



## *John the Baptist in the wilderness*



*Our Lord said: "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist," yet he did no miracles. For a fascinating study into this important Biblical character see "John, the Untalented" on page 58.*

September/October

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**SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD**

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# LOOK UP

September/October

1999

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# Point of View



*The following letter was sent to  
my Federal member.*

Greetings to you all,

The Bible is quite clear that to be righteously angry is acceptable. Not only did the prophets express such anger but also did Christ, who not only wept because the people were without a shepherd, but He also expressed righteous anger when He made a whip and chased out the money-changers from the Temple.

The reasons for my anger is the same as that of the prophets. The unfounded statistics that falsely say we have a sound economy is not reflected in the real world. It is my opinion that if you think such statistics coming from Canberra are an expression of the positive quality of this country then you have fallen for the cunning mischief of the tailors who said that the king had the best set of clothes in the kingdom. In actual fact all he had on, as he paraded before his people, was his underwear. It was a little child who recognised the real situation. The adults

## Editorial

of the town had been brainwashed into believing the propaganda.

The vast majority of our leaders, both political and spiritual, are feeding themselves and not the people. Feeding here does not refer to food as such, but rather is expressed in the area of having this country sold to foreign interests. They are feeding other people's interests and as a result have become like the rich man in Scripture who sold his soul for worldly wealth based upon greed.

It is a well known historical fact that the majority of people do not greatly influence history. History is influenced by a small minority, who for good or evil, can build up or bring down society. Remember it only takes a small amount of arsenic to poison the water supply. The Bible consistently shows how God deals with small groups to advance His plan. Lenin also followed the same method and do not forget he was an anti-Christian Fabian.

I am convinced that the differences between the Liberal and Labor policies are insignificant in the overall scene of things. Neither parties dare go beyond the parameters of everyday economic thinking. Such concern was shown by Sir Robert Menzies, who did not vote for the Liberal Party during his latter years.

As I listen to the radio and read extensively about social and political issues about this country, it is becoming more obvious that this country is bleeding

from a number of different main arteries. As a result the country is quite anaemic and it will not be long before a great dizziness will descend upon this land.

It is true I have not provided statistics or figures and quotes to support my feelings. Maybe these could be considered at a later stage.

The remainder of this letter will be positive. The Scriptures provide many personalities of inspiration. Elijah is such a character. To help show to the prophets of Baal that their gods would not answer, he asked them to call upon their gods to consume their sacrifice, but there was no reply. Finally he set up his own altar with a beast and he called upon the God of Israel to bring fire to consume the sacrifice. As you know God did send down fire and consumed the sacrifice and the rocks. Later on the prophets of Baal were all taken down to the Kishon Valley and slaughtered.

It has been overlooked by many that a number of the people helped Elijah to finish off this task. Who these people were, the Bible does not say. I am of the opinion that they were ordinary people of no greatness, but once they saw the power of Elijah's God they like Thomas believed and helped in ridding the land

of blasphemy. It is probable that these were people who had previously made no great commitment to any faith. They probably just swam with the stream of main thinking, but when confronted with the obvious Truth their consciences were jolted to the need to act.

Such people I know exist today. It is these people who in the future time of desperation will call upon the God of Israel to bring down "fire" and consume the teachings of Baal that comes forth from our higher institutions of learning. The foolishness of man will then be revealed and we will wonder just how silly we have been to believe the economic policies that have crippled this great land.

I believe God will use in a positive way those who have not bowed the knee to Baal. It will be only then that greater understanding of the words of Christ will be revealed, when He said, "take my yoke upon you and learn of Me." The real understanding of Christ's economics will become a reality when eventually "every man shall sit under his own vine and fig tree and none shall make him afraid." May that day come soon. In the mean time we must continue to pray, "THY KINGDOM COME ..."

*Yours for Righteous Government*



### **The Lord will guide you**

*"And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not" (Isa. 58:11).*





# Seasons of the Nations

W. Finlay

*"And he spoke to them a parable: Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh (near) at hand. So also ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know that the kingdom of God is nigh (near) at hand" (Luke 21:29-31).*

Prior to considering the implications of the above statement, it would serve a very useful purpose to note that the Scripture emphasises the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ "spake to them a parable," i.e., He resorted to parabolic instruction concerning the signs of the nearness of the Kingdom of God. In the Greek language and in the above context, the word "parable" is translated from *parabole* which literally means to "place one thing beside another — an example by which a doctrine or precept is illustrated." In Hebrew, the word is *mashal* which literally means a similitude and signifies a fictitious narrative, invented for the purpose of conveying the truth in a less offensive or more engaging form than that of direct assertion. The parable of the Trees and the Bramble of Judges 9 is a typical example of this.

## The "Trees and the Bramble"

In order to fully appreciate this parable spoken by Jotham the youngest son of Gideon, one should note the national background which prompted the "fictitious narrative." *"In those days {there was} no king in Israel, {but} every man did {that which was} right in his own eyes" (Judges*

17:6). Here was a situation which threatened national disintegration in Israel with each tribe acting within a parochialism which disregarded the overall commission of the Lord which demanded that all Israel should act in unison to accomplish the initial stages of training and education for His world Purposes. The internal discord plus a developing apostasy resulted in a situation which threatened not only the continuity of the children of Israel in the land, but also the very Covenants which God had entered into with the patriarchs.

The ancient inhabitants of the land of Canaan still retained their hold on large tracts of the country and they were not slow in taking advantage of the situation by making incursions among the tribes, devastating their possessions and threatening national subjugations. It was against this situation that the Lord made provision for the Judges in Israel of which number, Gideon was one, His was a history of contradictions in which, on the one hand he proved to be a mighty warrior in faith and on the other, a snare which led Israel into idolatry. He had seventy sons by his wives and one by a concubine from Shechem whom he named Abimelech (Judges 8:30-31) — the

latter becoming the main actor in the drama which resulted in the parable of the "trees and the bramble."

### **Abimelech Assumes Control**

After the death of Gideon, Abimelech, in conjunction with his mother's family which appears to have exercised considerable influence in Shechem, embarked on a conspiracy to murder the seventy sons of Gideon and to take the position of Judge-king in Israel. There is, of course, no way of knowing the racial background to Gideon's "concubine" — whether she was of the "mixed multitude" which accompanied Israel from Egypt or whether she was of the Canaanite nations which persisted in the land because of Israel's incompleting task (Deut. 7:1-4). Whatever her origin, her status was one of inferiority in Israel which no doubt prompted her family's assistance in the matter of eliminating the seventy other sons of Gideon.

With money from the treasure of Baal-berith, Abimelech hired assassins who killed all his brothers except for Jotham, the youngest, who hid himself and thus escaped the murderous attack. Abimelech was subsequently declared king which, in effect, means that he assumed the office of ruler over all Israel. When Jotham was told of the election of Abimelech, he came out of hiding and joined the assembly on the top of mount Gerizim which had been called presumably for the inauguration of Abimelech. He took advantage of this assembly to speak the parable and

one should note that the overall background had to do with Israel and rulership in the nation.

The "trees" were thus Israel who, having been deprived of leadership by Gideon's death, "went forth on a time to anoint a king over them." They appealed to the "olive tree" with negative results; they appealed to the "fig tree" and had the same rebuff; they appealed to the "vine" and were similarly treated; they appealed to the "bramble" which demanded complete obedience as the price of the "shadow of its branches." There can be no doubt that Abimelech was the "bramble-king" and Israel the "trees" for the whole parable had its fulfilment in his life-time which ended precisely as Jotham had predicted in his parable. In laying siege to the town of Thebez and when he was about to kindle the fire which would destroy the town, a woman pushed a piece of millstone from a wall which fell on him crushing his skull. Being mortally wounded, Abimelech called his armour-bearer to run him through with a sword lest it be said: "A woman slew him." "Thus God rendered the wickedness of Abimelech" upon his head "which he did unto his father, in slaying his seventy brethren" (Judges 9:50-56).

### **Analysis of the Appeal by the "Trees"**

It has been suggested that the "olive tree" is the symbol of Israel; the "fig tree" that of Judah and the "vine" the general etymology covering the work of all Israel. While there is undoubtedly scrip-



tural evidence to suggest that Israel was the "vineyard of the Lord" (Isa. 5:7) and "Judah his pleasant plant," to state categorically that the olive tree was the symbol of Israel and the fig tree that of Judah requires considerable caution. As has been shown in the parable of the "trees and the bramble," the "trees" were all Israel who looked for leadership and they approached the "olive tree" and the "fig tree" respectively and were rejected. That they could not have been both the trees who sought leadership and the trees to whom they applied is surely obvious. This being so, one is forced to examine symbolism conveyed by the use of the Olive tree, the Fig tree and the Vine.

### The "Olive Tree"

*"But the olive tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honour God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?"* (Judges 9:9). The "fatness" of the olive is indicative of wealth which is attested to even in this modern age where even Middle Eastern and Latin races bordering the Mediterranean consider the olive tree a source of wealth. The slow growth of this tree is also associated with peace but generally has been considered as indicative of wealth rather than peace.

### The "fig Tree"

*"But the fig tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees?"* The

"sweetness and good fruit" of the fig tree is, throughout the Scripture, indicative of peace and prosperity. In the days of Solomon, prior to his degeneracy, *"Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree"* (1 Kings 4:25). The peace of Egypt was shattered when the Lord plagued the land and numbered amongst these was the fig tree (Psa. 105:33).

### The "Vine"

*"And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?"* The vine, in Old Testament usage, is associated with prosperity and security (1 Kings 4:25; Micah 4:4; Zech. 3:10) and a successful and prolonged vintage was indicative of God's full blessing (Lev. 26:5).

These symbolisms in the context of the parable of the "trees and the bramble" together with the national background to the parable, show that because of Israel's apostasy and departure from the Directives of God, they lacked wealth, peace and security and sought these from one who was totally unfit to make the necessary provisions. The "bramble" or as is suggested by some, the "boxthorn," is the symbol of misfortune and that of the Judgment of God on evil (Nah. 1:10). It is significant that in His parable of the "Sower," the Lord Jesus Christ mentioned these thorns (bramble) in the role of choking the good seed — this was indeed the role of Abimelech.

## The Israel "Trees" Planted by God

Throughout the many vicissitudes of Israel's national history, particularly those which led up to their captivity and deportation from the land, one may observe the continued allusion to "trees" as symbolising the nation. At a time when Israel was steeped in transgression, the northern capital of Samaria in ruins and the majority of people in "Halah, Habor by the river of Gozan and in the cities of the Medes" (2 Kings 17:6), the Lord said: "*Fear not, thou worm, Jacob, {and} ye men of Israel ... Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument ... I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah (acacia) tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree {and} the pine, and the box together. That they may see, and know, and consider and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this ...*" (Isa. 41:14-20). Whatever conclusions one may come to concerning this, and there are strong grounds for believing that it was a preview of the original British Commonwealth of Nations (Gen. 35:11), it remains an undeniable fact that the Lord continued to use the symbolism of trees in connection with Israel.

### The "Fig Tree" and "Figs"

It should be noted that in the Old Testament, Judah is referred to as "his pleasant plant" (Isa. 5:7) within the context of Jehovah's vineyard but nowhere is that tribe specifically referred to as the "fig tree." As has been indicated, the fig tree

is used to denote peace and security (1 Kings 4:25), i.e., it is used to indicate a *condition rather than a literal identity* — Judah's tribal identification was the lion (Gen. 49:9). However, one does find that Judah is equated with figs (not the tree itself) and in such a context as to indicate that it is parabolic.

It will be recalled that the Lord Jesus Christ said: "*A good tree cannot bring forth evil (bad) fruit, neither {can} a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit*" (Matt. 7:18). Thus the "basket of figs" (Jer. 24:1-10) of which some were "very good" and others "very naughty figs" is intended to convey behavioural patterns rather than tribal identities. This interpretation is borne out by the subsequent history of Judah for the "good figs" are they who were deported by Sennacherib the Assyrian (2 Kings 18:13-16) and the "naughty figs," those of the Babylonian invasion which terminated the reign of Zedekiah (Jer. 24:8).

### The "Cursing" of the fig Tree

Much has been made of the incident when the Lord Jesus Christ cursed the barren fig tree (Matt. 21:18-22) with commentators eagerly explaining that this indicated the Lord's disappointment at Judah's failure — Black's Bible Dictionary indicating that it was "his disillusionment about the apparent fruitlessness of Israel." In the first instance, it should be noted that national identities had nothing to do with the event. Jesus said: "*Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this {which is*





New York fund raising for Israel during 1967 War. This was not the fulfilment of the parable of the fig tree

done} to the fig tree, but also, if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, it shall be done" (Matt. 21:21). Thus to read anything else into this Scripture is to present the Lord, in a fit of pique, exposing the limitations of God Himself. However, if one adheres rigidly to what the Word of God teaches, no such derogatory implications appear.

It would, of course, be quite contrary to the whole tenor of scriptural revelation to aver that the Jews represented Judah at the time of the First Advent. Bearing in mind the behavioural pattern indicated in the phrase the "very naughty figs" the history of the "seventy

weeks nation" (Dan. 9:24-27) indicates a dilution of the Judah strain until it was supplanted by the Edom-cum-Canaanite amalgam. One has only to read the words of the Lord Who, in the context of trees said: "... a tree is known by his fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things" — to realise that He was not speaking of Judah but of the heterogeneous population which had usurped Judah's heritage. This should not be understood as implying that none of undiluted Judah was present in Judaea at that time. Far from it for both Joseph and Mary and a host of others were present — but in the main, the Edomite majority had exercised the foreseen dominion (Gen. 27:40) and were projecting themselves as the people of God's Covenant.

### The Season of the Nations

As His First Advent Ministry drew to its close, the Lord provided a prophetic preview of the events which would lead up to the consummation of the Christian dispensation. It is in this context that the Scripture which prefaces this article appears. It will be recalled that the Lord said: "Behold the fig tree, and all the trees ..." — a parable which has led many to conclude that with the establishment of the Israeli State in Palestine (the fig tree?) and the general rise of world nationalisms, this statement by the Lord has been fulfilled. It has already been shown that the fig tree indicates a condition and not a national identity — thus to identify the Israeli

State with the fig tree is certainly going beyond the authority of Holy Scripture. The fig tree is not a by-product of horticultural experimentation, being a definite species on its own, it cannot be equated with a heterogeneous population which is evident in the Israeli State.

It would serve a very useful purpose at this stage to note the words of the Lord Jesus Christ as He led His disciples up to the consummation of the age. He spanned the centuries during which Jerusalem would be the "highway of the nations" and in the Greek text His words are: *"kai Ierousalem estai patoumené upo ethnon achri plerothoin kairoi ethnon"*: Literally *"and Jerusalem shall be a pathway of nations until be completed critical times of the nations."* The "critical times of the nations" is rendered as the "season of the nations" by Dr. James Strong and indicates that notwithstanding the Babylonian succession of Empires, the end of the age will be marked by the assertion of individual nationalisms which are based on false pretensions (Joel 3:10) of strength and authority. This, of course, is the overall picture of the end of the age as presented by the prophets of both the Old and the New Testaments.

### The "Forest of the South Field"

Ezekiel the prophet was enjoined: *"Son of man, set thy face toward the south, and drop {thy word} toward the south, and prophesy against the forest of the south field"* (Ezek. 20:46). If one is correct in assuming that the south means literally the south and the forest of trees means

a host of sovereign nations, then Africa would fit the picture. Since the "winds of change" began to blow over the continent, "trees" as indicating nations, began to grow at an unprecedented rate until today a "forest" is literally evident in the political structure of the African continent. The Organisation of African Unity has a total of forty-four members — each a sovereign state (or tree) with full voting rights in the world forum of the United Nations Organisation. Here indeed is a fulfilment of the words of Joel: "... let the weak say, I am strong ..."

Isaiah the prophet, too, makes mention of the multitude of nations at the end of the age when he wrote: *"Woe to the multitude of many people, {who} make a noise like the noise of the seas ... The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters; but {God} shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off,"* (Isa. 17:12-13). In this "season of the nations" which is indeed the "time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:7) when he is not "reckoned among the nations" (Num. 23:9), the impact of the "strangers" (Heb. *zuwr*, alien) is likened to a "yoke" upon God's people — a yoke which the Lord assures will be removed when He moves in the context of the "raging heathen" (Psa. 2).

Thus the "season of the nations" and the emergence of "all the trees" is translated by the contemporary world scene in clear and unmistakable terms. What then of the "fig tree" in all this? It is very convenient to point to the Israeli State as indicating this symbolism





"Magen Dawid" or The Star of David

but few take note of the fact that even the Jews fail to identify themselves with the fig tree. The symbolism which they generally adopt is what is commonly called the "star of David" or more correctly the *Magen Dawid* or "David's Shield." The hexagram formed by the combination of two equilateral triangles was adopted as the symbol of Judaism (the modern name for Pharisaism) by the American Jewish Publication Society in 1873 and subsequently by the Zionist Conference of Basel (Jewish Encyclopaedia). The symbolism of the "fig tree" simply does not exist within world Jewry and on scriptural grounds, rightly so.

### "Peace, Peace When There Is No Peace"

As has been intimated earlier, the symbolism of the "fig tree" which is ac-

cepted by most Bible Commentaries is that it indicates "peace and security." At no time in the history of man has there been the incredible paradox in which, in the midst of universal conflict, there has been such a pretension of "peace." The compromise of Western Christian civilisation under the excuse of "detente" is "peace at all costs" — the capitulation of the once "great and mighty British Empire" was for the "peace" of the world. The surrender of Rhodesia was demanded so that "peace" could return to Africa.

One prominent clergyman in Anglo-Saxondom is on record as having stated that it would be "better Red than dead" which is merely another way of saying that peaceful coexistence with the atheistic powers is preferable to being dead. Here indeed is the fulfilment of prophecy in which the prophets' in Israel, i.e., both the ecclesiastical and political "shepherds," are accused of seducing God's people. *"Have ye (the prophets) not seen a vain vision, and have ye not spoken a lying divination, whereas ye say, The Lord saith {it}; albeit I have not spoken?"* (Ezek. 13:7). The teachers of the "social gospel" are the accused here for they advocate the integration of Israel with all people — indeed they advocate universalism as the very epitome of God's desire for all people — a "lying divination" for God has nowhere placed His benediction on this.

However, the prophets have a further indictment against them. *"Because, even because they have seduced my people, saying, Peace; and {there is} no peace; and one*

*built up a wall, and, lo, others daubed it with untempered {mortar}" (Eze. 13:10). While "peace" is proclaimed on platform and pulpit and universalism the wall on which this is built, the Lord God of Israel has assured that none of this will succeed in invalidating His Purposes with His people (Ezek. 13:13).*

Thus, in the contemporary world scene, one may see again the incredible accuracy of the "sure word of prophecy" — a subject graciously given by the Lord to guide His people through the darkness of the pre-dawn era. In Malachi 4:2, the Lord is called the "Sun of righteousness" and in John 8:12 He says: *"I am the light of the world (Greek 'kosmos', the world system as vested in Israel); he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."* Thus, if one follows the words of the Lord in their scriptural context, one may follow the unfolding of events as they lead to the great climax of history — the Return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Words of the Lord go further. They show the new heaven and the new earth which, significantly are associated with a tree. *"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, {was there} the tree of life, which bore twelve {manner} of fruits, {and} yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree {were} for the healing of the nations ..." (Rev. 22:1-2).* This "tree of life" is the Kingdom of God in which Kingdom alone will be realised true peace, true righteousness and very definitely quietness for ever — a world situation in which each man will sit under his own vine and under his own fig tree and none shall make them afraid (Mic. 4:4). The world is hurtling toward this destiny — all that is happening indicates it and the Word of Truth vindicates it.

*Courtesy: Covenant Message*



## Seven Heavens

The Bible does not use the term "seven heavens." Though this expression may be found in the book of *Enoch* and in the writings of several religions, the Bible itself mentions only three heavens. "... caught up to the *third* heaven ... caught up into paradise" (2 Cor. 12:2-4).





## Herbs for Health –

# GATHERING WILD HEALING HERBS

### HERBAL MEDICINE

We can all benefit from knowledge of herbal medicine for treating minor medical problems. Its importance is magnified in a time when a doctor may not be near. Many "home remedies" used are from the past; these include those used by Native Australians and early settlers. Many are still used today.

In many cases they do not act as rapidly as modern "miracle" drugs. On the other hand, **modern cures alleviate one condition only to produce a worse one.**

Herbal cures are gaining in popularity as many begin to seek gentle and natural cures. One will find that many plants can be used for the same end result. When a favourite is not available, an alternate may be used. In addition, there are those herbalists who believe in using a combination of several herbs to solve a medicinal problem this being more effective than a single plant.

### GATHERING WILD HERBS

When considering gathering wild plants for herbs, there are some warnings to be heeded: Do not pick near (within 50 feet of) well-travelled roads or where there may be any type of pollution. For some plants such as bram-

Selected

bles and plantain, one mile is recommended. When leaded petrol was used, plants beside a busy road could contain up to 200 times their natural level of lead. Be aware that those plants growing near or in polluted water may be hazardous.

The strength of medicine obtained from plant leaves is normally best when the plants are about to come into flower. The reverse is true when eating a wild edible, for the plant becomes too bitter when it blooms. Otherwise choose only tender young leaves that have a healthy appearance.

When perennial roots are to be used, dig them early in the spring or in the autumn after the tops begin to die back and the nutrients have returned to the root for next year. For example, dock roots are gathered after the seeds turn brown and dandelion is dug while blooming.

Collect tree bark during spring of the year when the sap is rising. With a sharp knife or saw carefully remove smaller branches preferably near the top of the tree. Bark is easier to remove from younger branches. Otherwise, remove bark in vertical strips while leaving other strips to carry future sap so as not to kill the tree. Removing bark during the autumn when the sap is returning to the roots offers a good second choice.

## DRYING WILD HERBS

Wild plants can be dried and stored for later use as herbal medicines. To dry, avoid crushing or allowing wilting which will reduce loss of healing properties. Normally the quicker the drying takes place, the more the plant's properties are conserved. After collecting, tie the whole plant with a string and suspend from a ceiling or in a warm ventilated area such as an attic away from sunlight. Time will vary from 24 hours for foliage to weeks for roots. Some may be spread on the floor to dry, but the plants may need to be turned over occasionally. Roots can be dried in a warm attic or the sun to reduce the possibility of moulding.

Another method, frame drying is used outside. It is time-consuming but it gives good, potent results. A small wooden or metal box is used with the open side covered with glass with several protected vent holes used for venting moisture. The interior is lined with aluminium foil. The herbs (wiped dry to prevent moulding) are placed on the foil and the glass closed. Turn plants daily. If the box is water tight, it does not have to be brought in when rains occur. The drying process is accelerated if brought in daily to protect from evening moisture. This process can take several weeks.

Oven drying saves time. Herbs that would normally take weeks to dry outside can be dried in an oven in hours. Lay herbs on a dry oven tray. Aluminium foil should be placed over it with the reflective side down. Press the foil around the edges with several gaps to allow moisture to escape. Set temperature at

lowest setting and remove tray every 15 minutes to turn the herbs. The plant is useless if allowed to brown or burn. Burning is the main disadvantage of oven drying. Oven drying also seems to cause more of a potency loss than natural drying.

The leaves are properly dried when the leaves crumble gently in your hand without powdering while some or the entire original colour is maintained.

When the plants are dried, store in airtight jars in a cool dark place. Sunlight will cause the herbs to deteriorate. The use of dark glass will reduce the effects of sunlight affecting the herb's chemicals. Most dried herbs will last several years.

Potency seems to be maintained by keeping the plant whole before use. Be sure of dryness before storage, because the foliage, seeds, and roots may seem to be dry, but will mould when stored in a closed container.

## HERBAL PREPARATIONS DEFINED

### Preparations

Salves are easy to prepare. The easiest method is to simply cook herbs until brown in Crisco or lard. For every pound of herbs, use a half-pound of Crisco or lard. For additional thickness, two ounces of beeswax is sometimes added. Or, the crushed herbs can be placed in a container and covered with water. Bring to a low boil for thirty minutes. Remove from the heat, cover the container, steep for fifteen minutes and strain. Squeeze



the plant pulp for additional liquid. Boil the herbal water and Crisco or lard together in an open container until the water evaporates. If beeswax is used, add at this time, stir in and remove container from the heat. Pour in small containers to reduce spoilage, seal with wax or cool, and apply lids. Store in cool, dark place or in the refrigerator.

**Poultices** are made from crushed plants that are heated in water and applied to the body. When hot poultices are used, the plants are applied while warm and moist. Cover poultices with a cloth to hold in position.

**Extractions, washes, and teas** are made by steeping the herb. *Never use copper or aluminium pans as they add an off-flavour and may impart impurities into the liquid.* Use one pint of water for each ounce of herb. Heat the water to boiling and turn off the heat. When boiling stops, sprinkle the herb on the

water and stir. Steep for 10 minutes while occasionally stirring. When complete, strain the particles from the liquid. To make a stronger tea, steep longer or pour the liquid back through the particles in the strainer.

**Infusions** are a type of extraction and are made with leaves only or with leaves as the principle ingredient. The herbs are soaked or steeped in a liquid, usually water, for a period of time. **Infusions are not boiled.**

**Tinctures** are a useful form of herbal medicines. Basically, tinctures are 100-proof alcohols in which a plant has been soaked for a time to be relieved of its specific properties. Tinctures have not been addressed in this article due to their concentrated nature and skill needed in their use.

**REMEMBER:** — When using herbs, too little is better than too much.



## What is the longest verse in the Bible?

The longest verse in the Bible is Esther 8:9, which contains ninety words and which reads: *"Then were the king's scribes called at that time in the third month, that {is}, the month Sivan, on the three and twentieth {day} of it, and it was written according to all that Mordecai commanded unto the Jews, and to the lieutenants, and the deputies and rulers of the provinces which {are} from India unto Ethiopia, an hundred twenty and seven provinces, unto every province according to the writing, and unto every people after their language, and to the Jews according to their writing, and according to their language."* The shortest verse in the Bible is John 11:35, which says simply *"Jesus wept."* Revelation 20:4 is the longest verse in the New Testament.



## Bible Study – Who was Melchizedek?

R. Gibbons  
(Subscriber)

To write a Bible study on the subject of the Godhead is the most challenging and dangerous spiritual project one could undertake. I feel a bit like an electrician sorting wire cables — live ones — carrying hundreds of volts; if a mistake is made I could be struck dead. Who am I? But for the wonderful grace of the Almighty One I am virtually useless and very dispensable; so I simply by His grace, pass on the words I am given, regardless of what theologians, churches or religious authorities I may be offending.

If you are sleepy, or feeling frivolous, or even light hearted, please do not read any further, for this is a very serious matter and needs to be read slowly and carefully — and especially with reverence. Our subject is bigger than the science of astronomy, for He created all things; all the millions of island universes that are scattered across the unfathomable expanses of space we term “the *macrocosm*,” and all the incredibly tiny particles we call “the *microcosm*,” such as atoms, electrons, positrons, protons, etc which oscillate and travel at mind-boggling speeds. Add to this the amazing details and intricate workings and care lavished upon the insect world, the fishes, the animal and plant world, the birdlife and their wonderful instincts, not forgetting His crowning creation of mankind, plus all the heavenly hosts of angels and other forms of spirit life.

Can we ever be reverent enough? Can we ever praise Him enough? Let us now make a start to at least respect and give thanks to the Almighty Creator who, for a very special reason in His supreme wisdom, gives us life itself and the very air we breath each moment.

As I indicated earlier, the Godhead is a very serious subject, not to be discussed lightly. Please read the following study very slowly and thoughtfully, with reverence, consider the meanings of the words, which are finite and inadequate to do full justice to the Infinite One.

### MELCHIZEDEK THE MYSTERY

According to Hebrews 7:1-2, we are told this name Melchizedek means “King of Righteousness” and that He had another title, “King of Salem” meaning “King of Peace.” Furthermore, in addition to this, His perpetual office is that of a *priest*, for He “remains a priest continually,” (margin, “to perpetuity”). Ferrar Fenton says, “*remains a Priest uninterruptedly*,” (end of verse 3).

Another point, He was definitely not of the tribe of Levi which exclusively provided the Israelitish priesthood under the Sinai Covenant. Obviously Melchizedek predated Levi by many years, for He met Abraham and received tithes from that patriarch whose great grandson Levi was not yet born, (see Hebrews 7:4-10).



## Was He Jesus?

Many believe that this mysterious Melchizedek must be none other than Jesus, the Son of God, so let us check out the Identity marks to see if they fit Him.

1. "King of Righteousness." This definitely applies to Jesus: *"and unto the Son: Thy throne, O God, {is} to the age of the age; a sceptre of righteousness {is} the sceptre of thy reign,"* (Hebrews 1:8, Young's Literal Translation). See also Isaiah 11:1-5; Zechariah 9:9; 1 Timothy 6:14-16, etc.
2. "King of Peace." Surely this applies to Jesus. Isaiah 9:6-7, a prophecy concerning the Messiah, calls Him, *"The Prince of Peace";* and adds *"To the increase of the princely power, and of peace, there is no end,"* (Young's Literal Translation)
3. "A Permanent Priest." Definitely Jesus, see Heb. 7:11-28, and we quote verse 24 (Ferrar Fenton), *"But He, by continuing for ever, holds the continuous Priesthood."* Consequently He is both a king and a priest, in fact He is a King-Priest, see Zech. 6:12-13.
4. As we have seen, Melchizedek was "not of the tribe of Levi." Certainly Jesus was not a Levi, but was from Judah, Heb. 7:13-14.
5. All the above qualifications and identity marks undoubtedly apply to Jesus, the Messiah, the only begotten Son of God. But we must not stop there!

## STRANGELY UNIQUE

Now there is another very unique characteristic and identity mark of

Melchizedek, which appears to eliminate the Son of God. In fact it cuts right across the Trinitarian theory of an "Eternal Son." Some sects believe that He was the first created being long ages ago; some sects believe He was begotten long before creation; some sects believe He was always there as the Son with no beginning!

If any of these four above concepts of deity is meant by using the term "Eternal Son," then I for one would have to firmly disagree. However, the term "eternal" is often used for a variety of words in the original texts usually having a beginning and ending, so in that case one could agree. Now we must be careful here and take note that nowhere in the Bible can we find the term "Eternal Son." Search for yourself. But, and this is a big "But," we must not overlook that grand and glorious truth expressed in Isaiah 9:6, *"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."* Young gives the latter half of this verse, *"And He doth call His name Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Father of Eternity, Prince of Peace."*

Few Christians seem to grasp the fact that this "child," this "son" he prophesied is actually not only a human son, but at one and the same time the "Eternal Father," the "Father of Eternity," ie. the Creator Himself veiled in mortal flesh.

Here then, is the strangely unique description of Melchizedek presented in Heb. 7:3 — He was *"without Father, without mother, without descent,"* (margin, "re-

corded genealogy"), "having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God ..."

According to these five identity marks of Melchizedek, Jesus is eliminated. That is, if you accept any of those four sectarian doctrines of the "Eternal Son."

At this point you may be suffering from distress and confusion. Let me make one glorious truth clear so you can better understand where we are heading. Our great and wonderful Messiah, "God our Saviour" was, and still is, "The Eternal" in the highest sense of that word; but His sonship ministry actually had a beginning and eventually an ending.

### FIVE CONTRASTS

In contrast to Melchizedek, note these five points.

1. Jesus most certainly had a father — Lk. 1:35; Jn. 17:1
2. He most certainly had a mother — Lk. 1:30-31.
3. He most certainly had a recorded genealogy — Lk. 3:23-38.
4. Jesus was born and died, so certainly did have beginning of days and end of life — Matt. 2:1; Jn. 19:30-33.
5. Jesus was not "like unto the Son of God," but he actually WAS the Son of God — Mk. 1:1; Jn. 20:31.

### THE LOGOS

We know that "God is spirit," Jn. 4:24; and we know that in contrast to all other

created spirits which are localised, He Himself is OMNIPRESENT. That means He is everywhere at once and fills all things. Jeremiah 23:23-24 states "*{Am} I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill the heaven and the earth? saith the Lord.*" See also Ps. 139:7-12. We understand that God's powerful Spirit-Presence fills all His vast creation, macrocosm and microcosm, controlling it all in orderly fashion. Because air is invisible we are able to see other things. Should it become visible it would deprive us from seeing other things to the extent of it being opaque. Similarly, if God's omnipresent Spirit become visible everywhere, such a revelation could be blinding or dazzling, so His creation could not be seen and appreciated. "No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the father, He has declared Him" (Jn. 1:18). "... Who only hath immortality, dwelling in light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see. ..." (1 Tim. 6:16).

Being omnipresent, God exists in all dimensions. But there is another additional concept of God, which is in contrast to the extremely vast concept of omnipresence. When He wishes to concentrate His presence locally as a person, He manifests as "the Word," (or *Logos* in Greek). "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was



made" (Jn. 1:1-3). The Word is the Creator. Obviously, when God appeared to Adam, Abraham and Moses it was God in person, His localised presence, the Word.

## THEOPHANY

Who then was Melchizedek? Quite simply He was a THEOPHANY. What is a theophany? There is only One Person He could possibly be, and that is the Word, the Logos, a "truly Divine Apparition in the form of a man" representing the universal, omnipresent, Almighty Spirit. He was the **localised Personal expression** of His own Spirit that fills the entire creation.

Melchizedek combined the two great and vital roles of King and of Priest. The versatility of the Almighty is really profound! He takes upon Himself many different rolls. A priest represents the people to God as a mediator. But also, by contrast, Melchizedek as King rules the people **AS THEIR GOD!** We are so thankful that justice and judgement, mercy and love are the qualities of Almighty God!

The ministries of both Melchizedek and Jesus are so varied and versatile as to have major diverse roles to play in God's relationship with the Adamic race, such as creation, provision, sustenance, deliverance, redemption, salvation, etc. But please note this very important point, although Melchizedek could be both King and Priest, He could not be the sacrificial lamb which the priest must offer up. Stop and think why. ... Why? Because

He was none other than the Eternal Creator Himself, the Life Giver. "*God who made the world and all things in it, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands, neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, seeing He gives to all life and breath, and all things ... for in Him we live and move and have our being. ...*" (Acts 17:24-28). Furthermore, besides being our Creator, Melchizedek had NO father, (He was the Father), He had NO mother, NO genealogy, NO beginning of days, and especially note this point: NO end of life! Because He always was and always will be, the Alpha and the Omega, it is impossible for Him to die.

## A HUMAN BEING

In order for the Everlasting to die on behalf of His creation and be the sacrificial Lamb "*which bears away the sins of the world*" He must incarnate Himself as a human being. Partaking of flesh and blood, He was subject to death," — Heb. 2:14-15.

Consequently Melchizedek must **BECOME** the only begotten Son of God in order to be that perfect sacrifice that He, as Priest then offered up! For it was Himself who took our infirmities, who bore our sicknesses, and by His stripes we are healed. Jesus did most definitely lay down His life **voluntarily** as a vital part of the great plan — Jn. 10:17-18; 1 Peter 1:18-20.

Therefore we now see that the **SONSHIP MINISTRY** of God began at a certain time in history (His-story). To

Jesus, the **only** One wholly begotten by God, the Holy Spirit said *"Though art My Son THIS DAY have I begotten thee,"* (Heb. 1:5). Not "begotten before creation"; not "created thee"; not "eternally begetting thee" as some would have us think, but "this day" — in time, at the incarnation 2,000 years ago. And again, I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son." It was the omnipresent Holy Spirit who was "the Father" in a very real way to Jesus, see Lk. 1:35.

The Bible clearly teaches that Jesus of Nazareth as Son of God, and therefore human, had "beginning of days" at Bethlehem and "end of life" at Golgotha. Nowhere is He called "the eternal Son." However, please note, He who became the Son in the framework of time was most definitely pre-existing as the Eternal, ("Before Abraham was I AM"). He was indeed "The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father (or Father of Eternity), the Creator of all things, *"and by Him all things consist,"* (Col. 1:16,17).

This incarnation of Melchizedek as the Son of God is well put in Jn. 1:14, *"And the Word was made flesh ("BECAME FLESH" — margin) and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth."* It was vital for our salvation in order for Almighty God to actually "learn obedience" by being His own Son, first to live as a perfect human example, fulfilling all righteousness, and then TO DIE and very importantly rise again for our external salvation. (see Heb. 5:8-9 and note verse six — if Melchizedek and Jesus are different persons they would

co-exist as permanently RIVAL PRIESTS!)

Jesus was not simply an apparition as some false prophets taught, but actually "came in the flesh" as the great apostle John so emphatically maintained in 1 Jn. 4:1-3, for he personally handled the Son of God.

## A COMPARISON

From our point in His-story, we can look back and regard the Theophany of Melchizedek in Old Testament times, the apparition of God in man-like form to visit the patriarchs. Notice I said "man-like form," for Heb. 7:3 says "made **LIKE UNTO** the Son of God," for at the time referred to, the physical Son was not yet born.

Then, we can compare that with the New Testament **UNIQUE THEOPHANY**, the new, **one and only Divine incarnation**, Jesus, the only One wholly begotten of God, ie. Immanuel, "God with us" — God visiting us in human flesh! *"Amazing love, how can it be, that Thou my God shouldst die for me!"*

*"And without controversy great is the mystery of Godliness: God was **manifest in the flesh** ... believed on in the world, received up into glory "* (1 Tim. 3:16) — Amen!

It is hoped that this study will give us a better understanding of the great wisdom and loving care of our mighty Creator who saw fit to die for us, pouring out His precious life blood to reconcile us to Himself, cleansing us from all sin and giving us eternal life as new-born



<p><b>MELCHIZEDEK</b>  <b>Old Testament Times</b>  <b>A Spiritual Theophany</b></p>	<p><b>JESUS THE CHRIST</b>  <b>New Testament Times</b>  <b>A Physical Theophany</b></p>
<p>The one and only personal  Revelation of God in the  <b>LIKENESS</b> of human form</p> <p>The Word, the Logos,  Melchizedek, Yahweh.</p> <p>Creator, King, Priest.</p> <p>The Eternal, the Everlasting.</p> <p>No father or mother.  No descent.  No beginning. No end.</p> <p>Abides a Priest continually  (to perpetuity)</p> <p>Isaiah 9:6</p> <p><i>"... the Mighty God,  the Everlasting Father."</i></p> <p>Micah 5:2</p> <p><i>"Whose going forth have been from  of old, from everlasting." (Melchizedek).</i></p>	<p>The one and only personal  revelation of God <b>PHYSICALLY</b>  <b>BORN</b> in human form.</p> <p>The Lord Jesus Christ.  Yeshua ha Messiah.</p> <p>Who was the Creator (Col. 1:16-17).  Born a human to be Priest, King.</p> <p>Subject to death, in order to be  The redeeming sacrifice.</p> <p>With father and mother.  With descent.  Born and died.</p> <p>Continues for ever, has an  unchangeable priesthood.</p> <p><i>"For unto us a child is born,  unto us a son is given ..."</i></p> <p><i>"But thou, Bethlehem ... out of thee  Shall come forth ... ruler in Israel."</i>  (Jesus)</p>

children in His own family.

The Godhead is a very big subject, but maybe I shall be able to share some more at a later time.

Our Creator — the Word — the Everlasting Father **became** the only begotten Son, (for redemption within time), and now ministers to us His Holy Spirit.



# The Pathos Behind Da Vinci's "Last Supper"

Selected

They say it is a true story. Maybe it is. The fact that the story appears in an old family heirloom Bible, first published in 1923, may add credibility to the story's integrity, depending upon one's personal viewpoint on such matters. The point remains, however, the story itself is nothing less than remarkable.

It has to do with the painting of "The Last Supper" by world-renowned Italian artist and painter, Leonardo Da Vinci. It's a task that took the old master seven full years to accomplish.

Starting out, Da Vinci wanted to find the perfect Christ caricature for his portrait. You see, Da Vinci always used real people in all his portraits and paintings, so he always searched for just the right "actors" to portray the realism he wanted to capture for his canvass.

According to the story, "hundred and hundreds of young men were carefully viewed in an endeavour to find a face and personality exhibiting innocence and beauty, free from the scars and signs of dissipation caused by sin." Eventually, after searching for weeks, a young man of 19 years was found and selected. For the next six months, Da Vinci worked on the portraiture of Christ as he, the artist, saw Him, the Messiah, in the face and demeanour of this young subject.

Now completed, Da Vinci settled himself into the task of searching for and capturing the faces of the other disciples around that table in the upper room. One by one, over the next six years, Da Vinci searched and worked.

Finally, the work had progressed to the point that there remained but one face left to find — that of The Traitor himself, Judas Iscariot. It was a face that the old master had purposefully left for last for any number of reasons. Now, near the end of his task, he went on a search not unlike the one he had at first — looking, scrutinising, studying thousands of faces in endless crowds for just that one face — the face — that would tell the story behind the story.

His travels finally took him to a dungeon in Rome, where he had heard resided a man who was thought to be the epitome of what the artist was looking for. Upon introduction, Da Vinci realised his expectations were not disappointed. Indeed, here was a man of dark soul — a wretched, unkempt and vicious human. Yes, this was the perfect Judas!

By special order of the king, the prisoner was released into Da Vinci's care for the next several months. For both days and nights, the portrait was crafted into the scripted scene. The moment finally came when the portrait was completed



and the prisoner was returned to the care of his incarcerators

Turning to leave, Da Vinci suddenly found himself in the clutches of the prisoner crying out, "O, Da Vinci, look at me! Do you not know who I am?"

Upon studying the poor man closer, Da Vinci exclaimed that he did not know

the man. "O, Da Vinci," the man cried louder, "*I am your Christ!! I am the man you painted seven years ago as Christ! O, God, have I fallen so low?*"

"For the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save {them} ... He has come to seek and to save that which was lost." Jesus (Lu. 9:56; 19:10)



## Devotional – "Sanctification"

*"But you also belong to God through Jesus Christ who, from God, is wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and salvation to all of us." (1 Cor 1:30, Lamsa)*

Sanctification is the very practical gift from above of the Holy qualities of the Saviour Himself. It is His purity, His love, His patience, His diligence that is directly available to us, in us and through us to others.

Sanctification is definitely not our spasmodic efforts at imitating Him. That is the nature of actor or a hypocrite. It is not trying hard to be good. That would be to **my credit and my glory**.

Sanctification is letting the perfections of "the life of Jesus manifest themselves in our mortal flesh." For "*we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us*" (2 Cor. 4:7, 11). We are the earthen vessels and His perfect character is indeed the treasure He gives to us; the gift of Himself: "Christ within you the hope of glory."

His perfections are imparted to us instantly by faith as we, like an empty vessel, invite and welcome His Holy Spirit to fill us to overflowing. Then, as we learn slowly and surely to work out in life the salvation, the perfect wholeness, that He has placed within us, we experience a very precious transformation which has to be felt to be understood. But such a result cannot be expected without our willing co-operation — our obedience. A continuous, voluntary yielding of one's will to Him in a daily "walking in the light," cleanses from all sin and brings Him glory.

"May the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly; — your entire spirit, soul and body ... faithful is He who calls you, who will also do it! Amen."

R. Gibbons  
(Subscriber)



# Gems from Ancient Literature

G. Taylor

There have been two periods in the history of Christendom when the Church set out, under the leadership of great scholars, to seek and find rare literature from the past in order to build up knowledge of Holy Writ and the background to its narratives.

One period was during the third and fourth centuries, when the later Christian fathers spent long periods in the libraries, such as those at Alexandria and Antioch, copying from books many centuries old in their day. In their own copious writings they set down their findings, with many quotations and their views as to the authenticity of these books.

The other period was during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when the destruction of Alexandria by the Saracens caused the scholars of that time to flee westwards, with such manuscripts as they could save from destruction, with the result that a Renaissance of learning showed itself in western Europe.

## Revivals of Learning

Both these revivals of learning greatly influenced the Celtic Church of the west. The Celtic missionaries — notably those from Ireland — obtained their copies from the Eastern Church with which they were in constant

touch. The later Renaissance provided the manuscripts in various languages, from which it was possible to obtain a remarkably accurate translation of the Bible in Tyndale's time, so that it has not been possible to improve upon it very greatly since that time.

It was the discoveries made during the first period which enabled the Greek scholar Hieronymus, "better known as St. Jerome, to draw up his canon of Holy Scripture, based upon the books acceptable to the Apostles and, in the case of the Old Testament, those approved by Hebrew scholars. His own Vulgate translation into Latin, though patronised by the Popes of his time (around A.D. 400), who were beginning then to show their ambitions, was a work of true scholarship and was used greatly by the Irish missionaries in the evangelisation of Europe. However, during the Middle Ages, probably because it was the official version of the Roman Church, the Vulgate suffered many alterations from Jerome's original.

## Non-Canonical Books

Now, if we wish to learn all that is to be known, we need to remember the other books, those which were available in Jerome's day but have since been lost, or those which Jerome did not know, books of great antiquity which have



gradually come to light in recent times. We need not use them for doctrinal purposes but we can increase our knowledge by the study of their contents. Books like *Enoch* and *Jasher*, which are not available in the original tongue, are quoted in the Bible, a fact which gives them added authenticity. They parallel Bible narratives and give us additional detail.

Among those which appear, by the names used, to be of Hebrew origin, is *The Testaments of the Patriarchs*. It is in twelve sections, each being a prophetic blessing given by one of the sons of Jacob. Historical details are introduced. One is of particular importance to us. Knowing how carefully God selected the wives of the patriarchs, that His Kingdom People might come from the most suitable stock, who were the concubines Bilhah and Zilpah? They were maids to Leah and Rachel, but we are not told in *Genesis* anything of their racial background. If they were Egyptians, like Hagar, their sons would surely be rejected, as Ishmael was. We do not doubt that they must have been true Hebrews, but the Testaments give us a clue.

In the *Testament of Naphtali*, who was a child of Bilhah, we read they were "the daughters of Rotheus, brother of Deborah, Rebecca's nurse, who was born on the selfsame day with Rachel. Rotheus was of the family of Abraham, a Chaldean, God-fearing, freeborn and noble. He was taken captive and bought by Laban, who gave him Euna his handmaid to wife. She bore him Zilpah, named after the village where she was taken captive, and next Bilhah."

There is a detail in the *Testament of Zebulun* which may be of interest to our Dutch friends who believe themselves to be of Zebulun, for it shows that tribe to be the first seafarers in Israel:

"I was the first to make a boat to sail upon the sea, for the Lord gave me understanding therein, and I let down a rudder behind it, and I stretched a sail upon another upright piece of wood in the midst, and I sailed therein along the shores catching fish for the house of my father, until we came to Egypt." Evidently, in that time of famine, the family of Jacob was saved from starvation by Zebulun's fish.

### The Testament of Judah

There is an interesting passage in the *Testament of Judah* that is worthy to rank with the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament:

"A man shall arise from my seed like the sun of righteousness, walking with the sons of men in meekness and righteousness, and no sin shall be found in him. And the heavens shall be opened unto him, to pour out the spirit, even the blessing of the holy Father. And he shall pour out the spirit of grace upon you, and ye shall be unto him sons in truth; and ye shall walk in his commandments first and last, the Branch of God most High, and this fountain giving life to all. Then shall the Sceptre of my kingdom shine forth, and from your root shall arise a stem, and from it shall grow a rod of righteousness to the Gentiles, to judge and to save all that call upon the Lord."

Isaiah deals with the fact that Messiah is to be both a descendant of Jesse and the very root from which Jesse draws his life, a fact which is equivalent to the riddle put by our Lord, which His hearers could not answer, when He asked them how could David call his own descendant "Lord"? Here is a similar theme, for it presents Messiah as the Root of righteousness and the Fountain of life.

### The Book of Jubilees

Another Hebrew book is *The Book of Jubilees*. It is described as the oldest of the commentaries on Genesis and Exodus. It contains many passages of prophecy, notably concerned with the return to righteousness in the last days, like the following, parallel to Deuteronomy 30:

"They will turn unto Me from amongst the Gentiles with all their heart and with all their soul and with all their strength, and I shall gather them from amongst all the Gentiles, and they will seek Me, so that I shall be found of them when they shall seek Me with all their heart and with all their soul. And in those days the children will begin to study the laws and to return to the path of righteousness."

As students of Divine Law we can appreciate the need to "begin to study the laws before it is possible to return to the path of righteousness," a fact that we are continually emphasising.

*The Book of Jubilees* laments the fall of man and all that has been lost by sin, including the gift of long life. It contains the following prophecy pointing to the

time which our Lord describes as "the regeneration":

"And the days will begin to grow many and increase among those children of men, till their days draw nigh to one thousand years, and to a greater number of years than before was the number of days. And there will be no old man, nor one who is not satisfied with his days, for all will be as children and youths. And all their days will be days of blessing and healing, and at that time the Lord will heal His servants and they will rise up and see great peace" (23:27).

The following passage is surely a prophecy of the Second Advent: "And the Lord will appear to the eyes of all, and all will know that I am the God of Israel and the Father of all the children of Jacob, and King on Mount Zion for all eternity" (1:28).

### The Book of Enoch

For those interested in angelology, *The Book of Enoch* gives an interesting list of the archangels. From the point of view of the Scriptures Michael is mentioned as the guardian or champion of Israel in Daniel 12:1; Gabriel appears to be the messenger of great events, who appeared to Mary to announce our Lord's birth, Uriel was the interpreter of the visions of Esdras in the Apocrypha and, also in the Apocrypha, Raphael guided young Tobias to the healing of his father's blindness. Now see what Enoch says:

"Michael (who is like God) the merciful and long-suffering, blesses the Lord of Spirits for ever and ever.



"Raphael (divine healer) who is set over all the diseases and all the wounds of the children of men. Blesses the Elect One, and the elect ones who hang upon the Lord of Spirits.

"Gabriel (Strong one or Hero of God) who is set over all the powers; prays and intercedes for those who dwell on the earth, and supplicates in the name of the Lord of Spirits.

"Phanuel or Uriel is set over the repentance unto hope of those who inherit eternal life. Fending off the satans, and forbidding them to come before the Lord of Spirits to accuse them that dwell upon earth."

Enoch was one who was given great visions of the Heavenly Throne and to him special knowledge of the heavenly hosts seems to have been given. He describes the "Cherubim, Seraphim and Ophanin (the "wheels" of Ezekiel's vision) in these words, "These are they who sleep not and guard the Throne of Glory." He adds this strange detail, "I saw the sons of God. They were stepping on flames. Their garments were white of fire, and their faces shone like snow, and I saw two streams of fire, and the light of the fire shone like hyacinth." This is interesting for comparison with the prophets' descriptions of the light around the Throne of God.

### The Acts of John

A strange but interesting passage appears in the *Acts of John*, an

uncanonical writing of New Testament times, in which John is describing the Transfiguration. He tells us, "We saw in Him such a light as it is not possible for man that useth corruptible speech to describe." Then John tells us that he went and stood behind Jesus and "I saw that He was not in any wise clad with garments, but was seen of us naked, and not in any wise as an earthly man."

Here surely is an attempt to describe that garment of light which many of us believe to have been the attribute of Adam before the fall. The removal of it caused Adam to realise that he was naked. Jesus, being seen for a short while in His full glory, was clothed in light. John tells us that "His feet were whiter than any snow, so that the earth there was lighted up by His feet, and that His head touched the heavens, so that I was afraid and cried out."

We often try to think of the strange fact that Jesus was the greatness of God compressed into a small span. This illustrates that greatness and that glory which was compressed for a time into a mortal body. No wonder the disciples were smitten with awe.

Apart from Enoch, these ancient books are not at present in print, but a search in antiquarian bookshops would be well repaid by the discovery of a translation of one of them, for they contain many treasures.

Courtesy: National Message



# Archaeology Report – Likenesses of People in the Bible

Selected

## Have any likenesses been found of persons named in the Bible?

Many of the people mentioned in the Bible are confirmed in sources outside the Bible. In the case of royalty, many times a likeness of the individual has been recovered. Over 50 persons named in the Old Testament are known outside the Bible, and we have likenesses of 12 of them. Some 27 people named in the New Testament are known from other records, with six likenesses surviving (four of them Roman emperors).

Based on current knowledge of Biblical and Egyptian chronology, the best candidate for the pharaoh of the Exodus is Tuthmosis III, who ruled 1504-1450 B.C. We have many records from his reign, as well as this statuary of the pharaoh himself.

Likenesses have also been found of these Biblical figures:

Shishak, the Egyptian king who plundered the Temple during the reign of Rehoboam (1 Kings 14:25-26).

Jehu, king of Israel, who took power in a bloody coup; the only surviving likeness of a king of Israel or Judah (2 Kings 9:1-10:36).

Hazael, king of Aram, enemy of Israel (1 Kings 19:15, 17; 2 Kings 8:7-15, 28-29; 9:14-15; 10:32-33; 12:17-18; 13:3, 22, 24-25; Amos 1:4).

Tiglath-Pileser III, king of Assyria, who invaded Israel (2 Kings 15:29; 16:7, 10; 1 Chronicles 5:6, 26; 2 Chronicles 28:20).

Sargon II, king of Assyria, who defeated Ashdod and completed the siege of Samaria and took Israelites into captivity (Isaiah 20:1).

Sennacherib, king of Assyria, who attacked Judah but was unable to capture Jerusalem (2 Kings 18:13-19:37).

Tirhakah, king of Egypt, who opposed Sennacherib (2 Kings 19:9).

Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, who succeeded his father Sennacherib (2 Kings 19:37).

Berodach-baladan, king of Babylon, whose messengers Hezekiah showed the royal treasury, much to the indignation of Isaiah (2 Kings 20:12-19).

Xerxes I, king of Persia, who made Esther his queen (Esther 2:17; Ezra 4:6).

Darius I, king of Persia, who allowed the returning exiles to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem (Ezra 4:24-6:15; Haggai 1:1, 15).

Augustus, Roman emperor, 27 B.C.-A.D. 14, when Jesus was born (Luke 2:1).

Tiberius, Roman emperor, A.D. 14-37, during Jesus' adulthood and crucifixion (Matthew 22:17, 21; Mark 12:14, 16, 17; Luke 3:1; 20:22, 24-25; 23:2; John 19:12, 15).



Claudius, Roman emperor, A.D. 41-54, who ordered the Jews to leave Rome (Acts 11:28; 17:7; 18:2).

Herod Agrippa I, ruler of Judea, A.D. 37-44, who persecuted the early church (Acts 12:1-23; 23:35).

Aretas IV, king of the Nabateans, 9 B.C.-

A.D. 40, whose governor in Damascus attempted to arrest Paul (2 Corinthians 11:32).

Nero (referred to as Caesar in the New Testament), Roman emperor, A.D. 54-68, who Paul appealed to (Acts 25:11-12, 21; 26:32; 28:19; Philippians 4:22).



## What is meant by the evil eye?

Evil eye is used in the Bible in the sense of covetousness and envy. Proverbs 23:6 says: "*Eat thou not the bread of {him that hath} an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats (foods).*" And in Proverbs 28:22 we are told: "*He that hasteneth to be rich {hath} an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.*" In *Baba Metzia*, written about 200 B.C., one of the Talmudic scribes says: "For one that dies of natural causes ninety-nine die of the evil eye." "*Is thine eye evil, because I am good?*" asked Jesus in Matthew 20:15. In other words, "Are you jealous and envious because I am kind and generous." In Mark 7:22 Jesus includes "an evil eye" with covetousness, wickedness, deceit and other evil things that come from within and defile a person. Belief in the evil eye was one of the most common and widespread of all ancient superstitions and many customs and practices are traceable to it. The evil eye was one of the basic principles of demonism, sorcery and witchcraft. A primitive form of the superstition was that the eyes of some persons darted noxious rays on objects which they glared upon and the first morning glance of such eyes was sure to blight with bad luck both man and beast. Virgil tells of an evil eye that made kine lean. All sorts of amulets, names, phrases, garments and gestures were devised to ward off the blight of the evil eye. The veiling and cloistering of women, eating in private, the covering of certain parts of the body regardless of comfort, style or necessity are among the customs that may be traceable to the superstition of the evil eye. One of the notions of the evil eye was that a person should not praise, admire or in any way encourage those that were prosperous or lucky. Belief in the evil eye is still prevalent among many primitive peoples. In modern usage *evil eye* survives in the sense of jealousy, envy or malice.



# Incipient Heraldry

## The Emblems of the Twelve Tribes

L. Pine

No definite origin of time or place can be assigned to the science and art of heraldry. It arose, we know, in western Europe in the middle of the twelfth century. Theories as to the reason for its sudden appearance can be advanced, it was used on seals, thence spread to armour; or vice versa its use on armour caused it to be used on seals. And thence, its obvious artistic qualities brought it into fashion on buildings, on silver, gold and other objects, also on clothes of peaceful type, and so on — as it is still used, into our own times.

The main reason for the inability to date the origin of heraldry to a precise half-century, or to show that it originated from a single mind or that it was, on the contrary, a general movement, is the lack of written material of a contemporary nature. The chief writers of the twelfth century, the chroniclers, only noted something when it was sufficiently striking to merit their attention. A comet in the sky was very unusual though not unknown; its appearance was chronicled, as with Halley's Comet, which appeared at the time of the Norman Conquest in England. Plagues and wars were events which obviously affected life and were entered in the records by the surviving writers. But something which arose in connection with the use of arms or armour, or even of seals — if noticed at all — was usually assumed to be a thing existing always.

### Heraldry in Medieval Europe

There was little sense of historical change in the Middle Ages; nor is there now among people who have not been educated to think in terms of change. Even now a village church can be described as old by its inhabitants, merely because the building was there in grandfather's time. Yet the visitor notices the nineteenth-century date of consecration.

The first written mention in Europe on heraldry came 200 years after the appearance of the phenomenon. We can assign a *terminus a quo* for the appearance of heraldry in western Europe. There is an enamel dating from 1151 which shows Geoffrey of Anjou as he presumably appeared when his father-in-law, Henry I of England, invested him with a shield. The latter is armorial. Now we know from the evidence of (1) the Bayeux Tapestry that in 1066 only very rudimentary designs had been seen on a few shields of the warriors, and (2) that in 1099 the Crusaders bore plain shields, because they were so described very carefully by Anna Comnena, the historian of the Eastern (Greek) Empire.

If, however, heraldic writing made a tardy appearance after the emergence of heraldry, the earlier writers on the subject made up for their slowness in noticing it, by the exuberance of their theories about its origin. One writer (thought



to be a lady, Dame Juliana Berners) wrote in the *Boke of St. Albans* that the angels in heaven stood in their coat armour. After this it was fairly moderate for another writer to assign the beginnings of heraldry to the skins with which God clothed the fallen Adam and Eve. Medieval writers seldom allowed themselves to be overcome by stubborn facts; resembling in that respect modern Biblical critics. Nor did they err on the side of refusing arms to worthy persons. They gave coats-of-arms to every one of note in the past or present. Thus the Grand Soldan, enemy though he might be of Christendom, was still a gentleman and had to have the sign of gentility — arms. Then in the past, a king like Alfred the Great, or the sainted Edmund of East Anglia, had coat armour; in fact, the Middle Ages even ascribed a coat of arms to our Lord. Dr. Woodward quotes, not without some quiet indignation, the arms ascribed to the Blessed Saviour at Mayence; so that He might not be at a disadvantage when in presence of the gentlemen with sixteen quarterings, so common on the Continent.

From the nonsense of the medieval writers, and the even greater nonsense of the sixteenth and seventeenth-century authors, modern study has delivered the subject. The romance of heraldry needs no such assistance from spurious sources.

### Heraldry — Even in Japan

How far, therefore, can we assign heraldic devices to ages and countries other

than twelfth-century western Europe? With certainty as to one part of the world only, namely, Japan, where there is a system in which an object known as the *mon*, equivalent to our crest or badge (but not our full coat of arms) appeared in the twelfth century. Chivalry in Japan had a long history, much longer than in western Europe. By chivalry must be understood knightly conduct in war and private exploits — not necessarily deeds of nobleness or care for others. The medieval knight in Europe could be chivalrous to his equals; nothing could be finer than the conduct of the Black Prince towards the captured king of France, whom he overcame in courtesy as well as in combat. But was the Black Prince always as solicitous towards the villains of the period? The churls of England had a rough life in the days of his son. They were promised by that same son (Richard II) that they should have their liberty, only to find that he broke his word, once their threat was broken. Thus, when we condemn the Knights of Bushido, let us remember that they were only somewhat more cruel than their western counterparts, and without the light of Christian faith. It is impossible not to admire the courage of those ancient Japanese knights. One of them leading his cavalry found himself on a precipitous height overlooking the camp of the enemy. Without hesitation he had his trumpet sounded and charged down the impossible precipice to victory over the astonished foes.

Leaving aside old-time Japan, there was no other part of the world where full

heraldic systems existed. There were, however, many places in which an *incipient heraldry* could be found. The totem poles of the Indians of the north-west coast of Canada enshrine their histories under symbols of their families and clans. They are a rudimentary heraldry. One must be on one's guard for the enthusiast who gets carried away. Thus it was with Lt. Col. James Tod. He set himself to study the history of the martial Rajput princes, whose castles still dot the land of Rajasthan, whose chivalrous exploits are known all over India. According to the worthy Colonel, the Rajputs used armorial bearings, when Europe had not even thought of them. "In Europe, these customs were not introduced till the period of the Crusades, and were copied from the Saracens; while the use of them amongst the Rajput tribes can be traced to a period anterior to the war of Troy." This is enthusiasm with a vengeance, but it will not stand up to examination. There were symbols used by Rajput princes as by all other races. They could have developed into heraldry, but they did not. They may be likened perhaps best to those rough designs which are seen on less than half a dozen shields in the Bayeux Tapestry; on which are seen, more polished in appearance, on Etruscan or Greek vases.

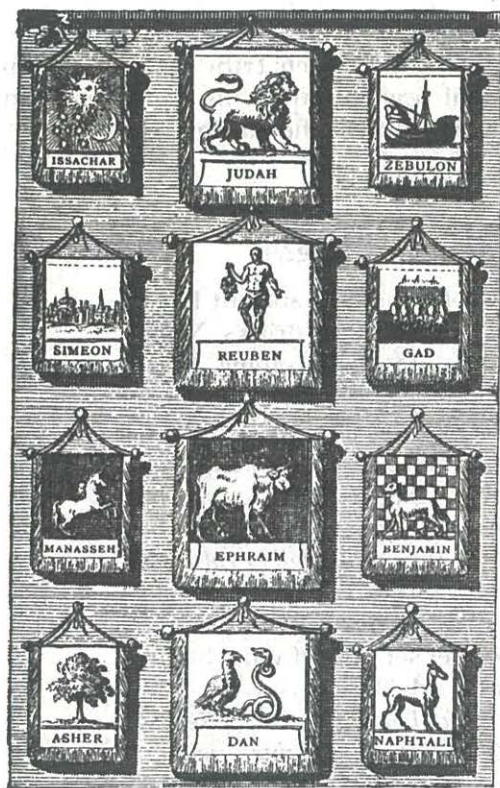
### Scriptural Heraldry

There is one source of a rudimentary heraldry which has a particular interest for us — the emblems assigned to the twelve tribes of Israel. We can begin with

the 49th chapter of Genesis where Jacob gathers his sons in order that he may tell them what shall befall them in the "latter days." There is a vast amount of interest in this chapter and in the preceding chapter (48th) where the blessing of Joseph's two sons provides a useful study in which we should seek in vain for guidance from a modern "demythologising" bishop or a smart young atheist priest, with the message that God is dead. I had the good fortune in my youth to be able to get advice and assistance in a study of the Scriptures from Christian clergymen who were deep-versed in the meaning of God's Word, and having reverence for it.

In going cursorily through these two chapters, we find that direct symbolism is used for several of the tribes. That of Judah is directly called the lion's whelp by Jacob. The significance of this is brought home, first by the interesting fact that the Emperor of Ethiopia to this day uses as his symbol the lion of Judah. Rising in meaning, we may reflect on the fact that the Lion has always been the symbol of our country, England, and of the British Empire. Three lions form the arms of England first adopted by Richard I, Coeur de Lion, and since his time used by every dynasty which has occupied the British throne. Even when such dynasty has had a male line descent which carried with it a different coat of arms, the newcomers, possessed of course of a female line descent from the most ancient line, gave up their own arms and adopted the symbol of the country. Finally, and most important of all, Judah's symbol has a profound spiritual meaning.





*The Banners of the Tribes of Israel*

In chapter 5 of the Book of Revelation, we read that the Lion of the tribe of Judah "has prevailed to open the book and to loose the seven seals thereof." And in the succeeding vision the Lion merges into the Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world. Our Lord, as the writer of the Epistle to Hebrews states, sprang from Judah.

### Emblems of the Tribes

No other symbol in the list of the tribes can equal Judah's lion in its maj-

esty and regality; but the others have great interest. Issachar is called "a strong ass couched between two burdens." Some explain this as "between sun and moon," but the symbolism need not be strained. Dan is "a serpent by the way." Joseph is "a fruitful bough by a wall." Benjamin "ravens as a wolf." Other symbolism maybe found in the description of the tribes. Reuben has a doubtful description, likened to water, but some symbols give him the mandrakes of his earlier life. Simeon and Levi had earned their father's dislike because of their behaviour towards the Shechemites. A sword or city, both heraldic emblems can be used for them. Urim and Thummin may also be the symbol of Levi. Zebulon's symbol is a ship; Naphtali is likened by Jacob to a hind; Gad's emblem may be a camp; Asher's symbol is sometimes put as a covered cup or a tree; Ephraim and Manasseh, the sons of Joseph, may be represented by a bullock and a unicorn respectively.

Now there are two points of interest in these descriptions. In some modern movements these symbols are used to this day on standards. They have persisted over many centuries. More important is the passage in the subsequent Book of Numbers, where in chapter 2, verse 2, we read: "Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch (encamp) by his own standard, with the ensign of their father's house." Then are detailed the arrangements by which the standards of the different tribes are to be set up. Judah on the east side, then Issachar, Zebulon, etc.

I do not suggest that in ancient Israel there was a system resembling in its details the western European heraldry, but I do think it incontestable that there were

standards in ancient Israel, symbols under which each tribe mustered, and which were important traditional signs derived from the patriarch Jacob.



### Is total abstinence mentioned in the Bible?

There were at least two groups of people in ancient Israel who practised total abstinence from all alcoholic drinks. Numbers 6:1-4 says: *"And the Lord spoke unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When either man or woman shall separate {themselves} to vow a vow of a Nazarite, to separate {themselves} unto the Lord; he shall separate {himself} from wine and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried. All the days of his separation shall he eat nothing that is made of the vine tree, from the kernels even to husk."* The Rechabites were also total abstainers from strong drink. According to Jeremiah 35:6, when the prophet set pots of wine before the Rechabites, gave them cups and said, "Drink ye wine," the Rechabites replied: *"We drink no wine; for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, {neither} ye, nor your sons forever."* In the time of Jeremiah the Rechabites lived in Jerusalem, where they went to seek safety from the Chaldean and Syrian armies. The prophet held up their loyalty to their founder's ideals as worthy of emulation by the Israelites generally. Jacob brought wine to Isaac, who drank it before eating the venison, and generally it may be said that the Hebrews regarded wine as a necessary and essential part of every meal. Some authorities suppose that John the Baptist was a Nazarite, because the angel of the Lord, according to Luke 1:15, told Zacharias that his son *"shall drink neither wine nor strong drink."* And in Matthew 11:18-19 Jesus is quoted as saying: *"For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans (tax collectors) and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children."*





# Health – Cramp

R. Gibbons  
(Subscriber)

You are lying in bed, just starting to wake up. Your legs are stretching a bit and then “BANG!” — a shocking pain knives into your calf muscle — Oh, No! You’ve got cramp!

All very well to contemplate a lack of magnesium and calcium in your diet, and of ways to increase your intake with molasses, broccoli and buckwheat, but with such a severe pain as muscle cramp your immediate concern is relief from that unbearable pain!

Yes, there is something very simple you can do to correct the fault and bring relief immediately.

Cramp is the result of a confused message between the brain and the muscle; the muscle then tries to pull in opposite directions simultaneously. The result is agony.

Our simple, self-help treatment is to do two things at once: (a) give the corrective message, and (b) prove physically to the muscle the truth of your instruction.

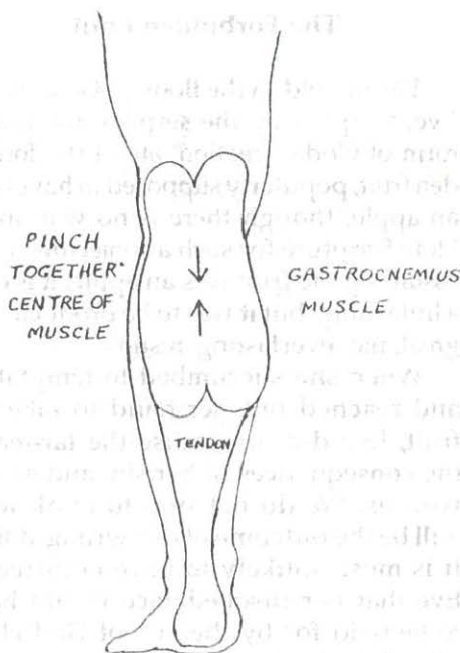
Take (b) First. Quickly locate the centre of the muscle where pain is most severe and **firmly pinch** or tweak the flesh together as indicated by the arrows in the diagram. This can be done with either the thumb and fingers of one hand, or else the fingers of both hands, but do it promptly and firmly. You are pushing the muscle fibres closer together to confirm

and convince the muscle of its misbehaviour. At exactly the same moment as you do this you must speak aloud the message of correction:

“THIS MUSCLE IS TOO SHORT! LENGTHEN IT!”

I do the pinching action twice rapidly whilst saying this.

If immediate relief does not follow, repeat the procedure. Don’t take no for an answer.



REAR VIEW OF CALF MUSCLE

BOB

# God's "Little Things"

E. Bates

*"For who hath despised the day of small things?" (Zechariah 4:10)*

While Man boasts of his great achievements in science and technology, space travel, the trifling things, which he regards as of no moment, have been turned to great account by the Author of the Universe, Whose ways pass human understanding.

It is the purpose of this study to show how God's "little things" have been, and can still be used to fulfil His Covenant to Israel and, through them, to the whole human race.

## The Forbidden Fruit

We are told in the Book of Genesis that Eve, tempted by the serpent, the lowest form of God's creation, ate of the forbidden fruit, popularly supposed to have been an apple, though there is no warrant in Holy Scripture for such a conjecture. Even assuming the fruit was an apple, it is only a little thing, but it was to be productive of great, nay everlasting, results.

When she succumbed to temptation and reached out her hand to take the fruit, Eve did not realise the far-reaching consequences of her sin, and so it is with us. We do not stop to think what will be the outcome of our wrong-doing. It is most unlikely to have occurred to Eve that her disobedience would have to be paid for by the Son of God Himself, *"Who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by*

*whose stripes ye were healed"* (1 Pet. 2:24).

Right at the beginning of the story of the Adamic race, then, we are introduced to two of God's "little things" — the serpent and the fruit.

## Joseph's Coat

In the thirty-seventh chapter of Genesis we read how Jacob loved his son, Joseph, more than all his brethren, and made him a coat of many colours. This caused jealousy amongst the brothers and they conspired to slay him, but Reuben, his eldest brother, saved him, and he was sold into Egypt. Who would have thought that such an item as a youth's coat, the cause of his brother's jealousy, could lead to such extraordinary consequences? What is a coat but an insignificant thing in a vast universe, something the Great Architect would not be expected to notice, a thing which moths can corrupt! This particular garment, however, was not despised by the Omnipotent Creator, for the fate of its owner was to affect the lives of his descendants for many a generation. We all know the story attending Joseph's sojourn in Egypt.

## A Woman's Weapon

In the Book of Judges, chapter 4, we read that the children of Israel did evil





JOSEPH'S COAT – From a painting by Horace Vernet

in the sight of the Lord Who delivered them into the hands of Jabin, king of Canaan, the captain of whose host was Sisera. For twenty years the Israelites were oppressed, and at length they cried unto the Lord for deliverance.

Now Deborah, a prophetess, judged Israel at that time, and she sent for Barak, of the tribe of Naphtali, telling him to take ten thousand of his kinsmen and of the children of Zebulun, and go and fight Sisera. Barak, however, refused to go unless Deborah accompanied him, and she said, *"I will surely go with thee: notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honour; for the LORD shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman. And*

*Deborah arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh. And Barak called Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh; and he went up with ten thousand men at his feet: and Deborah went up with him"* (vv. 9-10).

We are told that the Lord discomfited Sisera and all his host. Sisera, however, fled away, and

took refuge in the house of Heber, the Kenite, whose wife, Jael, lulled him to sleep, then drove a tent nail between his temples that he died. So, what could not be accomplished by Barak's vast army was accomplished by such a small thing as a tent nail, driven into his temple by the hand of a woman, as Deborah had foretold, and the enemy was subdued.

### The Battle of the Pitchers

The phrase, "And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD," occurs with monotonous regularity in the history of the Judges. After the deliverance of the Israelites under Deborah

and Barak we read again, in the sixth chapter of Judges, verse 1, *"And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years."* The people cried unto the Lord and He raised up yet another deliverer, this time a young man named Gideon.

With the enthusiasm and inexperience of youth, Gideon decided he must have an imposing and well-trained army to enable him to impress such a formidable foe as the Midianites, so he recruited thirty-two thousand men from various tribes and pitched in the sight of the enemy, but God showed him that this was not necessary. It was quality that counted. The Lord told Gideon, *"The people who {are} with thee {are} too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me"* (7:2).

Let us pause here for a moment to consider St. Paul's words in his first Letter to the Corinthians, chapter 1, verses 27-29. *"But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen, {yea}, and things which are not, to bring to nought (nothing) things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence."*

So Gideon was instructed to send away those who were afraid and he was left with ten thousand. But the Lord told him there were yet too many and, by a process of selection, directed

him to reduce the army to three hundred chosen men. Gideon could not understand how this ridiculously small force could defeat the enemy but he had to learn the lesson, *"{There is} no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few"* (1 Sam. 14:6). Gideon divided his three hundred men into three companies, giving each man a trumpet, a pitcher and a lamp, then he placed his three divisions and instructed them to do as he did.

Then Gideon and his men blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers. *"And the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow; and they cried, The sword of the LORD and of Gideon ... and all the host ran, and cried, and fled"* and the Israelites pursued them (Judges 7:20-21). So the host of Midian was defeated by a handful of men without weapons save lamps, pitchers and trumpets; strange weapons indeed! The might of the Lord prevailed and the Israel people, however unworthy, were delivered. Gideon has earned a place in St. Paul's list of saints and heroes (Heb. 11:32).

### Saved by a Small Stone

Most of us are familiar with the story of David and Goliath, the champion of the Philistines, who were harassing Saul's army. We are told that Goliath was a giant, much feared by the Israelites. He presented himself daily, challenging the foe to produce a man capable of overthrowing him.



Now it chanced that David, who had been sent by his father to attend to the material needs of his elder brothers, who were engaged in the battle, happened to arrive on the scene just at the moment when the Philistines' challenger emerged with his usual taunt, "I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together." David, when he heard these words, asked the men who stood by him, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" Then David went to Saul and said, "Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine" (1 Sam. 17:10, 26, 32). But, although Saul protested; that David was unfit to fight a trained soldier, David was so insistent that Saul consented to his meeting the enemy and "armed David with his armour." The younger man, however, refused to wear these trappings, saying he would fight the Philistine in his own way and, taking a bag of stones and a sling, he ran to meet the Philistine and smote him on the forehead, so that he sank to the ground, "Therefore David

ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath, and slew him, ... and the children of Israel returned from chasing after the Philistines and spoiled (plundered) their tents (vv. 51-

53). So it came to pass that the Philistines were defeated, not with a vast army of well-trained soldiers, but by a mere boy with a sling and a stone, who went forth in the fear of the Lord. Notice this stone. It is one of God's "little things," which plays an important part in the story of the Kingdom.

These are a few of the instances in the Old Testament which relate the significance of the "little things" which changed the whole course of the history of God's people Israel. It is a profitable exercise to take note of these "little things," so let us con-

sider the parallels in the life of our Lord and see whether the Old Testament instances already mentioned were symbols of the Redemption of Israel.

### The Stone Again

We have seen how David's opponent disdained the youth who came to



DAVID COMBATING GOLIATH

By D. G. Rossetti

him with a sling and a stone, but he paid dearly for his contempt.

Jesus, Who the Pharisees admitted to be the Son of David (Matt. 22:42), was talking to the priests and elders in the temple, who were trying to entangle Him in His talk. After telling them the parable of the wicked husbandmen, He declared: *"Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner; this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?"* (Matt. 21:42). He went on, probably after a short pause, to watch the effect of His words, *"Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."*

So the Jews also paid the price of rejecting the Stone.

### The Pitcher

And now we return to the pitcher. It was the night of the Passover and the disciples asked the Master, *"Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the Passover?"* *"Go ye into the city,"* commanded Jesus of two of them, *"and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water; follow him"* (Mark 14:12-13).

A pitcher of water! What an everyday occurrence in Palestine, and yet what significance did this particular pitcher represent. Notice, Jesus told His disciples to look for a man bearing a

pitcher, although this was a task usually allotted to a woman. It would certainly seem to have been a prearranged signal. *"And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them; and they made ready the Passover"* (v. 16).

### The Nail

Another of God's "little things" was the nail. We have seen how this practically worthless article was used by a woman to secure a victory for her country. How much more, then, does the nail signify to every Christian? Without its use there could not have been any Crucifixion for the nail was essential in the hands of the soldiers to perform their cruel task.

When the Crucifixion was over and the Lord was risen, He appeared the same evening to His assembled disciples and showed them His hands and His side. One of the disciples, Thomas, was not present at the time and, on being told of the appearance of the Risen Lord, he refused to believe unless he saw His hands and His side. *"And after eight days, again his disciples were within (inside), and Thomas with them; {then} came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace {be} unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach here thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach here thy hand, and thrust {it} into my side; and be not faithless, but believing"* (John 20:26-27).

Is it not a sober thought that such a common, everyday object should play



so important a part, not only in the conviction of one man, but in the redemption of Israel and the whole world?

### The Coat

*"Who {is} this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This {that is} glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save" (Isa. 63:1). Thus did Isaiah prophesy. "Then the souldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also {his} coat. Now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said, therefore, among themselves, Let us not rend (tear) it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be; that the Scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture did they cast lots" (John 19:23-24).*

It is more than probable that the soldiers standing at the foot of the Cross viewed this coat with envy, for they considered it too valuable a garment to be thrown aside and decided to cast lots for it. Was this a coat of many colours such as had been worn by Joseph? This particular type of apparel was the recognised symbol of royalty, therefore it is not hard to understand the jealousy of Jacob's elder sons, nor the reason Jesus' garment was coveted by the soldiers who had driven the nails into the hands of its owner.

### The Tree

So the story ends, as it began, with a tree! Is it too fanciful to suppose that the wood used for the Cross was the same as that of the tree from which Eve was tempted to pluck the forbidden fruit the tree of knowledge of good and evil, or the tree of life — life from the dead?

Now we come to an amazing thing. Our Lord Jesus Christ refers to the reptile. *"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up" (John 3:14). "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all {men} unto me" (John 12:32).* This is the glorious conclusion of the whole matter. So we see how God's "little things" are turned to His praise.

### The Last Little Thing

Although those of us who take heed to these things are conscious of a worsening situation as the days go by, let us not despair for the Supreme Creator has His Hands on the pulse of the nations and, while the Lord's people seem to be far outnumbered, He can save by many or by few, as we have tried to demonstrate in this article, and our extremity is God's opportunity. *"Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16).*

Courtesy: National Message



# Survival – Prepare 4 Y2K

*"I advocate planning and preparedness in the event year 2000 related disruptions occur ... Regardless of whether the Y2K problem is **hype** or **disaster**, we can and should take steps to protect our neighbours, our friends, families, and ourselves. Only time will determine the outcome."*

Subscriber

## Are You Prepared For Y2K? — I am!

Maybe the Y2K problem is new to you maybe it is not. In any case, you should at the very least make a few preparations for what might be a large disaster — or might be only an inconvenience.

If it might be only an inconvenience, then why bother? If you're thinking this way, you have it backward. Preparing for Y2K is disaster preparedness: you work back from possible outcomes that you want to be prepared for and go from there. After all, you buy home-owner's insurance, don't you? You buy automobile liability insurance, right? Yet the outcomes you are preparing for in those cases are actually far less likely than some of the Y2K problems you may encounter.

There is no question now that there will be consequences of Y2K. The government is not in good shape, small business has barely started, many other countries have hardly begun (including Japan, the world's second largest economy), and the "iron triangle" industries — electric power, telecommunications, and banking — cannot guarantee that their services will be 100% ready.

They all have started too late, and there is simply not enough time left to get all the computer code fixed.

So how bad will it be? No one knows exactly, no one can know because the problem is so "distributed." It is like a shower of millions of tiny meteorites rather than a comet headed toward Earth.

Only fools will say "*Oh, it can't be that bad.*" Actually, *it can be that bad*, though it is not certain. I've watched Y2K for more than two years, and while some of the news has been good, some has not. You will hear good news because the majority of date-sensitive code will be fixed. Don't let it lull you into thinking everything will be okay. Somewhere between 10% and 25% of the code that needs fixing isn't going to get fixed in time, and much code that does get fixed isn't going to be properly tested. And it looks like the government and the media are doing their best to keep this out of the headlines.

Smart people won't wait for more evidence. They will decide to make some preparations now, not next month



when general panic might set in. So don't panic. Just decide what you are going to do and do it. By acting now there will be one less person to panic later.

**REMEMBER:** In a nutshell, the Y2K problem is the problem of not knowing just how **BIG** the problem is going to be!! ... So, prepare for the worst and hope for the best!

### Good Luck With Your Preparations



## In Flanders Fields

By - John McCrae

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,  
In Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.*

"In Flanders Fields" appearing anonymously in *Punch* on December 8, 1915. It caught the mood of dedication and determination which a few English soldier-poets,

notably Rupert Brooke and Herbert Asquith, had expressed in the first years of the Great War and became after Brooke's "1914" the most famous of all British poems of patriotism and sacrifice.

John McCrae was born in 1872 in Guelph, Ontario, and was educated at the University of Toronto, where he had a distinguished career in general science and later in medicine. He was attached to the staff of McGill University and the Royal Victoria Hospital, Montreal. World War I broke out, he joined the Royal Army Medical Corps and proceeded overseas. He served with great distinction in France until his death from pneumonia in January, 1918.

In the same year the poet's friend, Sir Andrew MacPhail, edited a selection of McCrae's verses with a "Memoir."



# Controversial – “Why I Do Not Believe In The Trinity Tradition”

(Part 1 of 2)

R. Gibbons  
(Subscriber)

Although brought up to accept the trinity tradition without questioning it, a time came many years ago when I began to study the subject of the Godhead, this I did by comparing a host of Scripture verses together. These Bible verses convinced me of the **oneness** of God. I present reasons for this belief.

## First Fact

Because Trinitarians constantly insist that “God is three persons,” whereas neither such a term as “*Trinity*” nor any statement that “God is three” ever occurs in the original text of Holy Scripture!

In contrast to this silence the Bible clearly and emphatically states that “God is One;” and says it at least ten times! See Deut. 6:4; Mal. 2:10; Matt. 23:8-10; Mark 12:29, 32; Rom. 3:30; 1 Cor. 8:4, 6; 1 Tim. 2:5; James 2:19.

## Second Fact

If “God is a Spirit” as we are plainly told in John 4:24, and if, as Trinitarians maintain, God were three persons, then logically He would have to be three Spirits! But God’s word says “There is One Spirit” Eph. 4:4.

Remembering that God’s Spirit is **omnipresent** as we are told in Eph. 4:6; Jer. 23:24; Isa. 57:15 and Psalms 139:7-10, there is therefore NO NEED for other spirits in the Godhead to carry out special roles.

Trinitarians say the Holy Spirit is the One Person of the Godhead dwelling within Christians.

However, we read in Eph. 4:6 that “The father” is within us. Of course, to be honest, “The Holy Spirit” is just another title for God our Father. In fact, the Holy Spirit was actually the Father of the infant Jesus according to Luke 1:35. Trinitarians would therefore logically need to believe in Jesus, as Son of God, having **two fathers** in the Godhead!

## Third Fact

Please note that “The Father,” “The Son” and “The Holy Spirit” are **titles** not names. God’s name is “Yahweh” Isa. 42:8. Titles such as “father” and “son” can be and are applied to humans; but the sacred name of “Yahweh” must never be desecrated by misapplication to created beings. The “Holy Spirit” is a descriptive title, usually indicating His active presence among us.



So, the third fact we can consider is that all three titles, (or so-called "persons"), are so often used and applied to God performing the same identical

work, and therefore rules out any need to require three persons.

For example see Table A below:

**Table A**

**1. Who resides in the believer?**

(Title) The Father ... Eph. 4:6 and 3:19

(Title) Christ ... Rom. 8:9; Gal. 4:6; Col. 1:27

(Title) The Holy Spirit ... Act 2:38-39; Rom. 5:5 and 8:9

**2. Who spoke through the Old Testament prophets?**

(Title) The Father ... Heb. 1:1-2

(Title) The Holy Spirit ... 2 Peter 1:21

(Title) The Spirit of Christ ... 1 Peter 1:10-11

**3. Who gives the disciples the right words to say?**

(Title) The Father ... Mat. 10:20

(Title) The Holy Spirit ... Mark 13:11; Luke 12:12

(Name) Jesus Himself ... Luke 21:14-15

**4. Who sanctifies the believer?**

(Name) Yahweh ... Ex. 31:13

(Title) The Father ... John 10:36 and 17:17

(Title) The Holy Spirit ... Rom. 15:16

(Name/Title) Jesus Christ ... Eph. 5:26; Heb. 13:12

**5. Who raised Jesus from the dead?**

(Title) The Father ... Rom. 6:4; Gal. 1:1

(Title) The Holy Spirit ... 1 Peter 3:18

(Name) Jesus Himself! ... John 2:19-21; 10:17-18

Note this truly amazing claim by Jesus, in the last point from the Table "... I lay down my life so that I may take it up again. No man takes it away from Me, but I lay it down of My own will. Therefore I

have the power to lay it down, and I have the power to take it up again ..." What man could possibly raise himself up after he died? This is because Jesus was the Creator/Life-Giver veiled in flesh.

He made the staggering claim in John Chapter 11, verse 25, "... I am the resurrection and the life ..."

### **Forth Fact — The Term "Elohim"**

Trinitarians claim that the word "Elohim," (pronounced "eloeem"), which is one of the many Hebrew words translated "God," because it is a plural term must indicate three persons in the Godhead. Now if this is so, why didn't the Israelites realise this? This language is Hebrew, written to Hebrews. If indeed they understood that it referred to a ONE PERSON GOD in spite of its plurally, where then is the proof for three persons?

Let us be logical in this matter; surrounded as they were by polytheistic neighbour nations, God emphasised His oneness to Israel. "Hear, O Israel, the Lord your God is one Lord."

Is the word "elohim" a plural term? Yes and no. It is what is known as a "uni-plural" word. We have in English a uni-plural word in "sheep." We say "one sheep, two sheep or many sheep" — never "sheeps." The same word serves for both singular and plural. We understand by the context whether singular or plural is meant, eg, "Among the gods" (elohim). "Thou {art} God alone" (Elohim), Ps. 86:8, 10.

It would be a sensible and honest way to study if we take notice exactly how the word "elohim" is actually applied in the Bible. Following this up we find some big surprises.

### **Firstly**

This word "elohim" was directly applied to pagan deities!

"Baalzebub the god (elohim) of Ekron," 2 Kings 1:2-3, 6, 16.

"Nisroch his god (elohim) ..."

2 Kings 19:37

"Ashtoreth the goddess (elohim) ..."

1 Kings 11:33

"Chemosh the god (elohim) ..."

1 Kings 11:33

"Milcom the god (elohim) ..."

1 Kings 11:33

"Dagon their god (elohim) ..."

Judges 16:23-24

"Baal-berith their god (elohim) ..."

Judges 8:33

Two questions should be asked Trinitarians: were all these heathen gods trinities? Why wasn't the singular Hebrew term for god, "el," applied to them?

### **Secondly**

"Elohim" is translated "angles" in Ps. 8:5!

### **Thirdly**

To go even further we find the word "elohim" is not confined to deities, either genuine nor false, but is even applied to humans as divinely appointed rulers.

Moses was made a god to Pharaoh. "And the Lord (Yahweh) said unto Moses, "See, I have made thee a god (elohim) to Pharaoh ..." Exo. 7:1.



Judges of Israel were also *elohim*. "Then his master shall bring him unto the judges (*elohim*) ..." Exo. 21:6. "... brought unto the judges (*elohim*) ..." Exo. 22:8 "... shall come before the judges (*elohim*) ..." verse 9. "Thou shalt not revile the gods, (*elohim*) nor curse the ruler of thy people" verse 28.

Verse 25 of 1 Sam. 2 is quite significant: "If one man sin against another, the judge (*elohim*) shall judge him: ('Judge' is a singular verb here); but if a man sin against the Lord, (Yahweh), who shall intreat (mediate) for him?" However, there are various translations of this verse.

Trinitarian logic would indicate that these various pagan gods were all trinities, and angels, Moses and the judges were in each case triplets!

#### **Fifth Fact — ONLY BEGOTTEN SON**

"Eternal Son" as a title, is a Trinitarian invention — meaning well of course — but nowhere in Scripture can be found this title. However, HE WHO WAS ETERNAL actually BECAME the Son of God. According to Isa. 9:6 He was the Everlasting Father or Father of Eternity and became the Son of God during history: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, ..." It was Yahweh, the Creator who became the Son of God, begotten at a point in time. The Holy Spirit said, "Thou art MY Son, *this day* have I begotten Thee," Heb. 1:5. Begotten in time you see.

Also, by the very nature of things, a father must needs be **older than his son**.

Who was speaking here? It must have been the Holy Spirit, for according to Luke 1:35 it is clearly stated the Holy Spirit caused Mary to conceive; and "therefore also that Holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." So the Holy Spirit was indeed "The Father" to the physical, human infant Jesus, **THE ONLY ONE WHOLLY BEGOTTEN OF GOD**, absolutely unique.

We are of course, **spiritually** begotten of God, but Jesus was the **ONLY** one physically begotten by God. We all, by contrast, are begotten physically by **human** fathers. The exception of course included those originally created beings such as Adam and Eve.

In order for the creator and Covenant Lord to fulfil His role in time and history as the promised "Seed of the woman," as kinsman-redeemer and saviour, He had to become human flesh of Abraham's and of David's line. The "Eternal Father" of the race had to become "The Only Begotten Son" in order to carry out His saving plan and keep His covenant promises so frequently given throughout the Old Testament.

Make <sup>no</sup> mistake about it, the vital role of sonship does require a tremendously contrasting duality in the Godhead! In order to harmonise all the Scriptures this duality is not a feature of two different persons, but a mind-boggling contrast between two dimen-

sions and two simultaneous roles: God and man.

We need to keep reminding ourselves of the first three verses of John's Gospel which are a key to our understanding. Our well-known K.J.V. states, *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made."* Obviously this tells us that "The Word," a title, (one of many Bible titles), is the very person of the creator, who is God and Father of all things. *"Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us?"* (Mal 2:10).

Now, in contrast to His Person, "The Word," the title "God" as used in these verses must by simple logic refer to His omnipresent Spirit. *"God is a spirit ..."* (John 4:24). We do believe in the literal omnipresence of God's Spirit: see Jer. 23:24; Isa. 57:15; Eph. 4:6; Psalms 90:1; Acts 17:28; Rom. 11:36; Col. 1:16-17, 27. His Spirit fills, sustains, controls all things throughout the entirety of creation, the entire macrocosm and, of course, the microcosm.

Nearly all translations of the New Testament are from Greek manuscripts. Let us read the meticulous translation called the "Concordant Literal": *In the beginning was the word, and the word was toward God, and God was the Word. This was in the beginning toward God. All came into being through it, and apart from it not even one thing came into being which has come into being."*

Now to compare the above with the "Lamsa Bible" translation from the original eastern manuscripts which were written in Aramaic: *"The Word was in the beginning, and that very Word was with God, and God was that Word. The same was in the beginning with God. Everything came to be by his hand; and without him not even one thing that was created came to be."*

This wonderful revelation of our Creator gives us a glimpse of the pre-existence of the man, Christ Jesus when He was the Father, the Almighty, before He became the human son, begotten by His own Holy Spirit.

Along with those three verses quoted above we must include verse 14: *"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw his glory, a glory like that of the firstborn of the Father, full of grace and truth"* (Lamsa).

### Melchisedek — The Sixth Fact

Please refer to my Bible Study, "Who Was Melchisedek?" on page 14. What was presented in that study and what we are considering in this article harmoniously fit together. The study of Melchisedek, as we saw, eliminates the Trinitarian doctrine of "Eternal Son" with its various traditional interpretations, and clearly confirms the fact that the Everlasting Father became the Only Begotten Son at a point in time in order to be subject to death as the one supreme sacrifice for the sins of the world. The priest became the sacrifice! For your reconsideration please refer to



the Table on page 19 for the list of comparisons between MELCHISEDEK and JESUS CHRIST.

### Seventh Fact

In the New Testament, particularly in the gospels we find a lot of apparent

contradictions or puzzling contrasts which are easily explained if we realise that our wonderful Messiah was truly unique, having two very contrasting natures. He was both human and divine; He was truly a man and He was and still is truly God.

Consider then Tables B & C:

<b>Table B</b> <b>The Dual Nature of Jesus Christ</b>	
<b>Truly Man</b>	<b>Truly God</b>
<p>Jesus was the Son, Isa. 9:6</p> <p>Jesus was a man, John 8:40</p> <p>Jesus was not yet 50, John 8:57</p> <p>Jesus was a baby, Luke 2:16</p> <p>Jesus prayed, Luke 22:41.</p> <p>Jesus was on earth, Mark 2:10.</p> <p>Jesus was weak &amp; weary, John 4:6, and 2 Cor. 13:4.</p> <p>Jesus learned &amp; knew not, Mark 13:32, and Heb. 5:8.</p> <p>Jesus lost by His parents, Luke 2:43.</p> <p>Jesus was born &amp; died, Luke 1:35, Mark 15:39.</p> <p>"A child is born, a son is given," Isa. 9:6.</p> <p>"... And Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." John 17:3, 1 John 5:20.</p>	<p>Jesus was the Father, Isa. 9:6.</p> <p>Jesus is God, John 20:28.</p> <p>Jesus is the Eternal, Micah 5:2.</p> <p>Jesus is the Mighty God, Isa. 9:6.</p> <p>Jesus answers prayer, John 14:14.</p> <p>Jesus was also in heaven, John 1:18, 3:13.</p> <p>Jesus is the Almighty, Rev. 1:8 and Omnipotent, Rev. 19:6.</p> <p>Jesus is Omniscient, John 21:17, Col. 2:3, Heb. 4:12-13.</p> <p>Jesus is Omnipresent, Matt. 28:20, Eph. 4:10, Col. 1:16-17, 27.</p> <p>The Everliving, First &amp; Last, Rev. 1:8, 11- 12, 17-18.</p> <p>"The Mighty God, the Everlasting Father"</p> <p>"This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the Only True God ..."</p>

Table C

## JESUS

Truly Human Conscious	Truly God Conscious
<p><i>"My Father is greater than I" (John 14:28), ie, the Holy Spirit is greater than the Son, eg, Luke 1:35.</i></p> <p><i>"I do know Him and obey His word."</i></p> <p><i>"My Father has never left me alone, because I always do what pleases Him" John 8:55, 29.</i></p> <p><i>"The Father that dwelleth in me (The Holy Spirit) He doeth the works," John 14:10.</i></p> <p><i>"I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever" John 14:16, 26.</i></p> <p>Who then is this comforter? See Phil. 1:19 for the answer.</p>	<p><i>"I and the Father are One," John 10:30.</i></p> <p><i>"He who has seen Me has seen the father," John 14:9.</i></p> <p><i>"Who ever sees Me sees Him who sent Me," John 12:45.</i></p> <p><i>(Because the Word — Creator/Eternal Father — "Became flesh," John 1:14.)</i></p> <p><i>"Before Abraham was, I AM" John 8:58.</i></p> <p><i>"Abraham rejoiced to see My day; and he saw {it}, and was glad" John 8:56 with Gen 18.</i></p> <p>Jesus returns as the Holy Spirit:</p> <p><i>"I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you" John 14:18, 28.</i></p> <p><i>"I am with you always, {even} unto the end of the age" Matt. 28:20.</i></p> <p>Therefore His Spirit is omnipresent.</p>

(In the next and final part of this article Mr. Gibbons will examine such things as: The name used in baptism; Did elohim become Jesus?; Trinitarianism in history, and many other revealing aspects of this important subjects — Ed.)



### Golden Rule

The expression "golden rule" does not appear in the Bible nor do the words "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" — not in this exact form. The thought is there, of course, as in Luke 6:31: *"And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them."* It should also be pointed out that this is not exclusively a New Testament thought. It is also in the Old Testament: *"... thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Lev. 19:18).*





# Conspiracy Tracker – Another Step Closer To One World Government Announced In 1998

Selected

Following the 1998 Bilderberger secret world conference, certain world organisations have been mobilised to take the next step toward a One-World Government. Recently, it was the World Trade Organisation's turn.

Renato Ruggiero, Director-General of the World Trade Organisation [WTO], announced at a Paris press conference that, *"We are drafting the constitution of a single global economy."* With that announcement, Ruggiero unveiled the Multilateral Agreement on Investments [MAI], which has been under development secretly since 1995 by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD].

In an article titled, *"World Economic 'Constitution' Drafted"* by reporter James P. Tucker in the Mar. 9, 1998 issue of Spotlight newspaper, this new economic constitution *"would govern virtually every kind of business transaction, from buying land to sweeping buildings."*

The article goes on to say, *"Among other provisions, the MAI would require nations to drop (their) preferences for domestic companies and would establish a panel to rule on complaints by corporations of unfair government treatment."*

In other words, on matters of a nation's economy that could affect the so-called global community, all matters will be handled by international tribunal rather than sovereignty within each nation.

How's that for "global boldness"? As usual, there is historical precedence in all this. In early May 1976, the "Houston Chronicle" reported that then-Secretary of State Henry Kissinger had successfully mentored a UN resolution known as "The New International Economic Order" [NIEO].

In announcing the shift toward a global economy, Kissinger noted that *"all nations can now participate"* in a common world monetary system.

The Preamble to the NIEO, which helped set the stage for the more recent WTO constitution, states: *"We, the Members of the United Nations, solemnly proclaim our united determination to work urgently for the Establishment of a New International Economic Order based on equity, sovereign equality, interdependence, common interest and co-operation among all States, irrespective of their economic and social systems."*

Speaking before the international press at the time, then-British Ambassador to the United Nations, Ivor Richardson, predicted, *"This assembly will, in later years, be seen as a turning point. Things will never be the same again."*

With the announcement of a "constitution of a single global economy" by the WTO's Director-General, Ambassador Richardson's warning carries a cold chill.



# Petra City of the Nabataeans

J. Simms

Many travellers visiting the Holy Land during the period of the division of the land between Israel and Jordan have had the added thrill of a visit to the rose-red cliffs of Petra, situated towards the south in Jordan about sixteen miles to the north-west of Maan.

Travelling in fast cars down the ancient Kings' Highway, and reaching a set point in the rocky countryside in about four hours, it is difficult to realise that the journey from Jerusalem is as much as 250 miles. Petra was only rediscovered for the Western world in 1820 by a Swiss traveller, Jean Louis Burckhardt, but, by the 1960's, archaeologists and scholars had discovered much of its history.

## A Narrow Gorge

The area is usually approached this way from the East and it is usual to change to horseback and ride through a narrow gorge called the Sik or, more correctly, *Wadi es Sik*, one and a quarter miles long. The track is rough and stony and mostly downhill, but the horses amble gently along, each one led by an Arab. On either side high, precipitous cliffs cast gloomy shadows, until a break in the gorge affords a staggering and beautiful sight. Ahead the sandstone cliff looks a brilliant red in the sunlight, and carved out of the cliff face are Corinthian-type pillars and

cornices. It is the Nabataean rock-cut temple of *El Khazneh*.

This is the first stop, but the track winds on between the cliffs, in which can now be seen rectangular dwellings carved out of the rock. The cliffs fall away on either side to give views of more magnificent buildings of all kinds carved out of the rock remains of what were once temples, houses, shops and tombs. Many have beautiful rounded pillars at the entrances of the type we associate with Greek architecture.

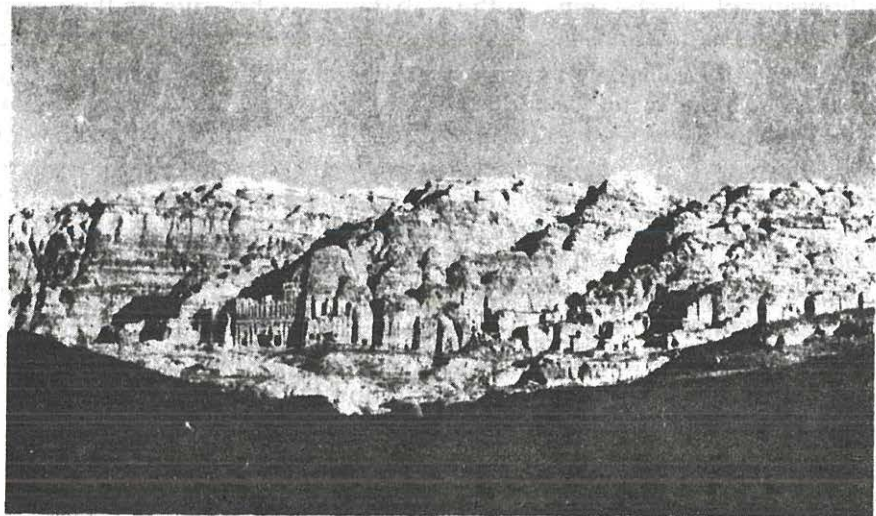
This, then, was the ancient City of Petra, capital city of Nabataea at the time of the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, the seat of kings and a great emporium and store-house situated where important trade routes crossed.

The whole of the great valley is enclosed by sandstone cliffs which, although they look a brilliant rose-red in strong sunshine, are actually veined with every shade of red and purple to pale yellow and eroded into fantastic shapes.

The valley which pierces the great rocky terrace from east to west is called the *Wadi es Musa*, or Valley of Moses, the eastern end being a traditional place where Moses struck the rock and water gushed forth.

Petra is not mentioned in the Bible under that name, nor are the people of the Nabataeans, but some of their history links up with Bible people. For instance, when the Apostle Paul was





*Petra – view showing tombs hewn out of rocks*

writing his second letter to the Corinthians, he described his escape from Damascus by being let down in a basket from a window, and refers to "the governor under Aretas the king" (2 Cor. 11:32-33). Aretas IV was the most famous king of Nabataea, which in his time stretched as far north as Damascus. His capital was Petra and his daughter, a princess of the Royal Household, was the wife deserted by Herod Antipas for Herodias. John the Baptist's execution was the result of his fearless denunciation of the illegal union between Herod Antipas and Herodias, his brother's wife (see Mark 6:17-28).

The Arab tradition (a late one) that Moses struck the rock near Petra does not agree with Biblical history. In the record of Numbers, chapter 20, when he struck the rock, the tabernacle of Israel was situated at Kadesh, away to the west of the deep

Arabah rift. The people were complaining of their lot and caused Moses to show his anger by striking the rock twice. What the rock was or where it is is not recorded. There is still a spring of water at the eastern end of the Petra

gorge with a strong perennial flow, which the inhabitants caught and contained in cisterns.

Another Arab belief that Mount Hor, where Aaron died, overlooks Petra in the west, does seem accurate. The high peaks of Jebel Harun are a place of special Moslem veneration, and Mount Hor was by the coast (or borders) of Edom (Num. 20:23-29). Long before the Nabataeans took over the land this area was Edomite territory.

### **"Selah" of the Bible**

Petra is now generally believed to be the *Selah* of 2 Kings 14, where Amaziah, King of Judah, slew ten thousand Edomites (descendants of Esau) in the valley of Salt and took *Selah* by war, renaming it Joktheel (v. 7). In the parallel record in 2 Chronicles, chapter 25, the children of

Judah took ten thousand of the children of Seir (Edomites) left alive and "cast them down from the top of the rock, that they were all broken in pieces" (vv. 11-12). So the prophecy of Obadiah concerning Edom had a partial fulfilment at that time:

*"The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation {is} high, who saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt {thyself} like the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence (from there) will I bring thee down, saith the LORD" (vv. 3-4).*

The war between Edom and Judah was some seven or eight centuries before the time of Jesus Christ, but only in one part of Petra has any Edomite settlement been found by the archaeologists and the beautiful carvings and excavated rock dwellings are Nabataean. Dr. Nelson Glueck, who has been described as "Scholar — Adventurer Rabbi," has been working on "digs," and writing of his finds since his first visit to the Holy Land in 1927, he states: "On top of the steep hill on *Umm-el-Biyarah* there, we found the remains of an Edomite fortress and pottery, contemporary with the Kingdom of Judah, terminating early in the sixth century B.C. I believe that this isolated fortress is to be identified with the Biblical site of *Sela*, that is, the Rock. Its Greek equivalent is Petra, as it has been called from Hellenistic times on.

### The Nabataeans

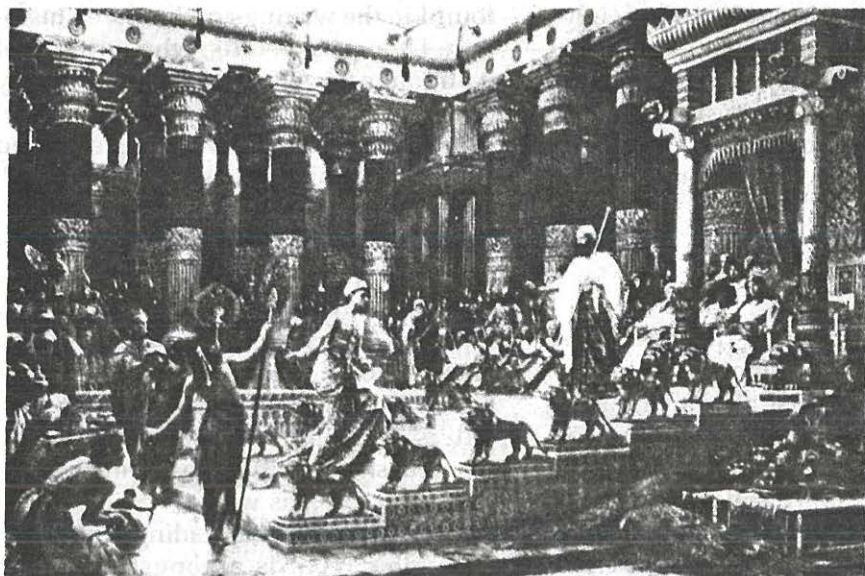
J. A. Thompson also, in his book, *The Bible and Archaeology*, writes: "Then came

the Nabataeans, who gave up their own Arabic tongue for Aramaic, as thousands of inscriptions show today, and slowly settled down to build towns and to live an urban life. Petra became their great centre and here they undertook the remarkable task of carving out homes and temples in the red sandstone of the valley. ... These structures are undoubtedly Nabataean. The only Edomite site in the area is on the hill behind Petra, where there is evidence of occupation in Edomite times" (p. 233).

The Nabataeans were Arabs and came from the desert areas of Arabia. In the past they must have had contact with the rich Arabian kingdoms of the south and, as their trade extended, so they travelled to many countries around the eastern end of the Mediterranean. Like the Ishmaelites, who at the time that young Joseph was sold by his brothers were carrying spice, balm and myrrh, and like the Queen of Sheba, who carried gold, spice and precious stones in her train to King Solomon from her own country, the Nabataeans developed a rich trade over a wide area.

Travelling the trade routes and meeting others of many nations, they were in a position to take advantage of the rise and fall of kingdoms. But, to quote Dr. Glueck, "for all their deployment across strategic trade routes between Arabia and the Fertile Crescent, the Nabataeans might never have gone beyond their semi-nomadic state and their carrier trade were it not for a chain of political events and circumstances that catapulted them into prominence and afforded them





THE QUEEN OF SHEBA'S VISIT TO KING SOLOMON.

*From a painting by Sir Edward J. Poynter, Bart., P.R.A.*

opportunities they were quick to exploit and expand. ... Seizing and settling themselves firmly as farmers as well as tradesmen in easily accessible lands that had been shorn of their defences through political upheavals, the Nabataeans fashioned in short time a unique kingdom and a culture of flashing distinction."

### **An Ancient Civilisation**

So, by the fourth century B.C., we find them occupying the land once held by Edom. The Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus, refers to their area as Nabatene and describes it as extending from the Euphrates to the Red Sea. Certainly, for nearly four centuries, they were a people to be reckoned with and from the second century B.C., until the Romans finally sub-

jugated them during the second century A.D., they lived and worked in a civilised way. They were literate, their own Aramaic script is always recognisable to the expert. They rebuilt the cisterns and conserved the water supplies, developing the finest agri-

culture of their times. They built temples which are now being discovered throughout their area in present-day Jordan.

While Herod the Great was building magnificent palaces in Judaea and Galilee, the Nabataeans were building on the same scale and vaster in the cities of the area to the east of the River Jordan. Above all, their artistic sense was unique. They copied and learned from the Greeks, but they added their own peculiar Orientalism, and so we find their carved columns and buildings beautifully symmetrical, figures and faces portrayed with a master's touch, a great love of colour and a sense of design. Fragments of pottery in their thousands show that their cups and bowls were made much more delicately and are more fragile than anything discovered in the days

of the Edomites or, indeed, in the neighbouring kingdom of Judah. One house carved from the rock in Petra is called "The Painted House." On its walls are designs of birds, beasts and flowers painted with great sensitivity and beauty of colouring.

### A Brilliant People

For a short period in time the Nabataeans were a brilliant people. They held their own against all comers until the Roman Empire subjugated the peoples of the Middle East, then slowly they lost their individuality and disappeared. "The nature of their achievements was forgotten, the character of their society and civilisation obscured, the brilliance and beauty of their works buried in the debris of the past" (*Deities and Dolphins*).

Like the Edomites of earlier days, they were a Semitic people but, unlike the Edomites, they had an unusual flair for carving, and an eye for colour and line.

There are those who see in their name a link with the first-born of Ishmael, Nebaioth, although Dr. Glueck opposes the idea as not sufficiently proven. But if this be true, it would make them descendants of Abraham's first grandson, a line not of the Covenant Seed of Isaac, but nevertheless first of the twelve princes promised for Ishmael, a promise which was given by God to Abraham.

In Isaiah, both Nebaioth and Kedar are to be given a place in the future kingdom.

The first certain record of these amazing people in secular history is to be

found in the writings of the Greek historian, Diodorus Siculus, who writes that Antigonus Cyclops dispatched an army under his friend, Athanaeus, "to the region of the Arabs who were called Nabataei." This Syrian expedition took place in 312 B.C.

They attacked and looted the rock and captured frankincense, myrrh and five hundred talents of silver, which the Nabataei later recovered, first sending a letter of protest to Antigonus Cyclops, their Greek adversary, at the attack "in Syriac letters." The letter was diplomatically worded, showing them to be emerging as a political force, as well as having an important and profitable trading centre.

Earlier records amongst Assyrian cuneiform texts refer to war being waged by Ashurbanipal, last of the great kings of Assyria (668-633 B.C.) against the Nabataeans of Arabia. Scholars are not yet agreed as to whether these people are actual predecessors of those who settled at Petra.

What is abundantly clear from the discoveries of the archaeologists is that the Nabataeans of the Petra era were part of the background history of our New Testament. By marriage, as well as trade and travel, they became part of the record. Herod the Great, himself, known to Scripture readers for his killing of the Baby Innocents, had a Nabataean mother by name Cypros. She is said to have stamped her beauty upon all the women of the family. He himself inherited her looks, her brilliance, her hospitality and her temper. He was, of course, an Idumean and not an Israelite.



Where are the Nabataeans today? The people living on their territory now are the Jordanian Arabs, but whether they are the true descendants is a mystery that may be solved by the searchers-after-

facts about the identity of races. They proudly claim descent from Abraham. Could it not be through Ishmael, Nebaioth and Nabataean?

*Courtesy: National Message*



### Why do small x's signify kisses?

Probably few persons sometime in their lives have not written letters in which they put several small crosses to signify kisses — "love and xxxx." Although there is no positive evidence on the subject, it is believed that the origin of this symbol dates back to the time when the cross-mark was equivalent to an oath. Signatures on wills, deeds and documents were followed by a cross, then in vogue as a general religious symbol. After having made the cross after his name the signer often would kiss it as a pledge of good faith and as an act of reverence. The gesture was comparable to putting the hand on a Bible or crucifix while taking an oath or attesting a statement. A person who could not write merely placed a cross — "his mark" — after his name written by another. It is not true, as often stated, that the use of the cross-mark after a signature was invariable evidence that the signer was illiterate. In Anglo-Saxon times in England the mark of the cross was required after the signatures of those who could write as well as after that of those who could not write. At any rate, it was customary to complete the transaction by kissing the cross-sign, and by this means the cross on paper became associated with the kiss. The X was the Greek abbreviation of *Christos* and already associated with the cross. One writer suggests that it was from motives of reverence that the shape of the cross used in marking one's mark on paper was that of the cross of St. Andrew, which resembles the letter X, and not that of the cross of Calvary. It is more probable, however, that the form of the cross used in signatures took no definite form at first. Soon after the outbreak of the second World War the British government issued regulations forbidding sailors to sign letters with the traditional "love and xxx" on the ground that these crosses might be used by spies for code messages. In 1942 American military censors forbade soldiers stationed abroad to use such symbols in letters to their people at home.



## Children's Corner -

***The Mice And The Weasels***

*This story for children seeks to make use of the valuable teaching material contained in some of the old stories and legends known as Aesop's Fables.*

A. &amp; T. Morrison

*"Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour {is} humility" (Proverbs 18:12).*

It is very good when girls and boys are able to do some important job-like helping the teacher at school or doing messages for their parents. We need people who can fill positions of responsibility and do the important tasks in the life of the school, the Church, or the home.

But, as well as learning to do important jobs, we must also learn to do them humbly. Sometimes we feel that because we are doing something important, then we must be of special importance ourselves, and we begin to get rather conceited. We forget that the importance belongs to the job and not to us, and once we get this high opinion of ourselves, we do not perform our job as well as before.

The really valuable people in the world are those who, while doing an important job, yet remain humble — not thinking of themselves, but of what they can do for other people by working well at their job.

One of Aesop's fables tells us of a war that was waged between an army of mice and an army of weasels. The battle was always fought quite near the mice's holes and when they felt that the weasels were

winning, they would quickly escape down the tiny doorways to their homes.

One day a large mouse said: "Proper armies have generals who wear splendid uniforms and large helmets with tall plumes in them." He puffed out his chest. "From now on we will have generals too; the leader of the generals will be myself."

The other mice agreed to this suggestion, and soon the largest mice were dressing themselves in smart new uniforms with swords, shields, and tremendous helmets with large plumes. They were very important. They spoke to each other in low voices and would not speak to the ordinary mice at all.

When the fanfare of trumpets announced the next battle, the generals marched proudly at the head of the mice. But after a few minutes' fighting it became evident that once again the mice would be defeated. As usual, the mice scampered swiftly back to their holes, but when the proud generals tried to get into the holes their swords, shields and plumed helmets made it quite impossible. As they struggled to get in, the weasels fell on them and triumphantly car-



ried them away. Their importance had proved their downfall.

In the Book of Proverbs it says: "Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility." We often say nowadays: "Pride comes before a fall." Jesus taught us too, that in God's Kingdom it is not the proud and haughty who are given first place, but those who are humble. When Jesus was asked who was greatest in the Kingdom

of Heaven, He took a little child and, setting him in the midst of them, said: "Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven."

Just as a little child depends for everything on his parents, so we must learn to accept our own weak and sinful state and trust our Heavenly Father — then we will be fitted to do some important task in the service of God's Kingdom.

## Bible Quiz

### What's in the Field?

Fields are abundant in Palestine, and often mentioned in the Bible. Frequently a field has something very important in it. Can you tell what is in the field by supplying the missing word?

1. "And he [Jacob] looked, and behold a \_\_\_\_\_ in the field. . . ."
2. "In the \_\_\_\_\_ that is in the field of Machpelah . . . which Abraham bought. . . ."
3. David's soldiers "found an \_\_\_\_\_ in the field" (near Besor).
4. A son of the prophets "went out into the field to gather \_\_\_\_\_, and found a wild vine. . . ."
5. "\_\_\_\_\_ springeth up as hemlock in the furrows of the field."
6. "And there were in the same country \_\_\_\_\_ abiding in the field. . . ."
7. "I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the \_\_\_\_\_ of the field. . . ."
8. "Consider the \_\_\_\_\_ of the field."
9. "The kingdom of heaven is like a \_\_\_\_\_ hidden in a field."
10. (Jesus) "went through the \_\_\_\_\_ fields on the sabbath day."

### Answers

1. well, Genesis 29:1-2
2. cave, Genesis 49:30
3. Egyptian, 1 Samuel 30:11
4. herbs, 2 Kings 4:39
5. judgment, Hosea 10:4
6. shepherds, Luke 2:8
7. hinds, Song of Solomon 2:7
8. lilies, Matthew 6:28
9. treasure, Matthew 13:44
10. corn, Mark 2:23



# John, the Untalented

L. Phillips

*"{Are} all workers of miracles?"*

(1 Corinthians 12:29).

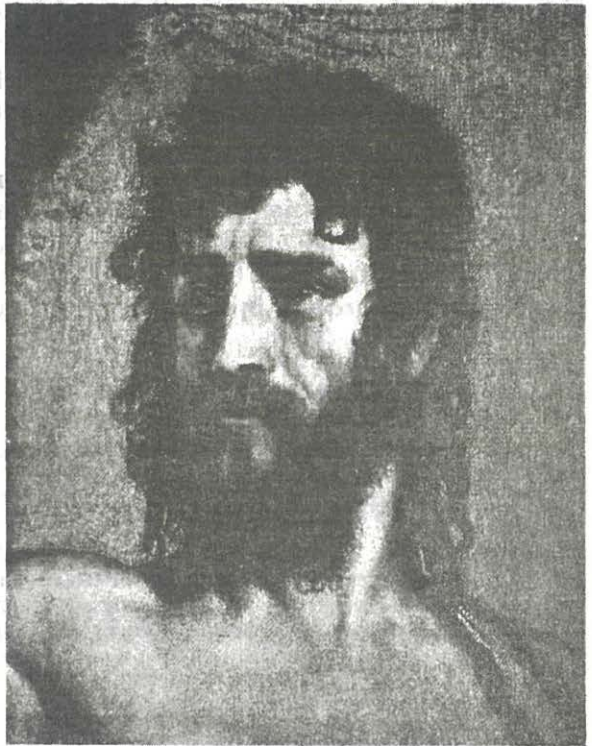
*"Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist"* (Matthew 11:11).

*"John did no miracle"* (John 10:41).

"Are all workers of miracles?" The obvious answer is *No*. For, on the authority of Jesus, here was the greatest "among them that are born of women," yet he "did no miracle."

This shall be the study of a great man (in our Lord's testimony) who was possessed of no particular talent, in the reckoning of men, for which assurance we may be profoundly thankful and encouraged. We are so apt in our reading of Scripture and, too, of history, to become arrested by those of outstanding importance and attainment and to become discouraged by the thought of our own insignificance; like the one-talented man of our Lord's parable we fail to use what gift we have, being envious of those to whom are given two or five, failing to remember that to every man is given "according to his several ability."

John, with whom we are concerned, has prominent mention in the Gospel



records. Jesus said of him: *"Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist"* (Matt. 11:11) and we know, from both Matthew and Luke, that great popularity attended his preaching: *"Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan"* (Matt. 3:5); *"multitudes that came forth to be baptised by him"* (Luke 3:7), yet of that same man it is recorded that whilst "all things that John spoke of this man [Jesus] were true," it is also said that *"John did no miracle"* (John 10:41).



## Message for the Average Person

This is a message for the average person, who abounds on every hand. The one who does no miracle and; like Tabitha (or Dorcas — Acts 9:36) is "full of good works and almsdeeds," may be without any outstanding gift or many talents. For every talented man or woman, or outstanding personality of many entrustments, there are thousands of very ordinary individuals with no special powers, who make no headlines, and who, apart from their limited circle of acquaintances, awaken no popular interest.

There are those who never take up the pen without giving to the world some profound thought or helpful contribution that will be remembered long after they have passed from our midst; there are others with voices of imperishable worth, which will be recorded as worthy of transmission, but the average person is different from such as these. He or she is just "faithful in that which is least" in the world's reckoning; to whom one day is as those that have gone before, and for whom today's task will be much as those which will await them on the morrow.

It is good for such unendowed ones to know that, for the most part, countless people do no miracle, whilst John the Baptist, great preacher as he was, to whom was entrusted the honour of heralding the Messiah, was no miracle worker but was just the voice of one crying in the wilderness.

Apart from the prophetic announcements of a forerunner to the promised

Messiah, very little is told us in the Scriptures of this man, whom Jesus declared to be the greatest "among them that are born of women." Consequently, few words suffice the Bible Commentators in introducing him, whom one has described as "the Elijah of the New Testament."

John Eadie D.D., LL.D., in *A Biblical Cyclopaedia* states: "John the Baptist — a prophet, and the forerunner of our Saviour — the Elias of the New Testament. He was the son of Zacharias, the aged priest, and Elizabeth (Luke 1:13) and was born about six months before Christ. His birth and work were predicted by the Angel Gabriel (Luke 1:5, 15), by Isaiah (Isa. 40:3).

"He grew up in solitude and, when about thirty years of age, began to preach in the wilderness of Judaea, and to call the people to repentance and reformation. By Divine direction he baptised with the baptism of repentance all who came unto him confessing their sins (Luke 3:3) and many supposed he might be "the Christ" (John 1:19-28).

"His manner of life was solitary and austere, for he seems to have shunned the habitations of men, and to have subsisted on locusts and wild honey, while his dress was made of the coarse hair of camels, and a leather girdle was about his loins. John moreover announced the near approach of the Messiah's Kingdom, called the Kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 3:2). Multitudes flocked to hear him and to be baptised of him from every part of the land."

The Universal Bible Dictionary says further: "Of the early life of John the Baptist we learn no more than that he 'grew, and waxed (became) strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel' (Luke 1:80). Thus, while consecrated to the office of preacher and teacher before his birth (Luke 1:13-17), John did not enter upon it until ripe manhood, and after spending several years in solitude and self-denial."

Beyond these brief statements there is nothing further recorded apart from his preaching and ministry in the wilderness.

But, although little is told us, much is implied, both in the several prophecies relating to him, and from the fact of our Lord's remarkable tribute to his greatness among men. For one, of whom Jesus declared that "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist," there must be certain definite facts relating to his character, calling and service that are worthy of study.

### Advent and Commission

First, then, we may note his Advent and Commission. St. John the Evangelist states: "There was a man sent from God, whose name {was} John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all {men} through him might believe" (John 1:6-7). What greater honour could come to a mortal creature than to be purposed (even before birth — Luke 1:1-17), sent into the world, and commissioned to announce the

greatest event ever proclaimed to mankind, and to set before them the most wondrous privilege of acceptance of Him, Whom all prophecy foretold and had now been manifested.

"Behold," the Lord had declared, through the prophet Malachi, "I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me" (3:1), (see also Matt. 11:10; Luke 7:27). The fulfilment of that forecast was revealed to Zacharias by Gabriel, the angel of the Lord (Luke 1:13-17) and, later on, the birth of the child having been accomplished, he was attested by his father, being "filled with the Holy Ghost," as being indeed the miraculous child of promise (vv. 76-79).

### John's Preaching

Then there was his preaching. "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea" (Matt. 3:1). "Having reached the age of thirty years," writes Dr. David Smith in *The Days of His Flesh*, "the word of God came unto John as it had come to the ancient prophets, and he must needs utter the thoughts which glowed within him, as a burning fire shut up in his bones. The Lord God hath spoken: who can but prophesy."

"The fame of his preaching quickly attracted curious and ever-increasing crowds and ere long Bethany beyond Jordan was the scene of a mighty revival. It was indeed a striking coincidence that, just where Israel of old had entered the Land of Promise, the door of the Kingdom of Heaven should, in those last days, be opened."



"John did no miracle" but he fulfilled his mission and announced the Advent of the promised Messiah "Who," says Bishop Home, "was the One sent from God, as the Lamb, ordained as the expiatory Sacrifice, as the grand Atonement for the sin of mankind foretold by the prophet Isaiah (ch. 53), as applied by our Lord to Himself (Luke 22:37); and by the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:32), for He was the true Paschal Lamb, typified in the mysterious institution of the Passover, who was to be 'slain from the foundation of the world' (1 Pet. 1:20; Rev. 13:8)."

Although he was not given power to work miracles, as were others who were later set "in the church" (1 Cor. 12:28), he was faithful to his calling as a "prophet," and who can estimate the miracles of changed lives and convictions that resulted from his preaching? St. John relates, as a first consequence, the turning to Jesus of two of His own disciples who, in turn, brought to Him others. The record states, *"Again the next day John stood, and two of his disciples; and looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. ... One of the two who heard John {speak} and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ, and he brought him to Jesus"* (John 1:35-42).

Continuing the record, we find that from that first introduction the company of our Lord's followers grew and increased in service as the news of His

Advent was broadcast. *"The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. ... Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph"* (vv. 43-45).

Thus did the world-affecting ministry of Jesus Christ begin; a truly wondrous ministry of grace, by which miracles of healing have been wrought throughout the centuries. Lives have been changed by the teachings of Jesus and, later, by His disciples and Apostles, as His Word has gone forth to the nations, and is still being broadcast throughout the world.

### A Preacher of Righteousness

Truly, John was no miracle-worker, as is generally understood by the term but, since that first announcement, "Behold the Lamb of God!" countless millions have looked to Christ, and lived. He was a preacher of righteousness, "filled with the Holy Ghost," that "many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God," going "before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Luke 1:15-17). No man can be entrusted with such a commission, faithfully fulfil it, and be of no account to his generation.

We know that all classes flocked to hear and see him: Pharisees, Sadducees and soldiers from every quarter of Jeru-

saalem, all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan (Matt. 3:5). As they listened to his commanding voice, denouncing their sins, warning of the approaching Kingdom of Heaven, and calling them to repentance, they must have departed greatly affected by his faithful delivery.

### **Rebuke for False Leaders**

With what concern and resentment must they have listened to his preaching for, *"when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet (befitting) for repentance"* (Matt. 3:7-8).

How needful a rebuke for those self-styled false leaders of religion. Well might the prophet Micah denounce in like manner such hypocrites as were in his day being *"full of power by the spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression and to Israel his sin"* when he cried, *"Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel, that abhor judgment, and pervert all equity. They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. Her heads judge for reward, and her priests teach for hire, and her prophets divine for money; yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, {Is} not the Lord among us? No evil can come upon us"* (Micah 3:8-11).

What hypocrisy! What taking of the Holy Name and attributes of Almighty God in vain! What impudent claiming of His acceptance!

Well did Dr. Parker (The People's Bible) write: "Men have been extortionate, they have oppressed the poor, and overreached the weak, and then given a tenth of the profits to the building of the walls of Jerusalem.

"The Lord will not accept such offerings. Men will serve the devil with both hands, and then bring an offering to God's temple. Burn it: there is a vulgarity that feeds its piety by bringing unconsecrated offerings to the Lord's service. The work of the Sanctuary must be built with honest stone, and laid with honest hands."

### **Beloved of the People**

The people, too, came to John enquiring, *"What shall we do then? He answered and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat (food), let him do likewise. Then came also publicans (tax collectors) to be baptised, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you. And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse {any} falsely; and be content with your wages"* (Luke 3:10-14).

Religious leaders, tax collectors, soldiers and the average person in the street: John was not content with calling one class to repentance but all Israelites, neither is God in His dealings with sinful Israel: *"Hear ye this, O priests; and hearken, ye house of Israel; and give ye ear, O house of the king; for judg-*



ment {is} toward you. ... I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hidden from me; for now, O Ephraim, thou committest whoredom, {and} Israel is defiled" (Hosea 5:1, 3),

With such popularity, and with such consciousness of a Divinely-entrusted commission, we cannot fail to be arrested by John's humility.

When the priests and Levites from Jerusalem sought to invest him with special honour, asking, "Who art thou? ... He confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elijah? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I {am} the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaiah" (John 1:19-23).

### John's Humility

Surely the last grace that comes to a man, certainly one of the most difficult to attain, is humility. Says R. W. Emerson, "In the Christian graces, humility stands highest of all; in the form of the Madonna and in life this is the secret of the wise."

Writing of this period, Dr. Vincent Tymm observes: "In the summer of the year A.D. 26, Rome swept away the last shadowy vestiges of Jewish self-government, and sent Pilate to Jerusalem, as the representative of Caesar. Up to this time no idolatrous emblems were carried into the city of David, and out of respect for Jewish scruples the im-

age of the Emperor was removed from Roman banners before they passed the gates. Pilate ruthlessly trampled on these scruples and caused the obnoxious flag to wave above the castle of Antonia which abutted on the courts of the Temple. The policy of which this was a symbol caused tumults in the city, and spread revolutionary commotions throughout the land.

"In no place was feeling so strong, or so openly expressed, as in Galilee. In that province a vigorous national party had been in existence for a considerable time, and many who sought to emulate the heroic deeds of the Maccabees gathered armed bands among the hills, and not a few lost their lives in ineffectual insurrections.

"In the autumn of the same year, and in the midst of all this national ferment tidings came to Galilee that a great prophet had suddenly appeared in the wilderness of Judaea, and had raised the startling cry, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!' At such a time this cry appealed, not only to religious aspirations, but to racial and political passions.

"All Nazareth would be stirred by the news, but to the family of Jesus it had a more personal interest than to any household in the land. The brethren of Jesus would be thrilled to hear that their cousin John had burst forth from his seclusion, and had been acclaimed a prophet by the people of Judaea.

"They had seldom, if ever, seen this cousin, but had often heard of his aus-

tere and solitary life. Probably they had felt little sympathy with him as a hermit, but they would feel a flow of family pride in his popularity; while his clarion call to prepare for a restoration of the kingdom would not only stir their honest patriotism, but would excite their more selfish hopes of elevation as members of the royal stock of David.

"These young men could not have been unaware that the family to which they belonged was the centre of all Messianic hopes. They knew that Jesus was the lawful heir to the throne of David and on this account, if for no other reason, they would naturally be eager to promote any movement which might transport them from obscurity and poverty in Nazareth to wealth and distinction in the royal city of their fathers."

### John Superseded

What an incentive for pride and self-advancement would have been presented to John, knowing all this, by this sudden popularity. Fully acquainted, as undoubtedly he would have been, with the inspired pronouncement of his father Zacharias on the occasion of his circumcision, "*And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways*" (Luke 1:76), he now sees crowds flocking to the wilderness, as there "*went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan*" (Matt. 3:5; Mark 1:5).

The day came when Jesus and His disciples came "*into the land of Judaea; and*

*there he tarried with them, and baptised. And John also was baptising in AEnon near to Salim, because there was much water there. ... And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all {men} come to him*" (John 3:22-26). We might well wonder in what spirit John would receive the report; so difficult it is for even the most consecrated servant of Christ to take second place with good grace. Feelings of resentment are so apt to fill the human heart.

But how fitting a true disciple was John's response: "*Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. ... He must increase, but I {must} decrease*" (vv. 28-30). The forerunner, whose office ceases when He comes, "*must decrease*" in reputation, in favour, and in authority.

### His Famous Reply

His reply thus becomes an example to all who would be true and acceptable ministers of Christ. In the words of Bishop Home: "By the part of John's character and conduct here displayed, in his repressing the jealousy of his followers, and asserting the superiority and glory of Christ, in how pleasing a manner are the ministers of Christ instructed, that they are to bear testimony to Him, not to themselves; to seek His glory, not their own; that they should take pleasure in the success of their brethren's labours, by which the cause of their common Master is promoted; that envy and



jealousy ought to have no place among the disciples of the Lamb of God, on Whom descended and abode the celestial Dove."

"Practise humility," wrote Bishop Wilkinson. "Be content to be the last of all and the least of all. Do not be ill-tempered with yourself, and with God, because you seem to be the least of the saints. Think of God, not of self. If we find that we have to take the lowest place, let us take it quietly and thank God that we are accounted worthy by Him."

### "Great Praise of Christ"

John the Baptist did just that! And although he "did no miracle" he yet

won great praise of Christ. "Verily I say unto you" said Jesus to John's inquiring disciples, "*Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist*" (Matt. 11:11).

In the world there is room for genius, for the gifted, and the successful, and they will be judged and ennobled accordingly but, in the service of Christ and His Cause, there is room, work, and praise from God for one who may do no miracle, but who testifies, and is faithful to Him. It is not the great and gifted upon earth who will receive eternal reward, but "well done, thou good and faithful servant ... enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."



## Hymn of the Month

*God is the refuge of His saints,  
When storms of sharp distress invade;  
Ere we can offer our complaints,  
Behold Him present with His aid.*

*Let mountains from their seats be hurled  
Down to the deep, and buried there;  
Convulsions shake the solid world:  
Our faith shall never yield to fear.*

*There is a stream whose gentle flow  
Supplies the city of our God;*

*Life, love, and joy, still gliding through,  
And watering our Divine abode:*

*That sacred stream — Thine Holy Word,  
That all our raging fear controls;  
Sweet peace, Thy promises afford,  
And give new strength to fainting souls.*

*Israel enjoys Jehovah's love  
Secure against a threatening hour;  
Nor can those firm foundations move,  
Built on His truth, and armed with power.*



# The Head Gardener

W. Dodd

It is the glory of the Bible that whilst it exhibits the eternal verities and encompasses the sweep of the ages, yet it enshrines the significant word, the arresting and meaningful phrase. One of the most poignant of such phrases contains six short words and is found in the gospel of St. John. In the description of the events connected with the Resurrection of Jesus, Mary, turning back from talking with the two angels at the empty tomb, saw Jesus, and "*supposing him to be the gardener*" (John 20:15), spoke to Him. We wonder that it could have been possible for her to have made such a mistake, even allowing for the grief which overwhelmed her at the time. But was she, after all, quite wrong? He said, "*I and {my} Father are one*" (John 10:30), and was not God the greatest Gardener of all?

## The Head Gardener at the Beginning of Time

"The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden" is recorded in the first book of the Bible, in the second chapter. After all the powers and glories of creation set down in the first chapter — of light and darkness — of land and sea — of the celestial bodies — of herbs and animals — of man in the very image of God Himself — all beyond our understanding, the plant-

ing of a garden comes as almost a homely act, more nearly within our comprehension. And the resurrected Lord, standing outside the tomb in the garden of Joseph of Arimathea, was in truth with His Father the gardener of Mary's bemused words, Father and Son drawing near to humanity in the two-fold acts of creation and incarnation.

## The Head Gardener at Work in Succeeding Ages of Time

God called a nation to be His witnesses in history to the existence of the Living God, and to approach Him in monotheistic worship. His plan of this agelong witness necessitated the perpetuity and protection of this chosen nation, and He entered into covenants with them and their royal house to ensure this. In one of these covenants He said He would "*appoint a place for my people Israel, and will PLANT them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them anymore as aforetime (formerly)*" (2 Sam. 7:10). This place of planting was clearly not Palestine, from which the chosen people were deported as captives (*circa* 721-604 B.C. for final captivities). But we as British-Israelites believe that there is such an appointed place of safety from invasion and slavery, and that it is what



the prophets call "the isles" (Isa. 41:1; 42:10; 66:19) and "the isles afar off" (Jer. 31:10), and which we know as the British Isles. Here it is that the lost tribes, with the ruling House of David over them, have been preserved under the hand of the Head Gardener through the centuries of time.

By the selectivity of His sovereign power, God uses nations and individuals, and when the chosen people seemed in danger of disappearing from history, God chose a man (even before he was born), whom we know as the prophet Jeremiah, and commanded him, *"See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out ... and to PLANT"* (Jer. 1:10), *"and the remnant that has escaped out of the house of Judah shall again take ROOT downward and bear fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant and they shall escape out of Mount Zion"* (2 Kings 19:30-31). Note — the refugees are from the royal city of David, *"I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion"* (Psa. 2:6). In the 43rd chapter and verse 6 of the book of the prophet Jeremiah is an account of the escape of this remnant, *"Men and women and children and the king's daughters ... and Jeremiah the prophet."*

### **God Plants a Dynasty and a Nation**

It is a remarkable fact that the genealogy of the royal house of Great Britain can be traced into the far past. It goes back through James I of England and VI of Scotland to Kenneth McAlpine, who became first king of Scotland in A.D. 834. He was de-

scended from Fergus Moore, who was king of Argyll in A.D. 487, who in turn was descended from kings of Ireland whose ancestry can be traced back to the year 580 B.C. It was about this period that the final fall of the kingdom of Judah to the Babylonian empire took place, and the prophecy that a remnant of its royal house should escape "to bear fruit" elsewhere is nowhere fulfilled unless it was "planted" in the land where historically at this time a school of prophets was founded and where idolatry was overthrown and the worship of Jehovah introduced instead. Moreover, the placename "Tara" is a Hebrew word meaning "the law of the two tables" (see Exodus 34:1).

In the period referred to there was a king in Ireland, Eochaidh, son of Gallum of Milesius, whose title was Heremon of the four Principalities, and in the ancient records his marriage with an Eastern Princess is inscribed. Here was surely the "planting" of refugees of the royal house of Judah, "taking root and bearing fruit."

The 31st chapter of the Book of Jeremiah is an example of long ages of history being covered in a few words in the Word of God. Here is the story of God's wayward people and the means by which He as the Head Gardener brings to fruition His agelong work, *"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah"* (Jer. 31:31); *"I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to PLANT {it}"* (Jer. 18:9). This cannot ap-

ply to the modern state of Israel in Palestine, which is not a kingdom with the royal line of king David over it.

Through the words of another prophet, Isaiah, God identifies Himself with Israel as Head Gardener, *"They shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my PLANTING, the work of my hands"* (Isa. 60:21).

### **The Head Gardener at work in the Life of the Individual**

So far we have seen, from the Bible, God's work on the grand national scale, but the Apostle Paul, writing in the first century A.D., tells the Christians at Corinth, "Ye are God's husbandry," and warns them against self-deception and worldly wisdom. Our Lord emphasised this aspect of the work of the Head Gardener when He said to His disciples, *"Every PLANT which my heavenly Father hath not PLANTED, shall be rooted up"* (Matt. 15:13). What shall the individual do if he or she wishes to escape such a fate? "Delight in the law of the Lord," said the Psalmist, and he shall be *"like a tree PLANTED by the rivers of water"* (Psa. 1:3).

### **The Garden**

In this study we have seen that God's first PLANTING of a garden was "eastward," and that the subsequent PLANTING was "westward." "Our England is a garden," wrote the poet Rudyard Kipling, and though it is now woefully full of weeds, it is the hope that sustains our hearts when we sing the words of another poet, "And did those feet in ancient time walk upon England's pastures green?" That He will yet walk again in this garden when He returns to take the throne of His father David from the hands of the reigning monarch of Britain whom we believe to be His regent till then. Subsequently, of course, His throne will be established at Jerusalem in accordance with the Scriptures, see Jer. 3:17; Isa. 2:3; Zech. 14:17.

In the meantime, "supposing Him to the gardener" may we recognise Him as the source of all creative growth, and learn from His laws how to produce effective fruit. This will be the infallible test whether or not we are of His planting, both as nations and as individuals.



### **Pride**

Does the Bible say, "Pride goeth before a fall"? This would seem like a Biblical quotation, but what the Bible actually says is this: *"Pride {goeth} before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall"* (Proverbs 16:18).





## *Prayer for the Month*

*Almighty Father, Who art the centre of all True Knowledge and Wisdom, we come before Thee at this time to thank Thee for all Thy tender mercies; for health and strength which gives us the opportunity of witnessing to Thy Kingdom. We acknowledge that on our own we are feeble and that without Thy guidance we cannot do the duties and tasks of the day. Strengthen us so that we may be faithful, courageous, patient and full of hope in Thee. Grant us a clear vision which will recognise Thee in all things and remove from us those things which offend Thee; the selfwill and stubbornness which prevents us from serving Thee as we should. Help us to see clearly only that which we should see and dismiss from our lives the things which keep us from willing service in Thy Cause.*

*Accept, we pray Thee, O Lord our God, the free-will offering of our hearts for, while we acknowledge all that we are, we know that in Thy Mercy, Thou dost look on us through Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ and through Whom we are transformed from death into Life.*

*Give us the courage and conviction to go forward in Thy Service trusting always in Thy promises and believing ever in the abiding Presence of Thy Son Who assured that He would be with us — even unto the end of the age. These and all mercies we ask in His Name and for His Sake.*

*Amen.*



## *Our Aussie Flag*

*Looking back on those days when I sat on daddy's knee,  
He told me 'bout our Aussie flag and how it came to be.  
We're Welsh and Scots and Irish and English like your mum.  
And so we chose the Union Jack to show that's where we're from.*

*There's the Southern Cross above you and its shining brightly now,  
The Federal star, for all the states and territory afar.  
For there's Aussies here from other lands and a culture near to us,  
We're one great Nation, Aussies all, with a flag that means so much.*

*For your aunties and your uncles have sweated tears and blood,  
They've worked the land and dug the mines and toiled through  
drought and flood  
They've fought and died in lands afar and islands close to here,  
For freedom, flag and liberty and family so dear.*

*So when others want to change our flag, for reasons known to them,  
Be steadfast in your loyalty, for your children and your kin.  
For our Aussie flag we cherish, for our culture and our past,  
Through mud and blood to pastures green, we've put it up to last.*

*Looking back on those days, with my children on my knee,  
I tell them of our Aussie flag, and it came to be,  
Of battlers true, from decades past, from city and the bush,  
Just do your best and trust in God and to our flag hold fast.*



**KEEP OUR FLAG  
FLYING IN 2001**

**SAY NO TO A REPUBLIC!**