which **sleep** in Jesus will God **bring** (*ago* – to lead, lead along as a General; take with one) with him” and that the living at the time would “not **prevent** (*phthano* – to come before. Diaglott – “precede”) them which are asleep” – V.14-15.

V.16-18 – These verses are particularly valuable in understanding the events subsequent to the return of Christ. For a full exposition of that subject see the book “The Events Subsequent to the Return of Christ” by the present author, available via the Study Notes tab of web site <https://jimcowie.info>. The following slides will assist understanding of the depth and extent of the Apostle’s writing.

Christ returns as Judge

Gr. *keleusma* – (from *keleuo* – to put in motion by word or command) a call, summons, a shout or command which assembles all at once.

Gr. *autos* – very self; he and no other

16 **For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:**

Michael (**Jude 9**) – “Who is like El” – **Ex. 23:20-21; Isa. 63:9; Dan. 10:21; 12:1.**
Yahweh’s name-bearer with power to forgive or condemn.

Thessalonians

Lit. “a trump” – Jubilee trumpet **Lev. 25:8-10** – once every 50 years on Day of Atonement (coverings).

Reward in the Aerial – **1Thess. 4:17-18**

Gr. *harpazo* – to snatch, to seize, to take hold of forcibly.

Gr. *perileipo* – to leave over, to be left remaining, to survive.

17 **Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.**

Symbol of a multitude – **Heb. 12:1**

18 **Wherefore comfort one another with these words.**

The Aerial or governing region – **Eph. 2:2; Rev. 9:2.**

Thessalonians

Gr. *apantesis* – with a view to a meeting (to welcome a newly arrived dignitary).

May 19

Joshua 3

V.1 – “Joshua (Yahweh’s salvation) rose early in the morning” – Points to Christ’s resurrection as the guarantee of the salvation of others – Luke 24:1; John 20:1.

“removed” – *nasa* – to pull up tent pegs to start a journey. In the type – from probation (a sojourn) to permanent inheritance.

“Shittim” – “Acacias” (noun feminine) – 5 occs. in O.T. = grace. The ark was made from shittim wood – Ex. 25:10. It represented the ‘Israel of God’ – now ready to enter the Promised Land.

“came to Jordan” – For the baptism of the Spirit – John 3:5-6 (there is both a begetting and a birth).

“lodged there before they passed over” – The judgement Seat of Christ must precede the glorification of the saints.

“passed over” – *abar* – to cross over (the root of Hebrew) occs. 23 times chaps. 3&4.

V.2 – “after three days” – Christ went 3 days before his brethren as ‘the ark of Yahweh’ – cp. Num. 10:33.

“the officers went through the host” – Just as the angels will at the Judgement Seat of Christ – Matt. 25:31; 13:41-42.

V.4 – “a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits” – Represents the 2,000 years since Christ rose from the dead and was glorified, down to our redemption – see the principle of Rev. 14:20 – “space” = time, not distance.

“come not near unto it” – The ark standing in Jordan represented Christ’s victory over mortality. Ours must wait.

“that ye might know the way by which ye must go” – Christ’s example

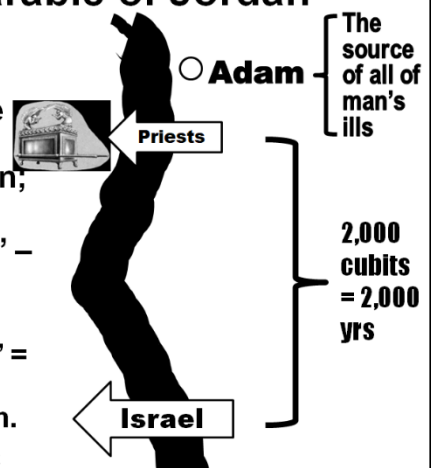
The parable of Jordan

❖ **Josh. 3:15** – Israel crossed Jordan in time of flood = harvest season, i.e. **Passover.**

❖ **V.16** – “Adam” – **Rom. 5:12.**

❖ “Zaretan” – “their distress” = the problems related to Adam.

The Apocalypse in Joshua



must be in clear view for those who will follow him into life.

“ye have not passed this way heretofore” – LITV – “yesterday and the day before.” No one has received eternal life since Christ was glorified. It awaits us!

V.5 – “Sanctify yourselves” – *qadash* (Hithpael Imperative) – to keep oneself apart or separate; to cause himself to be hallowed (of God). This is the key to acceptance – 1 Pet. 1:13-16.

“Yahweh will do wonders among you” – A change of nature declares the glory of God – Rom. 1:4; 2 Thess. 1:10.

V.6 – “ark of the covenant” – Typified all that God accomplished in Christ – he the mercy seat (Rom. 3:25; Heb. 9:4-5), and the saints the cherubim in glory.

V.7 – “magnify” – *gadal* – to make great, powerful. See the type of Christ’s resurrection to glory – Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:3; Phil. 2:8-11.

V.16 – Adam’s curse reversed.

Joshua 4

Two sets of 12 stones were to be placed – one on the banks of Jordan at Gilgal (where the males were circumcised – V.20), and the other in the midst of Jordan where the priests carrying the Ark had stood (V.9), from whence the former 12 stones had been extracted and taken into the Land.

Presuming that the stones left in Jordan came from the eastern side of the river, they would represent the nation of the wilderness journey. The stones smoothed by water from the midst of the river and installed in the place where the flesh was cut off (by circumcision) would represent the Israel of God – Gal. 6:16; Eph. 2:11-14; Rev. 7:1-8.



Just as Israel had seen the dead bodies of the Egyptians on the opposite sea shore (an embodiment of the ‘old man’ left behind after baptism – Ex. 14:30; V.23), so the stones left in Jordan (“the descender”) that continued its serpentine course (see picture above) to the Dead Sea was a parable of mortality swallowed up of life – 1 Cor. 15:51-54.

Isaiah 9

The darkness (Isa. 8:22; 9:1-2) that would descend on God’s people was existent when Christ came on the scene – Matt. 4:13-16 – “And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: **That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet**, saying, The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.” He came to dispel that darkness, but was rejected by his own – John 1:4-9.

V.4-5 – That darkness would persist until “the day of Midian” = Armageddon – Judges 7:22-25; Ps. 83:9-11 – for Israel would “grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in

darkness” (Deut. 28:29; see also Isa. 59:10; Rom. 11:25) until the Redeemer comes to Zion (Isa. 59:20; Rom. 11:26).

Isa. 9:6 contains five Kingdom titles of Christ preceded by details of his origin. “Unto us a child is **born**” = born among men – i.e. **one of us** – explained in Isa. 7:14. Then, “unto us a son is **given**” – i.e. God’s son **given as a gift** for the salvation of both Jew and Gentile. He is destined to rule – “the government shall be upon his shoulder” (*shechem* – shoulder = government). There are five titles (not four as some think) which when using the meanings of the Hebrew words can be spelt out this way – “he shall be called Miracle, Counsellor, The mighty warrior, The Father of the Age, The Prince of Peace.” Each of these addresses the roles that the Lord Jesus Christ will play in the Kingdom Age starting with his uniqueness as “the only begotten Son of God” that enabled his triumph over sin and death.

V.7 is taken up in Luke 1:33 when Gabriel declared to Mary – “And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be **no end**.” This is not a reference to time, but to territory (see 1 Cor. 15:24; Rev. 20:4,6 – Christ’s Kingdom lasts for 1,000 years). The question is raised, how do you increase government and peace? Only by acquiring power over nations one after the other, as Christ will. As the 40 year period of the conquest of the nations unfolds, Christ’s power and territorial possessions will increase until there will be no place in the world where he doesn’t rule. There will be no end.

V.8-21 – Judgements would persist on God’s people as they wallowed in darkness (V.19). The sentence “For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand *is* stretched out still” drawn from Isa. 5:25 is repeated in V.12,17 and 21, and again in Isa. 10:4. It is like a thread connecting the apostasy of the past with the judgements of the future that will cleanse the apostasy of Israel. This is the subject of Isa. 10 onwards.

1 Thessalonians 5

V.1 – We do not know the day nor the hour when Christ will return, but we should know the times in which we live, as did those of old – Dan. 9:2; Luke 2:25,38. “Times has to do with quantity, seasons with quality” (Hogg & Vine). “Times” (*chronos*) refers to the revealed time periods concerning God’s purpose. “Seasons” (*kairos*) refers to the actual characteristics of those periods.

V.2 – “the day of the Lord” is a reference to “the day of Yahweh” of Zech. 12 to 14 (mentioned 23 times). Therefore it refers to Armageddon and the following 40 years of judgement. This must be kept in mind for accurate interpretation.

“a thief in the night” – So Christ warned (Matt. 24:42-44). However, those who walk in light should not be caught off guard – V.5-6.

V.3 – “when they shall say” – *lego* – to lay forth, say, affirm. Implies special pleading. This will happen just prior to Armageddon. It needs to be remembered that the saints will have been removed to Sinai some 10 years before.

“peace and safety” – Lit. “peace and security”. This applies to “seasons,” and its outcome “sudden destruction” – Lit. “unexpected ruin.”

“as a woman in travail” – This is a set time – none can prevent it once the birth pangs begin.

V.8 – Paul uses a similar imagery to Eph. 6:11-17 of the spiritual warrior based on the Roman soldier. Protected by “the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the

hope of salvation” the faithful will not be swamped by the surrounding darkness that would characterize the final days of human madness.

V.12-28 – Paul concluded the epistle with a list of principles that should govern ecclesial life in every era. Among these were: V.12-13 – Respect for faithful elders and teachers; V.14-15 – An uncompromising yet positive and patient spirit seeking the salvation of others – a hallmark of ‘sons of light’. V.17 – “Pray without ceasing” – *adialeiptos* – incessantly. 4 occs. N.T. – 3 in this letter (1:3; 2:13; Rom. 1:9). This word occurs in a Papyrus letter from the Apostle’s time referring to a chronic asthmatic with an “incessant cough”. Hence, it refers to constantly recurring prayer. V.18 – “in everything **give thanks**” – perhaps the single most important aspect of prayer. V.19 – “Quench not the Spirit” – *sbennumi* – extinguish, suppress, stifle. Negativity and unwarranted criticism stifle growth. V.21 – “**prove** all things; hold fast that which is good” – *dokimazo* – to test, examine, prove, scrutinize (to see whether a thing is genuine or not). V.22 – “Abstain from all appearance of evil” – It is important that we give no “occasion to the enemies of Yahweh to blaspheme” (2 Sam. 12:14; Rom. 2:24; Phil. 2:15; Titus 2:8).



May 20

Joshua 5

In the marvelous prophetic scheme presented in Joshua 1 to 12, chapter 5 types the immortalization of the saints. The following slides illustrate.

Israel’s 2nd circumcision – Josh. 5

- ❖ **V.1** – “their heart melted” – Divine activity causes men’s hearts to fail for fear – Cp. **Luke 21:25-26**.
- ❖ **V.2** – “At that time” – Cp. **Dan. 12:1** (twice).
- ❖ “sharp knives” – *tsor chereb* – Lit. “**flint knives**” (Roth.; Ygs.; RSV). — “sword” **V.13**.
- ❖ “circumcise....second time” – Symbol for baptism (cutting off of the flesh) – **Col. 2:11-12**.
- ❖ **V.8** – “whole” – *chayah* – to live.
- ❖ **V.9** – “reproach of Egypt” = mortality – **Ex. 15:26**.

V.2 – Foreshadows the change of nature to be granted to the faithful saints at Sinai that ensures their entry to the Land as permanent inheritors of the Land promised to Abraham. Circumcision is a type of baptism as is clearly indicated in Col. 2:11-12. Baptism of the Spirit will be the second ‘circumcision’ for the saints.

V.8 – “they abode in their places in the camp, till they were **whole**” – Just as the saints will spend time in their ‘camp’ at Sinai – Isa. 26:20.

V.10-12 – In the type, the saints having been immortalized, the sacrifice of Christ that has made that possible will be commemorated – Rev. 5:6,12,13; 13:8.

Manna representing the Word of God ceased because immortals will not need the Word of God in the same way as in mortal probation.

The saints will be inheritors of the Land with all its blessings.

Passover kept – Josh. 5:10-12

- ❖ **V.10** – “Gilgal” – “rolling” – Type of the place where our nature is changed.
- ❖ “passover” – Commemorating release from Egypt through the sacrifice of the Lamb – **Rev. 5:6**.
- ❖ **V.12** – “the manna ceased” – Symbol for the word of God – **Ex. 16**. The word of God will not be needed in the same way in immortality. Saints then “word made flesh.”
- ❖ “fruit of the land” – In immortality the saints will enjoy the fruit of the Land.

Joshua identified with Michael

- ❖ **Josh. 5:13** – “there stood a man” – *ish* – great man. This was Michael the archangel – Cp. **Ex.3:4-6; 23:20-23 (Isa. 63:9)**.
- ❖ “sword drawn” – Symbol for imminent Divine judgement – **Num. 22:23; 1 Chron. 21:16-17,27,30**.
- ❖ **V.14** – “captain” – *sar* – prince, ruler, leader – Cp. **Dan. 10:13; 12:1**.
- ❖ “host” – *tsebaah* – army, host.
- ❖ **V.15** – “holy ground” – Unholy place made holy by Yahweh’s presence.

V.13-15 – Joshua’s encounter with Michael the Archangel (for it was clearly him – The angel of Yahweh’s presence, for when he was present, Yahweh was present – Isa. 63:9). That fact made one of the unholy places on the planet “holy ground” as Mt Horeb was similarly called – Ex. 3:4-6.

Joshua, as a type of Christ receives the authority of the Angel that Yahweh promised would lead them to the Land – Ex. 23:20-23.

Joshua 6

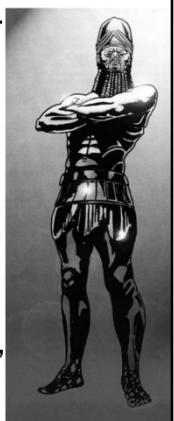
In the grand type of the Book of Joshua, chapter 6 is the **Armageddon chapter**. The proofs are many. It is a chapter of **sevens** – Jericho was overthrown by an earthquake with 7 priests, 7 trumpets, 7 days, 7 times prefiguring the 7 seals, 7 trumpets, 7 vials, and 7 hunders of the Apocalypse – but some Babylonian elements survive, as they will after Armageddon. The following slides fill out the detail.

Joshua 6 – Chapter of sevens

- ❖ **V.1** – 21st occ. of Jericho O.T. = 3 x 7.
- ❖ **V.4** – “seven/seventh” – 14 times in chap.
- ❖ 7 priests; 7 trumpets; 7 days; 7 times.
- ❖ “trumpets” – *shophar* – ram’s horn. Only occurs in **Josh. 6** in the book – 14 times.
- ❖ “ram’s horns” – *yobel* – ram’s horn, trumpet, cornet – blown at **Jubilee** – 5 occs. = **grace**.
- ❖ “compass” – *sabab* – go around – 7 occs.
- ❖ **V.6** – “Nun” – “perpetuity” – N.V. **(50)** ←
- ❖ “ark” – 10 occs. in chap.

Image metals devoted to Yahweh

- ❖ **Josh. 6:18** – “accursed thing” – *cherem* – a thing devoted, i.e. dedicated.
- ❖ **V.19,24** – “all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron” – Twice the metals of Nebuchadnezzar’s image are enumerated = **Armageddon**.
- ❖ “consecrated” – *qodesh* – apartness, holiness.
- ❖ “treasury” – *otsar* – depository, storehouse.



The Apocalypse in Joshua

V.17-19 – Jericho as the centre of Nimrod worship in the land of Canaan was to be totally destroyed, as will Babylon the Great, Nimrod’s latter day counterpart. However, the four metals of Nebuchnezzar’s Image – gold, silver, brass and iron (representing the kingdom of men) were to be kept and put in the treasury of Yahweh – V.19,24. This represented the complete absorption of the kingdom of men by the Kingdom of God as expressed in Dan. 2:44 – “it shall break in pieces and **consume** all these kingdoms.”

V.22-24 – The redemption of Rahab and her family is a type of the remnant of Judah saved after Armageddon (Zech. 12:7 – Rahab married into Judah and was in the ancestral line of Christ – Matt. 1:5. Her name Rahab means “broad, large”; also “insolence, pride” as the Egyptians (Isa. 51:9). She was a harlot – the characteristic of God’s people in the past and present (Jer. 2:20).

V.20 – “the wall fell down flat” – The remnant of ‘Judah’ (the Jews in the Land) will be saved after the great earthquake at the time of Armageddon, but will be isolated for deep mourning, reflection and cleansing – Zech. 12:10-14; 13:1.

V.23 – “they left them without” – *chuts* – out-side (Cp. Zech. 12:12). Under Ahab king of Israel and Manasseh king of Judah, God’s people had turned to Nimrod and Babylonian

idolatry so that He could say of them – Amos 9:7 – “Are you not like the **Cushites** (Babylonians) to me, O people of Israel?”

Isaiah 10

V.1-4 – With the Assyrian invasion looming (Isa. 8:7-8), and in the absence of the reform called for, that oft-repeated warning is heard again – “For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand *is* stretched out still” (V.4).

V.5-19 – The Assyrian “the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation” (V.24) would come against a “hypocritical nation” (Israel) “to take the spoil, and to take the prey.” This has long range ramifications for latter day Israel, for we read that Gog’s confederacy will invade the Land of Israel in “the latter days” to “take a spoil, and to take a prey” (Ezek. 38:12). Judgement would fall on the proud Assyrian invader when his work was done – “Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem,” as it will upon Gog – Ezek. 38:18-23.

V.20 – “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, **shall no more again stay upon him that smote them**; but shall stay upon Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.” This is a very important point. Just as **Ahaz** formed an alliance of sorts with Assyria in desperation (through faithlessness), so latter day Israel will do. This is proven by Isa. 14:28 – “In **the year that king Ahaz died** was this burden” for Isa. 14:1-2 is the context – the redemption of Israel. Faithless Israel will be replaced by a cleansed remnant – Zech. 13:9. It is also the reason why Ezek. 38:10 says of Gog “thou shalt think an **evil thought**.” There is no more evil thought than to **betray** those whom you have given security guarantees.

V.22-23 are cited by Paul in Rom. 9:27-28 where he confirms its meaning. Yahweh will redeem a remnant (V.21) from the fiery trials of the Gogian invasion of Ezek. 38, and it will be a relatively short period of judgement.

V.24-27 – Like the Assyrian of old, the latter day Assyrian, Gog, will be destroyed outside the walls of Jerusalem. The proof that this foreshadows Armageddon is in the reference to the overthrow of the Midianites by Gideon and his 300 – Judges 7. That victory is used in Ps. 83:9-11 and Isa. 9:4 as a type of Armageddon. A critical detail is the phrase – “according to the slaughter of **Midian** at the rock of **Oreb**.” The failure to include **Zeeb** here is because he was slain on a **winepress** (Judges 7:25), and in the type, that is a reference to “the great winepress of the wrath of God” (Rev. 14:19-20) for the destruction of Babylon the Great over 40 years following Armageddon. Oreb (‘raven’) represents Gog and his destruction is relatively quick – V.23.

V.28-34 – The military path of the ancient Assyrian is the pattern for Gog’s entrance into the land. All these places are in “the mountains of Israel” (Ezek. 38:8) today called the West Bank by nations, but Judea and Samaria by Israel who will annex it before Armageddon as required by Ezek. 38:8,12.

2 Thessalonians 1

While Paul was still at Corinth (AD 53-54) another report from Thessalonica arrived noting marked progress on matters addressed in his first letter. Though persecution still raged, their hope still endured and their faith had grown under pressure. Their love had expanded

more and more. Their mistaken sorrow for their dead was gone, and there was much to give Paul joy and thanksgiving. But there were still problems.

False reports had been circulated (claiming apostolic authority), that the day of the Lord was at hand. Feverish unrest had gripped the ecclesia and led to idleness and disorder in some (why should they work if Christ was about to come?). Hence, the theme of the advent of the Lord dominates this letter too. Paul intends to reveal the practical impossibility of the advent occurring in their lifetime because a great internal apostasy would precede it.

V.3-4 – Mutual support under severe persecution characterized the ecclesia.

V.5-12 – The righteousness of God would ultimately avenge the savage treatment they had received. They needed to be steadfast under pressure for it would lead to a glorious future – V.10 – “When he shall come to be glorified in his saints.”

2 Thessalonians 2

V.1-2 – False ideas were circulating about the imminence of the return of Christ, some with claims of apostolic authority. From whence might such ideas arise? Christ had warned his disciples that his coming was near (Matt. 10:23), but he meant his ‘coming’ at the head of the Roman armies (Matt. 22:7; Dan. 9:26). Judgement was to fall on Judah’s Commonwealth first and that was now at hand. Paul sets out to demonstrate that the second advent was some way off, as there would be a massive apostasy before then.

This had been prophesied in Zech. 5 as shown in the slide below. Zech. 5 sees 2 women – Samaria and Jerusalem fly like storks to Shinar (a reference to Semiramis wife of Nimrod) with an ephah (Judaism’s commercialized religion). This was a prophecy of the rise of the Roman Catholic apostasy out of the ecclesia in the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD. Bro. Thomas wrote in Eureka Vol. 1 pg. 65-74 – “This vision traces the spiritual decline of Israel until a commercialized Judaism arose to supplant the true spirit and purpose of the Law by a deadening formalism, and to superimpose itself upon the truth in Christ causing the great apostasy to arise in spiritual Babylon.” He added – “The abominations of Judaism have been abundantly reproduced in the Roman Catholic religion. The abuses of Rabbinism and Romanism are singularly alike.”

V.3-5 – “a **falling away** first” – *apostasia* – falling away, defection, apostasy. The apostasy would see “that **man of sin** be revealed, the son of perdition (*apōleia* – utter destruction), who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, **shewing himself**

The structure of 2 Thessalonians

1:1-2	Greeting
1:3-5	Assurance of their welfare in persecution
1:6-10	Judgement of persecutors
1:11-12	Prayer for further perfecting
2:1-7	Reassurance for saints in view of apostasy
2:8-12	Judgement of apostates
2:13-17	Prayer for steadfastness
3:1-5	Assurance of preservation amid disorder
3:6-15	Judgement on the disorderly
3:16	Prayer for peace
3:17-18	Final greeting

Zechariah 5 root of 2 Thess. 2

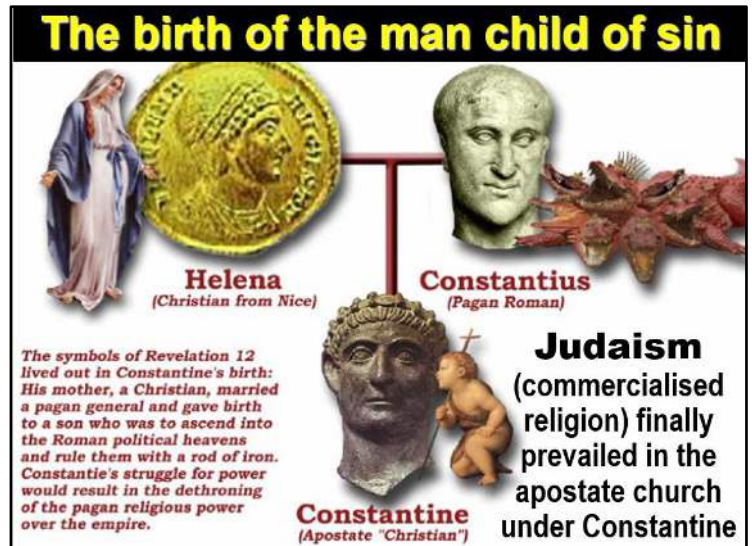

❖ The Septuagint translation of Zech. 5 uses the same word for the wicked woman that Paul uses to describe the man of sin.

“This is their <i>iniquity</i> in all the land.” – Zech. 5:6 (RV margin)	“with all deceivableness of <i>unrighteousness</i> ” – 2 Thess. 2:10
“A woman that <i>sitteth</i> in the midst of the ephah.”	“ <i>sitteth</i> in the temple of God” – 2 Thess. 2:4
“He cast her down into the ephah: and he cast the weight of lead upon the mouth thereof” – Zech. 5:8 (RV)	“that which <i>restraineth</i> ” – V.6 (RV) “there is one that <i>restraineth</i> now” – V.7 (RV)
“This is <i>wickedness</i> ” – V.8 (RV)	“the mystery of <i>iniquity</i> doth already work” – V.7 “then shall that <i>Wicked</i> be revealed” – V.8

Thessalonians

that he is God” – After 280 years of gestation “the man child” was born when Constantine (with the support of the apostate Christian church) defeated Maxentius at the battle of Milvian Bridge in AD 312 and assumed control of the Roman Empire in the west. This was the beginning of a system that developed into the papal system that claims to be God on earth. This is fully expounded by Bro. Thomas in Eureka.


V.6 – “now ye know what **withholdeth** (*katecho* – to hold down, restrain, hinder the progress. RSV – “restrains”) that he might be revealed (*apokalupto* – to take off the cover; disclose. Cp. Zech. 5:8) in his time” – Paganism was the ‘religion’ of the Roman Empire. With the rise of Constantine in AD 312 half the empire became notionally ‘christian’ and by AD 324 Constantine had overthrown Licinius in the east and the whole empire became ‘pagan christian’ and subsequently

Identifying Characteristics
2 Thess. 2:4 – “showing himself that he is God” - even in the last days!

"The pope takes the place of Jesus Christ on earth. . . . He is the infallible ruler, the founder of dogmas, the author of and the judge of councils; the universal ruler of truth, the arbiter, the judge of all, being judged by no one, God himself on earth."

The New Catechism (under Pope John Paul II), under the section of the pope.



Identifying Characteristics
V.4 – “showing himself that he is God”

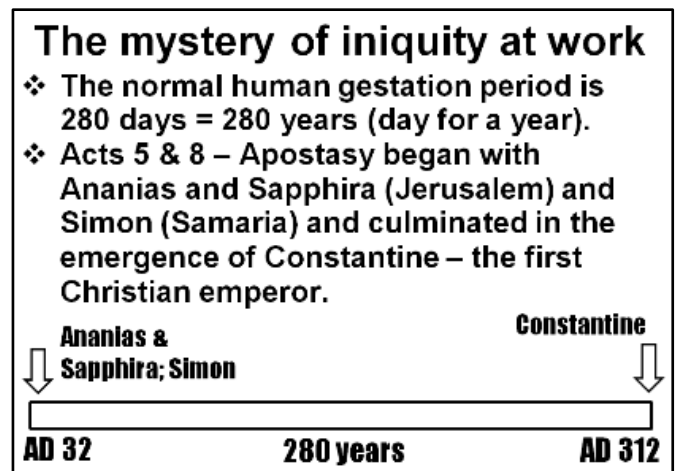
"All the earth is my diocese, and I am the ordinary of all men, having the authority of the King of all kings upon the subject. I am all in all and above all, so that God Himself, and I, the Vicar of God, have but one consistory, and I am able to do almost all that God can do. In all things that I list, my will is to stand for reason: for I am able by the law to dispense above the law, and of wrong to make justice in correcting laws and changing them... Wherefore if the things that I do be said not to be done of man, but of God, what can you make me but God? Again, if prelates of the Church be called and counted of Constantine for gods, I then, being above all prelates, seems by this reason to be above all Gods. Wherefore, no marvel if it be in my power to change time and times: to alter and abrogate laws, to dispense with all things, yea, with the precepts of Christ: for where Christ biddeth Peter put up his sword, and admonishes His disciples not to use any outward force in revenging themselves, do not I, Pope Nicholas, writing to the Bishops of France, exhort them to draw out their material swords?"

Pope Nicholas V, 1455

Constantine took charge of the apostate church and ensured pagan doctrines and practices were insinuated into Christianity.

V.7 – “the mystery (*musterion* – secret. Its use in Rev. 17:5,7 is revealing) of iniquity (*anomia* – contempt and violation of law) doth already work” – As shown in the slide at right a form of ‘commercialized religion’ when Ananias and Sapphira used deception to begin the ‘secret of iniquity’ that matured 280 years later with the rise of Constantine.

“he who now letteth (*katecho* – as above) will let, until he be taken out of the



way” – RSV – “only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way.”

V.8 – “then shall that **Wicked** (*anomos* – a violator of law, lawless) be revealed (*apokalupto* – to take the cover off; disclose) whom the Lord shall consume (*analisko* – destroy) with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy (*katargeo* – to render idle, unemployed, inactivate; abolish) with the brightness of his coming” – Youngs Lit. – “manifestation of his presence” (*parousia*). Christ will destroy the Catholic system by “the spirit of his mouth” described in Isa. 11:4; cp. Hos. 6:5; Rev. 19:20-21.

V.9-10 – “with all deceivableness (*apate* – delusion) of unrighteousness in them that perish” – The working of “Satan” (the adversary) has been by “signs and lying wonders” deceiving their adherents who have no “love of the truth,” the key to salvation.

V.11-12 – “for this cause God shall send them **strong delusion** (*energeia* plane), that they should believe a lie” – Youngs Lit. – “a working of delusion.” Diaglott – “a strong working of deceit.” God sends ‘strong delusion’ by abandoning men to their own devices – Rom. 1:28; Isa. 66:4. Refusal to believe the truth leads to ready acceptance of lies.

V.13-14 – Paul reminds them that God’s plan always included Gentiles for Abraham was made “the father of a multitude of nations” – Gen. 17:5. God has “chosen you” – God does the calling – We choose salvation by doing two things – seeking purity and believing truth. No truth – no salvation! (1 Tim. 4:16).

V.15-17 – “**stand fast**, and hold the **traditions** which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle” – The word “traditions” is *paradosis* – transmission; i.e. a precept. Used 13 times in the N.T. (10 in a negative sense). Here it refers to the teachings of Christ and the Apostles. We must “stand fast” (*steko* – to stand firm, persevere) in the doctrine remembering there is a nexus between doctrine and practice (1 Tim. 1:9-10). Paul concludes with a prayer that God would continue to work in them and establish them in the right way.

May 21

Joshua 7

In the prophetic structure of Joshua, chapter 7 foreshadows the cleansing of Judah (the Jews in the Land at the return of Christ (see Appendix 3 for the formula to correctly interpret Bible prophecy in relation to the Jews inside and outside the Land at the time of Armageddon). Prophetically, the redemption and cleansing of the remnant in the Land after Armageddon is the first thing to be accomplished. This is why it comes next in Joshua.

The problem was “Achan” – “troubler” from the tribe of Judah (his name occurs **6 times** in the O.T.). His ancestor was “Zerah” (the baby with a red cord on his hand) so he was a Zarahite – Gen. 38:30. Rahab was saved out of ‘Babylon’ with a **red cord** representing the Abrahamic Faith – Achan was destroyed with Jericho because of greed towards a **red** robe representing Nimrod’s religion (later Catholicism).

Joshua 7:1,15 – “trespass” – *ma’al* – treachery. Of the worst kind! Achan preserved the tokens of the Babylonian religion that God sought to utterly destroy – gold, silver and a priestly robe – Rev. 17:4; 18:12,16. It was an “accursed thing” – *cherem* – a thing devoted; i.e. to destruction – Josh. 6:17. Jericho was the centre of Baal worship in Canaan – hence the decree to devote it. Baal (Bel) was a title of Cush and Nimrod.



V.21 – “Babylonish garment” – *shinar addereth* – a splendid and costly robe of Shinar. The Vulgate Latin version calls it a scarlet robe like those worn by the inner circle of the priests of Semiramis the wife of Nimrod (matched today by the red robed cardinals of Catholicism). Semiramis is the Hellenized form of the Akkadian name “Sammur-amat”. “Sammur” when translated into Hebrew becomes “Shinar”. Her higher order of priests wore red coats while the lower order wore black as they had to stoke the fires!

The great assize identified the culprit for the disaster of the defeat at Ai – Josh. 7:2-9.

Josh. 7:14 – “families/family” – *mishpachah* – clan, family, tribe. Used 9 times in Zech. 12:12-14. This is typical of the assize after Armageddon when the remnant in the Land appear before Christ – Zech. 12:10; 13:6. As noted above, in V.16 the focus is on the tribe of “Judah” (title of Jews in the Land at Armageddon). Like Achan, the remnant will be called upon to “make confession” V.19 – Zech. 13:2-5.

V.25 – “all Israel stoned him with stones” – As they will in the Kingdom – Zech. 13:3.

V.26 – “Yahweh turned from the fierceness of his anger” – Cp. Hos. 11:9. The burial place “the valley of Achor” (“trouble” – cognate with Achan – play on name) becomes a place of hope – see Isa. 65:10 – “And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and **the valley of Achor** a place for the herds to lie down in, for my people that have sought me,” and Hos. 2:15 – “And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and **the valley of Achor for a door of hope**: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt.”

Isaiah 11

The Immanuel Prophecy (Isa. 7 to 12) now turns to focus on the origin and future of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Isa. 11:1 – “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse” – Yahweh’s judgements of Isa. 10:33-34 would reduce Israel to a **stump** in the ground.

“a Branch shall grow out of his roots” – *netser* – a shoot; branch. Perhaps this word is the source of ‘Nazarene’ – Matt. 2:23. The Spirit is the root of David – Rev. 22:16-17. The Spirit number is 7 (Rev. 4:5).

V.2 – “And the **spirit** of Yahweh shall rest upon him” – *ruach* – wind; breath, i.e. a sensible exhalation (see use Ps. 33:6) – occurs 7 times in Isa. 11 (V.2,3,15) where **seven** qualities and characteristics of Christ are revealed.

In V.2 the 4 occs. have *vav* for vowel sounding. But in V.3 *ruach* occurs with *yod* for the vowel sounding. This changes the meaning from exhalation to inhalation – note the margin, “Heb. scent, or smell” (to smell requires inhalation) – all 11 occs. of this form of *ruach* have to do with smelling. The LITV translation has “He is made to **breathe in** the fear of Yahweh,” capturing the sense. God breathed out His Word (2 Tim. 3:16 – Rotherham – “Every scripture, is God-breathed”) and His son ‘inhaled’ it.

It was his origin as the Son of God that gave Christ the ability to absorb his Father’s word far better than any son of Adam ever could. This was the source of his victory. See Ps. 139:13-17 (comments for March 18 – pages 40-41 of March PDF document). The following is a summary.

The secret to success lay in his Divine begetting. It was a Divine work from the outset – the Spirit was at work from conception and all through his development in the womb. The key outcome was intellectual and moral ability and receptivity – his ability to absorb and

understand was unique among men – he knew very early in life the purpose of his existence – Ps. 22:9-10 – “thou didst make me **hope** when I was upon my mother's breasts, I was **cast upon thee** from the womb.”

V.3-5 – Because of the above “he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears, but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth.” Finally, righteousness will come to the earth and the outcome will be peace among all nations. That comes next.

V.6-9 – “wolf” – *zeeb* – to be yellow; a wolf. Occs. 7 times in the O.T. (5 of those of the fierce ravaging of wild beasts). The wolf is allied with the lion and leopard in the judgements to fall on Judah – Jer. 5:6. Like the four beasts of Dan. 7, the wild carnivorous animals here represent Israel's rapacious enemies of the past, whereas the lamb, kid, calf and fatling (all clean sacrificial animals) represent redeemed Israel. It can be said (repeated in Isa. 65:25) that “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for **the**

earth shall be full of the knowledge of Yahweh, as the waters cover the sea.” (See ‘The Ministry of the Prophets’ pages 204-207).



V.10-16 – Christ “as an ensign of peoples” (Roth.) will bring peace to the earth, but only after “all Israel” have been settled in the Land. Elijah's work in the **Second Exodus** will be critical in achieving this – Yahweh “shall set his hand again the **second time** to recover the remnant of his people” – Mal. 4:5-6; Mic. 7:14-17; Matt. 24:31. This will also resolve the tensions between Jews in the Land and those outside of it – V.13; Jer. 3:18 – Rotherham – “In those days, shall **the house of Judah go unto the house of Israel**,—that they may enter together out of the land of the North.” The path of the return is plotted in V.15-16 and consists of the means of ‘baptism’ for Israel and the religious “highway” of Isa. 19:23.

2 Thessalonians 3

V.1-2 – “Finally, brethren, pray for us” – Paul seeks reciprocation from the Thessalonians – he had prayed for them, now it was their turn. He sought three things – (1) That the Word might be freely preached; (2) And consequently be glorified; (3) That he might be delivered from those who sought to impede his work, for – “all men have not faith.” Paul's enemies to this point had primarily been the Jews. Of all men they should have shown faith in the things of God, but despite the perfidy of His people “the Lord is faithful” (V.3). By contrast Paul had confidence the Thessalonians would also show their faith by their actions (V.4), so he prayed that God would “direct” (*kateuthuno* – straighten fully; includes removal of hindrances) their “hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ” (V.5). God directs through His word believed – Ps. 119:36; Prov. 3:6.

V.6-15 – Paul outlines the way disorderly conduct is to be dealt with – “command” is not an optional choice. To be “disorderly” is a military term – *ataktos* – irregularly, out of rank (of soldiers). Good soldiers follow orders or “tradition” – *paradosis* – substance of teaching; a body of precepts. There is a time to shun the disorderly (V.14) in order to recover (V.15).

V.17 – Paul signed off “with mine own hand” for the first time. This may indicate that a counterfeit letter purporting to be from Paul had arrived to mislead them about the return of Christ.

May 22

Joshua 8

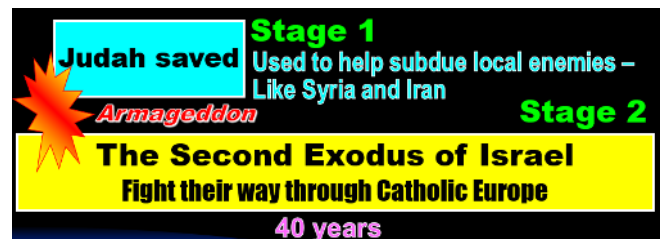
Context of the type – After the terrible sufferings of the Gogian invasion and Armageddon, the refined third of Judah get involved in the aftermath and fight – Zech. 14:14 – “And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance.” This is clearly after the great earthquake and the revelation of Christ to surviving Jews in the Land. So, in V.1-29, Ai is defeated representing purified Judah (Jews in the Land) being victorious over the surrounding nations. Then at the end of the chapter all Israel enter into a new covenant (the Abrahamic) to fulfil Jer. 31:31-33.

V.1 – “take all the people of war with thee” – Joshua did not lead the first disastrous campaign against Ai. The second campaign is a type of Zech. 14:14 – “Judah shall fight.”

V.2 – “the spoil thereof” – Fell to Israel as it will to Judah – Zech. 14:14.

V.30 – “Then Joshua built an altar unto Yahweh God of Israel in mount Ebal” (“bald”) – This is a dramatic development. The whole nation was encamped on the plains of Jordan at Gilgal (Josh. 5:10; 9:6), but all were present at Shechem to renew the covenant, including women and children – V.33,35.

V.31 – “As Moses...commanded the children of Israel” – In fact, twice – Deut. 11:29-30; 27:4-7. So “they offered” burnt and peace offerings to renew their covenant. There was no sin offering – Note Zeph. 3:17 – “he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love.” Hence, V.32 – “he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel” – To renew the covenant with V.33 – “all Israel” – See Ezek. 39:25-29; and V.34 – “read all the words of the law” – See Deut. 31:10-12 where the context concerns covenant.



Isaiah 12

The Immanuel Prophecy ends with a song of redeemed Israel praising Yahweh for the forgiveness of past transgressions and the prospects of eternal salvation. “Yah, Yahweh” has become their salvation (Rotherham – V.2), and they rejoice to “draw water out of the wells of salvation.” Christ may have had this in mind in John 4:14 and 7:37-39. The Jews had a custom of drawing water from the pool of Siloam, and pouring it mixed with wine upon the sacrifice on the altar. The rejoicings on these occasions were so enthusiastic that they became proverbial, so that it was said: “He that never saw the rejoicing of drawing of water, never saw rejoicing in all his life.” The Jews grounded the custom on Isaiah 12, and while, like their ancestors (Isa. 8:6), “refusing the waters of Shiloah,” made ritual use of the literal waters with great external show. It will not be like that when this prophecy is fulfilled. As redeemed Israel sing, “this is known in all the earth.”

“Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.” What a way to conclude the Immanuel Prophecy.

1 Timothy 1

Paul's first letter to Timothy is addressed to "Timothy, my own son in the faith." Paul had no one closer to him in the work than Timothy – "For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state" (Phil. 2:20-22).

V.3-11 – Paul had left Timothy (a somewhat timid character – 1 Cor. 16:10-11) in Ephesus to minister to the newly formed ecclesia there. The problem of Judaism in Jewish converts was again present, as in the Galatian ecclesias. With Judaism, what you see is not always what you get. The list of sins in V.9-10 should be absent from the life of anyone who agreed "the law is good, if a man use it lawfully" (V.8), but this was not always the case. Hypocrisy was the hallmark of Judaisers – Matt. 23:2; Luke 12:1. The leaven of the Pharisees was not only their private deeds, but their 'doctrine' (Matt. 16:12), and that is what Paul takes aim at, saying, "if there be any other thing that is **contrary to sound doctrine**" (V.10).

V.12-17 – Paul acknowledged his own dubious past as a strict Pharisee, and the grace of God that had delivered him from it.

V.18-20 – Wrong doctrine leads to wrong practice (V.10), so false teachers needed to be sidelined before a little leaven permeated the whole ecclesia – 1 Cor. 5:6-7.

1 Timothy 2

V.1-3 – "I exhort therefore, that, **first of all**, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for **all men**; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. **For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God** our Saviour." Most will agree that not a lot of this is done publicly in our community. It is an area of prayer that may need improvement given it is desired by God.

V.9-15 – The position of women is a point of debate in the modern Humanistic world. Paul provides two proofs that the woman should be subject to the man – one is pre-fall (V.13 – "For Adam was first formed, then Eve"), and the other post-fall (V.14 – "And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being (Rotherham – wholly) deceived was in the transgression"). However, her role in the larger scheme was crucial – "She shall be saved, however, through means of **the child-bearing**" (namely, the birth of the Son of God – see V.5-6; 1 Cor. 11:11-12 – "even so is the man also by the woman").

1 Timothy 3

V.1-7 – Ecclesias need shepherds ("bishops" – *episkopos* – an overseer) and "deacons" (*diakonos* – a servant, attendant, minister – V.8-13), but there are qualifications listed. The Roman world did not practice polygamy, so "the husband of one wife" meant not divorced and remarried. Discipline within the family unit was another indispensable requirement, as was probity and moderation in life.

V.15-16 – The Diaglott translation of V.15 is helpful, and correct – "that thou mayest know, know it behooves in a **house of God** (meaning of Bethel) to conduct thyself, which is a congregation (ecclesia) of **God living**." This verse is based on Gen. 28:10-19 where Jacob, having had the dream of the angels of God ascending and descending upon him, took the stone which he had used as a pillow and stood it up into a **pillar**, and anointed it with oil. He then changed the name of the place from Luz to **Bethel** meaning "the house of God." There is no article before the words "living God" which is the same as 2 Cor. 6:16

where Paul explains what is meant here. God should be seen walking about in believers. We call that God manifestation which is the subject of V.16. The ecclesia is “the **pillar** and **ground** (*hedraioma* – basis, foundation; what is fixed, settled). Bro. Thomas – “and material habitation of the truth” – a habitation of gods – Eureka Vol. 1 pgs. 390-392.

May 23

Joshua 9

In the typical scheme of Joshua, the deception of the Gibeonites foreshadows the Tarshish powers post- Armageddon submitting to Christ, but feignedly out of fear. Nations who submit to Christ are preserved but compelled to labour in the Temple as servants to Israel.

V.1 – 6 nations united against Joshua and Israel. This is typical of the Catholic nations who coalesce around the Pope and initiate their false ‘Anti-christ’ theory. V.2 – “they gathered themselves together to fight with Joshua” – Cp. Ps. 2:1-3 – “with one accord” – *echad peh* – one mouth – i.e. the Pope’s mouth.

V.3 – “when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard” – A type of Tarshish powers who will submit to Christ – Ps. 45:12; 72:10; who acted– “wilily” – *ormah* – trickery, shrewdness. Rotherham – “craftily.” – V.4. So they sent “ambassadors” – *tsayar* – act as an envoy (from the root *tzir* – pivot of door, **hinge**; hence envoy, ambassador).

The Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge comments – “The word *tzir*, an ambassador, properly denotes a **hinge**; because an ambassador is a person upon whom the business turns as upon a hinge. So the Latin **Cardinalis**, from *cardo*, a **hinge**, was the title of the prime minister of the emperor Theodosius, though now applied only to the Pope’s electors and counsellors.” The King of England is the head of the Anglican Church – a carbon copy of Catholicism. Note V.17 – “Chephirah” – “lioness” = Britain.

V.4 – “and wine bottles, old” – The ‘old wine’ of ‘Babylon’ is present to deceive, as are “old shoes” – representing a faulty effete walk (V.5), and “clouted” – *tala* – patched – the character of latter day Protestant religions. Their “bread” (symbol for teaching) was “dry” – *yabesh* – prim. root sig. to be ashamed, confused; hence dry, and “mouldy” – *niqqud* – crumbled. It would be difficult to find a more accurate description of stale Orthodox religion.

V.6 – Full of deceit the Gibeonites sought a “league” (*berith* – cut a covenant) with Israel, just as some nations will after Armageddon – Ps. 66:3 – “Say unto God, How terrible art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies **submit themselves** unto thee.” And Ps. 18:44 – “As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me: the strangers shall **submit themselves** unto me” – repeated 2 Sam. 22:45. The words “submit themselves” is one word *kachash* – to be untrue, deceive, lie. Youngs – “feign obedience.” The margin of the Oxford Bible has “yield feigned obedience, Heb. Lie.” It will take some rebuke and much education before these nations will espouse the Truth (Mic. 4:3-4), but like the Gibeonites, they will be granted the privilege of service in the building of the Temple of the future Age (Isa. 60:9-10), for they became “hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God” (V.23).

Isaiah 13

THE BURDEN OF BABYLON CHAPTERS 13-14 (Summary of what is before us)

V.1-3 Yahweh commanded and sanctified His forces

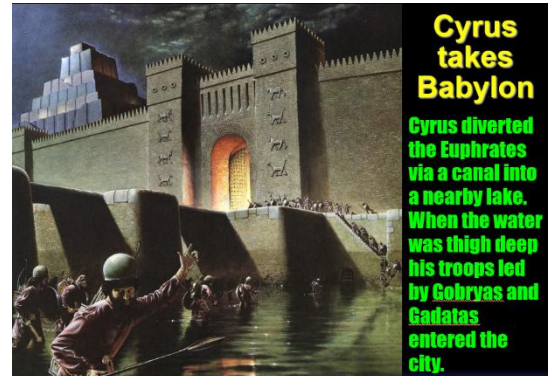
V.4-5 The fledgling Medo-Persian Empire was developing to the east

V.6-10 The day of Yahweh’s judgements was nearing

- V.11-16 The world to be punished and completely overthrown
V.17-18 The Medes and Persians to be the rod of Yahweh's anger
V.19-22 The complete destruction of Babylon determined – never to be rebuilt

What happened in BC 539 when Cyrus conquered Babylonian was a long range prophecy of Christ and the saints overthrowing Babylon the Great of the latter days. The pouring out of the 6th Vial in Rev. 16:12 is based on this history.

Cyrus was a type of Christ. His name signifies "the Sun" in Persian, but in Hebrew as Koresh – "Like to the heir". He was raised up in "righteousness" by God – Isa. 41:2; as Yahweh's "anointed" – *mashiyach* = Messiah – Isa. 45:1; and named 160-180 years before he arrived on the scene.



The 10,000 elite soldiers of Cyrus (his body-guard) were called "The Immortals" because their number never decreased. Fallen soldiers were immediately replaced by others waiting to join this elite band. They wore white robes into battle, and followed their king on horses, just as the saints will do (Rev. 19:14). It is said Cyrus knew every one of them by name, as Christ does his saints (Isa. 45:3-4; Luke 10:20; Rev. 13:8).

The drying up of the Euphrates by Cyrus was a type of the drying up of the Turkish Empire to open the way for the State of Israel and as a **way** for Christ against Babylon.

V.21-22 – "But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there" introduces a theme that will be amplified in Isaiah (chap. 34) and end up in the Apocalypse (Rev. 18:2; 19:17). In the type, it is a reference to the displaced nations who have submitted to Christ after Armageddon, but have no place to live. They will be given the vacated lands of Europe after "Babylon the Great" has been utterly destroyed and its land emptied of inhabitants – Rev. 19:21.

1 Timothy 4

One of the hallmarks of the inspiration of the Scriptures is prophecy that never fails. The Apostle Paul prophesies of the character of the great apostasy that would overtake the Brotherhood of Christ, as he did to the Thessalonians (2 Thess. 2).

V.1 – ESV – "Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits (claims of divinity) and teachings of demons" (Catholic 'saints'). This would lead to "Forbidding to marry" (celibacy in the Catholic priesthood); and "commanding to abstain from meats" (Catholic laws against eating meat on Friday = fish day after Dagon).

V.8 – (RV) "for bodily exercise is profitable for a little; but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come" – A fad of modern times is body image. Much time is spent in the gym or on the walking or running track. Very little time, if any, is spent seeking higher and more permanent things.

V.13 – "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine" – By "reading" Paul means the public reading of the Word in the ecclesia. It has its own power when read well. It is after all, the Word of God.

V.14-16 – Full commitment to appointed tasks and the teaching of the Word will lead to salvation for oneself and others (Dan. 12:3); Rotherham – "they who **make wise**, shall

shine like the shining of the expanse,—and, they who **bring the many to righteousness**, like the stars to times age-abiding and beyond.”

1 Timothy 5

V.1-16 – Honouring the elderly and vulnerable by extending respect and care is fundamental to life in Christ. Paul gives instructions on which widows should be supported by the ecclesia. These speak for themselves, but the indispensable requirement is that the aged widow (over 60) have a record of doing for others what she now rightly receives from the ecclesia.

V.17 – “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine” – Much in ecclesial life depends on wise leadership and sound teaching. While no-one should be put on a pedestal, respect and honour is due to those faithfully leading others to the Kingdom. They themselves will be very conscious of the vagaries and pitfalls of human nature, and therefore conscious of the needs of others.

V.20 – “Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear” – This is consistent with many prior Scriptures such as Lev. 19:17; Prov. 27:5 – “Open rebuke *is* better than secret love.” Reluctantly, Paul had to do this with Peter (Gal. 2:11-14). It is not easy, and must always be done with sensitivity and without anger or “partiality” (V.21).

V.22 – “Lay hands suddenly on no man” – This refers to the laying on of hands to pass on the Holy Spirit gifts – 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6; Acts 6:6. It was not to be done flippantly or irresponsibly.

V.24 – “Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgement; and some men they follow after” – In connection with ecclesial guidance and selection of fellow workers it would be necessary to show sound judgement based on what was known – “Ye shall know them by their fruits” – Matt. 7:16.

May 24

Joshua 10

A summary of the prophetic structure and content of chapters 6 to 10 of the Book of Joshua may be useful at this stage:

- Joshua 6 sets forth Armageddon in type.
- Joshua 7&8 deal with Israel's redemption.
- Joshua 9 is the submission of some nations to Christ after Armageddon.
- While nations who submit will be put to work building the Temple, the Catholic nations (particularly of Europe) will unite behind the Pope to rebel against Christ.
- Joshua 10 covers the 40 year period beyond Armageddon that leads to the destruction of Babylon the great. It involves an extended 'day'

V.1 – “Adonizedek king of Jerusalem” – “Lord of righteousness” – probably claimed to be a successor to Melchizedek. He is a type of the Pope as the real Antichrist – i.e. in the place of Christ; who claimed the title “king of Jerusalem” during the Crusades.

“Ai” – “heap of ruins”. So post-Armageddon the infrastructure of the world will be.

“Gibeon had made peace” – The Tarshish powers and others will submit to Christ post-Armageddon – “and were among them” for submissive nations will be required to commit

to Christ. Consequently, “they feared greatly” (Ps. 2:1-3) because Gibeon was “one of the **royal** cities” (*mamlakah* – kingdom, dominion), as is Britain.

V.5 – A confederacy of 5 (‘grace’) kings – Religious issues produce war.

V.6 – “Amorites” – “a sayer” in the sense of publicity; prominence – Cp. Ps. 2:1-3.

V.10 – “Beth-horon” – “house of hollowness” – as it proved to be; and “Azekah” – “dug over”. “Makkedah” – “place of shepherds”.

V.11 – “hailstones” – *barad* (29 occs. O.T.) *eben* – These hailstones destroyed Amorites selectively, missing the Israelites who wielded sword. This is a type of individual saints who will be the instruments of Divine judgement against Babylon – Rev. 16:21. These “slew” (*harag* – to smite with deadly intent) more than the sword.

V.12 – “Sun, stand thou still” – Unique in history – “And there was **no day like that** before it or after it, that Yahweh hearkened unto the voice of a man” – V.14.

V.13 – “the sun stood still (*damam* – be dumb, silent, still), and the moon stayed” (*amad* – to stand) “about a whole day” – *tamiym yome* – entire or whole day. This was unique in history and is “written in the book of Jasher” (*yashar* – straight) – Rotherham & Youngs – “the Book of the Upright.” It was an extended day – The Day of Yahweh of Zech. 12-14 (23 occs. in 3 chaps.) a period of 40 years of judgement.

V.14 – “for Yahweh fought for Israel” – Repeated V.42. Referred to in Zech. 14:3 – “Then shall Yahweh go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he **fought in the day of battle.**” Zech. 14 covers an extended ‘day’ of 40 years.

V.16 – “But these five kings fled, and hid themselves in a cave (*me’arah* – cave, den, hole) at Makkedah (“place of shepherds”). A type of Catholicism that frequents the abyss – Rev. 17:8. The command was “suffer them not to enter into their cities” (V.19). There will be no place of refuge for Catholics after Armageddon, but there will be a remnant that need to be cleaned up – V.20 – “the rest which remained.” This is a type of the remnant of Rev. 19:21.

V.20 – “none moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel” – The name ‘Amorite’ signifies “sayers” but they are now silenced as will all Israel’s enemies.

V.24 – “put your feet on the necks of these kings” – Necks under feet = Flesh subdued – Rom. 16:20 – “the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly”; 1 Cor. 15:25-27.

V.27 – “at the time of the going down of the sun” – i.e. the evening time – Zech. 14:6-7. The time when the glory of the saints will be revealed. The command was “cast them into the cave” – The old serpent in political manifestation in Rome and the Papacy will be cast into the abyss – Rev. 18:21; 19:20; 20:3.

V.28-39 – **Seven** cities overthrown – 1. Makkedah (V.28), 2. Libnah (V.29), 3. Lachish (V.31), 4. Gezer (V.33), 5. Eglon (V.34), 6. Hebron (V.36), 7. Debir (V.38) – Represents in the type the seven campaigns of Christ like that of both Joshua and David, and is prophesied in the **seven** thunder judgements – Rev. 10:3-4.

V.40 – “all their kings he left none remaining” – This is the fate of Babylon the Great (fourth beast of Dan. 7:7,11) and the Papacy (2 Thess. 2:8; Rev. 19:17-20).

V.42 – “And all these kings and their land” – So by the end of 40 years Christ will have conquered all rulers and captured all lands – See Luke 1:33; Isa. 9:6-7 = extent of Christ’s Kingdom (1 Cor. 15:24).

“did Joshua take at **one time**” – Such will be Christ’s 40 years of conflict.

V.42 – “because Yahweh God of Israel fought for Israel” – This repeats the words of V.14 showing how critical ‘the extended day’ was in the final victory.

V.43 – “Joshua returned, and all Israel with him unto the camp to Gilgal” – As the saints will to Christ in Zion ‘in the evening time’ (Zech. 14:7) to the place that memorialized the cutting off of mortality (Joshua 5:2-9). There is a clear break now until the **final conflict** in the Book of Joshua that types the rebellion at the end of the Millennium.

Isaiah 14

- | | |
|---------|--|
| V.1-3 | The restoration of Israel to the Promised Land |
| V.4-8 | The imminent sudden downfall of the king of Babylon |
| V.9-11 | Figurative excitement in Hell awaiting the king of Babylon |
| V.12-15 | The ignominious fall and darkening of the day star |
| V.16-20 | The disgrace of the dead but unburied king |
| V.21-23 | Yahweh’s irrevocable decree of Babylon’s destruction |
| V.24-27 | Destruction of the latter day Assyrian |
| V.28-32 | The punishment of Palestine for their hatred of Israel |

The Ministry of the Prophets pg. 260 – It is not surprising that there is so much concerning **Babylon** in the Old Testament Scriptures, when we consider her antiquity and importance, and the extent of her influence upon the nations and Israel. It is only in harmony with the fact that we have very much concerning **Rome** in the New Testament Scriptures, especially Revelation, for the same obvious reason, that her position and importance, and intimate and antagonistic relation to the divine purpose, required it. It is easy to realise this in connection with **Rome**, the **modern Babylon**, for the city remains, with the monuments on which Paul and the first century Christians set eyes. And the influence of Rome is indelibly engraven on all the civilized world.

The above citation reveals the longstanding Christadelphian understanding of this chapter. While the prophecy heralds the time of Babylon’s doom in the days of Belshazzar, its most important aspect is its application to the latter days. This is the hallmark of Biblical history. Most of it is actually prophecy. That in itself is an incontrovertible proof of inspiration.

V.7 – “**The whole earth is at rest**, and is quiet: they break forth into singing” – This is the far-reaching culmination of this prophecy. The time when Babylon the Great will have been totally destroyed and all enemies of Christ subdued – cp. Zech. 1:11.

V.24-27 – Yahweh’s determination is to “break the Assyrian (Gog) in my land” and extend the triumph to all nations for “the purpose that is purposed upon **the whole earth**: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon **all the nations**.” This is conclusive that the prophecy concerns the latter days.

V.28 – “**In the year that king Ahaz died** was this burden” – This is a highly significant statement. Ahaz is the type of faithless latter day Israel (see comments May 17). When ‘he’ dies, judgement will also fall upon Palestine (for there will be a nation called Palestine in the Gaza Strip at the time of Armageddon – Joel 3:4; Zeph. 2:4-11; Ezek.

25:15-17). Just as Babylon paid a price for their treatment of God's people, so will the Palestinians.

1 Timothy 6

V.1-10 – The nexus between doctrine and behavior that Paul mentioned in chapter 1:9-10 is expanded here. The way we operate in everyday life is reflective of the way our mind has been shaped by teaching – “Ye shall know them by their fruits” is an unfailing measure of attitude and character (Matt. 7:16). Solomon's quest for contentment without hypocrisy (Prov. 30:8-9) is echoed by Paul – “having food and raiment let us be therewith content,” “for the love of money is the root of all evil.”

V.11-21 – Using wealth aright (V.18-19), and following “after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness” is fighting “the good fight of faith” leading to “eternal life” that we might share with Christ an ever-lasting relationship with “the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting.” The only being with no beginning and underived immortality in the universe is Yahweh “the blessed and only Potentate,” but He has extended immortality to angels and to His Son – the Lord Jesus Christ. Truth, faithfulness and loyalty to Him will see many more added to them through the mission of His beloved Son.

May 25

Joshua 11

The final conflict of the Book of Joshua foreshadows in a marvelous type (wonderfully confirmed at the end of the Bible) the great rebellion at the end of the Millennium.

V.1 – “Jabin” – “intelligent” or “wise” – the characteristic of the serpent (Gen. 3:1). Jabin is a dynastic name – there were two who ruled from Hazor (“village”) in Josh. 11 and Jud. 4. As in Judges 4, **Jabin is a type of the serpent in political manifestation** (cp. Rev. 20).

V.3 – “Canaanite” = “humiliated”. The serpent (human nature) is the monarch of humiliation – Phil. 3:21 – LITV – “who will transform our body of **humiliation**.” Jabin's confederacy includes 4 named kings, 3 from the north, south and west, and 6 nations in V.3 = total **13 = rebellion**. This is a type of the final rebellion at the end of the Millennium.

V.10 – “for Hazor beforetime was the head (*rosh*) of all those kingdoms” – Jabin's head-quarters was home of the ‘serpent’ (2nd occ. of *rosh* is in Gen. 3:15).

Jabin represents the Serpent

Joshua 11	Revelation 20
V.1 – Jabin – “Intelligent”, “wise”	V.2 – The old serpent – “more subtle” Gen. 3:1
V.2-3 – from north, south, east, west	V.8 – gather from four quarters of the earth
V.4 – even as the sand on the sea shore	V.8 – as the sand of the sea
V.5 – met together, pitched together	V.9 – went upon the breadth of the earth
V.5 – Merom – “height” or “elevation”	V.9 – the beloved city – Zion (elevation - Ps. 48:2)
V.6 – burned chariots with fire	V.9 – fire from God out of heaven

Joshua 11	Revelation 20
V.8 – Mishrephoth-maim – “burnings of waters”	V.10 – cast into the lake of fire and brimstone
V.8 – left none remaining	V.14 – the second death – mortality abolished
V.11 – left none to breathe	V.15 – no mortals remain
V.23 – the land rested from war	The serpent destroyed – no sin and death – Gen. 3:15

Joshua 11 is the basis for Revelation 20 – it foreshadows the final conflict between Christ and the serpent in political manifestation.

V.11 – “utterly destroying them” – *charam* – exterminate – such is the fate of the serpent, for there was “not any left to breathe” – i.e. no one was using oxygen, hence, all mortality abolished. That is where Rev. 20 ends up.

V.13 – “save Hazor only, that did Joshua burn” – Christ will finally bring Divine judgements to an end when the serpent is destroyed at end of the Millennium.

The following slides compare Josh. 11 with Rev. 20 where it is clear the Spirit has drawn much of its language from.

V.15 – “so did Joshua, he left nothing undone” – Joshua’s name occurs 14 times in the chapter. 14 is the Biblical number of the certainty of covenant (Matt. 1). Christ the antitype will fulfil all that is written of him.

V.21 – “Joshua cut off...the Anakims” – “long-necked” – Anak was the father of 3 giants (Judges 1:10) – Sheshai – whitish (like leprosy); six (Hitchcock) = **Lust of the flesh**. Ahiman – “my brother is a gift” (Ex. 23:8) = **Lust of the eyes**. Talmai – ridged; root meaning to accumulate; a bank or terrace = **Pride of life**. These are the three giants that stand between us and an inheritance in the Land promised to Abraham – 1 John 2:15-16. They were “from Hebron” – There was now no obstruction to “fellowship” (the meaning of Hebron). They were cut off from “Debir” = “sanctuary”, i.e. in the type, no Canaanites in the house of Yahweh – Zech. 14:21; and from “Anab” = “fruit” – There now being no impediment to fruit for “Judah” = “praise” who have no limit to praise as with “Israel” = “prevailers with God”.

When Christ’s work is done at the end of the Millennium all men will have fellowship with God; worship in His sanctuary; bear fruit to His praise and will have permanently prevailed over the serpent through Him.

V.23 – “So Joshua took the whole **land**” (*erets* – earth, land depending on context), and “Joshua gave it for an **inheritance**” (*nachalah* – inheritance, heritage) “unto Israel” – Ultimately there will be but one nation on earth – the perfected Israel.

“And the **land** (*erets*) rested from war” – Refers here historically to the land of Canaan, but in the type to **the whole earth**. When Christ hands the Kingdom back to God at the ‘end’ it will be at rest, the hostility of Gen. 3:15 a thing of the past.

Isaiah 15

This chapter contains – V.1-4 - Sudden destruction to fall on Moab; V.5-7 – Some fugitives of Moab flee to escape; V.8-9 – Complete desolation to overtake Moab.

Ministry of the Prophets pg. 287 – Isaiah’s fifteenth and sixteenth chapters introduce “the burden of Moab,” or “oracle concerning Moab,” a message which not only speaks of the proximate judgment to come upon the nation, but of its latter-day policy in relation to the house of Israel. All things are for Israel’s sake; and the surrounding nations acquire importance in human annals only as they find place in the divine purpose to “restore again the kingdom to Israel.”

2 Timothy 1

As the Apostle languished in prison in Rome for the second and final time awaiting a hearing before the increasingly insane and hated Emperor Nero that culminated in the latter’s suicide on June 9 AD 68, he wrote his final letter to his “son in the faith” Timothy. One of the last orders Nero gave was for the execution of the Apostle to the Gentiles. It was

the right time for him to rest. The Roman legions under Vespasian were in Judea; AD 70 was near; and many of Paul's converts in Asia had turned their back on him (V.15).

V.1-2 – Reasserting his Divinely appointed Apostleship would seem superfluous for someone who knows he is about to die, but Paul has Timothy's continuing labours in the truth in mind. He knew by reports that many in Asia Minor (the western side of modern Turkey) had forsaken him because false brethren had gained their ear. Timothy needed as much support as he could get in this disappointing and challenging development.

V.3-15 – He exhorted Timothy to carefully guard and promote the deposit of the truth received through his heritage (mother and grandmother), and his close association with the Apostle, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a **sound mind**" (*sōphronismos* – discipline, that is, self-control).

V.16-18 – One who had not forsaken Paul was Onesiphorus who had apparently lost his life offering support to the Apostle. That is why Paul used the terminology "the house of Onesiphorus" for he was 'asleep' in Christ awaiting the judgement ("in that day").

May 26

Joshua 12

In this chapter, 31 kings in the land of Canaan were subdued and their land given to the tribes of Israel. There was not one ruler left standing in all the land. In the type, this prefigures the destruction of all opposition to Divine rule and the dissolution of all nations so that only **Israel** remains. That is the subject matter of the promise made to Abraham.

The last three chapters of the Bible set forth the ultimate fulfilment of all three covenants that God made. The slide below illustrates.

Joshua 11 and 12 were a typical fulfilment of these promises. The very first clause of the first promise that God made to Abraham was "I will make of thee **a great nation**." Israel at the height of its glory in the days of David and Solomon did not fulfil this promise, for 'great nations' do not crumble and dissolve as Israel did. This was a promise of the single nation of **Israel beyond the Millennium**, and that is what Rev. 21 is about. Its focus is on a 'city' but that city is actually a nation (a corporation of people). It is noteworthy that "city" occurs **12** times in Rev. 21 & 22 (12 = Israel). This is the Abrahamic "city" of Heb. 11:10,16; 12:22-23. The "holy city" is styled by Bro. Thomas, "The New Jerusalem body politic" and "the holy Jerusalem association of saints." "It is the Yahweh-Elohistic municipality, symbolized by one hundred and forty-four cubits, each cubit representing one thousand of the numerical symbol of this 'Holy Nation,' the Israel of the Deity." – Eureka Vol. 1 pg. 115. 144 is 12x12 and the city has 12 gates and foundations.

This is why Rev. 21:1 begins with "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the **first** (actually the **former** = the Millenium) heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more **sea**" (i.e. no more **nations** – Isa. 17:12-13). The first 8

Culmination of the 3 great covenants

Rev. 20 – Final fulfilment of Gen. 3:15

- ◆ The Old Serpent bound and finally destroyed
- ◆ Sin and rebellion eradicated – death abolished

Rev. 21 – Abrahamic Covenant fulfilled

- ◆ The Holy City (Abrahamic) completed
- ◆ One nation – Israel – embraces all (**Gen. 12:2**)
- ◆ Eternal inheritance experienced by all

Rev. 22 – The Promises to David fulfilled

- ◆ Divine authority over all the earth
- ◆ David's throne established forever
- ◆ The spiritual house of David complete

verses of Rev. 21 are a description of the time beyond the Millennium. What follows is how it is attained during the Millennium.

Isaiah 16

The chapter can be summarized – V.1-5 – Advice for Moab to recognize Messiah; V.6-11 – Moab to be humbled because of pride; V.12-14 – Moab weakened and feeble.

God's judgments were to come upon Moab because of their pride, and their exultation over the calamities He had brought upon His people. The pattern was set for the future. Pride; trust in uncertain riches; settlement on the lees (Jer. 48:11); idolatry of various forms; reckoning Israel to be no different from all the nations; magnifying themselves against them, even against Yahweh and His people – all these things are characteristic, more or less, of the most prominent Gentile powers of today, and will be more and more so until the crisis comes which has been so long ago revealed in the prophets.

V.1 – The Chaldee version renders this verse, “Bear ye tribute to the Messiah, the anointed of Israel, who is powerful over you who were in the desert, to Mount Zion.” This would seem to harmonize with V.5 – “And in mercy shall the **throne** be established: and he (Messiah) shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness.” It speaks of the day when Christ will sit on the throne of David to fulfil Luke 1:32-33 – “the Lord God shall give unto him **the throne of his father David**: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”

V.14 – In the Scriptures the position of a “hireling” or hired servant, is used in contradistinction to that of a son and heir. Nationally Israel is Yahweh's Son, His firstborn (Ex. 4:22), and the Gentiles—Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Roman, Russian, German, British, or others – His “hirelings” who do His subordinate work, but do not have in His house of glory the eternal inheritance of the Son.

2 Timothy 2

V.1-13 – In a series of metaphors, Paul underscores the importance of total commitment to Christ and his cause. The soldier, athlete and farmer all come into view. A good soldier does not allow himself to be entangled in the affairs of this life and be distracted from the objectives of his commanding officer. Athletes are cautious not to be disqualified for unlawful behavior. Farmers are rightly determined to produce a crop for their own sustenance as the wellbeing of others. In all cases, hardship, discipline and difficulties will be encountered, just as it was for Christ (V.9-13).

V.14-21 – Nitpicking Judaism and disbelieving Greek philosophy were dangerous distractions from the objectives of Christ. The antidote was as Weymouth translates V.15 – “Earnestly seek to commend yourself to God as a servant who, because of his straightforward dealing with the word of truth, has no reason to feel any shame.” All kinds of people had been called to Christ, for God wishes to save all men, some would prove to be vessels of honour, others would not.

V.22-26 – Flesh is weak and is not inclined to “follow righteousness, faith, love, peace” the products of pure motivation. It is more inclined to quibbling and argument. Patience and “meekness instructing those that oppose themselves” is what is required.

May 27

Joshua 13

Using the mantra that a picture is worth a thousand words, this map will assist understanding of where the areas yet to be conquered were. The pink coloured areas represent the parts of the Land Israel controlled, while the green that which remained to be captured.

All the kings had been overthrown (Josh. 12), but all the territory of those kings was not yet in the possession of the tribes.

This is a fact that in itself is an important element of the overall type presented in both Joshua and Judges. Joshua could do no more, just as Christ can do no more than what he has done. It is up to the individual Israelite to secure his own inheritance in the Land by dealing with the remaining Canaanites who stand in the way, for the problem we all have, namely, human nature stands between us and an inheritance in the Kingdom of God.



Isaiah 17

The frequent angry interchanges between Israel and Syria culminated in the prophet's time with the events of Isa. 7 when the throne of David was in jeopardy from invasion by Syria and Israel. It was that threat that brought Syria under the judgement that arrived when the Assyrians hired by Ahaz slew Rezin and destroyed Damascus which lay in ruins for 40 years. However, like the "burden of Moab" that precedes it, it is associated with a time of "eventide trouble" for Israel (V.14); of angry rushing nations like the billows of a storm-tossed sea (V.12-13); and with the sweeping away of the Spoiler by a divine rebuker as thistle-down before the whirlwind. The history is the pattern for the future.

The Arab-spring of 2011 saw civil war in Syria with horrendous loss of life, destruction and a huge cohort of refugees. Damascus is already half destroyed and with the overthrow of the Assad regime is ruled by an extremist Islamic sect that is even more virulently hateful of Israel than the Assads. Russia (the latter-day Assyrian) will finish the job in due time. Israel will say, “This is the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us.”

Ministry of the Prophets comments – Damascus has been a notable place from time immemorial. Josephus says it was founded by Uz, the grandson of Shem. Shem's son Aram, gave his name to the land, which was afterwards called Syria (from Tyre, *Tzur*), and Mesopotamia is called in the Hebrew, Aram-Naharaim, Aram of the two rivers (Euphrates and Tigris).

Isaiah 18

Citing portions of Isa. 17 and 18, Bro. Thomas in Elpis Israel identifies “the land shadowing with wings” as Britain – Now, the geography of this passage points to the Lion-power of **Tarshish** as “the land shadowing with wings.” Taking Judea, where the prediction was delivered, as the place of departure, the word “beyond” points to the east; that is, running a line from Judea across the Euphrates and Tigris, “the rivers of Khushistan,” it passes into

Hindustan, where the Merchants of Tarshish, and its young lions, “rule the land.” But the **British** power is still further indicated by the insular position of its seat of government; for the “sending of fleet messengers by the sea,” implies that the shadowing power is an **island-state**. Ambassadors are sent from the residence of the Court, and if they proceed to their destination by sea, the throne of the power must be located in an island.

In V.1 the word “Woe” should be “Ho” as a call to service. “Ethiopia” is Cush where there are rivers (Gen. 2:13). Britain has played an important part in bringing Israel to where they are today, but has more to do to fulfil prophecy in the future – V.7; Ezek. 38:13; Isa. 60:9; 23:18.

2 Timothy 3

V.1 – “This know also, that in the last days perilous (*chalepos* – hard to bear, troublesome, dangerous) times shall come” – A more accurate description of the character of the times in which we live from the following verses 2 to 9 is not possible. Most are obvious, but “trucebreakers” of V.3 requires comment. The word *aspondos* means “that cannot be persuaded to enter into a covenant, implacable.” In other words, they cannot keep covenants, and if they make them will not hold to them out of self-interest. The modern world are “lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God,” yet there is a ‘curtain’ of hypocritical religion (V.5-9).

V.10-17 – Attempting to live the truth and preach the Gospel brings its challenges even in times of freedom from violent persecution (V.11-12). The evils of the world, in magnitude and reach, rapidly increase as men seek out many inventions – Ecc. 7:29. But there is an antidote – “continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of” by close attention to “the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” We are assured that “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 V.16-17.

2 Timothy 4

V.1-5 – We have an obligation to preach to all as opportunity arises (1 Pet. 3:15), but Paul is not talking about preaching externally when he writes, “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine” for he goes on to say, “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine,” but will choose teachers who say what they want to hear. This is about one-time believers who turn aside to false teachings. Upholding truth within the community is critically important.

V.6-8 – Paul had done all he could to “contend earnestly for the faith,” but it was a losing battle. The time for his “departure” was at hand. The word is *analsis* – an unloosing; a military term speaking of the breaking up of camp, hence describes the disintegration of his body. However, he knew a reward awaited him at the resurrection which would also go to “all them also that **love** his appearing.” We love (*agapao*) Christ’s appearing by sacrificing the present for the future – Luke 17:33. Sadly, one of Paul’s fellow labourers had chosen the present – “Demas hath forsaken me, having **loved** (*agapao*) this present world.”

V.9-22 – Personal instructions for Timothy and final greetings conclude the epistle. Paul was not without some comfort, for Luke the faithful physician was with him, and he asks

Timothy to bring John Mark with him. This young man had caused Paul much disappointment (Acts 13:13; 15:37-39). Paul did not bear personal grudges. He was happy to see and encourage renewed dedication.

May 28

Joshua 14

V.1-5 – These verses concern the inheritance of the tribes on the west side of the Jordan. It was to be divided by lot which had been stated three times before – Num. 26:55-56; 33:54; 34:13. This process was designed to minimize disputes among the tribes which arose anyway later due to the failure to drive out the Canaanites – Josh. 17:13-18.

V.6-15 – After 7 years of campaigning with Joshua to overthrow all organized resistance of the Canaanites, the time came for Caleb to obtain his inheritance. He only wanted one place – Hebron which had been the stumblingblock to 10 of his fellow spies 45 years earlier, and through them to the whole nation.

V.6 – “Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite” – Caleb means “a dog”, from a root “to yelp, or to attack”. The dog was a Jewish symbol for the Gentiles and Caleb was a Kenezite. This is emphasized again in V.14 and presents one of the great ironies of Biblical history. Kenezite means “a descendent of Kenaz” and signifies “hunter,” but they were one of the original tribes of the land of Canaan when Abraham sojourned in it – Gen. 15:19. The Kenezites are listed among the 10 tribes in the land that would have to be removed before Abraham and his seed (Christ) could inherit it. Accordingly, Caleb had Gentile origins and while it is not known when his ancestors joined Israel, his prominent position in Judah (Num. 13:6) probably indicates his ancestors had joined the Patriarchs in the Land before Jacob went to Egypt. Multitudes of Abraham’s natural family did not receive an inheritance in the Land of Promise due to lack of faith, but Caleb’s faith secured it for him, both then and in the future. The same situation exists today for Gentiles who have become part of “the Israel of God” – Gal. 6:16. Incidentally, Jephunneh means “he will be prepared” (Strong), or “he will be facing” (BDB), and he was indeed ready to deal with the three giants that stood in his inheritance (1 John 2:15-16) as we must be.

Hebron means “fellowship” and this too was to play a part in the future for Caleb. Having secured his inheritance in that city it was taken away from him and given to the Levitical family of Aaron (Josh. 21:9-13), but he was happy with that. Not only did that mean that he had a permanent ‘Bible school’ close by, but he retained “the fields of the city, and the villages thereof, gave they to Caleb the son of Jephunneh for his possession.” In these fields was the cave of Machpelah (Gen. 23:9; 49:29-32) where lay Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their wives who ‘lived’ unto God (Matt. 22:32; Rom. 4:17). That was all the ‘fellowship’ that Caleb wanted.

Isaiah 19

The following is copied from ‘The Events Subsequent to the Return of Christ’ page 62 as a summary of the content of this chapter. It is a substantial consideration (too large for this time) but the full section is appended in **Appendix 4** of this document.

Following the subjugation and disciplining of the Arabs, Christ and the saints will move westwards into Egypt. In Isaiah 19 this is shown to be by invitation of the sorely oppressed Egyptians who will be suffering at the hands of “a cruel lord.”

Christ's entry into Egypt is part of a predetermined plan by God to provide a base for the return of purged and redeemed Israel to the land of their fathers (Isa. 11:15). Because of its proximity to the Covenant Land Egypt occupies an important place in the purpose of God; this purpose is fully outlined in Isaiah 19 which also provides details of the great crisis to descend upon Egypt during "the time of trouble such as never was."

A summary of the chapter divisions might be helpful.

V.1 – Yahweh invades Egypt

V.2-4 – Egypt under Gog

V.5-10 – Egypt's dire poverty

V.11-15 – Egypt's political folly

V.16-17 – Egypt to be humbled

V.18 – Egypt converted

V.19-20 – Yahweh memorialized in Egypt

V.21-22 – The conversion of Egypt

V.23 – Egypt forms part of a united world

V.24-25 – Egypt submits to Israel as the first dominion

Titus 1

Titus was given one of the most difficult commissions in the first century history of the Brotherhood – the organization of the ecclesias on the Island of Crete. Cretians as a race were notorious for all forms of bad behavior (V.12). The ecclesias there needed organization and stabilization and Titus was the one brother with the skills and fortitude to handle the situation. He had done effective work among the Corinthians for the Apostle – 2 Cor. 2:13; 7:6,13,14; 8:6,16,23; 12:18. His character is clearly shown in those passages, but his presence is indicated by 2 Cor. 7:15 when Paul reminded the Corinthians "how with **fear** and **trembling** ye received him." They did not view Timothy that way – 1 Cor. 16:10. The old saying "horses for courses" has its application to ecclesial life – Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:12-25; 1 Pet. 4:10-11. Titus was equipped to deal with unruly behavior so Paul could counsel "rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith" (V.13).

V.5-9 – Capable and qualified elders were required as 'bishops' or overseers (V.7) to guide the ecclesias and set things right. These qualifications are similar to 1 Tim. 3, but hint at some of the contemporary problems of our time as well – e.g. divorce and remarriage; dysfunctional families; self-will and anger when demands are not met; domestic violence and greed. Cretian society had moulded its inhabitants, and consequently the truth was facing an uphill battle to survive. Added to this was the omnipresent machinations of Judaistic converts (V.10-16).

Titus 2

Chapter 2 expands upon 1:9 – "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." Leaders especially need to be equipped to dispense the Word, each in their own area of responsibility – "aged men" the ecclesia; "aged women" to "teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" (V.4-5). It is the Word of God that would effect change for the better. It too could bring moderation to the lives of younger men brought up in an evil environment. The word for "sober minded" (V.6) is *sōphroneō* – to be of sound mind; to exercise self-control; to curb one's passions.

V.7-10 – It was essential that Titus "walk the talk" as the modern saying goes as an example of integrity in "a pattern of good works" in doctrine, speech and employment.

V.11-15 – There were sound reasons for demanding such corrections to behavior. By “the grace of God” the call had gone out to all men “training us to renounce ungodliness and all the pleasures of this world, and to live sober, upright, and pious lives at the present time” (Weymouth – V.12). The sacrifice of Christ can remove the stain of sin “and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (V.14), who will look to the “appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ” (RV for V.13).

Titus 3

V.1-7 – “Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work” – Having dealt with the necessary changes within the ecclesias, Paul now turns to the relationship of the ecclesia to the state. Lawlessness and rebelliousness were common in Crete. Followers of Christ have obligations to “the powers that be,” and are required to be subject to them unless required to disobey God. We have a duty to undertake “every good work” in terms of Paul’s counsel in Gal. 6:9-10 – “let us not be weary in well doing....as we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto **all men**, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” This is best brought to the fore by remembering the unbelieving past, and appreciating the scope of the change wrought in our lives by the truth in Christ, and the benefits it has brought – “That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

V.8-11 – “This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou **affirm constantly**, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain **good works**” – Christ’s principle that “ye shall know them by their fruits” (Matt. 7:16) is reflected by the Apostle. Our destiny will be determined by our works (not to be confused with works of law and ritual in which the Judaisers gloried – Rev. 22:12 – “my reward is with me, to give every man according as his **work** shall be”). It is Judaisers that Paul has in mind next – “avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law” (cp. 1:10). Heretics decide their own fate by insisting on wrong doctrine and/or wrong practice (“being condemned of himself”), and after two or three genuine attempts at conversion should be withdrawn from lest they corrupt the rest of the community (1 Cor. 5:5-6).

V.12-15 – Paul’s final instructions to Titus speak for themselves, but it is notable that one of the principal problems in Crete was an aversion to manual labour – “let our people too learn to set a good example in following honest occupations for the supply of their necessities, so that they may not live useless lives” (Weymouth).

May 29

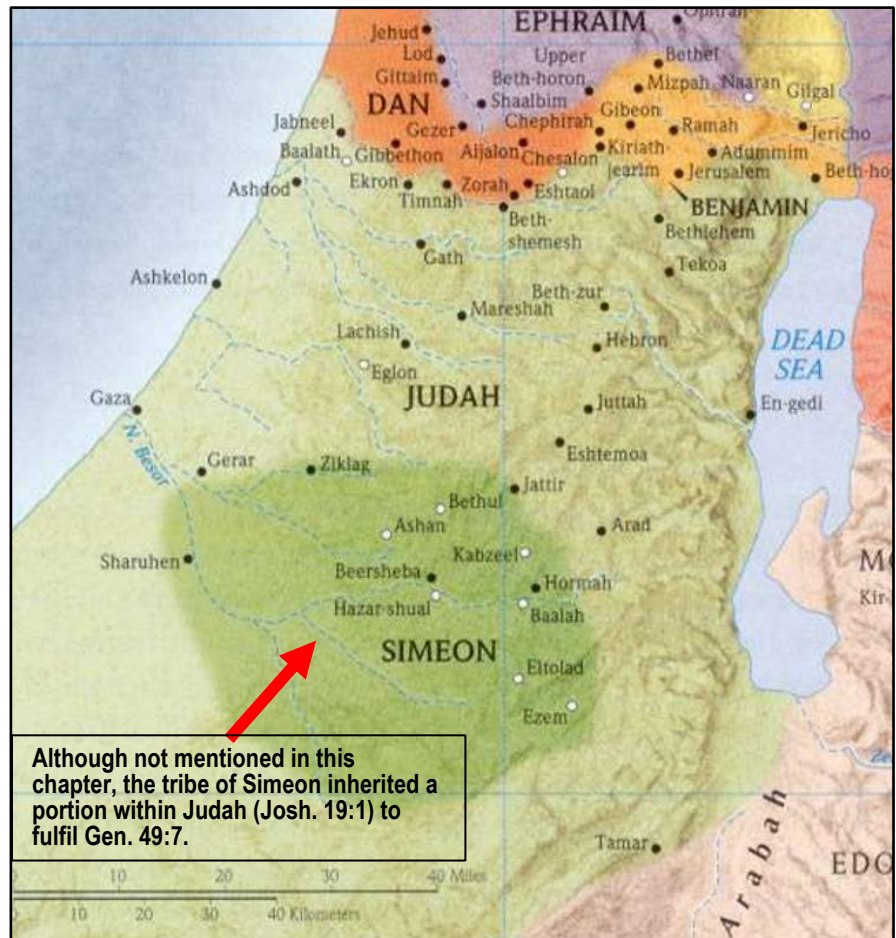
Joshua 15

There is too much detail in this chapter to consider in this forum. The map at right will be helpful as the long list of names of cities given to the tribe of Judah are enumerated.

The “river of Egypt” mentioned twice in this chapter is not the Nile, but the Wady el-Arish on the Mediterranean coast 40 miles south-west of Gaza.

Caleb’s inheritance is mentioned again – V.13. We will leave consideration of the events of V.14-19 until Judges 1.

One sad note is in V.63. Jebus which means “trodden down” was not trodden down by Judah but the Jebusites retained possession of it for 500 years to the days of David, and this was the place where Yahweh had chosen to place His name – Deut. 12:5; Ps. 87:1-2.



Isaiah 20

Ministry of the Prophets page 357 comments – “Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction and of patience” (James 5:10). Isaiah is here before us as such an example, a man of sign to apostate Israel, walking naked and barefoot among them for three years, to indicate first the approaching fate of “Ethiopia their expectation, and Egypt their glory,” upon whom they leaned for help against Assyria; and next, the fate of the nation that looked to them rather than to God, who had brought them out of Egypt at the beginning. Some ingenuity has been expended in the attempt to escape the roughness of the word just here. It has been said that “naked” means only partially unclothed. But the original word is that applied to Adam and Eve before the fall, and to the condition of a babe at birth, and the working out of the sign was to result in a procession of captives with “buttocks uncovered” to their shame. Then again, it has been sought to evade the length of time, “three years,” and the margin of the Revised Version bears traces of the effort. But it is beside the point. We might as well object to the account of Ezekiel’s four hundred and thirty days prostration in his typical siege of Jerusalem (chap. 4), or to Nebuchadnezzar’s seven years’ madness, or to Israel’s forty years’ wandering in the wilderness.

Isaiah 20 is a short but powerful testimony to what happens when nations oppress Israel even as God's weapon against His own people, and to Israel for their faithlessness. "God is not mocked" – Gal. 6:7.

Isaiah 21

The first ten verses of this chapter contain a prophecy of the taking of Babylon by the Medes and Persians; which is here denominated "the desert of the sea" (V.1), because the country around it, and especially towards the sea, was a great morass, often overflowed by the Tigris and Euphrates, and only rendered habitable by being drained by a number of canals. However, the literal is typical of the spiritual. A desert is a **wilderness**, and the sea is a type of **nations** (Isa. 17:12-13), hence we have a "wilderness of the peoples" (Ezek. 20:35) which we know is central Europe where Elijah will gather scattered Israel after Armageddon to inflict Yahweh's judgements on Babylon the Great – Rev. 17:3,5,15; Hos. 2:14; Ezek. 20:35-36; Mic. 7:13-15; Zech. 9:13-15; Rev. 19:11-21 where Israel is the "horse in the wilderness" – Isa. 63:12-13. Accordingly, we read in V.9 – "And, behold, here cometh a chariot of men, with a couple of **horsemen**. And he answered and said, **Babylon** is fallen, is fallen" – Rev. 14:8; 18:2.

V.11 – "The burden of **Dumah**. He calleth to me out of **Seir**, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?" – In a display of the principle undergirding Christ's use of parables to his generation – "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given," an anagram is employed here. It is hidden from the shallow, but obvious to the student of God's Word. An anagram is the transposition of letters in a word to form a different word. Such is "Dumah" being Edom transposed. The proof lies in the parallelism mentioning "**Seir**." Edom is the typical name of Babylon the Great – Isa. 34:9-10 cited in Rev. 14:10-11 – note V.8. Rebellious Catholicism in Europe post-Armageddon is destroyed during what is called "night" in Zec 14:6-7 – "And it shall come to pass, in that day,—that there shall be no light, the bright stars (saints), shall be withdrawn; And it shall be a day by itself, The same, shall be known unto Yahweh—Not day, nor night,—But it shall come to pass, that, at evening time, there shall be light" (Rotherham).

V.13-17 – The prophecy turns to Arabia. Rotherham – "The oracle on Arabia."

V.13 - "In the forest in Arabia shall ye lodge" – Rotherham – "Among the shrubs in Arabia must ye lodge." The word for 'forest' is *ya'ar* which is widely used in relation to forests or a wood of any kind. It means "to thicken with verdure". Hence, in relation to Arabia it must refer to a time when the Arabian wilderness is transformed into a lush forest region. This dramatic change will be one of the consequences of the massive changes Christ will bring to the region subsequent to (and as a result of) Armageddon. The word 'lodge' means to dwell. The place of dwelling for the Arabs in the Kingdom Age is Arabia proper to the east and south of the territory promised to Abraham. To this area the humbled and disciplined Arab peoples will be taken and resettled.

"O ye travelling companies of Dedanim" – Dedan refers to the Arab peoples who descended from Abraham and Cush – Gen. 25:3; 1 Chron. 1:9. The fact that they are described as travelling in companies serves to confirm the obvious reference to the nomadic Bedouin tribes of the Arabian Peninsular, the Sinai Desert, and Jordanian Plateau.

V.14 – "The inhabitants of the land of Tema" – Tema was a son of Ishmael (Gen. 25:15) and probably gave his name to the region of Teman. The word signifies 'the south' and clearly refers to the region of Sinai (Hab. 3:3). The Arabs of this region who will be the first

to feel the power of Christ's disciplining sword will stand ready to assist fleeing Jews in the "time of Jacob's trouble" = Armageddon.

"brought water to him that was thirsty" – The refugees from Israel, fleeing Gog's furious attack upon the land of Israel will be desperate for sustenance as was their forefather Elijah in a similar situation (1 Kings 19:4-8). A drink of water in this dry and arid region is a valuable gift (Matt. 10:42) and given together with bread was regarded as an act of friendship (Deut. 23:4).

"they prevented with their bread him that fled" – R.V. – "did meet the fugitives with their bread." This implies that the Arab peoples will actually initiate help for the fleeing Jews. They will preempt their cries for help. What could bring about such a remarkable change in the attitude of Arab toward Jew but the supernatural intervention of Christ?

V.15 – "For they fled from the swords" – This verse provides the reason why the Jews must flee the land of Israel and seek refuge in adjoining lands. Gog's invasion of Israel will be so ruthless and devastating that two-thirds (or over 5 million) of the population will be destroyed (Zech. 13:8), multiplied by the earthquake.

Philemon

This is a short but powerful epistle about humbly receiving back into service as a brother in Christ an escaped slave. Paul's writing from prison is vigorous and uses an obvious play on the meaning of names. For example, "Philemon" means 'affectionate' whom Paul describes as "our dearly beloved." "Archippus" signifying "horse ruler" is described as "our fellow-soldier." "Onesimus" means 'profitable or useful' to which Paul adds, "Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now **profitable** to thee and to me."

V.4-7 – Philemon had a reputation for loving and faithful service in Christ at Colosse. He was known for his care of the brethren and sisters. Now Paul had a challenge for him.

V.8-22 – Paul pleads for the escaped slave of Philemon, Onesimus, who had been subsequently converted by him, and doubtless under the Apostle's instruction wanted to return to Colosse and to his master. Human pride and the desire to exact lost revenue may have got in the way, but Paul's masterly writing would have removed all impediments.

When all is said and done, we are all slaves. Once, slaves to sin (Rom. 6:17), we have been freed from one slave master in order to serve another, namely, God and His son (Rom. 6:22 – ESV – "now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God"). In Christ we are 'prisoners' – V.1,9 – "being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a **prisoner** of Jesus Christ" (Eph. 3:1; 4:1; 2 Tim. 1:8). As such we have no choice in the matter, and doubtless Philemon grasped that.

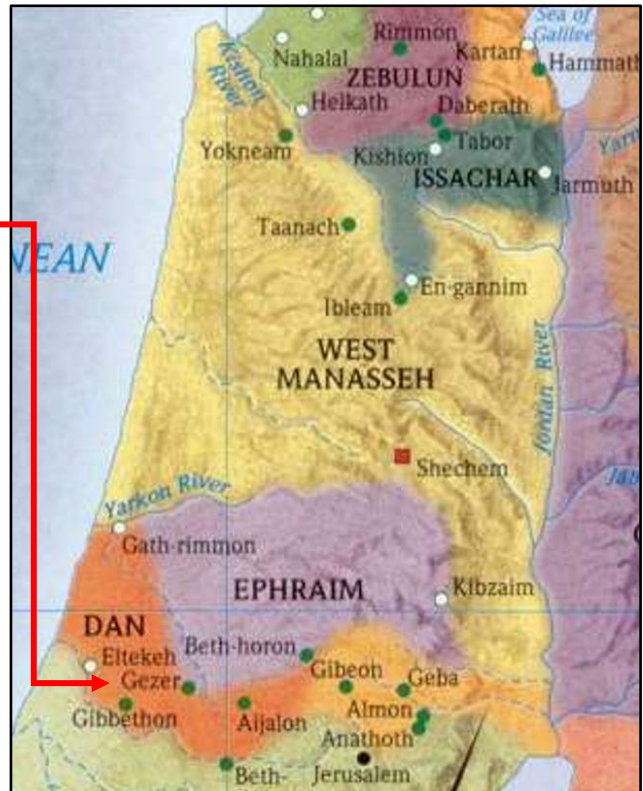
May 30

Joshua 16

Josh. 16 & 17 deal with the inheritance of the tribe of Ephraim and the half tribe of Manasseh as shown on the map at right.

V.10 – “And **they drove not out the Canaanites** that dwelt in **Gezer**: but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites unto this day, and serve under tribute.” This was the beginning of the adulteration of Israel’s singular worship of Yahweh. Moses had repeatedly warned them of the danger of letting Canaanites survive in the Land – Num. 33:52-55; Deut. 7:1-2. They did not obey this requirement and by the early days of the Judges this became a huge problem – Judges 1:27-36.

Just as Moses had warned, it was integration with the residual Canaanites that led to a series of apostasies throughout the period of the Judges. The lesson is clear. When we enter the Truth, we must leave behind all the associations of the past that might undermine our faith.



Isaiah 22

The Ministry of the Prophets page 378 – This “oracle” is related to Hezekiah’s reign. Shebna and Eliakim were two of his officers who figure in the account of Sennacherib’s invasion, of which the prophet speaks in chapters 36 and 37. This, we are told, took place in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, from which we see that Isaiah was then getting an old man. His vision of chapter 6 is dated “in the year that King Uzziah died.” After that, Jotham reigned 16 years, and Ahaz followed with another 16 years’ reign. Add to this the 14 years of Hezekiah, and we have 46 years from the death of Uzziah. If the prophet were then only 20 years old, he would be 66 years old in the fourteenth of Hezekiah. The probability is he was past the three score and ten limit, and that when he was “sawn asunder,” according to the tradition, which seems to be supported in Heb. 11:37; it was in old age, after a long life of distressful and unheeded testimony and warning.

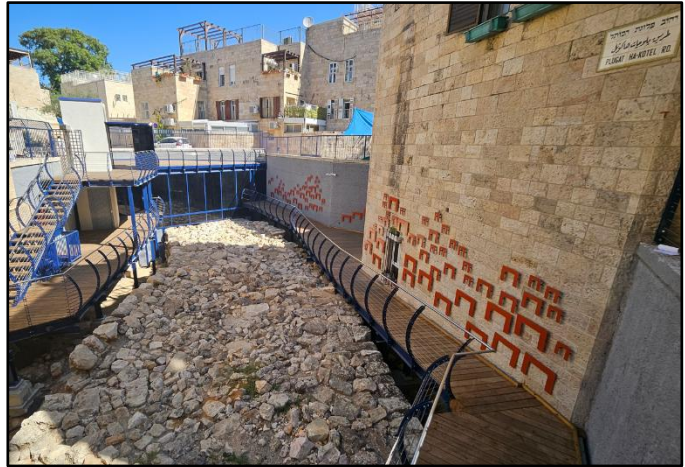
V.1 – “The burden of the valley of vision” – Isaiah’s prophecy began with a glorious vision of Jerusalem as the centre of world government and religion, but it is not these visions of glory only that feature here. In Isaiah’s time the Tyropoeon valley divided the city, and running south joined the valley of Hinnom. This last was **the valley**, defiled by the idolatries of Judah’s kings, which was to be the scene of divine retribution in the day of “treading down by the Lord Yahweh of hosts” (V.5). Isaiah had been a grieved spectator of the abominations practiced there.

V.1-14 – The Assyrian invasion of the Land and the ultimate siege of Jerusalem in the 14th year of Hezekiah produced a range of preparatory activities and attitudes. This

“tumultuous city” of “stirs” had “wholly gone up to the housetops” and feverish preparations were made for the siege, mostly without faith (V.11), except for Hezekiah and a remnant.

V.9 – Hezekiah’s tunnel had been dug before Sennacherib’s army arrived – 2 Kings 20:20; 2 Chron. 32:1-6.

V.10 – “ye have numbered the houses of Jerusalem, and the **houses have ye broken down** to fortify the wall” – The evidence of this remains in the Old City today. The photo at right shows the remnants of what is called ‘Hezekiah’s wall’. The stones visible had once been the walls of local dwellings.



V.12-14 – Yahweh called for reflection and repentance, but many adopted the mantra “let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we shall die” and set about enjoying everything available to them. There was only one cure for that attitude – “Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you **till ye die**, saith the Lord GOD of hosts.”

V.15-25 – The contrast between two principal officers in the government could not have been more stark. Shebna the “companion” (the king’s friend) was digging his own grave, but he would not be laid in it. His name means “to lead captive” and that is where he was going – V.17-19. But Eliakim (“El shall set up”) became a type of Christ due to his faithfulness and loyalty to Yahweh and Hezekiah – V.21-22 – “And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy **government** into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. And **the key of the house of David** will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.” These words are cited in Matt. 16:19 and Rev. 3:7 confirming their connection to Christ.

Hebrews 1

Faced with the increasingly evident defection of some Jewish converts who were inclined towards keeping the Law and returning to it to avoid persecution from other Jews (family included – Luke 12:51-53), the Apostle wrote, under inspiration, perhaps the most profound letter in history. The aim was to assert the absolute superiority of Christ over every aspect of the Law. It had been delivered “by the disposition of angels” (Acts 7:53; Heb. 2:2), but Christ was superior to the angels in every way – V.4 to 2:18. This was the first of several contrasts to be made between the Law and Christ as the Apostle sought to pre-empt a defection from the Body of Christ by some of the Hebrew brethren (Heb. 10:25-26) – “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. For if we **sin wilfully** (by departing from Christ) after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.”

The superiority of Christ to the angels was due to his Divine begettal that led to victory over sin and death (something the Law could never do) and now “being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of

the Majesty on high” (RV for V.3.) He “loved righteousness” and **therefore** “hated iniquity” (V.9 cited from Ps. 45:7), and was exalted above “the whole family in heaven and in earth” (V.13 is cited from Ps. 110:1; Eph. 3:14-15), so that he now manages the angelic host in support of his mortal brethren – V.14 – ESV – “Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?” It was these indubitable facts that produced the dramatic and unique introduction to the epistle – “**God**, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his **Son**, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds” (*aionos* – Ages).

Hebrews 2

The theme of Christ’s superiority over the angels runs from chapter 1:4 to chapter 2:18 as is indicated in 2:16 – “For verily he took not on him the nature of **angels**.”

V.1-5 – The problem for those converted Jews who were tending to turn back to the Law was that they had allowed the teaching concerning Jesus Christ to leak out of their minds – “lest at any time we should let them slip” for which the KJV margin has “run out as leaking vessels.” There was a pressing need to revive the memory of that teaching which had convinced them to be baptized into Christ – “For this reason we ought to pay the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard” (Weymouth). Uncomfortable and persistent persecution like that described in chapter 10:32-33 has a way of distracting the mind from the veracity of cold hard truths (“the word spoken by angels was stedfast”). This was the status of some Hebrew believers who were doubtless experiencing what Christ warned would happen within families by the acceptance of his teaching (Matt. 10:34-37). Departing from the “great salvation” that they had received which was confirmed by “signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit” could only lead to rejection at the Judgement Seat and that would rob them of assuming the role of the angels in the future Age – (Rotherham) – “For, not unto messengers (angels), hath he subjected the coming habitable earth of which we are speaking.” The word “world” (KJV) is *oikoumenē* – the inhabited earth (Thayer).

V.6-10 – To prove the things related in this section from chapter 1:4, the Apostle quotes Ps. 8 extensively (see comments from March 19 copied below in box).

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.

“But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is **man**, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou **visitest** him?” – Weak, mortal man (the first word “man” from Ps. 8:4 is *enosh*) could not overcome the problem of his nature, but God “visited” (*paqad* – to attend to, look after, care for) His son to enable him to do so and render perfect obedience. The title “the Son of man” refers to exercising dominion over all carnal things, and this Christ did, then, now, and will in the future (see comments on Luke 5 for **March 14** – page 32). For this to be done required him to be made “a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death” and to be raised and “crowned with glory and honour” having tasted “death for every man.” Everything revolved around Jesus Anointed (“for whom are all things”) and without this “captain of their salvation” who was made “perfect through sufferings,” no other sons could be brought “unto glory.”

V.11-18 – “For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of **one**: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren” – The work of God in Christ “reconciling the world unto himself” (2 Cor. 5:19) created a unity between God and those who came into His son by belief and baptism. This was over and above what the Law could achieve and to depart from Christ to return to it was utter folly, for all the Law could do was separate man from God through highlighting his sinfulness (Rom. 7:7-10). This **oneness** enabled Christ to declare baptized believers as his brethren as shown by the Messianic citations from Ps. 22:22; 2 Sam. 22:3 and Isa. 8:18. The latter becomes the basis of V.14 – “Forasmuch then as the **children** are partakers of flesh and blood, **he also himself likewise** took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.” Four words used consecutively (“**he also himself likewise**”) emphasize that Jesus Anointed shared Adam's nature equally with us. His perfect obedience to the death of the cross (Phil. 2:8) not only destroyed the *diabolos* (that which strikes through God's Word in every other man) in him, but enabled the righteousness of God to be declared by his resurrection and change of nature as well. Henceforth, those “who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage” could be delivered from the shackles of death that were only emphasized by the Law (2 Cor. 3:6-7). Why would anyone appreciating these things want to return to the Law of Moses? Sadly, some did to escape the constant persecution and rejection by family. They chose the consolations of the present over future glory – “Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it” (Luke 17:33).

We have “a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God” through whom sins can be forgiven and our inner yearnings and need for help are perceived by a mediator who “himself hath suffered being tempted,” and therefore “is able to succour (*boētheō* –to aid or relieve) them that are tempted.” How this is done is hinted at in chapter 1:14.

May 31

Joshua 17

This chapter focuses on the inheritance of the half tribe of Manasseh in the west (see the map for May 30). It records the disgruntlement of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh (V.13-18) because they did not drive out the Canaanites, but placed them under tribute, reducing the land available for their own settlement. Joshua dealt with their complaint

gently, but directly. The matter lay in their hands, just as it does for us. Christ cannot make the decision for us to “crucify the flesh (the Canaanite within) with its affections and lusts.” He gave the example, we need to act upon it in our own lives.

Isaiah 23

While this “burden of Tyre” foreshadows the conquest of Nebuchadnezzar who besieged Tyre for 13 years and could not capture the island city, and later the conquest of Alexander the Great, there are clear indications in the prophecy that reach to the latter days. One clue is the interchangeability of the names Tyre and Tarshish in the prophecy. Another is the transition of Tyre’s trading arm from the coast of modern Lebanon to Britain. Tyre traded with Britain in ancient times (Ezek. 27:12,25), and there is still much evidence of a Tyrian settlement on the south coast of Britain. When Tyre was overthrown by Alexander, its trading functions moved to Britain, the latter day Tarshish (Ezek. 38:13). This is implied by the language of transition that keeps recurring in the prophecy – “**Pass ye over** to Tarshish; howl, ye inhabitants of the isle” (V.6); “her own feet shall **carry her afar off to sojourn**” (V.7); “**Pass through** thy land as a river, O daughter of Tarshish” (V.10); “arise, **pass over** to Chittim (Cyprus); there also shalt thou have no rest” (V.12).

V.14-18 – There is a switch to the future – “Howl, ye ships of Tarshish: for your strength is laid waste.” This happens at a time when ‘Tyre’ “shall be **forgotten seventy years**, according to **the days of one king** (or monarch).” Except for Louis 14th the ‘sun king’ of France who reigned for 72 years, history records only one monarch who ruled exactly for 70 years (1952-2022), and that was Queen Elizabeth II of Britain. She presided over a period of sharp decline in Britain’s maritime power and the shrinking of its Empire. As a result of near bankruptcy due to two World Wars it could be said of Britain “your strength is laid waste.”

The clincher however is in V.17-18 in the prophesied revival of ‘Tyre’ (Britain) as a merchant trading power in the latter days. It must be the **latter days** because “her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to Yahweh” can only be in the time of the Kingdom. This is certainly true of the final statement – “her merchandise shall be for them that **dwelt before Yahweh** (the saints), to eat sufficiently, and for durable (Kingdom) clothing.” What then does it mean in V.15-16 that Tyre will “sing as an harlot?” Is that not like the language used of the Catholic Harlot? Indeed, Britain’s religions are from Rome, but it is commerce and trading in goods that is referred to here by “the **merchants** of Tarshish.”

The Scriptural symbol of a nation or city acting as a **harlot** refers to its engaging in **commerce** and **trade** with many other trading partners. For example, we read of Babylon the Great in Rev. 18:3 – “the kings of the earth have committed **fornication** with her, and the **merchants** of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.”

The following extract from an article written in 2016 headed “Britain’s Leading Commercial Role in the Kingdom” is useful. The full article can be provided on request.

We know from Ezekiel 38 that Britain plays a leading role among those powers who, though weakly, oppose the advance of the northern invader into the land of Israel.

Ezek. 38:13 – “Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?” This attempted

intervention by the Tarshish powers will not be unnoticed by Israel's Saviour. Their fidelity towards Israel and their early allegiance to the King of Kings will be amply rewarded.

The final verse of Isaiah 23 defines the nature and intent of Britain's future commercial activity under the reign of our Lord Jesus Christ. Verse 18 – "And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the LORD: it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the LORD, to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing."

Not only does her sovereign lay their crown at the feet of the Lord, but in doing so is there with a 'gift' – Psalm 45:12. Here in Isa. 23:18 we see that this gift is the pledge of Britain's ongoing national surplus, to be dedicated to the treasury of Christ: it 'shall be holiness to Yahweh: it shall not be treasured or laid up'. The British people will lead the Gentile world in actively serving and devoting themselves to Zion's king, in much the same way that Tyre supported David and Solomon in the days of old.

We are told that the merchandise or industry of Tarshish in the Kingdom will be dedicated specifically towards supplying the needs of them that 'dwell before Yahweh' in food and clothing. Britain's farming efficiency and the quality of her produce is world renowned, and will be more so in the Kingdom. The quality of her textile industry and traditional tailoring is legendary.

In the verse before us, those who eat will do so 'sufficiently', or as the Hebrew expresses it, will eat to the full and be totally satisfied. They will be clothed wonderfully – the word for clothing is used in the context of Tyre in Ezek. 27:7, speaking of 'coverings' of fine linen and rich blue and purple. The clothing is 'durable', that is antique or ancient, long lasting. The word is akin to that used of the 'Ancient' of Days in Daniel 7:22, speaking of the time when the saints possess the kingdom with the Lord Jesus Christ.

The saints will then be those who 'dwell before Yahweh', and perhaps here in verse 18 it is being revealed that it will be Great Britain's honour and privilege to send excellent quality food for the immortal saints on the occasions they dine with their Lord at Jerusalem. Further, could it be that the outstanding tailors of Britain will dress the saints in the finest of garments befitting their immortal roles as kings and priests of the coming age.

Hebrews 3

V. 1-6 – Having shown the superiority of Christ over the angels in chapters 1 and 2, the Apostle now turns to contrast him with Moses the champion of the Law. It was not an even comparison. Though Moses was faithful in God's house, Christ was God's Son and therefore heir and builder of the house.

V.7-19 – As a witness that Law cannot save, the Apostle introduces the testimony of the wilderness generation who were led by Moses and guided by the law he ministered to them. They were an utter failure and lost their chance of eternal life and an inheritance in the Land promised to Abraham. He cites Ps. 95:7-11 as proof. He warned those contemplating turning their back on Christ and returning to live under Law that they would "not enter into his **rest**" like their fathers of old had not. The Sabbath **rest** (pointing to the Kingdom Age) now becomes the central focus – Heb. 4:4.

Hebrews 4

V.1 – "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his **rest**, any of you should seem to come short of it" – Faith was the missing factor (3:19) – "So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief." The word preached to Israel did not produce faith which is its aim and purpose (Rom. 10:17).

V.3,5 – The use of the Hebraism “**if** they shall enter into my rest” meaning ‘they will **not enter** my rest’ is drawn from Ps. 95:11. The “Jesus” of V.8 is of course Joshua of old.

V.9-10 make the point that in Christ the believer is already related to the ‘rest’ of the future Age through faith in his accomplished mission – V.14-16. But personal commitment and steadfastness is required.

V.11-13 – “Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.” Unlike the Law which could be espoused publicly, but not followed within (Matt. 23:2-3), life in Christ is exposed to the incisive gaze of “the Word made flesh” who misses nothing – “Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in **his** sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of **him** with whom we have to do.” Our life must be guided by God’s Word within – “For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword” (RV). Its power is capable of “penetrating as far as a dividing asunder of soul (that which belongs to the flesh) and spirit” (Rotherham). The Word divides the fleshly and carnal from the spiritual.

Hebrews 5

V.1-4 – (Weymouth) “For every **High Priest** is chosen from among men, and is appointed to act on behalf of men in matters relating to God, in order to offer both gifts and sin-offerings” – The Apostle is referring to the Aaronic priesthood. He is about to launch into the next major contrast between the Law and Christ and show the latter’s absolute superiority. The duty of a high priest was to represent God to His people, and the people to their God. Accordingly, “compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way” with empathy born of being a possessor of the same weak nature was required. Aaron and his successors were “compassed with infirmity” that led to moral failure and necessitated making sin offerings “for himself” as well as for the people they served. Such a grave responsibility could only fall to those appointed by God.

V.5-10 – Accordingly, “Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, (Ps. 110:4) Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.” The Apostle introduces a superior priesthood to the Aaronic and it changes everything on the principle expressed in chapter 7:12 – “For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.” This is one of the most brilliant arguments ever made. It was made to overt the disaster of some returning to a defunct and powerless priesthood after the resurrection of Christ at which time he became “a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”

As a bearer of Adam’s condemned nature with all its infirmities, Jesus Christ “in the days of his flesh, having offered up, both supplications and entreaties unto him that was able to save him **out of death**, with mighty outcries and tears, and been hearkened to by reason of his devoutness” (Rotherham for V.7), was because of his sinlessness raised and immortalized. It was a painful process – (Weymouth for V.7-8) “He was delivered from the terror from which He shrank (Matt. 26:39). Although He was God’s Son, yet he learned **obedience** from the sufferings which He endured.”

Obedience brings suffering (2 Tim. 3:12). Christ never disobeyed his Father, but obeying Him led to great suffering (ultimately, the death of the cross) “and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that **obey** him.” This was a high priest far superior to Aaron and his sons – “Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec” by an oath (Ps. 110:4).

V.11-14 – The Apostle knew some Hebrew believers had become shaky on this subject because they had not grown in knowledge and understanding. It was easier to default to the Law as pressure came on them from relatives and acquaintances with whom they had peace and acceptance beforehand. Maturity of understanding of the work of Christ was needed, and this is the reason for the epistle – “Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.” They should by now be teachers, but had not progressed past “milk” (that is where we all begin – 1 Pet. 2:2). They needed more “milk” in order to progress to “strong meat” (the deeper things of the Word) – “for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the **mature**” (ESV). This maturity is critical to ultimate success, for “they have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.” The word “use” (KJV) is *hexis* and means ‘habit, that is, (by implication) practice’ (Strong). Regular daily reading of the Word of God and determined efforts to grow in understanding are essential for success in overcoming this world, and our biased nature. Only then will we be able to properly “discern both good and evil” (Heb. 4:12). The key message is – Cultivate good spiritual habits in daily life.

APPENDIX 1

The Book of Ecclesiastes

Chapter 12 – THE CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE MATTER

The chapter division artificially breaks the train of thought and should be ignored. Solomon goes on from his counsel to remember darkness and judgement to show that there is a better way than applying merely negative restraint. The best defense against evil is to fill the mind with positive good. So he exhorts young people to remember their Creator in the days of their youth. Solomon then presents a graphic portrayal of the encroachment of old age and death as a warning of the foolishness of wasting the opportunities of youth.

V.1 – “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them” – Connection with the thoughts of chapter 11:7-10 is obvious. The pleasure and delight of youthful vigour, discovery and experience will surely be followed in time by a state of things in which one is compelled to say of the quickly passing days, “I have no pleasure in them”. Knowledge that this will come should be converted to energy to seek God while youthful vigour and zeal are present.

The word “remember” is *zakar* – to mark (so as to be recognized) i.e. to remember. It implies a deliberate act of seeking and acknowledging God in our life while we are young. That acknowledgement is of Him as “Creator”. Surely this is directing us back to Solomon's earlier statement about the beginning of life (11:5). It is God who has given life in the first place. Without Him there would be no “dawning” (11:9) and “beholding the sun” (11:7). It is this recognition of the power and right of the Creator to be worshipped and obeyed by His creatures that underpins the seeking and ‘remembrance’ of God. In Heb.11:6 Paul says, “He that cometh to God must believe that He is (i.e. exists), and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him”. This is the foundation of the kind of personal relationship that Yahweh seeks to have with His children.

It is important to note that Solomon has added the positive good of developing a personal relationship with God to the negative restraints of death and judgement. The evils of thought and action that are common to the nature of man are best displaced by the development of godly principles in the mind and the diligent practise of those principles (Rom. 12:21: Eph. 4:21-32).

V.2-8 – A Portrait of Decline, Decrepitude and Death

Solomon gathers up the figures he used in chapter 11 and shows that in the continuing cycles of life and human experience there is only one inevitable end. Brought face to face with the reality of our deteriorating nature there is hope that young people will acknowledge the brevity and vanity of life and seek their Creator in the days of their youth. This is the way to become “the whole man” of verse 13. By using the figure of a master and his household in an advanced state of decline the picture of human decline and bodily frailty is graphically illustrated.

V.2 – “While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain” – In chapter 11 Solomon used the sun and light as symbols of life. The time comes when the light fades and the sun disappears. So the strength and vitality of man wanes with the encroachment of old age, and finally the darkness of death strikes. Similarly, clouds after rain obscure the light of the sun which warms the earth and encourages growth and renewal of life. There comes a time in every man's life when decline to death is inevitable and nothing can be done to revive strength.

The lesson is once again, to wisely use the opportunities of youth for the pursuit of meaningful and permanent things – “To fear God and keep His commandments” (V.13).

A HOUSEHOLD IN DECLINE

The series of figures which follows builds up the picture of a household in which the man's consciousness is master, while his bodily members are the servants. To appreciate the contrast when it is shown in decline the house may first be visualised in the sunny days of prosperity which reflect the man's prime. Then all about it was bright and bustling. There were active men servants to guard it from thieves or intruders; there were sturdy porters to bear the burdens when the ample household supplies were brought in. Women menials were daily turning the upper millstone on the nether to grind corn for bread. Since there was lavish hospitality and much work for grinders, the doors were thrown open so that neighbours could come in to help, and the house resounded with their chatter. Through the fretted lattices in the room above, ladies of the harem watched the comings and goings in the street with bright eyes.

Now the master is old and with dwindling means, and quiet has fallen on the house as if a cloud had covered it. With beautiful poetic consistency the decline is suggested by the deprivation of the light which was the symbol of life in 11:7. The household have grown aged along with the master.

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V.3 – “In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble” – This refers to the arms once muscular and strong but now frail and trembling. A man's arms are like the servants of the household employed for their strength and ability to accomplish the work of the house.

“and the strong men shall bow themselves” – The legs of a man strong, straight and muscular in youth become weak and bowed in old age. The word “bow” is *avath* meaning to wrest (with the idea of being crooked).

“and the grinders cease because they are few” – Like the women who grind at the mill to provide food for the house, the teeth perform an important function in a man's body. But in old age there are few of them left, and their work is diminished because of failing appetite and sense of taste (2 Sam. 19:35).

“and those that look out of the windows be darkened” – The bright eyes that once peered through the lattice are now old and dim. Their lustre and beauty is gone. Failing sight is a mark of old age.

V.4 - “And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low” – The activities of this house have been curtailed. No longer is there the bustling movement of guests and labourers, hence the doors are shut. This seems to indicate a loss of interest in daily affairs and the consequent inactivity. The communication that was once a delight in youth is now difficult because of failing health and poor hearing.

“and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird” – The imagery is of the light sleeper who is easily disturbed out of sleep by the sounds of the morning. Insomnia is common in old age.

“and all the daughters of musick shall be brought low” – Like Barzillai who could no longer hear the voices of singing men and women because of his advanced age (2 Sam. 19:35) all men will one day be unable to hear and enjoy sounds that once delighted the senses.

V.5 – “Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high” – Frailty of body and limb make heights a terror for the old man. What was once an exciting challenge in youth is a terror in old age.

“and fears shall be in the way” – Roth. “and there be terrors in the way”. To venture out among the jostling crowd in the street and the market is now a source of terror for the old man with bowed legs and trembling arms. He feels terribly vulnerable and is at the mercy of the bustling multitude and even perhaps the lurking thief.

“and the almond tree shall flourish” – This seems an apt symbol of advanced age. The white, wispy hair and hoary head of the old man is likened to the winter blossoming of the almond tree. In Jer.1:11-12 the almond is used as a sign of coming events. Normally used in the context of resurrection (for it is “the awakener” – the first of the trees to blossom), it is clearly used here to point to approaching death.

“and the grasshopper shall be a burden” – Roth. “and the grasshopper drag itself along”. A grasshopper unable to spring and leap is the most ungainly and handicapped of creatures. As it crawls laboriously through the grass it presents a sad picture of old age as the once sprightly man now slowly picks his way through the crowded street. Youth leaps: age crawls – a burden to itself.

“and desire shall fail” – Bodily impulses such as appetite and other normal desires, taken for granted in youth, gradually fade until in old age there is little or no pleasure to be gained from the most elementary of human activities.

“because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets” – The word “long” here is *ohlam* signifying the vanishing point; the hidden period. Roth. translates: “For man is going to his age-abiding home”. Death stalks this man, and so near is it that the professional mourners loiter in the street awaiting the news that will begin their noisy trade. The picture is one of utter hopelessness as man finally reaches the point of death.

V.6 – “Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken” – The figures change a little now, but still revolve around the household. The silver cord which holds the suspended lamp to provide light for the house suddenly snaps and the bowl crashes to the floor and is broken. Life which is likened to light in the previous chapter (11:7) is suddenly extinguished after an extended process of decline.

“or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern” – Roth. “or the bucket by the fountain be shivered, or the wheel at the well be broken”. Water is a symbol of life (John 7:38) and the means of collecting it is now gone. The wheel or machinery to lower the pitcher has broken and the pitcher has tumbled into the well and smashed. This is a dramatic figure to illustrate the sudden arrival and utter finality of death. The very source of life is now withdrawn.

V.7 – “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it” – Roth. “And the dust return to the earth as it was”. This statement follows on from the graphic figures of verse 6 and shows that those figures represent that death has struck the old man. All that awaits him now is dissolution into the dust from which he was made (Gen. 2:7). The spirit which animates all life has left his still and cold body which in a matter of a few days will begin corrupting away into the dust (Job 34:14-15). It is the sad but certain end of all mortal life and the wise will take heed of the lesson it drives home (Ps. 90:9-12). It is that lesson that Solomon now intends to emphasize as he draws his book to a close.

The structure of the thought both poetically and morally is to be found in the rising scale of the exhortations to “remember” (culminating in “Remember thy Creator...”) and the descending scale of the allusions to light (ending in the fallen lamp). It is this contrasting framework which gives the essay its strength and grace. Viewed within this framework, the picture of old age gains an added meaning. The Preacher is doing something more than describing poetically what everyone knows - that human life passes its prime and then travels down the curve to the grave. He is showing the deprivation of light where the Source of light is disregarded, for here the picture of physical decrepitude has as its overtone a spiritual loss: this is the end of men without God. Thus, even more than the telling figurative portrayal of aged feebleness, the play upon the symbol of light conveys the lesson that youth is the time for thankful dedication to the Creator. For what is life but a gift? And what is life for but to remember the Giver? Without that it is truly nothing but a breath.

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V.8 – “Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all is vanity” – Having completed the full circuit of human experience Solomon returns to his initial thought (Ecc.1:2). His study of man's life “under the sun” had begun with this statement, and all that he had considered in his pursuit of the greatest good finally ended with the complete confirmation of the truth of his opening remark. Nothing that this life offers is permanent or fully satisfying. Emptiness awaits the man who fails to “behold the sun” in the highest sense of the phrase. There is a way that leads to life and another way that ends only in death and oblivion. Solomon is about to deliver his “conclusion of the whole matter”.

Vv.9-12 - Solomon's Wisdom Extended for the Benefit of Others

Some commentators have questioned whether this closing section could be the writing of Solomon given its rather self-centred style. However, close examination shows that it is part of Solomon's narrative and is designed to make his final appeal and exhortation even more powerful and meaningful. Never was there in history a man in such a position to provide unerring counsel on the great issue of this book, i.e. what is the greatest good for man to seek in all his labours “under the sun”. Solomon had discovered this by unique experience. He knew he had an enormous responsibility to pass on to others the wisdom born of his experience.

V.9 – “And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge” – RSV – “Besides being wise the Preacher also taught the people knowledge”. For the phrase, “he still taught” Rotherham translates, “still further taught”. This suggests that Solomon increased his instruction of others as a result of his growing wisdom and understanding. When one is deeply impressed with the importance of a simple truth the urge to preach it to others is increased. The more study Solomon undertook of this matter, the more he was impressed with the urgent need for all men appreciate what he now understood so clearly.

“yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs” – RSV “weighing and studying and arranging proverbs with great care”. Though Solomon's name is never mentioned in the book this statement almost certainly links its author to the compiler of the Proverbs. Like the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes is full of sayings that have been carefully weighed in the experiences of life and deliberately set down for the benefit and eternal well-being of those who come after.

V.10 – “The preacher sought to find out acceptable words” – Roth. “The Proclaimer sought to find out words giving delight”. His words were only “acceptable” to those who

would come to the light and accept their wisdom. The bulk of mankind ignore the wisdom of Solomon and endlessly repeat the mistakes of those who have gone before. They never learn from the experiences of others. His words are no “delight” to that class of people.

“and that which was written was upright, even words of truth” – Roth. “and to note down rightly the words of truth”. It was very important for Solomon to devote time and care in recording his findings. Truth was paramount, for the eternal salvation of many rested upon the lessons of his research being understood and accepted.

V.11 – “The words of the wise are as goads” – The ox goad was a common sight in ancient times. It was a long stick sharpened at one end and used for prodding the beast into action. The figure here is of stimulus or incentive being given. This surely must be the effect of Solomon's findings if they are accepted. When we understand the vanity of our state and the hopelessness of man without God there must be an incentive to seek for something better and higher.

“and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies” – Roth. “Yea as driven nails their well ordered sayings”. While there is some variation in the translations of this phrase the leading idea is of stability brought about by an expert securing a peg or nail on which man's whole life may be securely hung (Isa. 22:20-25). This Solomon had done by establishing “words of truth”.

“which are given from one shepherd” – Yahweh is the Shepherd of Israel (Gen. 48:15; Ezek. 33:15; Ps. 23:1-2). All words of truth ultimately come from Him. Solomon's deliberations had confirmed for him the truth of all God's words and now he seeks to pass them on to others.

V.12 – “And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh” – Roth. “And besides, from them, my son, be admonished”. Solomon is counselling the study of the “words of the wise” which have one source, namely God, the Shepherd of Israel. It is far too easy to be distracted from the words of God by the many books available among men. Men weary themselves in the production of books on all kinds of subjects, none of which are of eternal value. It is native to the flesh to seek after the writings of men which appeal to the shallow thinking of the carnal mind. It is not so easy to get into the good habit of constantly filling the mind with the words of God which admonish and instruct in right ways.

V.13-14 – The Conclusion of the Whole Matter

Having reminded the reader of his qualifications and that this writing is not among the “many books” which weary men both in their production and study, Solomon now concludes his book with a pithy statement of conclusion. In a few words he sums up all his findings and homes in on the simple message for all who would be wise and belong to the “whole man” class. This represents one of the simplest yet most profound exhortations in Scripture. The challenge for us is not only to see the rightness of his words, but to choose to do them.

V.13 – “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter” – There is a tone of authority here which challenges our attention. Who better to make this outright assertion of the true values of human life than Solomon? He had everything life can offer, and had systematically tried everything, yet found by experience that there is only one course worth pursuing in life. And that course can be pursued by anyone, whether they are young or old, rich or poor. Everything Solomon had discovered in his research is now focalized in this final summary statement.

“Fear God and keep his commandments” – There is nothing new in these words. They have been the consistent teaching of the Scripture from the very beginning (Deut. 6:4-9). Hence the mark of the “one Shepherd” is seen in Solomon's conclusion. All his experiences and study had shown that the greatest good in life is to be derived from a wholesome fear of God and obedience to His commandments. Outside of this lay only vanity, failure, misery and permanent death.

“for this is the whole duty of man” – The word “duty” in italics is not in the text. Ygs. Lit. “for this is the whole of man”. Man cannot be complete (or “whole”) without God. Solomon had found that when man lives for himself he will be empty and incomplete. It is only when man fears God and observes His commandments that life “under the sun” is given a value that can be appreciated, despite its limitations. When God enters the equation a man's life can be rightly directed so that he derives benefit and pleasure from what other men see as drudgery and vanity. In this way he becomes **“the whole man”** – he is able, because of his perspective and choice, to extract the very best from vain human life “under the sun” while placing himself in a position related to eternity and unending fullness of life in God's Kingdom. This is a secret few understand.

V.14 – “For God shall bring every work into judgement, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil” – Solomon harks back to chapter 11:9 and his warning to youth on the threshold of adult life. It is at that point in life that crucial decisions must be made. It is important to understand that he is only talking about those amenable to divine judgement. The bulk of men live out their vain lives in ignorance only to perish forever. They will never again see light. But those who have seen light will rise again to answer for their actions (Dan. 12:2-3; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15; Rev. 22:12). It is this class to whom the exhortation is directed. Every work, open for public gaze or practiced privately, that reveals the fundamental choice we have made in life will come under scrutiny in the day of judgement (1 Tim. 5:24-25). The reward will be received bodily according to the choices we have made (2 Cor. 5:10). It will then be seen whether we are of the **“whole man”** class who have chosen to fear God and keep His commandments.

APPENDIX 2 – Antonia Fortress

Names (also known as)

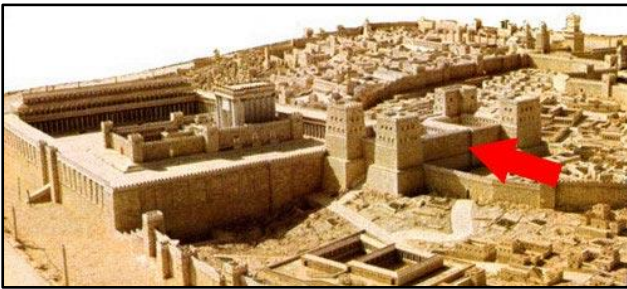
Tower of Antonia

Etymology

Named after Mark Antony, the name 'Antony' is said to mean in Latin – "Highly praiseworthy", and in Greek – "Priceless."

In Acts 21:34 the fortress is called a "castle" – Greek *parembolē* - from a compound of two words – *para* and *emballo*; a throwing in beside (juxtaposition), that is, (specifically) battle array, encampment or barracks.

Location/Description



It was located on the Northwest corner of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. The Antonia Fortress was a military fortification and Josephus recorded that the whole Fortress of Antonia appeared as one tower and therefore he referred to it as the Tower of Antonia. Josephus provided meticulous detail including the courts and baths resembled a palace. It was rectangular in shape, measuring about 490 feet (150 metres) long east to west, by 260 feet (80 metres) wide north to south, with walls about 60-75 feet (18 to 23 metres) high. Each corner had a high tower, three of which were 75 feet (23 metres) high. The tower in the northwest corner, which overlooked the Temple area, however, was about 115 feet (35 metres) high. According to Acts 21:35 stairs connected the Antonia Fortress with the Temple area. The northwest tower was later known as Strato's Tower. The western wall was built upon the edge of the cliff overlooking the

Tyropoeon Valley. The north wall was directly across the hill Bezetha and there was a deep mote between them. The rock hid the Temple from view on this side according to Josephus. From the southern wall one could see over the entire Temple area. The eastern wall overlooked the Pool of Bethesda and the Kidron Valley.

Scriptural references

New Testament

Acts 21:34,37,40

Famous characters

Herod, Mark Antony, Apostle Paul.

Brief history

The Fortress of Antonia was built in 35 BC and named in honour of Herod's friend and Roman Triumvir Marcus Antonius also known as Mark Antony. It was actually Mark Antony who had requested that the Senate make Herod King of Judea as an eastern boundary to the Roman Empire. At some point the Romans took over the Antonia Fortress and placed a garrison there.

It is described (by Josephus) as a small city, a palace for a king and a barracks for many soldiers. There were apartments, cloisters, baths and large courtyards. There were also stairs that led down from the Fortress to the porticoes of the Temple court at the extreme north side. It is also written that there was a deep passageway underground, which went from the fortress to the Court of Israel, mainly for use in uprisings and emergencies.

Scriptural importance

The Apostle Paul was arrested and taken to the fortress, upon which he asked permission to speak to the hostile Jews. The Roman soldiers having heard Paul say that he was a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city and gave him permission to speak from the stair

APPENDIX 3

The slide opposite explains an invariable rule of Biblical language in relation to Jews who are found in the Land of Israel at the time of Armageddon, and of Jews outside the Land – the Diaspora.

It is advisable when reading the O.T. prophecies to be on the lookout for this, and to test the above assertion.

It is important to remember, this rule applies when the context is about the **people only**, not the

Land. It is called Israel (Ezek. 38:8), but the people living in it at the time of Armageddon are called “Judah” despite what tribe they may be from. An obvious example of this is Joel 3:1 – “For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of **Judah** (1948 – Declaration of the State of Israel) and Jerusalem (1967).” In relation to the mixing up of Jews from different tribes inside and outside the Land, Ezek. 37:16 is very clear – “Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For **Judah** (Jews in the Land) and for **the children of Israel his companions** (i.e. a mix of Jews from all the tribes): then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of **Ephraim** (Jews outside the Land), and **for all the house of Israel his companions** (a mix from all tribes, including from the tribe of Judah).”

Some have pointed out Ezek. 38:14 as being antithetical to that interpretation – “and in that day when **my people of Israel** dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it?” (see also V.16). The answer lies in the fact that this is simply a reference in general terms to the inhabitants of the Land when Gog invades. Note the emphasis on **the Land** – V.16 – “thou shalt come up against **my people of Israel**, as a cloud to cover **the land**.” And again V.18 – “when Gog shall come against **the land of Israel**.” It stands to reason that if a power comes against a land called ‘Israel’, then the people in it in that context are not unreasonably called “my people Israel”. However, it is the land that is the real focus. Ezek. 39 which deals with the aftermath of Armageddon and the Second Exodus provides some guidance on the use of terms in this context. Note V.22 – “the house of Israel” and V.25 – “the whole house of Israel.” Israel here is clearly used in the wider sense of the term embracing “all Israel” as Paul puts it in Rom. 11:26 – “so **all Israel** shall be saved.”

The only other apparent contradiction to the above is found in Isa. 11:12 – “And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together **the dispersed of Judah** from the four corners of the earth.” This context concerns the **Second Exodus** – Isa. 11:11 – Yahweh “shall set his hand again the **second time** to recover the remnant of his people.” This is post-Armageddon and the answer to the apparent contradiction is that Gog’s forces will have carried away many Jewish captives from the Land – Zech. 14:2 (bear in mind that 1.5 million Jews left Russia in the 1990’s and in the early years of the 21st century – many were the intelligentsia of Russia). Many of these will be sold into ‘slavery’ – Joel 3:2-3,6. Accordingly, once Gog’s

Israel and Judah in the Prophetic Scriptures

- ❖ **‘Israel’, ‘Ephraim’ and ‘the remnant of Jacob’** – Refers to scattered Jewry worldwide – **Zech. 9:13; Ezek. 20:27,30,39; Mic. 5:7-8.**
 - ❖ **‘Judah’** – Refers to the Jews in the Land at Christ’s return – **Zech. 12:7.**
- When the people are the subject – not the Land!**

forces have been destroyed, these itinerant Jews will need to be gathered and returned to the Land. When only the people are in view the rule of this formula holds true.

The reading of "The Mystery of the Covenant of the Holy Land Explained" by Bro. John Thomas is recommended.

APPENDIX 4

THE SMITING AND HEALING OF EGYPT

Following the subjugation and disciplining of the Arabs, Christ and the saints will move westwards into Egypt. In Isaiah 19 this is shown to be by invitation of the sorely oppressed Egyptians who will be suffering at the hands of "a cruel lord".

Christ's entry into Egypt is part of a predetermined plan by God to provide a base for the return of purged and redeemed Israel to the land of their fathers (Isa. 11:15). Because of its proximity to the Covenant Land Egypt occupies an important place in the purpose of God; this purpose is fully outlined in Isaiah 19 which also provides details of the great crisis to descend upon Egypt during "the time of trouble such as never was".

YAHWEH INVADES EGYPT - Isaiah 19:1

V.1 - "The burden of Egypt" – Roth. - "The oracle on Egypt". The Hebrew word *massah* is from the root *nasah* - to lift, to raise up, therefore something that is heavy or burdensome, requiring to be lifted. This chapter describes the 'burden of Egypt' through which it will be humbled, disciplined and healed.

"Behold, Yahweh rideth upon a swift cloud" – This is the imagery of Rev. 10 and describes the movement of the Rainbow Angel fresh from victory over the Arabs, westwards towards Egypt.

A 'cloud' is representative of a multitude (Heb. 12:1) and here portrays the glorified saints, the cherubic chariot or vehicle upon which Yahweh (the Lord Jesus Christ) will ride into Egypt. However, as the cloud is described as 'swift', a word signifying light and therefore rapid in movement (*qal*) the inference is that not all the saints will accompany Christ on this mission but only a representative multitude. Doubtless much work will remain for the remainder among the Arab peoples.

"and shall come into Egypt" – It can be shown that Christ must enter Egypt before Armageddon. Hab. 3:8 hints that the next work before the Mighty One after disciplining the Arabs is connected with Egypt. Dan. 11:42-45 demonstrates how Russia will invade and occupy Egypt but will then send its main force to Jerusalem where it will be overthrown by Christ. If this overthrow preceded Christ's march into Egypt it is likely that the Egyptians would be able to successfully throw out the remnant of Russia's forces without Christ's help, but they are represented as desperately crying to Yahweh for help because of the oppression (Isa. 19:20) and this implies a pre-Armageddon situation.

"and the idols shall be moved at his presence" – Roth. - "and the idols of Egypt shall shake at his presence". Idols are not capable of emotional feelings but their makers and devotees are. The presence of Christ will finally dispel the superstitions and destroy the idolatry that has shackled the Egyptians for ages.

The word 'moved' is *nuwah* in the Hebrew and can also be rendered "to be removed". This suggests the ultimate purpose of Christ in entering Egypt.

"And the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it" – This is the language of fear and trepidation - Josh. 2:11; 14:8. The word 'melt' is *macac* signifying to liquefy. This is the condition into which the Egyptians will be brought so that like Rahab they may turn in faith unto Yahweh in a time of great distress.

This first verse actually announces the final results of Yahweh's purpose with Egypt. What follows is a description of events leading up to Christ's intervention. This is in accord with the principle frequently employed in the prophets of announcing the end result before the process required to bring it to pass; e.g. Isa. 2.

EGYPT UNDER GOG - Isaiah 19:2-4

V.2 - "And I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians" – The prophet depicts Egypt torn with internal strife just prior to Russia's invasion (v.4). What will cause this is not revealed in detail but it will be brought about by the divine hand.

The strife will be so serious as to verge on civil war - "city against city, and kingdom (LXX. - district) against kingdom".

V.3 - "And the spirit of Egypt shall fail" – *baqaq* - to pour out, i.e. to empty. Internal strife and external danger will result in a total break-down of the fabric of Egyptian society.

"I will destroy the counsel thereof" – Roth. - "the sagacity thereof will I swallow up". Government will collapse amidst the general confusion leaving Egypt wide open to external intervention.

"they shall seek to the idols, and to the charmers" – In vain the Egyptians will fall back upon their false religion (Mohammedism - 'the idols') and the vanities of their superstitions. As the terms 'charmers' and 'wizards' are applied to the Apostasy (Isa. 8:19) the Egyptians may even turn to the 'Christian' world for help when they find their Muslim brothers otherwise preoccupied.

V.4 - "the Egyptians will I give over into the hands of a cruel lord" – This cruel lord is Gog - Dan. 11:40-45. Few nations in the so-called 'civilised' world are as brutal and cruel to captured nations as Russia. The latter day 'Assyrian' is named such because his despotism and ruthlessness match that of the Assyrian kings of old. Egypt will be swamped by Gog's invasion and fall to the iron rule of "a fierce king".

EGYPT'S DIRE POVERTY - Isaiah 19:5-10

The livelihood of Egypt has always revolved around the River Nile and in latter times around both the Nile and the Suez Canal. Both of these vital waterways appear to be referred to in this passage which predicts the total collapse of Egypt's economy. Egypt will be thoroughly humbled by depression as the following conditions are gradually felt.

V.5 Commerce which in Egypt depends upon the waterways will grind to a halt as the waters figuratively dry up.

V.6 Egypt will be isolated from help, its canals will silt up, poverty will become acute.

V.7 The vital fields on the flood plains of the Nile will be left uncultivated.

V.8 Egypt's important fishing industry will go into decline and eventual ruin.

V.9 Egypt's craft and industry will close down.

V.10 The depression will strike all classes, rich and poor and the general calamity will bring Egypt to its knees.

EGYPT'S POLITICAL FOLLY - Isaiah 19:11-15

Now the reason for Egypt's economic collapse is given; a failure of government. This is clear from v.15 which attributes the disastrous economic situation to poor leadership.

Briefly stated the failure of Egypt's rulers which brings about this parlous state may be summarised thus:

1. Egypt's government advisors become wasteful and irrational in handling the nation's affairs ('brutish' - to consume, v.11).
2. A failure of the wisdom once displayed by Egypt's rulers in ancient times manifested in an inability to perceive the divine purpose in relation to Israel and Egypt (v.12).
3. A breakdown of effective government through the selfishness of the ruling class (v.13).
4. The mingling of a perverse spirit among Egypt's rulers by Yahweh who will exploit their inefficiencies, selfishness, and irrationality to bring to pass His purpose with Egypt (v.14).

EGYPT TO BE HUMBLER - Isaiah 19:16-17

V.16 - "in that day" – This is the day spoken of in v.1, as is clear from what follows in this verse. The latter part of the chapter deals with the healing of Egypt.

"shall Egypt be like unto women" – This simile is chosen to portray Egypt's helpless state in the face of the overwhelming divine power of Yahweh Tzva'oth.

"the shaking of the hand of Yahweh Tzva'oth" – Shaking of the hand is figurative of wielding authority. This is the work of the mighty Rainbow Angel in Egypt. The word 'shaking' is *tenuwphah* signifying a brandishing (in threat). Christ and the saints will humble the Egyptians by wielding divine supernatural powers.

V.17 - "the land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt" - The nation of Israel is already a terror to Egypt but will become more so when they are visited by "the lion of the tribe of Judah". They will tremble in expectation of retribution for their age-long anti-Semitism at the appearance of this more terrifying manifestation of Israeli might.

EGYPT CONVERTED - Isaiah 19:18

V.18 - "In that day shall five cities" – Five is the number of grace. These five cities will be appointed by Christ as centres of instruction where the truth concerning the grace and mercy of Yahweh will be proclaimed. The saints will preside over these centres to provide instruction in divine things to the humbled and disciplined Egyptians.

"shall speak the language of Canaan" – Namely Hebrew which will become the universal language in the Kingdom Age (Zeph. 3:9). The 'language of Canaan' is however more than just an alphabet and a system of speech; it is a system of truth. The tongue of Deity which is most likely scriptural Hebrew, is indivisible from His truth which is best proclaimed in that language.

"and swear to Yahweh" – i.e. swear allegiance to Yahweh.

"one shall be called, the city of destruction" – One of the cities appointed as centres of instruction will be particularly important.

The word 'destruction' is *heret* signifying demolition or destruction. Some commentators offer the alternative "city of the sun" and the Septuagint has, "the city of righteousness". While these can easily be seen to have relation to Christ the A.V. rendition is probably correct.

Perhaps this city will be established as a place of commemoration of Christ's victory over Gog's forces in Egypt (cp. Ezek. 39:11,15-16) and over Egyptian idolatry (v.1).

YAHWEH MEMORIALISED IN EGYPT - Isaiah 19:19-20

V.19 - "an altar to Yahweh" – Not for the purpose of sacrifice but as a memorial to the victory of Yahweh over Egypt's oppressors and a reminder of their responsibility to serve Yahweh with sacrifices upon His altar in Zion - cp. Josh. 22:24-29.

"and a pillar at the border" – Another physical memorial to commemorate Christ's victorious intervention in Egypt's affairs, at a time of great distress.

V.20 - "it shall be for a sign" – *owth* - a signal. The LXX. adds to this phrase "for the age". This obelisk will be erected to commemorate past and future deliverances by Yahweh.

"for they shall cry unto the LORD because of the oppressors" – Primarily this refers to the cry of distress as a result of the oppression of a 'cruel lord'; namely Gog, but Hebraists state that the verb will permit the verse to be given in the future tense, and may therefore relate to subsequent oppressions - cp. Zech. 14:18.

"he shall send them a saviour" – Primarily, this refers to Christ but also has relationship to the saints who will complete the work he initiates.

"a great one" – *rab* - abundant. The word is used in a wide variety of applications. It is translated "captain", "prince", and "officer" elsewhere, and in those places implies a ruler or governor having others ranked beneath him. This refers to Christ and his co-rulers - Ps. 22:27-28.

THE CONVERSION OF EGYPT - Isaiah 19:21-22

V.21 - "And the LORD shall be known to Egypt" – Roth. - "Then will Yahweh make himself known to the Egyptians, so shall the Egyptians know Yahweh". This will be the result of instruction and education.

"and shall do sacrifice and oblation" – The Egyptians will serve Yahweh in Jerusalem along with all nations - Zech. 14:16.

V.22 - "The LORD shall smite and heal it" – The word 'smite' is *nagaph* signifying to push, gore, defeat, inflict. This will be accomplished in Yahweh's invasion of Egypt - v.1.

The healing of Egypt must of necessity be a work of time and will be effected by instruction in divine things. There are two great afflictions in Egypt; leprosy (Deut. 28:60; 7:15) and blindness, and these are typical of the spiritual state of the people. Christ and the saints will heal Egypt of 'sin' and 'ignorance' by education.

"and they shall return even to the LORD" – The word 'return' is *shuwb* signifying to turn. Hence, Roth. - "and they will turn unto Yahweh". As a result of turning to Yahweh, He will in turn be entreated of them on the principle of James 4:8.

EGYPT FORMS PART OF A UNITED WORLD - Isaiah 19:23

V.23 - "a highway out of Egypt to Assyria" – In Isaiah's day Egypt and Assyria were the two greatest nations and between them virtually constituted the then known world. The highway refers to a "way of righteousness" in which the nations will walk. There will be a highway out of both Assyria and Egypt for Israel to return to the Land (Isa. 62:10; 11:16) and in which the Gentiles will also walk (Zech. 8:22-23).

EGYPT SUBMITS TO ISRAEL AS THE FIRST DOMINION - Isaiah 19:24-25

V.24 - "shall Israel be the third with Egypt" – This does not mean Israel will be third in rank but the intermediary between Egypt and Assyria. Recognition of Israel's status will be one of the conditions that Christ will lay down before the nations for their acceptance - Ezek. 39:23,27; Zech. 8:20-23. That Israel is the channel through which Assyria and Egypt will become a blessing to all nations is made clear by the next statement that these three nations shall be "a blessing in the midst of the earth" (Roth.).

V.25 — "Blessed be Egypt my people" – They will become such by conversion to Yahweh's truth.

"and Assyria the work of my hands" – The intervention of Yahweh's hands will transform this people of the north. Thus in these statements is portrayed the conversion of the whole world.

"and Israel mine inheritance" – To Israel alone is reserved the privilege of becoming Yahweh 's inheritance among the nations, for there He will dwell - Zech. 2:10-13.

Author – Jim Cowie – Extracted from 'The Events Subsequent to the Return of Christ' published 1980