

WHAT'S IN A NAME ?

No. 3

The Book of Judges
– the Saviours
of Israel

by

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FOREWORD 1974

We ask our readers to please accept our apologies for the long delay in publication of the first portion of our Studies in THE JUDGES. Sickness, overwork, and many other distractions, have caused it.

It is our purpose (God willing) to complete the book as soon as possible, in the foreseeable future.

We trust that the Studies will help to increase our faith in these last days of the Truth.

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- The Exodus of Israel.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

No. 2

THE BOOK OF THE JUDGES - THE SAVIOUR OF ISRAEL

The book of Judges or Saviours (Judges 2: 6-13) has suffered many things of many people, from the German Higher Criticism, down to the lower variety of our own day. It has been denounced as something unsavoury, fleshy, etc., and for some unknown reason, is usually associated with the Song of Solomon, as particularly and essentially revolting in character. Why, may we ask? Perhaps the unknown element could be tracked down to the lack of study, appreciation and spiritual understanding in the opponents of this book.

This without doubt is not the appreciation of the author of this treatise: it is his confirmed opinion that these two books of the Old Testament Scriptures are full of Christ (see the exposition of the Song, where the evidence for the Song is fully examined by the present writer from the Debir Press). We hope to make good our premises in the following exposition that, along with the Song, the Book of Judges ranks amongst the foremost for spiritual content in the Old Testament. To be confirmed in this belief there are several considerations that must be met:

- (1) that one will search long enough,
- (2) deep enough,
- (3) the search must be prayerful enough.

One can only advise from one's own experience in these matters. We ask a boon of our readers, that they will closely follow our line of thought in the following pages, and compare with the threefold formula in mind, the Biblical record of these historic events, so long ago in time; but always present in principle so long as the Lord remains. It is, as we have before stated, our whole consideration to illuminate, if we can, the portions of Scripture that fall to our notice, so that in its scintillating revelation we may be blessed, and our hearts stimulated by the warmth of the divine glow of inspiration. May we then plead your prayerful and careful indulgence in these things, and may the Father grant His good remembrance and care to our combined thoughts. Shall we then particularly use the book to find out (1) the meaning behind the names of the various Judges (actually there are thirteen mentioned in the book), along with the names of the cities and tribes to which they belong, (2) to what period in history it belongs in the Bible, and to (3) prayerfully ascertain its position within the history of redemption.

The last query must always be in the forefront of our minds, whenever we study any particular portion of the Old Testament in particular. The answers are plainly to be seen in what we may term -

THE INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF JUDGES

Many years ago Parker very delightfully put it this way:

"This book abounds in human character and thus differs very happily from the books of Ritual (Exodus - Deuteronomy) through which we have just passed -

Innumerable men come and go on this busy stage, each leaving a distinct impression on the memory; even the humblest having some touch of distinction which gives him importance.

(1) Think of Ehud the ambidexter, (2) Shamgar the wielder of rough weapons, (3) Deborah the mother in Israel, (4) Barak, woman-led, (5) Gideon so majestic in self control and patient simplicity, (6) Abimelech the hateful self-seeker, (7) Jotham the father of fabulists, (8) Jephthah despised, yet exalted, (9) Manoah domestic and melancholy, his wife quick at spiritual

interpretation, (10) Samson an elephant in strength, a babe in weakness, (11) Micah the priest, (12) Benjamin dissolute, yet missed and lamented.

Then there are innumerable little names (A. H. ') glittering like asteroids on that distant sky. (As we write these words astronauts from the U.S.A. have completed the tenth circuit of the moon in Apollo 8. Many doubted this daring event would ever take place, but terror of human landings has been taken away, so we learned, and "the earth hath He given to the children of men" (Psalm 115: 16) and the moon is but a satellite of the earth. It was very moving to hear Gen. 1: 1 being quoted at such a historic moment, and so far out in space; we can only pray that direct blessing may ensue from this further knowledge of our universe, may the nations give the glory to God, as these three very brave men did. Sorry! the thought of the astronauts brought forth these comments . Christmas 1968. Returning to the Parker quote - "Othniel and Heber, Sisera and Jael, Tola and Jair, the woman who stunned Abimelech with a millstone, and the old man who came out of the field at eventide and blessed the wayfarers. A book abounding in character, truly.

History, romance, song, war, tumult, gather in this array, and it is our business to observe and ponder, consider and learn, what we can. The present writer can truly say that the study of this book has been most profitable to his mind, as a study of human nature under conditions which severely test it at every point, and more particularly as a study of that spiritual and mysterious action which we justly call providence. Though the tumult is great and grievous, yet the central line never changes nor diverges.

(A) An unseen but mighty hand guides the tremendous storm and is never more evident as to omnipotence than when that history is most confused and bewildering.

(B) How many are the servants of Yahweh, and how various in faculty, disposition and capacity?

(C) Who could hold them together in one happy service, but the Lord God Omnipotent, who has held the life and being of man from his conception in the hollow of His hand? Were He to withdraw His spirit and His breath, all flesh would perish (Job 34: 14 - 15)

A The Position of the Judges in Scripture.

The Judges all stand between Joshua and Samuel, who was the forerunner of David the King. (Joshua 24, 1 Samuel 1, etc.) The book of Judges commences with Judah (the praise of Yah), concerting with Simon (hearing the Son), obeying the commands of God to attack the Canaanites in faith, recorded in Judges 1: 1 - 3. The end of this book sorrowfully speaks for itself, Judges 21 : 25, "In those days there was NO King in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes." What a considerable amount of drama, tragedy and triumph is contained within these extremes. How be it! The chapter value of the A.V. gives the numerologist great heart, and expresses the Divine grace behind it all. 21 Chapters. = 3 x 7 the sum of which is:-

Three is the number of Divine Completion, and seven is the number of Spiritual Perfection. In other words, a wonderful definition of the central line running throughout the book, in fact whatever tragedy or calamity may confront and confuse us, Omnipotent might will complete the purpose according to His Will, and Divine Grace will bring it to Spiritual Perfection. So then - (A) Joshua first established Israel in the land of promise (Genesis 12: 1 - 5, 13: 14 - 17, 22 : 15 - 18. John 1, etc.) (B) In David we

find the true beginning of the Kingdom, after Saul was put away in God's wrath. (Hosea 13:11) It was through David that "God gave them rest from all their enemies round about". (C) Between these two outstanding times in Israel's history we find many severe struggles, back slidings, punishment, but always deliverances by God from their wretched state. Approximately it has been computed that 93 - 101 years were blotted out through apostasy etc. during their history at this time, which should have a record of Israel's progress as the chosen race.

Perhaps it will be helpful to demonstrate briefly how these considerations were computed, helping to dispel what has been termed a "critics error" the differences between Paul's Chronology of this period of time (Acts 13 : 18-21) and the record in 1 Kings 6:1.

Paul's times, taken from Acts 13:18/21, are as follows: 450 Years - The Judges . 40 Years - The Wilderness . 40 Years - Saul. 40 Years - David. 3 Years - Solomon before commencing building the Temple = 573 Years between Exodus and the building of the Temple.

Now 1 Kings 6:1 gives us 480 years. Why? Wherein lies the difference? The answer is in the different aspects of chronology which the Scriptures allow, namely there are two viewpoints - ordinary or cardinal, or mystical. Both are represented here in this problem and a comparison will resolve the mystery.

A. Paul has used the ordinary method giving the exact years that passed during this interim of Israeli history, 573.

B. 1 Kings 6:1 presents the mystical version which takes account of God's formal rejection of Israel during the times of the Judges after they had rejected Him. It will be noted that 573 - 480 = 93 years not recognised by God, which are presented as follows -

8 Years	Cushan Rishathaim Period
18 "	Eglon
20 "	Jabin
7 "	Midian
40 "	Philistines

93 Years of formal rejection omitted from chronology! There is then, no disagreement when the true facts are known; we understand that this subtraction was taken, because Israel had fallen into idolatry, and therefore from grace, during these periods.

We have other instances of omissions, such as the three immediate successors of Jehoram from the genealogy of Christ.

- (1) Ahaziah or Jehoahaz (2 Kings 8:29 - 10:27) 2 Chronicles 22:39
- (2) Joash (2 Kings 11:2, 12:20, 2 Chron. 24:1-25)
- (3) Amaziah (Ahimaaz) 2 Kings 14:8-20, 2 Chronicles 25:7-27 and one between Josiah and Jeconiah viz. -
- (4) Jehoiakim (2 Kings 23. 36, 2 Chron. 36:5-8) It was he who cut in pieces and burnt the roll which contained the words of Yahweh. (Jeremiah 34:6) The Talmud says the reason why his name is not mentioned generally in the genealogies is because it was said concerning him (2 Chron. 36.8) "And the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim and the abominations which he did, and that which was found ON him. Rabbi Jochanan says that it means that "he caused an image to be engraved on his body. Jechoniah or was childless as to the throne, for though he had seven sons (1 Chron. 3:17-18) it was apparently his grandson Zerubbabel who became ruler over Israel (Ezra 2:2)

They were omitted therefore because of idolatry not only from kingship, but also the honour of appearing in David's genealogy as it affected the Lord Jesus. The critics' difference lies only in their failure to understand the ways of God, consequently because they oppose them, they are left to the ignorance of their own devices. (Rom. 1: 18-32)

One further point of interest before we pass on. 1 Kings 6:1 480 years after the coming out of Israel at the time of the Exodus, 1 Kings 6: 38 states 7 years were occupied in the building of the Temple. How long did it take to supply and fit the various furnishings? We notice that it was in the 8th month that the house was furnished etc., yet 1 Kings 8:2 gives the date for the Dedication as the 7th month, when the House was completely furnished ready for the habitation of God, symbolised by the Ark of the Covenant, (1 Kings 8:2) Clearly then this took place in a different year, we are not told directly how long it took to furnish the House but we are inclined to accept 3 years as the time, for this reason. 487 years are already agreed in 1 Kings, 6, as we have duly observed; the further addition which we have mentioned would give us the true total as 490 years - 7 x 70 which is the number of the Spiritual Perfection of Chronology or Seven Jubilees of Sabbaths, and these of Ordained Years or specially chosen by God to reveal His purpose. Commencing with the redemption out of Egypt, and arriving at the state of Spiritual Perfection in the month of the Feast of Tabernacles or the Ingathering. This is the reason why we tentatively, howbeit with a certain amount of dogmatism, believe 490 years occur, Be this as it may, we have written in other places on these things - in the Song of Songs, etc. to which reference can be made.

Returning to Judges once more, we find that the years omitted were times of retrogression, and of course, reprobation, meaning to Israel an endurance of oppression, suffering servitude to the nations that still remained in or near the land. Why this state of affairs could happen is part of the history of the book itself, and as such will come up for comment at the appropriate time. But - we must not forget the other side of the balance. Certain progress was made in the advancing purpose of God. The programme of redemption did not break down here. There are NO emergencies with God. Samuel has been known as God's emergency man, possibly quite rightly, from a human angle as the little boy who effectively stepped into the breach in the time of the apostate priesthood in the days of Eli. (1 Sam. 2: 12-18). But decidedly not so from God's angle; the apostasy of these days was seen by God from the foundation of the World, and effective measures, as found in the faithfulness of Samuel, were duly programmed. "God knows the end from the beginning". How truly grateful we are that the Divine Omniscience rules supreme, and along with Omnipresence, and Omnipotence, makes sure that He ruleth in the Kingdoms of men even as He rules over the Armies of Heaven. (Dan. 4:7) Is not our God One who can do both good and evil, and does not the book of Judges afford a supreme display of these dispositions for us. (Jer. 18:8, 26:3) etc.

Several nations of the land were so subdued that they could never again present any serious opposition to Israel, viz. the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, Perizzites and the Jebusites etc. and of course the Hivites, the six nations whom God had sworn to destroy out of the Land, because their evil abominations and practices had covered Canaan as with a filthy sore of pollution. (Joshua 9: 1-24).

This destruction is never once for the critics's stomach. These days were wild and turbulent we allow, and we must remember at all times, whatsoever comes before us in our studies, the words of Fausset, in this connection under the heading of "Historical Truthfulness". "The age in which the Judges lived was not like the heroic age in Greece, mythical and prehistoric. Though the Judges were "heroes" they lived in a settled

community, which was illuminated by the Mosaic code of Laws, and enjoyed the knowledge of the art of writing (c/p Judges 8-14). It was no age of ignorance, or semi-barbarism. There are no traces of an attempt to glorify Israel, such as are the glorification of Greek heroes in the Iliad of Homer. The faults of Israel are too faithfully recorded to admit of the theory that the story is a patriotic fiction, none else but the spirit of Truth could have dictated the record which vindicates God's righteousness, at the cost of exposing to view the sin, shame and suffering of the writer's own nation". When we arrive at the end of Judges, deliverance had begun even from the most inveterate enemy of all, in fact the enemy whom God had left to be "a thorn in His people's side". It was said of Samson, the last of the Saviours in the book of Judges, "He shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines". Much is said of the turbulence and waywardness of this period in Israel's history, but very rarely do we hear of the peacefulness of this time, in the words of Jahn: "The Book is a record of the exceptional diseases of the body politic, whilst the years of health are passed over in almost total silence". Taken all round it has been computed that the servitudes could at the most only have totalled 111 years, and the peaceful years 296, that is if the whole period is taken as 430 years. Perhaps for clarification the following chart may help to elucidate. The history of Judges is largely taken from chapters 3 - 7, and 16 - 31, and is seen in a cycle of seven sequences.

(1) First cycle. 3 : 7 - 11

(A) Enemy - Mesopotamia. (B) The deliverer Othniel. (C) Subjection 8 years (D) Peace 40 years.

(2) Second Cycle. 3 : 12 - 31

(A) Enemy Moabites, Ammonites, Amalekites. (B) Deliverer Ehud (C) Subjection 18 years (D) Peace 80 years. 3 : 31 Shamgar delivers from Philistines.

(3) Third Cycle 4 : 1 - 5 : 31

(A) Enemy Canaanites (B) Deliverers Deborah and Barak. (C) Subjection 20 years. (D) Peace 40 years.

(4) Fourth Cycle 6 : 1.- 8 : 32

(A) Enemy Midianites (B) Deliverer Gideon (C) Subjection 7 years (D) Peace 40 years.

(5) Fifth Cycle 8 : 32 - 10 : 5

(1) Usurpation of Abimelech 3 years. (B) Judgeship of Tola and Jair (C) Peace 45 years.

(6) Sixth Cycle 10 : 6 - 12 : 15

(A) Enemy Ammonites (B) Deliverer Japhthah (C) Subjection 18 years (D) Peace 31 years.

(7) Seventh Cycle 13 - 16

(A) Enemy Philistines (B) Deliverer Samson (C) Subjection 40 years (D) Peace 20 years

The count for subjection is 111 years, for peace 296. These facts the critics have either wilfully, or woefully, or both, overlooked.

It is usual to think that when there is the least to record, a period is at its happiest. Jair's times would approximate to this situation (Judges 10 : 4) We shall see why when we study it in more detail! There are recurring periods usually indicated by the caption "The land had rest 40-80-40-40 years etc", illustrating the general tranquillity which characterised the period of

the Judges - notwithstanding the sad interruptions that occurred (3 - 11, 3 - 30, 5 - 31, 8 - 28) and of course what is the gracious promise of the future to Israel. (Isiah 1 - 26 Cp. 32 - 1) "I will restore thy Judges as at the first", Namely as in Israel's happiest days, of the theocracy, when the Lord Himself was King and princes ruled in judgment (Isa. 32 : 1) and those future Judges, 12 in number, who shall sit upon 12 thrones, are none other than the Twelve Apostles themselves or should we say Eleven plus the one born out of due time, none other than our own Apostle Paul (Matt. 19 : 28) So the period of the book of the Judges, no matter what may be our own personal opinion of its contents, covers almost the interval between the foundation of Israel in Canaan and the Kingdom that was then to follow.

Typically we would suggest that it corresponds to the ages of Ecclesial History which intervene between the two advents of our Lord.

- (A) Firstly like Joshua the Shepherd of Israel, Christ gathered a flock together, a little band of disciples. Since then other sheep have entered the one fold into the flock by the Christ door or the eye of the needle. (John. 10 etc. Matt. 19 : 24).
- (B) Secondly, as King He will set up His kingdom, and give His Beloved her rest from every enemy that now disturbs her. Then for 1000 years the land will have rest from all her enemies round about: - The comparison between the two events is well illustrated by Paul.
- (1) No.1 The Philistine Goliath of Death is vanquished by Jesus in Hebrews 2 : 14 - 16
- (2) No.2 Is to be found in Rom. 8 : 17 - 22: - In the consummation, when even the creation itself, along with the Sons of God, will be freed from the yoke of bondage resulting from Adam's sin:

Between the two advents there is almost 2000 years of ecclesial history, and a very varied and mingled history it has turned out to be so far. How much longer? The Body of Christ has been partly oppressed, and occasionally turned out "Victor", as the Revelation by Jesus has shown. In our days, the Ecclesia is resting in the plains of Moab, awaiting the command to go forward over the Jordan of Death, to appear at Gilgal for the final cleansing. What do we find? Certainly not oppression, but apathy. "Where is the promise of His coming?" admirably fits our own days, and our personal sins bring us low very often with particular calamities and defects. How often have we been delivered into the hand of our enemies, as a chastisement for our faults, and it is only when we return to the Lord, in abjection of self, and true faith in His mercy, that He delivers us out of our distresses. "He sends a Saviour" (Matt. 1 : 18 - 23, Lk. 2 : 8 - 15); as in those turbulent and wild days, yet peaceful and serene in many ways, it depends upon what we are seeking, and which viewpoint we take) when there was NO king in Israel but the Judges ruled. Neh. 9 : 27 states "He gave them Saviours or Judges who saved them out of the hand of their enemies".

Shall we then search into the principles that lie behind this word 'Judges' (Judges. 2:18) or Shophetim's Hebrew properly "To put right - then to rule". Shophetim is derived from Shaphat, to judge, and literally means, to set up straight (Gesenius 844) and has a similar connotation to Suffetes, that of the chief magistrates in the Phoenician colonies i.e. of Carthage (Lev. 27, 37. 30 - 7)

The work that these principal men did in Israel

"The Lord was with the Judge and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge. (Judges 2 : 18) "Delivered them", literally saved them. The word in the original is from the same root

"Yasha" to set free (Gesenius 374) as in Joshua or Jesus. The Judges, in the original "Saviours", Soterēs, by Sept. in Judges 3 : 9 - 15. Wordsworth thought that the Septuagint prepared the way for the recognition of the character of the Judges, as figures of the Great Liberator and Saviour of all men Jesus Christ. Our viewpoint we will clarify in due course.

Fausset goes on to outline their true character and work in Israel. "Judging was the only royal function which was contracted by God the Heavenly King to man, under the Israelite theocracy". One wonders whether or not the mortal population will see the Lord Jesus Christ at His return; "every eye shall see Him". Would it appear to require qualification as in the days when the Judges ruled? They ruled for an Omnipresent though unseen God. Perhaps our readers would like to comment upon this suggestion? Moreover, as it was in the hands of the people's natural leaders, it ranked very highly in the feeling of the nation. But the distinguishing feature in the functions of the judges, from whom this book takes its name, is that these were not the ordinary rulers of the people, but were raised up by the special providence of God, not only to administer justice in Israel, but to be "Saviours of His people" from the oppression of their enemies (R.V. margin 2 : 16 - 19, 3 : 9 - 15, Obadiah 21). These extraordinary judges, in delivering the chosen people from their oppressors, were not arbitrarily sent forth to their work, but were chosen to vindicate Yahweh's righteousness, that is, His faithfulness to His Covenant, on behalf of Israel. His eternal principle is, when His people return to Him in penitence, He returns to them in mercy. The evidence is strong in Scripture to support the Divine claim that His salvation and His righteousness go hand in hand (Isa. 45:8) Thus they were judges of righteousness not only in, but for Israel: and accordingly Deborah and Barak, in their hymn of thanksgiving, dwell upon the manifestation of the divine righteousness in the deliverance just vouchsafed. "Speak, ye that sit in judgment - they that are delivered shall rehearse the righteous acts of Yahweh, even the righteous acts towards the inhabitants of His villages in Israel". (Judges 5 : 11)

They were "raised up" by Yahweh at different intervals, as need required, and were the viceregents of Him who was, at one and the same time, the civil, as well as the spiritual King of Israel. We find that there were in all 15 Judges between Joshua and the Kings. Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah and Barak (counted as one) Gideon, Abimelech (an usurper) Tola, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon (could he have been the same as the Bedan in 1 Sam. 12 : 11?) Samson, Eli and Samuel. Perhaps it is when we contrast Eli and Samuel (of 1 Samuel of course) that we discern the difference between the two orders of Judges that officiated in this early time of Israel's history. Eli and Samuel were of the priestly order; and as such were officially Judges, but Eli was not a deliverer, or Saviour, and Samuel inaugurated the Prophetic dispensation (1 Sam. 3 : 19 - 21, Acts 3 : 24), and delivered the people not by the sword in particular (notwithstanding 1 Sam 15 : 33) but by the Word and by prayer (1 Sam 7 : 3 - 10) whereas the judges especially so called were not of the priestly family, but were EXTRA-ORDINARY ministers called forth by God to deliver Israel and forming in their rule a kind of distinct dispensation.

The Lord raised them up (Judges 2 : 16) and qualified them for their ministry by causing His spirit to come upon them. (Judges 3 : 10, 6 : 34, 11 : 29, 13 : 25). Throughout this book God appears as maintaining His own glory against the idols of the surrounding nations, and not sparing even His own people whenever they apostatized from Him, and conformed to the vanities of the world, and ALWAYS hearing His people's cry and delivering or saving them, when they turned penitently to Him. These

two principles are the design of the Book.

- A) Israel's unfaithfulness punished by the foe's oppression
- B) Yahweh's faithfulness in raising up Judges to deliver them at their cry.

These principles are the two hinges upon which the history, moreover the eternal principles of God, are clearly to be observed, in which God deals today with His children, in relation to the world in which we live - in a word, righteous retribution in kind. When Israel forsook the Lord her rightful King to conform herself and to lean upon, the surrounding world powers of heathendom, justly He repaid her in kind, by making the instruments of her sin to become the instruments of her punishment (Hosea 8 : 11). Both nationally and personally, this has been true down the ages, from Jacob and his experiences to the seven letters to the Ecclesias in the Revelation. It will always be observed in the principle of Adoni - Zedek's punishment, shortly to come before us, and provides us with the uneasy knowledge of the fact that our personal judgment before Christ will be based on a somewhat similar point of view. "As ye have done to others, so will I do to you". "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors". (Matt. 6 : 12) R.V. "Have forgiven our debtors" Again Jesus emphasises the principle in Matt. 10 : 5 when sending out the Twelve. 10 : 40 - 42 in regard to acceptance of their claims. "He that receiveth you receiveth me", etc., whilst the city, or household that refused to accept the gracious offer (10 : 14) "Shake the dust off your feet". Matt. 12 : 31 - 32 outlines in stark yet true detail, the awful consequences of "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit" and a very fair sample of the treatment to be used by God against such a despising of His word, and power, and against His anointed, either Jesus as Messiah, or the Prophets, is to be seen in the "Imprecatory Psalms", not my heading, but of course the critics! Psa. 69 and 109 etc. Jer. 36 all the chapter; where Jehoiakim has the audacity to cut up the 'word of the Lord with a penknife; His retribution, because he had despised not only the Word of the Lord, but also Jeremiah the anointed of the Lord, was "He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem". Jer. 22 : 18 - 19

Rather, then, will we take the advice of Jesus to Peter. We will forgive our brother or sister until seventy times seven. Matt. 18 : 21 - 35, and so hope that the Father will forgive us our continual trespasses. Is it not far better to use the Pauline formula of behaviour in Rom. 12 : 9 - 21 etc. and the sterling advice of 1 Corinthians, 13, than to nurse a grudge against our brother or sister? In fact Paul advises "pray for your enemies", for if we do this we shall never hate them. Justly then, Israel was paid in kind and with equal justice; we, too, at the judgement seat of Christ, will be paid in kind. "As ye have done to others" will be the criterion upheld.

The Causes of Israel's Apostasy

The text reveals that they were manifold, and as always in the history of Israel, accompanied a forsaking of God through Apostasy. As Fausset remarks, "Israel were inclined (the Israelites) to 'Add' to the worship of Yahweh, the idolatries of heathendom, for they had too cogent and palpable proofs of the truth of the Divine Law to renounce it wholly."

Such causes were - intermarriage with their heathen neighbours, Gentile associations, the beauty of the Canaanite women, the pomp, gaiety and voluptuousness of their rites, the hope of learning the future by idolatrous divination, and the superstitious fears of the supposed gods of the localities where they settled. Severe chastisements of God executed by these very nations whose sins they copied, and the succeeding rule of the judges who were raised by God in answer to their cry, and who saved them out of the

hands of their oppressors, were just the kind of discipline which they needed. "

These words hold an ominous ring for the Truth today and a very strong warning for those who would widen the doors, to water down doctrine and practice. The Truth is as narrow as the set form of doctrine once received (Romans 6) but as wide as all nations who shall come and sit down in Christ's Kingdom even as many as the Lord our God shall call (Acts 2 : 39, Matthew 8 : 11), and while we may extend our activities in preaching to the 'earth's utmost bound', yet we must preach within the 'set form' and code of 'the doctrine once received'. It has been queried whether or not the rite of marriage will continue to be held in the not remote future. Brethren and sisters in Christ can be comforted with the words of Jesus in Luke 17 : 26 - 27. "And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all". The rite of marriage will be kept, how loosely none can say; it behoves each one of us to keep sharp watch in these dark days, and not copy their ways of either principle or dress, remembering our modesty before the angel. The lessons of Israel's Apostasy during the days when the judges ruled, have lost nothing down the process of time to our days.

Think of the third generation of Christadelphians, which happens to fall to our lot in these days, and find a parallel with the days when the judges ruled. Judges 2 : 7. "And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua (the first generation), and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, that He did for Israel (the second generation) Judges 2 : 10. "And there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord nor yet the works which He had done for Israel, and the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord and served Baalim (THE THIRD GENERATION). Notice first of all the linkage between these days, and the Apostle Paul speaking to the flock at Ephesus. Joshua 24 : 14 has said, by way of warning them of Apostasy. "Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve Him in sincerity and truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood and in Egypt, and serve the Lord". Already those Gods had a place in their midst; and already the seeds of destruction and alienation from God were planted right in the bosom of the people" (Ironsides)

There are other connections within the history of Israel on this wise, i. e. the default of the third generation, but for brevity we must move to Acts 20. Paul had said "After my departure shall grievous wolves enter in, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them". It is a warning as to the alienation, and departure, that comes in when the inspired leaders have been removed. It can be laid out in the following way.

- (1) The Truth was pioneered in the days of Christ (the first generation)
- (2) It prospered under the Apostles "They turned the world upside down" (Acts 17 : 6) or rather "put it right side up". It just depends which way one looks at it. (the second generation)
- (3) Declension set in in the third generation, as Paul prophesied, and finally descended to state religion under Constantine. THE THIRD GENERATION
We live in the third generation. Are we to follow these terrible steps in Ecclesial history?

- (1) The Truth was presented by Dr. John Thomas and his generation (the first generation)
- (2) It prospered under C.C. Walker and John Carter (the second generation)

(3) What of our particular days under L.C. Sargent (and A.H. Nicholls to come)? THE THIRD GENERATION. The words of the Apostle Paul already have found their truth within the flock. "Grievous Wolves" have entered in. Perverse things are being taught, and disciples are being drawn to the men who speak such things. What are we to do about it? If we wish to avoid the slippery path of the third generation we must seek for perfection with Christ and Israel. Compare Luke 13 : 52 "Go ye and tell that fox, behold I cast out devils, and I do cures today (1) and tomorrow (2) and the third day (3) I shall be perfected". Notice by way of interest verse 53. The necessity to walk today (1) and tomorrow (2) and the day following (3rd day) "for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem". What a terrible thing, that the vice and inhumanity of His own nation should finally crown His work of perfection. Hosea 6 : 1 -2 gives the national or ecclesial picture, as we are thinking, "Come let us return unto the Lord, for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up. After two days will He revive us; in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight, with the glorious future of Hosea 6 : 3. "His going forth is prepared as the morning". May it be that our "goings forth" are as "sure" (margin for 'prepared'), then He will come to us as the rain, as the latter and former rain upon the earth. (For other incursions into the wonder of No. 3 in Scripture the reader is advised to see Testimony for April 69, or any of the standard works on this subject).

We shall do well to keep in mind the words of Jesus regarding the days of Noah and these repeated warnings of the third generation: The Book of Judges records the actual history of thirteen judges, twelve called by God, and one usurper (Abimelech, the son of Gideon, Judges 9 : 1 - 22 etc). Bullinger demonstrates that the twelve judges by Gematria are a multiple of 8 x 13, 3848 (8 x 13 x 37) whilst the usurper has the factor of '13 Dominant' in His Gematria 364 13 x 28 (Number in Scripture pp 214). Going back in Scripture we find that the line of Seth are all dominated by the figure 8 and that of Cain by 13. Eight also speaks of the New Birth, New Creation, Men of Jesus, thirteen of Apostasy, rebellion, defection, disintegration, declension. (see Genesis 14 : 4, 17 : 25 etc). Thirteen we notice by research is particularly the number of Judas, of the Pharisees, of Haman and family throughout Esther. But thirteen we are surprised to find is used to symbolise the unity of God (by a plural noun? See Testimony for November, 1968 under "Echad" for proof). So foremost in our thoughts we must place the dominant figure 13 to realise that just as the Most High giveth the Kingdoms to the children of men, God raised up the Judges, 12 in number, to deliver Israel; amongst this selection we find Abimelech who raised himself to rule, figuring quite plainly under the Apostasy defection ideas we have just outlined. The number 8 is used because throughout we shall duly find that the work the 12 judges undertakes is a type of the work, not character, of the Lord Jesus Himself. This is the lesson that these numbers would convey to us. The Name of Jesus is by Gematria 888, and by the realization of this truth, we may see the application of the line of Seth the New Creation, the New Birth etc.

For computations surrounding Numbers 12 and 13, together with the entry of Paul into the Apostolic Band, see "The Twelve - the Lord's Men" by the present writer. No. 6 is also prominent in this book, incidentally we have

- (1) evil doings reported in this book, known as "The Evil" against the Lord (3 : 7 - 12, 4 : 1, 6 : 1, 10 : 6, 13 : 1) consequently we have
- (2) oppressors and oppressions (3: 8 - 12, 14: 2, 6: 1, 10 : 7, 13 : 1)
- (3) deliverances (3 : 9 - 15, 4:23, 8 : 28, 11 : 33, 16: 30)

Again it is plain to be seen why No. 13 is used - The Evil - the context alone settles the argument either way, in which we must interpret the figures. No. 6 in Scripture is predominantly human.

(1) Man was created the 6th day (2) He worked six days, or should do.
 (3) The hours of his day are multiples of six etc

Athaliah usurped the throne of Judah six years. Defiant great ones who have stood out in defiance to God (Goliath, Nebuchadrezzar, the antichristian Pope) all are emphatically dominated by No. 6. Are there not six Cities of Refuge in the Old Testament also? Just as the seventh deliverance is not shown in the book of the Judges so the 7th City of Refuge had to await the coming of Jesus. Note Paul's allusion to this fact (Hebrews 6 : 18 - 20). Consequently we observe in the teaching of this number the pattern of the main section of the Book of Judges.

(A) The predominant evil in man, howbeit, of the Chosen People.

(B) Consequent chastisements, oppressions and oppressors. Why, we may ask?

(C) To prove whether or not they were bastards, or sons speaking on their behalf. Could they endure chastising from God as sons, or succumb as bastards? (Heb. 12:4-13 etc.)

(D) To reveal the mercies of all beneficent God, and his acts of deliverance, knowing that He does not always chide, nor yet willingly afflict His children, except for their own good; as James 5 : 10-11 clearly illustrates in the life of Job. "The end of the Lord" must be clearly seen and appreciated.

(E) Its application to ourselves, as ecclesias or individuals is patent. Our chastisements arise to a great extent from our native foolishness and stubbornness, and usually only after we have applied to ourselves our personal brand of abrasive, or sandpaper, do we turn to the Lord for help. He can do more than we say, or think, and He will show us a way of escape should we acknowledge it as such. But are we advancing in our understanding of ecclesial problems and personal entanglements? It is thought that instead of decreasing they are on the increase in our days. This fact is undoubtedly true, and quite probably they will be found in ever greater numbers as the days darken towards the return of the Lord. But can we say, like Israel of old, that we have made headway against some of our minor spiritual disfigurements? - minor of course when viewed against the Philistine (We will turn to this aspect presently).

To continue the numerology, we arrive at a very important point from the Divine angle.

The Hebrew "Yasha" whom we construed Saviour or prefaced by the Yehasha or Yehoshua = Jesus GK or Saviour, Deliverer or Delivered is particular to this book of Judges and is found ten times in all. 10 is the number of ordinal perfection, and we know that it is reckoned as a perfect number. We think of the Ten Plagues, Ten Commandments. The number signified marks the entire round of anything. We have the implication that nothing is wanting. The number and order are perfect. The whole cycle is complete.

(A) There are ten clauses in the Lord's prayer

(B) We have the tenth or tithe from Jacob.

(C) The tenth in the Law of Moses.

(D) The Tenth of Isaiah 6 "The remnant who shall return"

(E) Ten Gerahs, redemption money in Ex. 38 : 26 and so on.

Therefore Yasha = To deliver, or save, is found as follows. Judges 2:16-18 3:9-31, 8:22, 10:12-14, 12:2-3, 13:5. How truly wonderful. But upon a closer inspection we shall find one to have been duplicated, and the number

of occurrences in Eleven. So accordingly if ten is the number of ordinal perfection, then eleven is an addition to it, subversive of, and undoing that order.

Always we find "Perfection", and defection, together in this book, as we have already noted in the 12 x 1 Judges. 6 Evils, Oppressions and Deliverances of God. There is an obvious reason why that which is Perfect is lacking. Perfection alone can be found in Jesus "888" The only name given under heaven" in whose name Salvation can be effected. Throughout the Book of Judges, the typical work of Jesus as Saviour is vividly portrayed. We can determine either the work of salvation done by Himself, or that later work which He delegated to the Apostles, and in some small way, that which falls upon us, 'upon whom the ends of the ages have come'. Behind it all there may be seen the purpose, power and grace of Shaddai, the all bountiful one, whose purpose in the Yahweh name is being wrought in the earth, bringing that day of gladness, when God will be all in all, and the travail of the greater Joshua the Judge of all the earth will have been satisfied in the abundance of children all taught of God and redeemed by His blood.

By what means were these deliverances wrought for Israel?

They were chastised by the weakness of the persons, or things by which they were affected. The age old principle is very obvious to see, that "No flesh should glory in the presence of God" (Psa. 8:2, 1 Cor. 1-27, 2 Cor. 12:9-10) There are seven weak things in Judges which were appointed by Yahweh to bring things which 'were mighty'. (i.e. in worldly eyes) "to nought". They were:-

<u>Judge</u>	<u>The means of Deliverance.</u>
(1) Othniel	Son of a younger Brother c/p Gen. 49 : 1-2
(2) Ehud	Who was left-handed.
(3) Jael and Deborah	{ Jael wrought with the wooden hammer etc. { Deborah - "The bee" stung Barak into action.
(4) Shamgar	Used ox goad only
(5) Gideon	Lamps and pitchers
(6) Jephthah	Illegitimate son
(7) Samson	The jaw bone of an ass

The double mention of Deborah and Jael under the weakness of a woman raises the number to eight weak things of deliverance. All these things narrated were considered to be very weak in Hebrew eyes and so despised by them.

- (1) Othniel - Son of a younger brother - the firstborn was the symbol of the strength of his father: c/p Gen. 49 : 1-2, the others were not reckoned (Judges 3-9)
- (2) Ehud was left-handed, again despised by the Hebrews as the right hand wielded the sword, the left having to be content to hold the shield. (Judges 3: 15)
- (3) Jael and Deborah were women, very much reckoned the weaker vessel in eastern eyes (Judges 4 : 4, 4: 17-24)
- (4) Shamgar noted for use of an agricultural implement (Judges 3:3)
- (5) Gideon used only lamps and pitchers,- certainly not weapons of warfare, only household utensils. (Judges 6 : 11-16)
- (6) Jephthah - illegitimate origin, no standing whatsoever (Judges 11 : 1, 12:7)
- (7) Samson slew with the jawbone of an ass, very despicable in eastern eyes (Judges 15 : 14-20)

These are the things of naught energised by the Holy Spirit, that crushed and defeated all the might of Canaan. Seven points to the spiritual perfection aimed at and found within the narrative. Eight as we have outlined reveals the antitype, and the ultimate consummation as it will be found in Jesus, the salvation of God who will grant perfection to this purpose of mercy. If we add Samuel the last Judge (but not found in this book, and not, let it be emphasised, an extraordinary Judge, as those just mentioned, then we get a total of 9 Judges. The meaning of this digit in scripture is that if finality as nine is the last of the digits, and is also to be observed in judgement.

- (1) The Gematria of "Dan" which means a Judge is 54 (9 x 6)
- (2) "Tee orgee mon" my wrath = 999 (Heb. 3:11)
- (3) The solemn Amen or Ameen or "verily" of our Lord, amounts to 99 also, summing up and ending His words.
- (4) The sum of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet is 4995 (5 x 999) and is stamped, therefore, with the numbers of grace, finality.
- (5) The gifts of the spirit are nine in number (1 Cor. 12: 8-10)
- (6) Nine is the square of 3 and three is the number of Divine perfection as we have seen. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that this number denotes finality in Divine things. Hence the gifts of the spirit and also the fruit of the spirit is nine graces (Gal. 5: 22-23)

Think too of the emphasis of the ninth hour in scripture and the issue of finality it brings. We hope, then, that the finality of this book of the Judges is determined, ready to give way to the Theocracy. The final act of Judgment upon sin (Rev. 20) by the Lord Jesus will readily do this when God will be All in All:

It will have been appreciated that even the numbers contained within this book open up to us the spiritual content of Judges, and are used precisely for this purpose.

The Aim of the Book of Judges

It is not to give a continuous history of these times, but to illustrate in particular the striking deliverances, and the Divine principle of dealing with Israel, which is laid down in Judges 2: 16-23, (A) in raising Judges up to deliver His people when they cried to Him in repentance and returned in truth to Him. (B) Also to teach Israel lessons from their own actions, in making their idols sin to them.

The Imperfection of the Judges

These will be noted in further study, possession of inspired gifts was not always accompanied by the right use of them, as in Corinth (1 Cor. ch. 12-14 etc) - Gideon and his golden ephod: Jephthah and his vow, according to popular thought, Samson who truly shadowed forth the strength, and weakness, of Israel, whose representative he was. Samson revealed -

- (1) Absolute strength with integrity when separated to Yahweh
- (2) Utter weakness when that consecration became severed as Samson's by lust.

The Deliverances, whole or partial?

Each Judge delivered only part of Israel

- (1) Shamgar, the district in the Philistine direction.
- (2) Deborah and Barak, Northern Israel (4: 10) so also
- (3) Gideon (6: 35)

- (4) Jephthah saved Eastern Israel
- (5) Samson, Judah and Dan

It is plainly evident that historical facts which did not subserve the spiritual purpose of the book are not specially detailed, as Ephraim's victory over Oreb and Zeeb (8: 3 Isa. 10-26)

Samson as we have indicated was the last extraordinary Judge, and was born during Eli's Priesthood. At that time the Philistines ruled Israel and the Divine promise concerning him was "He shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines" 13-5) The deliverance so begun by Samson was finally completed by David and his victory over Goliath was the earnest of his success (1 Sam. 17 etc). Only the tribes suffering at the time under the enemy's oppression are noticed, whilst the rest who observed the Law of Yahweh, and therefore had peace, are not alluded to. The treatment of the history reminds the writer of the Book of Acts of the Apostles, in which there is some affinity to the Judges, and Luke's Gospel which are so written to provide the Apostle Paul with a brief at the court of Nero, and both are a complete answer to the query that could be asked "Could the Gospel of Jesus Christ the King of the Jews be preached within the confines of the Roman Empire without Emporor worship and the Roman Law being abrogated?"

It could, and was. It was Ironside Still many years ago who first introduced the idea of the Acts, and the present writer researched for a considerable period regarding Luke and in his opinion the case is fully made.

The book is - Paul on Trial - Ironside Still

Not very deep research is necessary to trace a threefold denunciation by God because of their practices at this time during the Judges, and of course, their practical fulfilment.

The threats were given at -

- (1) Bochim (2 : 1-4)
- (2) At the Midianite invasion (6: 7-10)
- (3) At the Ammonite and Philistine oppression (10: 10-14) Fausset from whom these words are culled, states "These threats came to pass in Israel's ever deepening oppression by the enemy without and in the mutual severance of the tribes within".

Under Othniel and Ehud, all Israel combined against the oppressor. (Then the decay began A.H.) Under Barak, Reuben, Gilead, Dan and Asher, took no part (5: 15-17). Gideon with difficulty appeased the sensitive jealousy of Ephraim. (C/p 8) The further decay of the nation betrays itself in Abimelech's usurpation of kingship at Shechem (Ch.9) Ephraim fought with Jephthah and the Trans-Jordanic tribes to its own grievous hurt (Ch.12) Judah was so degenerate as to seek to give up the nation's deliverer Samson to the Philistines (15: 9-14) and finally left him alone to carry on the conflict with the Philistines. In an attempt to revive the nation, and of course to reveal God's care and watchful eye over His people on four occasions, God openly manifests Himself through "the Angel of the Lord" or Yahweh Angel; in the present writer's understanding, the same Angel who led Israel ever afterwards after being manifested at Etham (Ex. 13: 21, 14 - 19)

On these four occasions when the Divine Angel appeared the Holy Spirit followed on (clothing them with itself) Judges 6, qualifying the Judge for the saving of Israel.

- (1) Judges 2 : 1-5, 3-10 In the days of Joshua
- (2) Judges 6:11, 34 To Gideon

- (3) Judges 10 : 10-16, 11-29 After the death of Jair.
 (4) Judges 13: 3-25 To the wife of Manoah, Samson's mother.

So number four enters our glossary of Bible numbers. The teaching itself is not hard to assess, and once again it is truly wonderful. One is reminded of the four square altars, brazen and incense, the four heads of the cherubim. The lion of wild beasts, the ox of tame beasts. The eagle of birds, and man head of all. They mark the purpose of God from the moment the curse was pronounced, and are the pledge that it will one day be removed.

However, these Epiphanies or manifestations of God revived the nation only for a short period, and were followed by ever-deepening Apostasies. (This condition happened again later of course, and the early part of Ezekiel tends to show how far a nation could slip away from God by these idolatrous beliefs and awful practices. So consequently we notice, the people's servitudes increased successively in length. For instance:-

- (1) They served Cushan - Rishathaim for 8 years. (2) Eglon for 18 years.
 (3) Jabin for 20 years.

Humiliation also followed closely, and increased in degree, with the extended servitudes.

- (A) First they served a distant king.
 (B) Next a neighbouring king.
 (C) Then a king in Canaan itself.

To complete the humiliation Israel were disarmed by some of their captors. (1) Jabin (5: 8) and (2) as in 1 Sam. 13-22, by the Philistines.

Further statistics reveal that the three nations which first brought Israel into bondage were the same that proved to be her scourge in subsequent history. - Mesopotamia, Moab, and Philistia. Equally of interest do we find that the 4th, 5th and 6th servitudes, namely those to Midian, rise in progressive severity, lasting as they did for seven, eighteen and forty years respectively.

The principle is strongly demonstrated in 1 John in rather brief detail, although the impact is certainly potent, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols" whilst you have the strength, determination and drive to do so, because when you are old you may not have the strength. (Paraphrase A.H.)

May we outline the layout in brief detail.

The Main Divisions of the Book of Judges in 3 parts

- (1) The introduction (Ch. 1 : 3-6)
 (A) Israel's relation to Canaan.
Geographical and Political

The doings or failures in the duty of the Tribes or Families, in subduing the land (Ch. 1)

- (B) Israel's relations to Yahweh (Ch. 2: 3-6)

Disobedience and apostasy accounting for Israel's failure to drive out the Canaanites utterly, and for Israel's consequent chastisement by the enemy.

The nations to be allowed by God to remain for the purpose of proving whether or not Israel would serve Him.

(1) The refusal by Israel and result

Result 93 - 111 years. $\frac{1}{4}$ of the period of the Judges was spent in servitude because of this defection. It is important to know that the history from Ch. 1 - 2:6, occurred before Joshua's death, and the words "Now after the death of Joshua", are not in the R.V. of Judges 1:1, which according to the R.V. should read "And it came to pass" We do get Joshua's death narrated in 2: 7-9 by repetition from Joshua 24: 29-31. Consequently, if the words "now after" in Ch. 1 are reliable, they must refer to 2:11. "The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord", Kiel observes that the word "Now" of Ch.1, 1, or the Hebrew "Vau" is connecting this book with the foregoing book Joshua (cp. Joshua 1 - 1). The conjunctive (he comments on 1 Kings 1 - 1) at the beginning of a writing is a sure sign that it was connected with another:

We have already brought out the general facts and lessons of the book which are briefly set forth in 2: 11, 3:6, namely the high calling and apostasy of Israel notwithstanding God's distinguishing favour, consequent chastenings, and His subsequently raising up Judges because of His compassion for their groanings and cries to Him, then upon the death of each Judge their relapse into idolatry.

(2) The Body of the Work (Ch. 3: 7-16) Here we find a resumption of the opening formula from 2:11 "The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord". As always in Scripture political events are treated as secondary.

The spiritual truths of the history occupy the foreground. History quite truly but with a difference, Divine History - Divine History in which the spiritual elements rank foremost because as in most Bible history, the spiritual element looks forward, or backward, to the Lord Jesus Christ, and the work of redemption obtained only in His name. It is rather interesting to compare the list of 13 Judges already mentioned as occupying a place in this book. Fausset remarks out of 13 Judges -

(1) Seven are briefly noticed

(ii) The record of the remaining six is full. Viz. Ehud, Deborah and Barak, Gideon, Abimelech, Jephthah and Samson.

(iii) Othniel is the only representative of Judah

(iv) Most of the Judges belonged to Northern and Eastern Israel.

(v) Gideon is the only one whose son's career is detailed and the reason doubtless is because it illustrates the spiritual lesson of the whole. Gideon's sin in making the ephod, resulted in the destruction of all his family except Jotham, and this by the son of his concubine, Abimelech, aided by the men of Shechem, then these in turn, Abimelech and the men of Shechem, were made by God the instruments of punishing one another. Such was the fatal issue of the first effort to substitute an earthly King for Yahweh of Hosts.

(vi) Jephthah's daughter is the only instance where the family inheritance became blotted out through obedience to a vow, rather intriguing we think, after all his work Jephthah's inheritance became void, as an illegitimate son. He had no claim, and because his daughter fulfilled his vow it took him back to where he started - no-where.

Is this the justice of the Lord, may we ask? It would appear to be so naturally and politically. But - this is spiritual history and here lies the difference as Paul is at pains to illustrate. "Time would fail me to tell of Gideon and of Barak, and of Samson and of JEPHTHAH" etc. Heb.11:32. Jephthah is all right, he will be in the Kingdom of God. He is one of those

of whom the world who rejected him is not worthy. Heb. 11:38. Here lies the difference between natural and spiritual history; although he died childless, he was a man that the Lord had utterly separated from His people, neither should he say "Behold I am a dry tree". For thus saith the Lord: "Unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and daughters. I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off". Isa. 56: 3-5

(3) An Appendix to Judges (Ch. 17 - 21)

A) Introduction of image worship into the family of Micah (what a terrible travesty of a name. Micah means "Like unto Yah") and thence among Danites who adopted it on their way to the conquest of Laish (Ch. 17-18)

B) How true the name of Dan is - "Judgment" and how severely had this tribe to suffer in consequence of their evil ways. i.e. The tribe that led Israel into this terrible apostasy at this time".

C) We have the depth of moral corruption and depravity into which Israel had fallen by association with the Canaanites, as illustrated in the sin of Gibeah.

A studious comparison of Judges 1-34, 18:1, concerning Dan will make it expressly evident that Micah's commencement of image worship and the Danites carrying away his image and the emigration to Laish occurred in the earliest part of the Judges. Similarly can it be adduced that the wicked act of Gibeah and its avenging happened also at a very early date in the Judges. Ch. 20

D) Judges 20 is also very striking because at verse 28 we have the only mention of the Aaronic Priesthood in the book. "And Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, stood before it (the Ark of the covenant, verse 27) in those days". 20 - 26 mentions "all Israel" excluding Benjamin at this time resorting to the Tabernacle to ask for the Lord's verdict by Urim and Thummin. This is what is meant by Phinehas, now High Priest, standing before the Ark, and a most marvellous person he was, because to him had been given the covenant of Peace (Malachi 2: 4-5) for his strong defence of Divine principles when the people revolted in the iniquity of Baal. Numbers 25 - particularly 7-13. This reference to Phinehas and the ark etc. is not altogether unimportant, for it does prove, that all Israel did assemble for instruction, and they did worship at the Tabernacle. It is outside the scope of the book to show this aspect of the times, but it seems obvious, that under the rule of the various extraordinary Judges, Othniel etc. Israel were brought back to the true worship and such times equalled approx. $\frac{3}{4}$ of the whole period (see earlier notes in the introduction) otherwise the deliverance could not have continued; 40 years, 80 years, 40 years, and so forth, a great silence is kept, and history is veiled for the purpose of showing the apostasy of Israel, and God's deliverance when they cried to him in repentance.

E) Equally so, we must draw attention to the rather revolting opposite that is to be found in this book, a fact which is very much deplored by the Jewish Rabbis, who did their best to veil it from Gentile eyes, but our R.V. revealed it rather starkly. We are referring to the enigmatic case of what has been nicknamed the "suspended nun". The reference is Judges 18:30. "And the children of Dan set up the graven image; and Jo'nathan the son of Gershom the son of Manasseh, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land". Manasseh is the operative word; this word is one of the four that has a suspended letter. Here the letter N or "Num" is written partly in the line of the other letters, and partly above the line to show that it originally formed no part of the word, but was put in to make it spell "Manasseh"

instead of Moses. Jonathan was the grandson of Moses (his contemporary Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron, being mentioned in Judges 20 : 28 as we have seen. This was done for two reasons (1) to spare the honour of Moses' memory and name, (2) to put the sin upon one who committed so gross a sin. The Talmud gives the latter as the reason i.e. The most wicked King in Judah. Jonathan's name is omitted in 1 Chron. 23 : 15-16 and 26: 24. The Chaldee Targum paraphrase says that "Shebuel" there substituted, is meant for Jonathan, after his repentance and restoration. Shebuel "He returned unto God". The R.V. follows Sept and Chaldee by putting "Manasseh" in the text. The R.V. follows the Vulgate Latin translation by Jerome, and those codices and early editions which have "N" suspended, by putting "Moses" in the text not Manasseh. The Companion Bible offers this very revealing information. We have to be very careful as we embark upon these investigations otherwise we can easily fall into the pit of Rabbinical casuistry as they manipulate the text to their peculiar point of view. We will leave our opinion for fuller discussion later. The very last verse of Judges sums up the whole period (21:25) "In those days there was no king in Israel. Every man did what was right in his own eyes."

We have already emphasised the point of the almost complete obliteration of the Priesthood from the record, there is only one mention (20:26-28). Spiritually speaking:-

- A) In the book of Joshua we have seen that Joshua, or the Lord Jesus, through His death and resurrection gives us possession of what is ours in Christ.
- B) Judges is the history of what should have been a progress.
- C) All through Joshua we are reminded "That there remaineth very much land to be possessed", enemies there will be to overcome. The perfect balance, of course.

This is our spiritual heritage in Christ.

Always we have over us the stigma of belonging to the third generation of the Truth in our days. This having already been reviewed, we pass on to point out the relevance of the aspects of what Judges ought to be to the Truth - nationally, ecclesiastically and personally.

"There is much land to be possessed, or the Truth to be disseminated throughout the World, and our overseas Bible Missions are trying to cope with it, vast though the mission is, and the prognosis dark. c/p. Matt. 14: 22-33. The incident of the great storm on Galilee and of Jesus coming to the disciples in desperate fear of drowning. Note the timing from the typical angle. It is just before or about the Passover as John 6, a parallel Gospel, shows (John 6: 3-4)

- (1) The passover denoted the death of Jesus and, of course, His resurrection.
- (2) Jesus sent His disciples to the other side of Galilee. Galilee is now a Galilee of the Gentiles; typically, then, Jesus sent His disciples into the sea of nations, or Gentiles, just as we are sent in these days to preach the Gospel.
- (3) What has been the state of the nations since the ascension? - tempestuous, to say the least, and, as we see today, "casting up mire and dirt... the sea and the waves roaring".
- (4) And the fellowship of the Truth "In the midst of the sea, tossed to and fro, for the wind has been contrary".

The book of the Revelation shows this aspect only too well.

(5) Looking up the chart of the Revelation or Apocalypse which we have in our possession from Brisbane, Australia, (rather good we believe), what do we find? Precisely nothing to state for our days, and like those disciples on Galilee we are 'getting nowhere fast', the wind is definitely contrary, and not only outside in the World. The wind of change blows bleakly within, and our days are definitely Laodocean. For all our overseas efforts, natural efforts, and ecclesial efforts, we are getting stuck not only in a storm-tossed Galilee, but also in a lifeless windless Saragossa and we become becalmed spiritually. Very much like Israel, who, at the time of Jesus, not only dwelt in darkness, but were content to "sit in it", Matthew 4:15. Is not this our situation today?

(6) When our Lord left the disciples with the command to go to the other side of Galilee, he ascended up into a mountain to be with the Father alone (because the devil had once again visited him, with rare ferocity. The crowd wanted to make him king, and with its setting so near to the Passover, the temptation achieved deep penetration. Could he avoid the pain and humility of the cross? He knew that He could not, and so overcame on the mountain. In our typical comment the ascension is literal and Jesus has looked down on the contrariness of human nature for almost 2000 years, in fact almost to the fourth watch 3-6 a.m. in the morning. It is then that He comes to us in our toil. The fourth watch is upon us we believe. "How long Lord?" These are the days of Noah, days of lethargy and ease. How does the call affect us in our various ways? Are we shepherds feeding the flock? Or is our personal forte that of Dorcas? Can we go overseas to help? Do we comfort the sick and aged? Are we really devout Bible students? It is without doubt a day of small things, when we must not seek great things for ourselves. We are very foolish if we do.

(7) So if the Revelation does not even hint at possession in our day, if we are fighting against the wind, and putting all our strength into it, then, as in the days when the Judges ruled, we are showing progress, and if it is "Seen only in secret" by the Lord Jesus, no doubt He will reward us openly.

The incident on Galilee is capable of extended exposition, particularly should our readers care to apply the parallel records and undoubted benefit will accrue should they apply their minds diligently to these things. Shall we not then fight for our heritage, and through the strength supplied only in Christ, overcome all things?

Returning to the closing chapters of Judges, we notice, along with Fausset, that there are no Judges mentioned in this section. But the writer does notice "The day of the captivity of the land, i.e. the carrying away of the ark by the Philistines, for the sanctuary was the kernel and essence of the land (Hengstenburg) and the Psalmist 78: 60-61 describes the capture of the ark in similar language. "God forsook the tabernacle at Shiloh and delivered His strength into captivity and His glory into the enemy's hand", and the completeness of Israel's prostration under the Philistines is indicated in 1 Sam. 13: 19-23. Perhaps we do not realise the fact that Gibeah's awful wickedness and Benjamin's defence of it almost led to the extermination of Benjamin by the rest of united Israel. (Ch. 19-21) This point of time can be fairly definitely fixed.

(A) The unity of the tribes, and the mention of Aaron's grandson Phinehas, (20: 18) compared with Joshua 22:13, 24:33, point to a date just after Joshua's death.

Fausset goes on to state "These two histories depict the spirit of the Judges to which they are appended at the close, so as not to interrupt the historical sequence. They were not isolated events, but exercised a permanent influence for evil in doctrine and practice. Micah's idol, apparently the first introduced after, and in spite of, Joshua's charge and the people's

solemn protest of faithfulness (Joshua 24: 15-16, 20-21) was permanently set up, with a regular priesthood by the tribe of Dan. (18: 30-31). Gibeah's moral filthiness, the invariable associate of idolatry, was not eradicated by the terrible punishment of Benjamin, but affected the tribes ever afterwards, as the prophet Hosea testifies. Hosea 9:9 "They have deeply corrupted themselves, as in the days of Gibeah", c/p. also Hosea 10:9 "O Israel, thou hast sinned from the days of Gibeah"

The Connections between Joshua and 1 Samuel with Judges are fairly established.

We have already mentioned briefly the repetition of the account of Joshua's death (Joshua 24:28-31) in Judges 2:6-9. The spiritual connections link in a peculiar way. The book, though having as its subject events after Joshua's death, yet narrates, at the beginning, events preceding it, as being spiritually connected with those events following it. Thus we find statements viz.

(A) Judges 1: 10-15, 20, 21, 27, 29, being identical with Josh. 15: 14-19, 15: 63: 17:12, 16:10

(B) Also Judges 18 with Joshua 19:47

(C) Moreover the book of Judges prepares the way for the books of Samuel and Kings.

Thus the tributary state of the Canaanite remnant under Solomon (1 Kings 9: 13-22) harmonises with the statements in Judges 1:28, 30, 33, 35.

(D) The kindness of Saul and David to the Kenites (1 Sam. 15:6, 30:29) is accounted for in Judges 1:16.

(E) An illusion is made in 2 Sam. 11-21 to the death of Abimelech recorded in Judges 9.

We are heavily indebted to Fausset for this section of the introduction.

The Authorship of the book of Judges and date etc.

(1) The general consensus seems to fall on Samuel as the writer. This is more than likely, because it does appear possible to limit the period when it could have been written.

(2) Obviously this cannot be earlier than the close of that deliverance from the Philistine oppression which Samson "began" (13-5) and Samuel and David completed (1 Sam. 7: 9-14, 1 Sam. 17 etc.)

(3) Again it must have been before David's taking of Zion from the Jebusites (1:21, 2 Sam. 5-6) for these dwelt with the Benjaminites in Jerusalem down to the time of the writing of Judges.

(4) Zidon oppressed Israel during that period (Judges 10:12) and it was to Zidon that the Canaanites then looked for protection (18:7) In David's days on the other hand, Tyre took the lead and was his ally instead of being like Zidon, Israel's enemy.

(5) By the time the book of Judges was composed, Israel had a King, and was enjoying a more organised government as is proved by 18:1 "In those days there was no King in Israel but every man did that what was right in his own eyes". (c/p. 17:6, 19:1) This is understood by the law of inference. Probably Samuel, or one of the sons of the prophets, was the writer either in Saul's kingship or, if by one of the sons of the prophets, early in David's reign. Presumably it was written after the Philistine capture of the ark and its return and setting up at Nob in Saul's reign. (1 Samuel 21) as appears from Judges 18: 30-31 "Until the day of the captivity of the land" (i.e. the captivity of the ark),

for the ark was regarded (as we have before stated) as the very heart of the national theocracy (and its capture as the captivity of the people). They set up Micah's image all the time that the house of God was at Shiloh. The last words brand them with the stigma of perverse wickedness in face of the Divine testimony close by them in Shiloh. The Talmud affirms that the book of Judges was written by Samuel. We have no reason to oppose this viewpoint; we too believe that Samuel was the most likely author. Really it does not matter who wrote this book. It was written during the period stated, and not long after the events, as noted by the critics. "It is a unified authorship and the bleatings of the Higher Critics such as Ziegler, Bertheau, Studer, De Welte, Stahelin, and others, do not in any way invalidate or carry sufficient weight to destroy the authority of the Ancient Hebrew; and Christian communities, which have ever regarded this book as constituting one well compacted composition". (Wordsworth) To which we say Amen.

A final note in this somewhat lengthy Introduction (but necessary because of the special problems that are to be faced when we attempt a study of the Judges). In keeping with many ages the modernistic viewpoint on Judges is only a secular one, and many people today who should know better, reckon this book without any spiritual value, and if one were to advance the viewpoint that it is absolutely full of spiritual value, particularly regarding the Lord Jesus Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit during the Apostate era, they would be profoundly shocked and our ideas condemned as nebulous and highly imaginative (We have however just put these thoughts as a basic fact of Judges, and we stand or fall by this thesis, not from our own thoughts but from the Scripture itself). But was this secular aspect always held in former centuries? one might ask. Wordsworth has some striking words to say on this subject. He says :

'What ancient expositor of this book ever thought of commenting on the history of Jael, a woman pointed out by the voice of prophecy (4 : 9) as the future destroyer of Sisera (the captain of the hosts of the aliens arrayed against the armies of the God of Israel), and endued with supernatural power to accomplish the purpose, which she was stirred up by a supernatural impulse to attempt, and executing that purpose by driving through his head the nail of wood by which her tent was kept firm - who (I ask) in ancient times ever dreamt of expounding this marvellous history, without reference to the deed done, according to ancient prophecy by the seed of the woman, bruising the head of our spiritual Sisera, by the wood of His cross; and to the spiritual work of the Christian Church, by the preaching of the doctrine of the Cross, by which the church is settled in the Truth, and is able to overcome her enemies? Who among the ancient readers of this book thought that he could understand the history of Gideon aught, except he saw in the history of Gideon's fleece, and of the threshing floor around it, and image of the Jewish church and of the Church universal?

As the dew was first on the fleece, and not on the floor, so the dews of God's spirit were first on the Jewish people, and the world all around it was dry. But afterwards the dews of the spirit fell on the floor of the world, and the Jewish Fleece is now dry. What ancient expositor ever supposed that he had communicated the true meaning of the history of Gideon, to his hearers or readers, without profiting by the suggestions of the Spirit of God, speaking by the prophet Isaiah connecting the 'Day of Midian' with the victory of the Christ of God". Isaiah 9:6 "For thou

hast broken the yoke of His burden, the rod of His oppressor, as in the day of Midian, and without pointing their thoughts to a greater Gideon who is the true Jerubaal, and who has destroyed the idolatrous altars of this world, and who has routed the immense hosts of spiritual Midians by the sound of the trumpets of His Gospel, and by the breaking of the earthen pitchers in the martyrdom of his servants, shattered in death for His sake: and by the flashing forth of the light of the Gospel from these earthen vessels, by their sufferings and death. Who among the ancient expositors ever commented on the history of Abimelech, usurping the throne at Shechem in the very Sanctuary of God, and falling at last by means of his own usurpation, without seeing there a foreshadowing of Antichrist?

Whoever preached a homily in the ancient churches on the wonderful feats of Samson, without reminding his hearer that they ought not to be surprised into unbelief by these marvels? And wherefore now? Because a greater than Samson is here. A Samson and more than a Samson, in strength and spiritual gifts. One who shines forth as a perfect example of the right use of spiritual gifts, whereas Samson stands out to the world as a solemn warning against their abuse. Whoever preached a sermon in ancient times on the history of Samson without reminding his audience of one who did not despise His own nation as Samson did (14: 3 etc.) but was despised by it. One who did indeed espouse a Bride from the heathen, as Samson did, and one who never lost her as Samson did, one who encountered the lion, as Samson did, even that roaring lion who is ever going about to devour us; Who gathered the honey of Divine truth out of his carcase, and is ever giving that honey to us. One who gathered the honey of Divine truth out of the carcase of a vanquished error. One who gathered the honey of life eternal out of His conflict of death. One who by dying, gave immortality to man; one who out of the prostrate bodies of Sin, Satan and the grave, gathered for us the honey of spiritual sweetness and heavenly joy. One who was meek and lowly as Samson was in his modest beginnings, and who never degenerated, as he did, but continued meek to the end. One who overthrew his thousands, and tens of thousands, by the foolishness of preaching, as Samson slew the Philistines by a despised instrument, the jawbone of an ass. One who awoke at midnight from sleep, even from the sleep of death - in the strong city of a spiritual Gaza, even in the fortress of the adversary, even in the fortress of Death and the Grave, and broke asunder its iron bars and brazen bolts and carried them away on His shoulders towards the top of a heavenly Hebron and proclaimed victory and resurrection to the world. One who was a Nazarite indeed, sanctified to God, from His mother's womb, but who never allowed the seven locks of His head - the sevenfold gifts of the spirit to be woven by any Delilah of sensual delight, into the web of voluptuous ease, or to be shorn by an unhallowed hand while he lay in the lap of worldly allurements, or earthly fascinations. But who preserved those spiritual locks uncathed and holy to the end? Who had never His eyes put out, but who is the light of the World, and who entered the prison of the grave, in order to

disarm the jailor and to deliver the world out of prison, and who, though He overthrew more at His death than in His life, yet it was not that His own body might remain buried, in the confused heap of ruins of some Dagon's Temple. amid the bodies of Philistines but that He might arise again from the grave to glory, and ascend in triumph to heaven and sit down at the right hand of God, and finally bring us to that spiritual altitude where He Himself is, and that we might be ever with the Lord (1 Thess. 4:17)"

This thumbnail sketch and comparison between Samson and the Lord Jesus gives us a striking example of that which meets us continually in this book, and indeed throughout the Old Testament. The Antitype corrects the Type. Whenever Samson diverges from the right line of obedience, there the example of Christ comes into rectify the aberration; and whenever the weakness and wilfulness of Samson bring him down to defeat and shame, there the steadfastness and obedience of Christ raise Him up to victory and glory. Both the Type and Antitype have cheered the Ecclesias down the long ages of time, in sorrow and distress, with assurances of the power of the spirit and while the Type in Samson warns us against the abuse of spiritual gifts the Antitype in Christ teaches us how to use them aright.

The principle clearly outlined for us (and this is basic through the Judges, for our purpose and of course in truth) is that the Judges of Israel were types of Christ in all they did WELL, but in nothing they did ill. In this latter they are contrasts to Christ. And the general principle following will be that whenever they acted amiss, Christ's example supplies the antithesis and antidote to their sins. Gideon's polygamy and his ephod find their necessary corrections in Christ's love for His Church which is ONE, although a multitudinous unity formed out of many nations and out of all ages (see the Song of Solomon by the present writer).

We have before stated, however, that it is our belief that it is Christ's work in general that is in focus, along with the Apostles who followed Him. May we not then take to heart these spiritual lessons of sterling value, and apply them while there is yet time. We must not forget that priceless gem of literature the Book of Ruth which finds its setting within the confines of our study, possibly we shall include it as an Appendix. The times under which our lot has fallen are rapidly approaching the decline of these days "when there was no king in Israel"; let us, however, take heart, for this doubtful distinction will soon be remedied, for "The King will reign in righteousness and in judgment draws near". Let this knowledge always be in the forefront of our mind as we thread our way through this most fascinating book in Scripture.

CHAPTER 1

Turning now to the actual introduction of Judges for comments we remember that

Judges 1 : 3-4 = Section No.1 and possibly we could entitle it "Independency of God" in general, and as we approach the actual text of this book there is one thing that should strike us. The history of these deliverances is not an ascending one, but like that favourite book, hand book to prophecy should we say? "The Decline and fall of the Roman Empire", once so well loved in our midst. Judges can be viewed in this sense, as the history of the rise and fall of these days.

The last deliverer, Samson, though strongest of them all. appears to be the weakest and himself needs more deliverance than he gives.

A. Chapter 1. Israel's relation to Canaan, geographical and political. The doings or failures in the duty of the tribes or families in subduing the land.

1. What do we find?
2. In particular, as this work is "What's in a Name? No.3", what is the teaching of the names in this particular section of Israeli history?
- 3 How rich is it in spiritual understanding?

These are our three bulwarks of further expositions.

We have before stated that the events from 1 - 1 to 2 - 6 occurred before Joshua's death, serving to give linkage between the two books, and that the words 1:1 "Now after the death of Joshua" are omitted in the R.V., and should read "And it came to pass".

We do not have the death of Joshua narrated until 2 : 7-9, as we have noticed, and this is by repetition from Joshua 24: 29-31. We observed that if the words "Now after" are reliable, then they must refer to 2:11 "The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord".

We did comment on the word "Now" of Ch.1, that in the Hebrew sense it is a conjunctive word (compare with Joshua 1.1) There are other reasons why these early verses occurred in the time of Joshua. They had a very special place in the redemptive work of God, and put the record on a straightforward basis. Judges 1:1+20 relates how Judah, at the command of the Lord, attacked the Canaanites, and a highly interesting account is given of the capture of Adoni-Zedek. From a typical and spiritual point of view this incident gives the whole book backbone, and makes the missions authoritative, as they were representative, of, in particular: -

- (1) The days of Jesus. (2) After years, including our own days.
- (3) In fact we can say we believe with certainty, tentatively dogmatic: that unless Joshua had still been alive, the events could not have happened. It would be true from this viewpoint to say that Jonathan, though unafraid, could not have faced Goliath in single combat. It must be David, or no one. (1 Sam. 17 etc.) Just to get this basic fact straight, and to see why this has to be so, we will quote Joshua 1: 4-7 first of all;-

"From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.

There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee, I will not fail thee, or forsake thee.

Be strong and of a good courage, for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them.

Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest".

In this narrative of events just before Joshua's death, but told here as spiritually connected with the events after his death, it came to pass that Israel asked the will of the Lord, obviously through the Urim and Thummim of the High Priest (20: 23-27, Numbers 27:21)

(The omission to ask counsel thus, at the mouth of the Lord, led to the unwise league with Gibeon (Joshua 9: 14) The answer to the question "Who shall go up?" against the Canaanites etc. was "Judah shall go first",

i. e. from the plain of Gilgal (Judges 2-1) (leaving Simeon for the moment). We read Judges 1: 4 "And Judah went up and the Lord delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand. And they slew of them in Bezek, ten thousand men." This number is the cube root of 10 (10 x 10 x 10 = 10,000. 10 in itself means ordinal perfection, ten plagues, ten commandments etc., and taken to the 3rd power (10,000) we have Divine Perfection associated with it.

The position was made abundantly clear. If they fought being led by Judah (Praise) and Simeon, hearing the Divine commandments, then nothing in this world could stand against them. Yahweh had devoted the Canaanites to utter destruction as the pursuit at (1-1 7) Hormah (devoted to destruction) reveals spiritually. The same victory has been made abundantly clear to us, who are the latter day successors of the men "who turned the world upside down" (Acts. 17:6) we have to press on in similar spirit.

(1) Praise of Yah (Judah) "He that ordereth his conversation aright praiseth me. (Psa. 50: 23) "And I will show h' m my salvation"

(2) This combines the Simeon also, "Hearing the Son", because this is the Son of God's only name under heaven whereby we can be saved.

Psa. 72 Isaiah - 2, Micah - 4 etc. all salute the victory to be in symbol, the slain of the Lord will be 10,000 in that day, complete ordinal victory, just as the slain in Bezek were 10,000 in this day complete and utter victory.

(3) Whilst we believe this to be absolutely accurate, has God disclosed how this is to be done? And why? Most certainly He has, and the information concerning Adoni - Bezek will illustrate. It is correlated in an amazing way with the 10,000 slain, and this is the reason why we said that the victory must be celebrated under Joshua.

(4) Judges 1: 5-7 "And they found Adoni - Bezek in Bezek, and they fought against him, and they pursued after him and caught him and cut off his thumbs and his great toes. And Adoni-Bezek said, threescore and ten kings having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table. As I have done, so God have requited me. And they brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died.

(1) (A) First of all it is of interest to know that two tribes went together against the Canaanites (1.3)

(B) Christ sent forth His disciples two and two (Mark 6:7, Luke 10:1)

(C) Later the Apostles sent Peter and John together from Jerusalem to Samaria (Acts 8:14)

(D) The Holy Spirit sent Paul and Barnabas together from Antioch to preach to the Gentiles (Acts 13: 1-2-47) They were sent forth in pairs to fight against the spiritual Canaanites, and to subdue by spiritual warfare the world to God, and as we have pointed out they were definitely successful at this period because they turned the world "the RIGHT WAY UP" towards God. (Acts. 17:6) Type and Antitype agree.

Think again of Paul and Barnabas, Acts 4: 36, as two men who had their names changed or added to.

(A) Saul was called Paul, Acts 13, 9.

(B) Joseph was surnamed Barnabas, the son of exhortation or consolation (Acts. 4.36) Saul means "To be demanded" (as Saul the son of Kish for king) it also means "To be asked for" as Saul was at Troas "Come over into Macedonia and help us". (Acts 16: 8-10) by the Gentiles.

The word has the notification of "To be desired" and it also bears the idea of desire, or wished for, on the part of the person bearing the name.

(C) Saul the Pharisee had this name and his greatest desire, all through his life, was to have true righteousness with God.

(1) He had found that the righteousness under the Law which he had sought so fervently, and concerning the Ecclesias, had so rapaciously executed, led only to death.

(2) The crown of righteousness he so fervently sought, could only be attained in Christ Jesus, at His return (2 Tim. 4:8)

(3) Furthermore, according to his new name, Paul (Acts 13) which has the meaning of "Little or Small" Paul realised it could only be achieved through humility, restraint, and to make oneself "Small" in God's eyes, consequently "Paul" indicates, to be "restrained", "constrained", "reduced", lessened, made small and little. By the application of these principles Paul the Pharisee, helped to make himself Paul the Christian, and Paul our beloved Apostle, the one (so he said) "born out of due time" the least of all the Apostles, the little one or in Hebrew thought - the youngest.

(4) These principles found in Saul who was called Paul are sent out together with those resident in "the rich young ruler". Joses who was surnamed Barnabas (Acts 4: 34-37)

(A) Joses means "Whom Yahweh will add to", "Yahweh shall increase", the idea behind it being that Joses shall increase progressively; make progress from "perfection unto perfection".

(B) Barnabas - "son of exhortation", "son of praise", "son of consolation". Again it is necessary to understand that Joses must sell all and give to the poor, as required of the rich young ruler; leave all power and authority behind, make himself poor for Christ's sake - then true to his original name he would "increase" progressively, in opposition to Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5 : 1-10) "who kept back part of the money" which they should have dedicated to the Lord, and perished. It was because Joses did as his Lord advised that his name was "added to"; because of this act he became Barnabas.

(A) The Son of Consolation to those who benefited,

(B) The Son of Exhortation to his fellow Apostles and later brethren and sisters,

(C) The Son of Praise to the Father having ordered his life or conversation aright, and, in the very near future, will be shown the salvation of Yah. (Psa. 50 : 23).

(D) So we have as "partners in the work" of the truth a desire for the right thing, which is asked for in prayer and humility and self constraint, making ourselves small or little in the eyes of Christ. The Lord will then "add to" that smallness. He will increase it, and as the true light "it will shine more and more unto the perfect day". This will be found in very practical measures, as we found in Barnabas. In so doing our lives will be after the pattern of his "sons of praise unto our Lord".

(E) What is the method in our day of spiritual missions? Do we go two and two? Are we sure that in each case our mission has the authority of Christ, or of the Ecclesia? These we believe are to be carefully considered whenever we "go up" spiritually to encounter wickedness in high places. Ages may go by in time, and there may be changes in application to the knowledge uncovered as age succeeds age, but the principles stated in Judges 1 : 1-4 are as changeless as God Himself.

(F) We find that the command "Go up" had been given to all Israel (Deut.20:17, Joshua 10 : 40)

(G) "Judah shall go up first"

Judah was the tribe of Christ to come (Genesis 49 : 8 -12), let us not forget it. Joshua of Ephraim along with Eleazar of Levi had led Israel over Jordan (Joshua 4:) Caleb of Judah (Kenite) is not mentioned, although he must have been at hand to help in his honourable capacity as "elder statesman" along with Joshua ¹ the two spies who were faithful to God 40 years before (Numbers 14: 23)

In Judges it is entirely different, with the picture in mind of subduing what resistance remains to the complete annexation of Canaan. Judah now is chosen first, and invites Simeon to help in this section of the upland mountain region, and Judah would go down to help in the lowlands given to Simeon. In this section we have the valiant conquests of two tribes only, and it is an earnest of what could follow if all the tribes attacked in faithful trust. We can now approach the case of Adoni-Bezek as the second and most emphatic incentive not only to Israel but also to the first century believers and ourselves in particular.

(A) Judges 1 - 5 Bezek was situated near to Shechem, actually seventeen miles north. Shechem is the place of strength and means "shoulder". Here Jeroboam was named king (1 Kings 12 : 1-19). Bezek has the meaning of "scattered," "dispersed" and "lightning" or "flash of lightning". In Ezekiel 1-14 it is used of the Cherubim and is construed from "Bazaq" "to scatter, to disperse," etc.

(1) The dispersal and scattering aspects are to be viewed in Judges 1 - 6.

"Adoni-Zedek fled etc"

This king represented the might of the Canaanite forces in his particular locality. 10,000 had been actually killed by Joshua's forces. His strength had been well and truly "dispersed" and "scattered" to the four winds and, terror stricken, he himself had fled.

(2) His domination and power can be estimated by the captured kings who scabbled at his table, hopelessly crippled, and subservient to his wishes. 70 kings he had reduced to this deepest stage of humiliation, with thumbs and great toes amputated (none too carefully, one would assume).

(3) In this degraded condition they were unable to fight or run, scarcely able to eat their food.

The Athenians inflicted this upon captured enemies to disable them from fighting. Among the Romans, they who desired to escape conscription thus mutilated themselves, and sometimes parents amputated the thumbs of their children. "Pollices trancabant" whence we get the old English word "poltroon".

(4) Notice their despicable portion at the king's table. Judges 1 : 7-11 "Gathered their meat", or "picked up crumbs". We are struck with the parallels found in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:21), and it gives us a deep insight of Divine opinion on the Adoni Bezeks in this world who abuse power and wealth which they received from God, and make them their instruments of heartless cruelty. The beggar lying at the rich man's doorgate desiring to be fed, to scabble for the crumbs which are thrown to the dogs.

(5) Here we have in Judges 1: Adoni Bezek so great in power, and so inhuman that he had (no doubt gleefully) reduced 70 kings (and if kings then kingdoms) to this degrading position. 70 kings scabbled for the crumbs under his table.

(6) The parable of the rich man and Lazarus belongs to the same class, and the great lesson is that Christ, or Joshua in Judges 1, a Divine

Moral Governor, and that such inhuman persons are sure of a future retribution from Him at His appearing.

(7) Gideon displays the same truth, in the treatment of Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian, when he said, "As the Lord liveth, if ye had saved them (my brethren, the sons of my mother) I would not slay you (Judges 8 : 19). Compare also Agag and the statement by Samuel to him. "As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women". (1 Samuel: 15-33). As we have stated in the Introduction, the sins they committed became the means of their punishment. What are we to make of this situation? "Adoni = Lord of Bezek - "Lightning", who suffered in like fashion to those he had humiliated and degraded. 70 kings. He did not die in Bezek, but was taken captive by Judah and Simeon, while Joshua was still alive, and finally died at Jerusalem. What do we make of it?

(A) First of all 70 is very important

Originally the nations were reckoned according to the number of the children of Israel who went into Egypt. "70 persons" (Gen. 46 : 26) 70 = 7 x 10 = 7 is the number of spiritual perfection and 10, as we have seen, ordinal perfection.

(B) These seventy persons who went into Egypt built up the nation of Israel (Genesis 46: 27) Exodus 1 : 5, Ruth 4: 11)

(C) The Sanhedrin or 70 elders furnished Israel's great Tribunal (Exodus 24: 1, Numbers 11 : 16)

(D) 70 is used with regard to Jerusalem, the city having kept its sabbaths seventy years, while Judah was in Babylon. (Jeremiah 35:11)

(E) Seventy sevens were determined upon it to complete its transgression and bring in everlasting righteousness for it. (Daniel 9: 24 etc.)

(G) It is appropriate then, that Adoni-Bezek, Israel and Jerusalem are associated with the number 70 and with the capture of this king and his death in Jerusalem, a despicable useless poltroon. Even this heathen king recognised the truth of Divine justice. "As I have done, so God hath requited me" (Judges 1 : 7)

(H) There is, however, one quotation which brings this incident personally home to each one of us. The setting is the rejection of the claims of Jesus as Messiah and the sickening claim by the Pharisees, that Jesus cast out devils (or mental diseases) by Beelzebub "the God of flies" or in more strident language "the God of the muck heap", the whole apostasy is of Canaanite origin and is made reference to in Ezekiel (6: 4, 4: 12 - 15 etc.) where the Gods are called in the originals "Dungy Gods". The methods of worship were quite foul and disgusting, now this accusation was made against the nature of the Father, and the Power of the Holy Spirit and brought forth these words from Jesus. Matthew 12: 31-32. "Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men - but the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven unto men, and whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him, but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come". The answer is in Luke 10: 17 -21, Matthew 11: 25 - 27, and for the basic understanding Isaiah 49:1

From this time forward Jesus limited His teaching to the multitudes in parables, whilst afterwards if the disciples were sufficiently interested, He would open the parables up to them. Matthew 13: 13-36

Consider the possibility of Isaiah 49: 1-10 forming a dialogue between the Father and Son in the context of Matthew 11, bringing forth the comments of Jesus in Matt. 11: 25 etc.

(1) What are the facts?

Jesus has realised that in general He will be rejected, all His overtures to them are scorned, and His undoubted power attributed to Beelzebub; no longer will He teach plainly, but only for those who have the enquiring mind, who truly seek Yahweh with their whole heart, so in future parables it must be. It is distinctly noticeable that Jesus is deeply hurt by these filthy claims against Him, and the context of Isa. 49: 1-4 comes naturally into the conversation at this time. Isa. 49: 1-3. Jesus recalls that from the womb, His Father had called Him, from the bowels of His mother had God made mention of His name, and the comforting thought that Jesus had been "hid in the shadow of God's hand", which is the meaning of the name of Bezaleel, and His "mouth like unto a sharp sword". Had not the Father said of Him, "Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified"? (The subject of this glorification is one of the themes of John's Gospel. The Sept. version of this text renders for "glorified" s.w.a. John 12: 28, 13: 31, 14: 7, 17: 1-4) Both the Father and the Son would be "glorified" in the death of the Son, this incident being "the hour" emphasised in John's Gospel. But what had happened? This point lay at issue underneath the other consideration. Isaiah 49: 4 Jesus had just been accused of infamy and apostasy. The Talmud even reflects this terrible attitude today. Moses Maimonides declared that "Jesus well deserved the death which He suffered". In the Talmud "Jesus of Nazareth is placed in hell", alongside of Titus and Balaam, undergoing not only the severest, but the most degrading form of punishment. Gittin 566

49.4 "Then I (Jesus) said, I have laboured in vain. I have spent my strength for nought and in vain", (or for nothing). The Lord Jesus has hit the bottom of the trough of depression that became His lot at times, being human. To be observed quite plainly in the Psalms i.e.

(1) Psa. 42 can be identified with Matthew 16, Lk. 9-18 etc.

(2). Also very wonderfully we believe, in Psa. 89, we have all the elements of this crisis in the life of Jesus when He asked the disciples "But whom say ye that I am?" particularly when we observe these statements in the light of Micah 7

(3) Psalms 22 and 69 are distinctive as applying to the crucifixion.

(4) Psalm 109, as we gather from verse 8, the Psalm of Judas, Acts 1: 20, outlining the terrible things that Judas did to the Lord Jesus, and the inevitable outcome, because he had lifted his hand against the Lord's anointed, c/p. 1 Sam. 24: 6-7, and the attitude of David at this incident, which is the right one, with a very pointed comparison in Saul, who sought the life of David, also the Lord's anointed.

Isaiah 49:4 then brings with it the pathos, and dereliction of Jesus at the time of the Beelzebub incident. The last part of the verse, however, describes the faith of Jesus and certainly of the Divine favour. "Surely my judgment is with the Lord and my work with my God".

Similar sentiments to the Hallel Psalms which Jesus sang before Gethsemane Psa. 118 "I shall not die but live to serve the Lord". Though He would be overtaken by death, yet it could not hold Him. He would arise to continue His service to His God (paraphrase)

Isaiah 49:5 The answer to Him from the Father. "And now saith the Lord that formed me from the womb, to be His servant, to bring Jacob again to Him", (precisely what the Lord Jesus was about at the moment) "Though Israel be not gathered yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord and my God shall be my strength". We see from the text, the break-in of the thoughts of the Lord Jesus, as the Father has spoken. "Though Israel is not yet gathered, yet I shall be glorious in the eyes of the Lord and my God shall be my strength".

The thought of the importance of His sacrifice loomed largely before Him.

Isaiah 49 : 6 Again the words of the Father came to Him. "It is too light a thing (RV) that thou shouldst be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Israel and to restore the preserved of the Lord. I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth".

In this way did the Father gird His son for the whole salvation which He had purposed for the world. Song. 4:3 (see the writer's work on this book for further exposition apart from the mention here) opens up the idea of Light and Zarah of Tamar (Gen. 38 : 28 etc), Zarah means the "Bringer of Light", and although marked out as firstborn by a "thread of scarlet after a very temporary and partial appearance, he was born after his brother Pharez = 'the breaker forth.' So Jesus as the Light of Israel was refused and He withdrew again into His mother Jerusalem, and Pharez, the breaker forth out of death, was manifested in Him. He was the Light of the World and as Isaiah again had prophesied, Jesus was not accepted as the Light of the World. (John 1 : 6-10)

Isaiah 49 :7 Continues the divine dialogue. "Thus saith the Lord, the redeemer of Israel, His Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth (our very context in Matt. 11 and Lk. 10) to a servant of rulers. Kings shall arise, princes also shall worship..... and the Holy One of Israel, He shall choose thee", also verses 8 - 11 etc. in a similar mood.

After being more than privileged to glimpse over the shoulder into the personal life of our Lord, and holy conversation with the Father, we return to the Lukan context of the affair. The comparison of contexts will prove them to be parallel.

Matt. 11: 16-27 = Lk. 10: 1-22 It is recorded in Matt. 11 : 25 (RV) that "at that season Jesus answered and said "We notice the answer is to the Father" Verse 25-26 (we suggest that interspersed here we have Isa. 49, and Luke 10; 17-22 supplies the missing details why Jesus showed such ecstatic joy in answering His Father, and is the palpable evidence of the Father's pleasure and purpose in the Son, and incidentally reveals our connection with Adoni-Zedek, Luke 10 : 17 "And the seventy returned again with joy, saying "Lord, even the demons are subject unto us through thy name", and He said unto them, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall (or RV. fallen) from heaven".

- (1) How marvellous are the spiritual connections and how ought Israel in the first place in the original scene to have taken heart.
- (2) How ought the Apostles to have followed on, after such a triumphant beginning. How ought we to follow on in a similar pattern. Look at the connections and then we shall see why we stated with "tentative dogmatism" that unless Joshua had been alive this incident at Bezek could not have taken place.

What are these ramparts of inspired Truth?

(A) Adoni- Bezek was the Lord of Lightning. Jesus referred to Satan, the Adversary, as the King of Bezek was, with 10,000 men, fallen from heaven.

(B) So did Adoni-Bezek fall from the heavens of political and military might by the conquest of Joshua's hosts.

(C) We notice that seventy disciples were instrumental in the defeat and that they went "two by two" on their mission; Judah and Simeon were the executors in Joshua's days.

(D) The seventy again applies to seventy nations helpless under the cruelty of Adoni-bezek. Seventy disciples were more than a match for such foes. Does it not afford great comfort to us to know that should we be found faithful 'even the devils will be subject to us', as we once were to them.

(E) It is noticeable that the Adversary although powerless did not die then, but at Jerusalem. There, as a captive, powerless. Nothing to grip with. Nothing to walk straight, or even run with; abject misery. And he died in Jerusalem. Why, may we ask?

(F) His pathetic powerlessness would be exhibited for all Israel to see and take courage. Two of the great enemies of Israel were taken to Jerusalem. One dead, but in modern parlance "Unable to lie down".

(G) David took the head of Goliath there and buried it on Golgotha (the Hill of Goliath) 1 Sam. 17 : 54 Joshua took the captive Adoni-Besek there, and there he died (Judges 1 : 7). They were both put to death spiritually by the Lord Jesus Christ.

(1) Adoni Besek - The Adversary became bereft of big toes and thumbs at Gethsemane, his power was finally broken there. (John 18 : 1-11 etc)

(2) Goliath was slain on the cross by his own weapon (sword) 1 Sam. 17 death at Calvary. Through death Jesus slew him that had power over death, that is the Devil (sin in the flesh) (Heb. 2: 7-18) This double victory was brought about in the power of that Name above every name, and is the strong incentive to each one of us, to press forward in our spiritual warfare in Christ Jesus. It means that finally all rebellion and apostasy, and all sin, shall be made powerless at the last within us, as it was in Jesus, our Greater Joshua, and David.

Victory is assured if we heed the heavenly voice, as it would have been for Israel had they continued in the same spirit of co-operation and faith. Because it is the Lord who delivers us, and gives into our hands the Canaanites and Perizzites, then in the near future we hope to take part in the joyful paean of praise, having overcome because of the Blood of the Lamb.

Rev. 4 : 11 "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power".

Rev. 5 : 9 "And they sang a new song saying "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue, and people and nation. And hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign upon the earth".

Rev. . 5: 12-13 "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing. Blessing and honour and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb for ever and ever". May we be found within the fourbeasts, or Cherubim who say 'Amen' at that day.

We have glimpsed at the enormous surrounding, the taking of Bezek, and the crippling destruction of Adoni Bezek somewhat at length because it formed the basis of what God would do with and for Israel should they remain true to Him. Complete and utter victory, without any doubt. Some commentators, Ridout in particular, seem to see in this incident a kind of weakness, more than the overwhelming defeat of the enemy, beginning with Judah asking Simeon to help him. He sees Judah as the leading tribe in the land, and more so the tribe from which Christ was to come. One point we think is of supreme value. "Judah's inheritance was the whole southern part; of the land, the land that lay toward the sun". In like manner the word of

God illumines that heritage which is of first value. He confirms the fact, that, just as the basis of all true praise (Judah's name of course) must be the truth of God, so Judah here stands for the whole sun of doctrinal truth. It is by accepting this remark that we become in truth Jews who have "praise of God". This is the basis of all true worship. Wherever the Truth is sacrificed, wherever the Word of God is set aside, or what is just as bad, wherever its truths lose their power to guide and direct (that is, from our angle of course) the Praise languisheth and Judah will cease to become a victor. Judah was to go up first (Judges 1 : 2) We notice the verse continues, "Behold I have delivered the land into his hand" Ridout emphasises that "Judah has at the very outset a suggestion of weakness in the fact that he is not willing to go alone to take possession of what is his. What does that suggest, he asks. "When God tells me to do a thing, do I have to turn around for human help?" When God told Moses that he should go down and deliver His people, was it an honour to God or obedience to God for Moses to plead, and plead, until He gave Him Aaron as his helper? Did it not show weakness in Moses? (see Numbers 33 by present writer on this point). And whenever you find that the word of God commands your obedience, and you turn to human support, you may know at once that the seed of weakness has been introduced, and it will develop into more manifest failure. This is what Ridout learned from Judah's asking Simeon to help him.

The point has been well taken from a human point of view, and what follows later in the chapter proves it. (a) Our point is taken from the typical angle and is precisely different in aspect. (b) This is apparent from what he goes on to develop. (c) To be sure, there was victory, but after all, if we read on, we shall find that there was not that absolute wholeness of heart which would insure fuller development, and a complete triumph for God. (d) Then follows an absolute rejection of the typical victory of Christ and His disciples which we have just identified with Judges 1. (e) "There does not seem to be the dignity of a complete victory over the forces of Adoni-Bezek. An army mutilated is not one completely overthrown, and though he dies later on, and Jerusalem is for the time taken and burned, yet the conquest is not permanent. (f) As we have already observed the point is absolutely lost regarding the complete victory of Christ over sin and the adversary, but the insight into the general historical picture is right and is the picture of two extremes that are constantly before us. (g) The Antitype as already stated will always lead truly in the spiritual direction. (h) each is true in its own context, and the lessons should be accepted as true in both aspects. (h) When the seventy were sent forth by Jesus (the same number of the royal slaves of Adoni-Besek) and they returned to Him, Christ, foreseeing the triumphs of the Gospel said: "I beheld Satan as lightning falling from heaven". (j) Adoni Besek is brought captive to Jerusalem as we have seen. The adversary is overcome by the power of Christ in the Gospel and is carried in triumph to the "possession of the inheritance of peace" (Jerusalem) unable to diminish its bliss. (k) And in the end of all things, Christ's presence will shine like the lightning (Matt. 24 : 27) and He will destroy the enemy with the brightness of His coming (2 Thess. 2 : 8) and all things shall fall down before Him (Psa. 72:11) and God will put all things under His feet (1 Cor. 15:25)

So then Wordsworth concludes this fascinating incident with these comments: "The history at the beginning of the Book of Judges is like the history of the fall of Jericho at the beginning of the Book of Joshua, a compendious representation of the work of Christ by the ministry of the Church, beginning with His Ascension and to be consummated at the end.

"He went forth conquering and to conquer"(Rev. 6:2) And by this specimen at the beginning of this book, showing what TWO TRIBES of Israel could do by faith and obedience against Adoni-Besek who had

subdued and enslaved seventy kings, God showed what the twelve tribes might have done, if they had believed and obeyed Him, and all their subsequent miseries were due to defection from God". Stunning words for all ages and of invaluable use in our days of decline and defection from the things of the truth.

We pass on from the Adoni-Bezek story with its lessons to Judges 1 : 8-20, consisting of the further victories of the all-conquering Judah (verse 19), giving the reason, "And the Lord was with Judah", and incidentally it is only; at this juncture, and in the same verse, that we find the first decline from the Lord and indefiniteness in Judah : "And He drove out the inhabitants of the mountain but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley because they had chariots of iron". A very significant verse you will agree, assigning

(A) Victory for belief and faithfulness in the mountainous region.

(B) Defeat for unbelief. Here we have stated the two trends of the history of Israel in the land, and they have held for all time, and come down with equal emphasis to spiritual Israel today. All in one verse, how unstable is human nature, and how slow the human heart is to understand this simple lesson of trust and obedience. We will return again to this verse.

Judges 1 : 8 The children of Judah had fought against Jerusalem, sacked it and set it on fire.

(1) The relative information is to be seen in Joshua 10 : 3, 18-26. Joshua had taken the city, and slain the king, and Judah took the city.

(2) Afterwards it was re-entered by the Jebusites who dwelt in it with the children of Judah (Josh. 15 : 63) and the children of

(3) Benjamin (Judges 1-21), the city being in Benjamin (Josh. 18-28) on the border of Judah (Josh. 15 - 8) and it was

(4) Not until the reign of David, that Zion, its fortress, was recovered.

(2 Sam. 5 -7) The King of Jerusalem was early conquered by Joshua (10:23, 12:10), but not the city, which only now fell before the children of Judah, somewhat before Joshua's death. After its people were smitten and the city "set on fire" (a phrase only in Judges 20-48) marking that the appended last chapters were the earliest in point of time. The Jebusites returned and "dwelt with the children of Judah", and the children of Benjamin, as these could not drive them out. Josh. 15-63. Judges 1-21. Hence the city was called Jebus till David's time (Josh. 18: 28, Judges 19: 10-12, 2 Sam. 5-6) Does not this state of affairs within Jerusalem display once more our principal theme?

(A) The conquest of Jerusalem by Judah is another evidence of what conquests were gained and might have been maintained by God's blessing on their faith and obedience.

(B) The subsequent moral state of Jerusalem, inhabited by Jebusites, as well as Israelites represents weakness in government and in policy, and in warfare against those whom God had sworn to destroy. It was in fact a widening in policy, to envelop the other inhabitants of the land in servitude. In many ways it can be likened to Saul and his failure to destroy or devote everything that belonged to Amalek to the sword. The Amalekites became the inveterate enemy of Israel, in particular Haman in the Book of Esther. The lessons again come to us as we wait on the brink of the Jordan surrounded by the heathen nations, "Moab at its worst". We must close our ranks, not open them, and make sure that we are a people set apart to God, so far as we are able. The Jebusite must not dwell with the children of the promise; unfortunately there are those who change their characteristics with the seasons in our midst, and although the leopard cannot change its spots, yet there are times when they are not so discernible. The Jebusites,

meaning "the treaders down" are those who trample upon others, just the opposite to the meek in Christ. The combined names of Jerusalem and Jebusite give us -

Jerusalem - "The inheritance of the possession of Peace", being invaded by the Jebusites, "the treaders down", or "the trampers". Peace absolutely torn aside. They will trample down the Word of God. This must not be so, we must defend the honour of the Word, and of course not forgetting "The Word of our Lord shall stand forever".

(A) Joshua 10 : 1 is the first mention of the city as "Jerusalem" in the Bible.

(B) Originally it was known as Salem, the City of Peace (Gen. 14: 18)

(C) It was known as Jebus (Judges 19 :10 1 Chron. 1:4) with obvious reference to what has happened before this time, Jebus means "trodden down, trampled underfoot, a threshing floor, subjected, utterly laid waste, contemptuous, profound, polluted. The threshing floor aspect was manifested to David (2 Sam. 24 : 18-25) The king of Jerusalem in the days of the capture by Judah was Adoni-Zedek, "King of Righteousness", "Lord of Justice". How different from the True Lord of Righteousness and Peace, who shall dispense justice and peace throughout the earth during His reign (Psa. 72. Isa. 2. Micah 4, etc.)

Adoni-Zedek was an Amorite prince, a principal king in these days. The information gained from Jebus is quite sufficient to understand how he ruled those under him. "Ammonite" means "to dwell on high in the mountains", and, in the metaphysical sense "proud and contemptuous" It was Paul himself who said "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places". Compare the whole sequence in Eph. 6: 10-18.

This is the latter day aspect of war against the spiritual Adoni-Zedeks that oppress us. Ridout maintains that the Amorites were the arrogant talkers of Canaan. The world is full of talkers. Today wherever we turn the sound of talking meets us. Radio, television in the streets of the cities, what a relief to get away from it all from time to time.

Unfortunately, we are being invaded by talkers in the Truth, mostly uninformed. Where are the old-fashioned lectures, Bible lectures, not talks? Window Bills, the bills now hit the headlines with "Bible Talk at 6.30 p.m. etc." One is subjected to the indignity of having an unopened Bible for both the Exhortation and Lecture. Amorite High Talking has taken fast hold along with Higher Education, and in a Third Generation, unless we take the stern methods that Joshua used upon the original Ammonites, then we make havoc of the Truth. We have seen what happened to the city - sacked and burned. What happened to the King of Jebus or Jerusalem, Adoni-Zedek?

Joshua 10. Compare the whole chapter on this wise, but particularly verses 16-27, which relate the unhappy fate of the five kings who held together in conclave against Joshua and his hosts. Joshua's command to his captains was another boost for their morals in the campaign of Canaan. (verse 24) "And it came to pass, when they brought out those kings unto Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the captains of the men of war which went with him. Come, near, put your feet upon the necks of these Kings. And they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them. And Joshua said unto them. "Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage, for thus shall the Lord

do to all your enemies against whom ye fight." This trend would hold so long as Israel were faithful, and obedient, unto the Lord God of Israel. Once again positive proof of victory. Thus the evidence builds up. If the Lord is among them :

- (1) then there can be no defeat, So Judges 1.9 continues, "And afterward the children of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites that dwelt in the mountains and in the South and in the Valley" or low country.
- (2) Joshua 15.48 etc. for details of this campaign (the names are very interesting but outside our purpose at the moment).
- (3) The South is what is known in Hebrew as the Negev.
- (4) The Valley or Lowlands is in Hebrew 'Shephelah', Joshua 15.33. The overwhelming trend of victory surges on in the three natural divisions of Judah's territory (Joshua 11.16). This summary apparently includes the conquests given in detail subsequently.
- (A) Hebron and Debir in "the Mountain" (Judges 1.10-11)
- (B) Arad and Zephath in "the South" (Judges 1.16-17)
- (C) Gaza, Askelon and Ekron in "the Plain" (Judges 1.18, Joshua 15.33, 45-47).

We must remember that Caleb was Judah's leader at this time (Joshua 11.21, 15.13-14) and that Joshua and Caleb had Gentile blood in them. Joshua son of Nun came from Ephraim (Numbers 13.8) and Caleb is reckoned in Judah and also of the Kenites (Numbers 13.6, Joshua 14.6). It would appear that the mention of Judah here in Judges accords with the plan of the book, which is to describe the conflicts of the several tribes with the Canaanites. Several names now come before us, with spiritual brilliance as we shall see.

Judges 1.10 Judah went against the Canaanites that dwelt in Hebron and the name of Hebron before was Kirjath-Arba. The Canaanites who dwelt in these regions were the notorious sons of Anak, which means "Long-necked ones", consequently these were the giants who put the fear of death in the ten unfaithful spies on the original reconnaissance (Numbers 13 whole of chapter, particularly verses 30-33).

- (1) The attitude of Caleb and Joshua: "We are well able to overcome" (verse 30)
- (2) The cringing whining of the faithless ten. "We be not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we", verse 31, and also the verse in point, Numbers 13.33, "And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants, and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight."

Scroggie wonderfully so summarises :

- (A) "Joshua and Caleb had a BIG GOD and the Anakim were as grasshoppers.
- (B) The ten had a LITTLE GOD and the Anakim were as giants to them".

A notable lesson ^{on} the values associated with faith and the continual experience of Israel, and, no doubt if we are truthful, of ourselves.

We notice a rather valuable piece of information in Numbers 13.22 and the names Ahiman, Sheshai and Talmi, the children of Anak, living there at Hebron. As these matters of history occurred 45 years earlier, it is thought by Fausset, that they must be not individuals, but the three Tribes of Anak. They had at the time of Joshua been driven away from Hebron, and Debir, but they only withdrew to Philistia, and returned whilst Joshua was campaigning in the North against Jabin (Joshua 11.16, 21.22). It is also gratifying to note as a reward of following the Lord as a faithful dog (Caleb's name, "Gentile Dog" - see 'Numbers 33' by present writer) that Caleb was eventually their destroyer.

Fausset also concludes that, as it is abruptly stated that "Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt" the two cities had a common founder or else rebuilders, viz. one of the Hyksos or Shepherd race which for a long time ruled Egypt, and to which the Anakim probably belonged. Hebron was the original name, meaning "Joining together", akin to the Hebrew "Habru" (Genesis 14.3, 13-18), and perhaps alluded to in Abram's joining the Amorites, Aner, Eshcol and Mamre, as allies with him against the confederate kings, Amraphel, Arioch, Chedorlaomer and Tidal.

Arba, the "great man" (Joshua 14.15) of the Anakim subsequent to Abraham's

time, settled there and called it Kirjath-Arba, "the City of Arba" (Genesis 23.2, 19, 35.27). Caleb, who led the men of Judah on conquering it, restored the old name "Hebron". Evidently the writer of Genesis 23.2, "Kirjath-Arba, the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan", was not then in Canaan - an undesigned coincidence which confirms Moses' authorship of Genesis. So much for the bare bones of historical fact. What is the picture painted for us in typical worth and nomenclature lore? Stated briefly the flesh of the facts is as follows :

(1) Judah, "the praise of Yah" and "whom Jah praised" could not dwell in fellowship (Hebron = "brotherhood, bound together as by a ring") with the Canaanites ("those who traffic or trade", in an obverse sense, with the things of God). These, as we have already pointed out, are the sons of Anak. The lofty (stretched-out-necked ones), the talkers with great swelling words, against the Wisdom of God.

(2) Neither can we allow ourselves to suffer it. Jude 14-16 points this out quite clearly, but see the whole context of this Epistle. It is directed for the most part to spiritual Canaanites who have spoken loftily against the Lord and His Anointed.

(3) Zechariah 14.20 depicts the Millennial Picture wonderfully for us. "And in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the House of the Lord of Hosts" implying strongly that at one time there was. Compare also in this connection -

(4) John 2.13-17, Jesus cleanses the Temple at the commencement of His ministry at Jerusalem.

(5) Mark 11.15-18 presents the final cleansing before He suffered.

(6) Micah 6.10-12 and Micah 7 reveal the whole sordid business of the council of wickedness as they planned the destruction of Jesus. Psalm 64 has further thoughts on this incident, proving to the hilt the words of Jesus regarding Herod's Temple, "Ye have made it a den of robbers" (Gk. "brigands" etc.)

(7) Consequently Jesus is heard saying in Matthew 24.37-39, "Your house is left unto you desolate". Contrast Isaiah 64.9-11, "Our beautiful house". God had already left this house, and returned unto His place. The Canaanite, then, in our midst should be removed, or so it would appear. Caleb then took Kirjath-Arba, meaning "a city foursquare", "city of perfection", a symbol of great strength, characterised by a square or cube.

How that which is true and that which is false run close together in these days; in fact all down the ages there have been true and counterfeit, but we, with the devotion of Caleb (the Gentile dog) will assail it in the Fellowship of the Ring (Song 5.14) the strong right hand of Christ, clad in the whole armour of God. This is the only way one can discern between what is true and counterfeit, and the outcome will be that the "Jerusalem that is from above" will be revealed as "the city foursquare", "the city of perfection" characterised by the square root of 12. The symbol of the power of the Father from on high. Sheshai, Ahiman and Talmi of the giants, the sons of Anak, were destroyed at this place, fearsome no doubt on account of their physique and prowess in the feat of arms. A little investigation will prove from their names that they are special examples of what we might find in the Hebron Fellowship or the brotherhood today, and the damage they may cause with their insidious workings.

(A) Sheshai = "Whitish, noble wearer of fine linen". The Pharisee of all ages, whose whitish appearance superficially may assume the wearing of the fine linen of the righteousness of the saints (Revelation 19.8). But, as Jesus said, they were really whited sepulchres full of rottenness, hiding dead men's bones (Matthew 23.27 - indeed, see the whole chapter of woes here).

(B) Ahiman = "the brother of a gift; liberal brother; the brother of a portion".

We have the subtitle aspect here - (1) truth only of a portion, not the whole, (2) truth watered down, (3) a true position, but liberally let down with error, (4) covered over with liberality, (5) Jesus pin-pointed one clear aspect of it in Matthew 15.3-5, "Corban", whereby the Pharisee relieved himself of personal responsibility towards his parents by swearing under this rabbinical law that he had devoted it to God, or that particular money to God. (6) It is also found in principle where money is used to cover (what we think of course) a multitude of sins. (7) We meet this kind of Ahiman policy when we see tremendous amounts of money given to back certain movements in the body, and towards support of

various publications belonging to this movement. (8) Ananias and his wife Sapphira disclosed another aspect of this detestable principle when they kept back part of the money which they had dedicated to the Lord, and received their due punishment forthwith (Acts 5.1-11).

(C) Talmal. This name sets forth the true deserts of those who are Sheshais and Ahimans in the Truth today. Fellowship (Hebron) is "broken up", furrowed as by 'splits' and 'divisions' and 'scattered', wherein we perceive that breakdown either of society or fellowship. Think of the ravage done by the bold-spirited Talmals that have rent the Body down the last 100 years or so, and also of the various divisions of the Truth. They are all supposed to be born out of Principle. We would place it more squarely down to Personalities - the Talmals amongst us.

The spirit of Faith shining bright in Caleb is our true method of defence against them. One brother we know, and have conversed with on many occasions, is convinced that we have in these three Children of Anak, reference to the secret societies of our day, in particular Masonic culture and its poor man's variety, Oddfellows - quite a reasonable assumption we feel.

(1) Sheshai, having application to the noble ideals and pomp of the Masonic Lodge; wherein everything is glorified, as something appealingly sentimental to the Human Ego.

(2) Ahiman, Brother of Gift, or Portion, or the Liberal Brother, the way in which members are safeguarded and helped, hospitals, schools and the like.

(3) Talmal, the way in which the masonic cult has in many ways secret furrows, hand-shakes, signs, and the adoption of novices into the body.

The multitude of divisions and Lodges, within this blasphemous cult with the merging of Baal and the Lord God together in their circle! The breaking up of society is to be observed within this order as attempts have been made to alter court materials and civil law cases by the various signs and Lodge intrigue.

This may be so. We are certain that the Lord Jesus will sweep them away with the brightness of His coming. Whatever may be our opinion of the exposition of these verses, we may at the least well see the power and influence that would be exerted because they were giants. And Caleb and Judah routed them utterly. Let us take heart from their example.

Judges 1.11-15 could be summarised as The Valour of Faith and its Reward.

(A) The conquests of Judah continue, and because Faith is intact at this point the trend of victory follows.

(B) The actual place is Debir, and the name of Debir before was Kirjath-Sepher.

(C) Caleb is still in command, and his order for the day before the attack was, "He that smiteth Kirjath-Sepher and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah, my daughter, to wife" -

(D) "And Othniel, the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, took it, and he gave him Achsah, his daughter, to wife."

These are the brief details of the next assault of Faith, and of course, the names are distinct in their meaning.

(1) Debir before called Kirjath-Sepher. Perhaps our readers will have noticed the correspondence between this first word, Debir, and the name of our business, "The Debir Press". You are quite right, this is the quotation that influenced our opinion. Debir = An Oracle, same as the appellative "Debiyr", The Oracle - the inner part of the Temple where the Ark of the Covenant was placed, and where responses were given from above the cherubim. Another root, "Debbir", means "to speak" etc. It is to be hoped that we keep within the province contained in the word Debir, "The Oracle". If it please God, this is our only intention.

(2) Kirjath-Sepher means Book Town, or Library City as we would call it today, "City of Books". It is also known as Kirjath-Sannah, "City of Palm Branches" or else of sacred learning; apparently a university town of this period, a reference which makes nonsense of the conviction of the higher critics some years ago that reading and writing were unknown at this time. It is fascinating to add - Hebron a kindred city to the meaning of the name Fellowship or 'Communion' and Kirjath-Sepher the City of Books. It brings to mind our fellowship in connection with the Books of Scripture, the Bible.

Perhaps some of our readers may be shocked to find that we are suggesting conquering the Bible? Yes, we have to take possession of it, to take it out of the hands of its enemies and to make it for ourselves a Book of Delight. The Book which alone is of God and speaks to us truthfully of God.

(1) Therefore when this city of "Kirjath-Sepher" was taken, its name was changed to Debir, which means "The Oracles or Word of God".

(2) Now before we can do this there is a great deal of personal study involved for the "overcomer".

(3) To take possession within our context means to understand its teaching and this not only in study, but also in practice.

(4) To overcome as Jesus suggested in Revelation 2.7, 26, means to finally have the approbation of the Lord at His coming.

(5) Unless we take possession of the Citadel of Truth in this way, how can we hope to wrest this precious Book out of the heathen traffickers (Canaanites) of today.

(6a) This exercise also outlines our experience in the Word, (b) from when we first got to know it as a book, and (c) in maturity after manly experience has done its work we realise it is in truth the Word of the Living God.

(7) Kirjath-Sepher - A Book becomes the Word of God. This is the way that the victories of Judah must go, and if Judah had continued in that way and taken full possession of the Word of God, had made its doctrines a living reality, the voice of God speaking to His people, praise, worship and joy, then there would have been no falling from grace and power.

(8) In our day, think what effect would be produced in the land if the Kirjath-Sepher = seat of learning, in either Oxford, or Cambridge, Warwick, Manchester, Bangor or Belfast, or any university town, could be fully conquered or possessed by the Word until the names were changed to Debir, the Word of the Oracles of God. We need not worry when the true Joshua takes over: higher education will have its rightful place - in the Word of the Oracles of God, and then "every man shall know the Lord even from the least unto the greatest". Such will be the task of those who have really "overcome in the days of their adversity".

(9) It is true today, however, that we are in grave danger of the situation exploding backward, viz. that Debir is rapidly going back to Kirjath-Sepher, in that there is a trend developing that relegates the Oracles of God, Debir, down to the level of a human library of books - 66 in fact. We pray the Father that this suicidal trend may never get under way, or we are lost.

(10) We are reaping the results of orthodoxy which has gone backward to the limit. They have forsaken their doctrines, which, rightly or wrongly, in the past kept them to a decent standard of behaviour and morality. They have in the main disappeared, until they are left in a maze of uncertainty, "the Pill" being worshipped more than the Lord.

(11) This began because instead of Kirjath-Sepher being turned into Debir, a Living Oracle, the orthodox church took the book out of the people's hands, put it in monasteries, and forbade them the use of it. Instead of giving the people the living oracles of God, it removed these oracles, and as a result nothing but darkness and failure could come in.

(12) It is a fact that what is found in the world usually infiltrates in some degree into the Truth of God. Let us beware of the decaying, emasculating doctrine of the world invading the Truth. This is an intensely personal matter. Suppose you or I have this Book closed, the Daily Readings forgotten and unwelcome? The Book becomes a mere letter to us, the mere letter of the Word, and not its living reality. What is the result? There is no further progress, there is no further growth. The cry in the world today is, "We don't want doctrinal preaching, we want practical preaching." And is not this the cry in the Truth, now that the world has it? They get instead of doctrine, what? Not even practice, but man-developed themes of what he thinks will satisfy - the cult of the ego; that terrible system of thought dominated by what man is - the utter neglect of the Truth of God, and in its place only that which will cater to the taste of the natural man.

(1) Why are there so many churches closing down?

(2) Why do the remaining churches pander to the younger people?

(3) Why is there so little joy amongst these sad people?

(4) Why so little delight in the things of Christ?

(5) How can there be when the truth of Christ is so little known and appreciated?

(6) When the Word of God has been relegated to the book shelves along with all the other literature?

(7) A literature priceless, and precious it may be, but not the living oracle (Debir) of the Living God.

(8) If this Word is only literature, a man's literature in our eyes (as one prominent cleric in New York, U.S.A., thought, and apologised for his disloyalty to Christ and the Word), if it is nothing but literature, you and I have lost the Voice of God, we have lost all power, and - let us face it - all Hope!

(9) If this situation is arising within our ecclesias then we have lost our moorings, we are drifting, we are gone and all the darkness and declension which are closing in around us now - in Christendom - can be well explained!

(10) All teaching which excludes doctrine should be shunned, because doctrine itself is the essence of practice; else however could godly practice be formed and performed? All that is in itself of practical value in great depth is based upon the spiritual conceptions of Jesus concerning what you and I ought to do. One only needs to think for instance of the spiritual and priceless doctrine of the return of the Lord Jesus to see its undoubted practical value.

(A) Study the references to the Return in the Thessalonian Epistles.

(B) There are eight chapters in the two epistles, and one specific reference to the return in each chapter.

(C) Each reference has a different angle from the others, and the number of references - eight - tells us quite clearly what the Return will mean to us. Eight is the number of the New Creation, the New Order, the Number of Cutting Off the flesh in Circumcision, the Change of Nature, the Resurrection. May we say more?

(D) Paul looks to the return for the reward of the righteous (2 Tim. 4.8).

(E) The time of manifestation "He shall show who is the blessed and only Potentate." (1 Tim. 6.14-16).

(F) James warned, "Be ye also patient; ... for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (James 5.8).

(G) For Peter this return has always been "The Glory" (1 Peter 4.13).

(H) To John the beloved, the time of finalisation in body and in character. "We shall be like Him, for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3.2).

(I) The return to us is couched in reward and disapproval - inheritance in the Kingdom that the Lord brings, or infamy and shame, along with Judas, Ananias and Sapphira and others. Acts 5.1-10, 1.16-20.

(J) This doctrine must be clearly before our eyes, and steadfast in our hearts, because all our activities today will be judged in the light of it tomorrow, at the tribunal of Christ.

(K) May we hope that our point is taken, and that in future, we shall not put out the silly statement that one hears so much today - "I am a practical Christian, and not spiritual" or "I am not spiritually minded, but like to do pastoral duties."

(L) It is absolutely impossible, so far as Christ is concerned, to be either, apart. One's actions in Christ are governed by His doctrines, and way of life, and our whole enterprise should be dominated by this thought. Jesus Christ is "the Way, the Truth (and the personal aspect of these Truths, the Walk and the Word) and the Life (John 14.6). We shall keep then to the true scriptural development as found in Judges 1.11. The city once called Kirjath Sepher is now turned into Debir (the Living Cracles of God) to us - Debir, the City of the Book, and has 66 houses, and a surrounding wall of Divine Inspiration. The only door to it is found within the Lord Jesus Christ, who is its custodian and keeper. "I am the door" said Jesus, and nothing man-made can ever be compared to it. (John 10.7). The Canaanites, the traffickers of the Word, those who use it for their own advantage, we shall destroy, or else before long we shall descend to the 'age of reason' and of the French revolution.

(A) Caleb in stout faith dealt with it, and so shall we, if we adopt his measures.

(B) His method of attack was presented to Judah in the form of a challenge,

(C) and the greatness of the reward implies the difficulty of taking the city.

(D) One could not conceive Caleb giving his daughter as a reward for a light task.

(E) And as things turned out we find a person similar in calibre to her father. Achsah was indeed a very precious daughter to Caleb.

(F) Othniel, Caleb's nephew, accepted the challenge and (with a section of Judah?) took the city and duly claimed his reward.

(G) This is all very interesting; more so because we have before us in this incident the first of the weak things with which God destroyed the mighty. Puny in the sight of men, despised, so to speak, but mighty in God to the pulling down of strongholds (2 Corinthians 10.1-5).

What are the facts of the case?

The name of Caleb (the Gentile dog) has already come before us, and its wonderful significance has not been lost upon us, the Old Dog 85 years old has not diminished in faith, nor in courage and determination to conquer in the name of the Lord. What a sterling example to us all.

Judges 1.13 Why was Othniel a weak thing in Hebrew eyes? Othniel was the son of the younger brother of Caleb. According to Genesis 49.1-2 the firstborn, Reuben, represented the beginning of the strength of his father Jacob; all other sons thereafter had no significance after the firstborn who had the double portion. Deuteronomy 21.17, 2 Kings 2.9. Othniel could not have been further away from this signal significance as the firstborn: he was the son of a younger brother of Caleb (Kenaz, son of Jephunneh the Kenezite (Judges 1.13 and Joshua 14.6). How very remarkable this incident will prove to be. What is the teaching of the names? See Numbers 33 pp 11-13 by the present author.

1) Othniel means "the Lion of God", "God is Strength", "Force of God".

2) Tribe Judah - "the Praise of Yah" (also of Gentile upbringing by origin - a Kenite, or rather Kenezite, a Canaanite tribe (Genesis 15.19) thought to have been a tribe that descended from Kenaz, grandson of Esau. Persons from this tribe became closely associated with the Israelites by marriage and we find Jephunneh, the father of Caleb and grandfather of Othniel of the Israelitish tribe of Judah, called a Kenezite (Numbers 32.12), and of course one of his sons (Kenaz) is the father of Othniel (Meta Bible Dictionary).

3) Kenezite - "centralised strength", "spear thrower", "archer hunter". Hunter is determined so far from the names as "the Lion of God of the Tribe of Judah" ("Praise of Yah" and "whom Yah will praise").

4) Grandfather who was the head of the tribe. Jephunneh = "Which will be before His face", "Which holds attention", "A favourable appearing", "He will behold", "Cared for by God". The exploits of his son and grandson adequately explain the person who will be before "His" face - none other than the Lord God of Israel, to whom Jephunneh had turned hereafter to hope in His mercy. If his faith followed his name, then he, along with Caleb, Achsah and Othniel, will have a "favourable appearing" at the Day of Christ. He will behold the face of the Lord in glory. The roots of the family are to be seen in this patriarch of old. No doubt called a square or the equivalent in his day by his younger contemporaries. We say "God bless all squares today who love and admire His truth".

5) Father = the younger son Jephunneh. Kenaz as Kenezite. One who has "centralised strength". The centralised strength of the whole family is faith combined with love and hope. Very necessary for us today. Kenaz means for our purpose as construed from the elements of his name, and as far as Othniel is concerned as "a hunting lion", it is actually so designated by some authorities. We have all the elements of a strong character here in Othniel "the Lion of God" and Judah of the Gentile Dog, purposeful faith, personified indeed. The centralising strength of the whole family, as we have suggested, compare the additional information found in "Hur" etc., in Numbers 33, for further extension of this wonderful family, then contrast vividly the fool of the family - Nabal (1 Samuel 25). How wide the extremes in human nature. In the eyes of the "higher educated" these are but weak things, just as Othniel was in Hebrew eyes, in these stirring days of the Judges: as always, the judgment of God was rewarded, in steadfast faith and military prowess. Othniel took the city. How fittingly do faith and

works combine in this incident and the somewhat modern slogan finds a resting place "Praise the Lord and keep your ammunition dry". Because God had said these events should happen and that Judah would be victorious, was not the signal to sit down and wait for the victory (as Jonah did to his regret under the gourd outside Nineveh) (Jonah 4.5-11, and which never came). "The Lord was with them". "The Lord was with Judah" (Judges 1.19 etc.) He went with them into the battle and delivered the Canaanites into their hands. Faith is never found in a passive voice in Scripture. Faith is the bedrock of the man of action and of the woman of action, although maybe that person may be stricken down by sickness, such a wonderful faith is seen -

(1) In the sister in the nursing home, paralysed to a terrifying degree for many years, but whose hope is strong and steadfast and whose mind is constantly active for the Truth of God. (2) In the brother who is blind and smitten with arthritis, yet who still publishes his thoughts to us in the various magazines. (3) We have always admired Helen Attwell in this wise. Although stricken with a terminal disease, and in bed for many years, she did not allow this deterrent to weaken her faith, but wrote that lovely little book on "The Song" to which the present writer was much indebted when writing his commentary on this book.

These weak ones in men's eyes, permanently infirm and immobile, were giants in the performance of faith, and this is present day application, and particularly so, when we remember that most of us have our faculties impaired in some way. May the spirit of these worthies stir us up to greater endeavour in the Lord.

Judges 1.13 : "And Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, took it and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife". Achsah now moves into our glossary of names. Her name means "an anklet" - Isaiah 3.16 (Gesenius, "a charm"), one who has power over serpents (cp. Mark 16.15-18, Luke 10.17-20, Acts 28.5). Her name suggests the adornment of the doctrine in walk and life which is so necessary a complement to the faith of Othniel "the lion" or "Strength of God". A similar principle may be seen in the pomegranates and the bells interspersed along the hem of the high priestly garment. (See "Blue in Scripture" by present author, under "High Priest").

(2) There is also a very beautiful type to be garnered for all spiritual "Achsahs" in the fact that they will be seen clinging closely to the ankles of the risen Lord in faithfulness, thereby receiving His protection. We realise that "our sufficiency is of our Lord". Bitten though He has been in the heel, He will finally crush the serpent's head in victory.

(3) Achsah's power over the serpent is wonderfully discerned, because she embraces the ankle, above the heel, and therefore shares not only the impalement on the cross with her Lord, but also the risen walk in resurrection life.

(4) Achsah then was a true daughter of Caleb, the Gentile Dog who wholly followed after his Master, but can we say she goes one step further? Or becomes more intimate even than her father? She clings to her Lord Himself. Think of that New Testament noble Achsah, Mary, at the tomb, who clung to her Lord so tightly (John 20.17). The implication is found in the Greek text of these words. How truly priceless is the woman given to us from the Lord: what a great part she plays in our love, and comfort, and sometimes discipline. At this particular time she assisted in the courage of Othniel, for here we find a man full of valour for his God, yet too bashful to ask anything more from his father-in-law, having received from him the best of earthly gifts, a devoted wife.

Judges 1.13-16 we notice is a parallel quotation from Joshua 15.16-19, proving our former premises, that these events happened before the death of Joshua. We break in the narrative at verse 14. "And it came to pass when she came to him (in marriage), that she moved him (Othniel) to ask of her father a field" (part of the inheritance of Caleb), noticeably "the field" (Heb. Sadeh), "and she lighted from off her ass, and Caleb said unto her, What wilt thou?" And she said unto him, "Give me a blessing, for thou hast given me a south land. Give me also springs of water". And Caleb gave her the upper springs and the nether springs.

(A) First of all we appreciate the attitude of respect she showed to Caleb. Would to God the daughters of the saints today would follow her pattern! Such expressions

as 'the old man', and using the first name of a parent, are shameful and disrespectful. No doubt our daughters today would be shocked that we would think this, but such is the case.

(B) No daughter of an orthodox or self-respecting Jew would allow either his son or daughter to address him in such a way. "Honour thy father and thy mother" is timeless in its application, because this is the first step to honouring God Himself. Therefore, with a similar respect shown by Rebekah to Isaac (Genesis 24.64) Achsah "lighted from off her ass". A rare Hebrew word is used here, meaning that she sprang off, in a spirit of reverence. Heb. Tzanach = to leap forth, with eager impulse. Abigail likewise did obeisance to the great chief David (1 Samuel 25.23).

(C) Caleb had given her the barren South Land, the Land of the Sun, burning with heat, but full of possibilities, could water be conveyed there for cultivation.

(D) Hardly what one would wish as dowry, barren unfruitful land, particularly in these days of high salaries and easy living, when the idea is for young couples to set up with everything. Perhaps these things which we prefer to think essential, are got together too easily, and with very little effort on our part.

(E) Such wealth is usually little appreciated, and neither is the marriage when the sexual appetite is worn off, and divorce follows. We hear it said on many occasions, "I don't want my children to have to struggle as I did". What harm had it done them? Usually the people who say this thing are well stocked with 'essentials'. But this is the Bible way in general. We are aware that it is the parents' privilege to store up for their children, but how many great ones of scripture began with the silver spoon in their mouths? i.e. already secure in wealth. One reference only must suffice. Think of Jesus. His mother's cleansing offering was two pigeons, the poorest under the Law, and He is the Lord from heaven (Luke 2.24).

(F) The dowry of Achsah is the right blessing. A land barren but with possibilities, a proof that in many ways of life the best way to help a brother or sister is to let them struggle out of their particular patch of barrenness themselves (but keeping a watching brief over them, of course). God sometimes allows barrenness to come, so that abundant fruitfulness may result, as it undoubtedly did with Othniel and Achsah.

(G) Is it not remarkable that by the testing of the faith of Achsah her courage (indeed the daughter of her father) brought fruit for her husband. Our faith is born and matured in adversity, and if we tackle our problems with a similar respectful though zestful abundance of faith like Achsah, then undoubtedly the blessing of the Father will be with us.

(H) The eye of faith is discernible in this incident to a considerable degree and particularly from our standpoint it is vitally necessary that we should take notice. Achsah asked for two things in this South Land.

(1) The Field, already historically known by Samuel in his day (should he be the author, of course). (See next page re probable identity of The Field).

(2) Springs of Water. Incidentally, these became three, as her father gave her the upper and nether springs, reading her desires correctly and granting them to her, no doubt with great pleasure at her appreciation of the situation. Spiritually speaking, the Father delights in being asked for large blessings (Psalm 81.10, John 15.7, 16.23).

(3) Fausset gives us a fix on the geographical position. "The Dry" or "Barren Land" as in Psalm 126.4. "Give me also springs of water". Conder, he stated, identified Debir with El-Dhoherijeh, a corruption of Deborah, meaning in Arabic "the village on the ridge". Exactly at 3000 cubits on the south road is a large stone which formerly marked the suburban bounds assigned to Debir as a Levitical city. A similar stone stands on the western side. It is truly the dry land. But at 6½ miles northward are fourteen springs, divided into three groups, in the valley Seil-el-Dilbeh. These doubtless are the "upper and nether springs". No other such are found in the Negev or South Country of Judah.

(4) Achsah knew from the national layout, unless water was granted, the outlook of the blessing was pretty bleak. She desires a field, in fact The Field, and for this she knows she must have water springs. One of the characteristics of the Land mentioned in the 8th chapter of Deuteronomy is the abundance of water.

Achsah, then, was right in asking for this commodity to make her field fruitful.

(5) In the spiritual field it is the spirit in the Word of God (Debir) that alone can give fruitfulness and grant the united power of fellowship (Hebron). The Upper Springs of spiritual insight and Lower Springs of practical application, or, to give it New Testament usage, faith and works (James 2.14-26) ruled by love, between the Lion of the Tribe of Judah (the greater Othniel) and His bride Achsah ("the anklet" and "powerful persuasion over serpents") that will cause 100% increase in fruitfulness to God.

(6) It is those amongst us who answer to Achsah, who alone desire this well watered field (Song 4.12 etc.) who long for fruit to God, that will give the Father pleasure, because this characteristic is the true spirit of 'agape' (Gk) for particularly the love of God, and the unselfish participant in the things of God, for His sake alone, that under the surface make this woman or sister so splendid.

This was the lesson that the rich young ruler had to learn (Barnabas) after which he nobly rose to the standard sought in Him by the Lord Jesus Christ, having his name changed in the bargain from Joseph "Adding", as no doubt he had done to himself up to that point in his life, to the Son of Consolation, towards others, and became an example to the first century church, "Son of Exhortation". Both derivations are to be found in the name 'Barnabas' (Acts 4.33-35): in contradistinction to Ananias and Sapphira, who demonstrated the principle of avarice and ego, and suffered the dire consequences (Acts 5.1-11). We can definitely state that there would be no complaint that the Word of God was uninteresting and unprofitable, were there more Achsahs to claim it as their portion.

A further point of interest before we pass on, what was the background of the term "The Field"? A rather wonderful suggestion from Joshua and his successors is made by Groser p.17, where he quotes Wilton (some authority of his day on these matters). Wilton identifies "The Field" or the cultivated plain containing "springs of water" with a grassy amphitheatre in the neighbourhood of Kurnul, the Carmel where the possessions of Nabal (1 Samuel 25.2), Caleb's degenerate descendant, were situated. Carmel itself was in the hill country, but the neighbouring ground slopes away to the Negeb and there still exists a fountain high up among the rocks above and a reservoir in the amphitheatre below. These Wilton thinks were the upper and nether springs of water. A glance at 1 Samuel 25, which is not in our immediate perusal, will reveal the rich outcome of Achsah's request if this suggestion is correct, and in our opinion it would appear to be so. 1 Samuel 25.1-2 reveals the richness of the land and of the vastness of Nabal's possessions. Unfortunately we do not see any appreciation by Nabal in the moral value of such riches. He is the object of Psalm 49 - "fool by name and fool by nature". Note the dismay in 1 Samuel 25.3, "But the man was churlish and evil in his doings and he was of the house of Caleb." One can never tell what one's successors will be like. A greater contrast between Caleb and Nabal would be hard to find. Compare 1 Timothy 6 as a commentary by Paul on this man.

In conclusion of our thoughts on this aspect it must be remembered that we are called to be husbandmen and workers either in the fields or vineyards and our fruits must be garnered for the Master's approval and use (Song 8.11). This is the fruit (or fruits) of the spirit. Constantly we must remember the statement of Psalm 36.8-9, "With Thee oh Lord is the fountain of life". "Thou shalt make me to drink of the river of thy pleasures". The result can be found in Song 4.12-15 - "A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, streams from Lebanon", and John 4.7-14 concludes the eulogy, "A fountain of living waters indeed".

Think of the brides found in the line of Christ, who were first of all found barren: Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel. The barren gift from God is always used as an incentive to us, that we may ask a boon of our Lord, for further blessings; so that the increase may be passed on to others, that together we may rejoice in the grace of God who giveth liberally to all.

Judges 1.16 We are treated to a lovely touch in this verse. The in-laws of Moses finally accept the offer of Moses in Numbers 10.29-33. (See notes under Jethro, Numbers 33). "And the children of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law (or

Hobab, brother-in-law) whom Moses had entreated that he should be to Israel "instead of eyes" in the wilderness, as being better acquainted with the life in the desert, its tracks, passes and places fit for encampment (no doubt the father-in-law of Moses, Reuel, was probably too old to have been such a guide). Moses had urged his brother-in-law to share in Israel's promised blessing. "We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you. Come thou with us, and we will do thee good. What goodness the Lord shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee". We have the evidence in this verse (Judges 1.16) that the Kenites complied, and so partook in the divine goodness to Israel down to the Assyrian captivity, as Balaam prophesied. Numbers 24.22, Heb. Kain (or the Kenite, the tribal patriarch) "shall surely not be for destruction until Asshur shall carry thee away captive". So back to Judges 1.16 - "They went up out of the City of Palm Trees with the children of Judah, into the wilderness of Judah which lieth south of Arad, and they went and dwelt among the people." Cp. Numbers 21.1-3. Here we have identification with Hormah. Thirty eight years had passed since the period briefly noted here, and also in Numbers 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. The Israelites, by God's favour in answer to prayer, defeated the King of Arad, who had at first taken some Israelites prisoners, next they destroyed Hormah. But on their leaving the place the Canaanites reoccupied and restored it, under the old name of Zephath - "Watchtower". Joshua slew the king (Joshua 12.14) but it is not said that he took Hormah. It was left to Judah and Simeon who executed the honour bestowed upon them with zeal and courage. The ban placed or pronounced by Moses upon the town was efficiently carried out by these tribes, from which it was named permanently henceforth Hormah = 'Banning' or 'Devoted'.

However, we are over-riding our exposition. In this union between the Kenites and Judah we get a type of the proselytes and Gentiles united with the Apostles of the seed of Abraham, combining in God's work to overthrow his enemies, and at the same time extending His church. Jericho, the City of Palm Trees, is always a picture of the world in which we are forced to dwell, and the Kenites leaving it to follow Israel, is indicative of the Gentiles coming to dwell in blessing in the Kingdom of God, gained by exploits of our greater Joshua, and the dwelling in Arad after the sack of Hormah, the safe dwelling in the Kingdom of God under Messiah (Psalm 72) when all the wicked will have been 'devoted' to the sword. Such is our hope shining through these words in this passage.

(A) How wonderfully attractive are the things of God, when faith is in the ascendancy, and victory follows victory, particularly more so when our individual victories are very sparse, and cannot be compared with the heavy defeats that we suffer daily.

(B) Ridout detects the seed of defeat in this Kenite dwelling in Israel. "At the beginning the church held to the word in some measure and just in proportion as it did, it got its victories. But you see here in the next part evidence of weakness. Here are the children of the Kenite (verse 16). Moses' father-in-law, a relation according to the flesh, without the slightest intimation of any divine connection (apparently he had forgotten Numbers 10.29-33 - A.H.) They came up from the City of Palm Trees (?) Were they people spared from the city of Jericho?" (Hardly, we would think). He continues, "There is no mention of the fact that they had any right at Jericho. There was a curse upon any connected with Jericho" (has our friend forgotten Rahab?). "There you have these people coming up from the City of Palm Trees and making their abode right in the heart of Judah. That is the secret of further departure from God, when the world and all its evil influences, though there may be connections according to the flesh with God's people, can have a resting place in the bosom of the church. You may be assured that they will be heard from later on". Ridout is forced to agree that "there was a godly exception to this". Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite is heard as working a deliverance. But they had left their own people who dwelt at Arad, and were evidently in heart identified with Israel. Heber = 'a pilgrim' suggests this. This last comment is hardly fair, one would think, because to leave their old way of life and become settled in the Land and in the cantonment of Judah, surely is the apex of Gentile faith in Christ. Heber had been a pilgrim these 38 years with Israel, and when they obtained their rest, the Kenites obtained theirs. Arad means 'the place of the wild ass', which up to this time no man could tame, but Jesus will in his time.

The wild ass of the Gentiles will bow to his command and will gently bear Him into Jerusalem as before. Zechariah 9.9, Matthew 21.2-5 and Psalm 104 very beautifully state that God cares for them. "The wild asses quench their thirst" reminds us once more of this arid desert land of the Negev, where the Kenites settled. Yes, God will satisfy the thirst of the Gentile asses in Judah when His judges shall once more rule the land. We have however in this day of stirring events and quickening tempo in the purpose of God to maintain our positions of watchmen upon the watchtower of faith in which we dwell and make sure that our trumpets give out a true sound so that the people of our day and generation are quite sure of the signs of Zion's glad morning. As we said, the Kenite incident can be viewed in two contrasting ways. We leave our readers to decide which they will follow. Both have their merits of course.

Judges 1.17

"And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they slew the Canaanites that inhabited Zephath and utterly destroyed it (and the name of the city was called Hormah)." We have briefly touched upon this incident: could we now comment that Judah had for a time set an example of decision, by utterly destroying Hormah. A city long ago appointed to destruction, but now at last finally destroyed (see Ecclesiastes 8.11-13). So far so good. Victory after victory under the formula of Judah (Praise of Yah) and Simeon ('hearing the son'). Such alone can provide ultimate victory, and if Judah and the whole of Israel had carried out their tasks in a similar way, then the rest of the tale had never been told, nor written, and our task would have ended on this note.

Judges 1.18-19

Carried on this victorious trend - Gaza = "Strong", fortified. Numbers 21.24 from this root. The most celebrated and ancient of the five cities of the Philistines, and was situated on a hill near the Mediterranean Sea (Bagster Proper Names) "Strength, firmness, power", Meta Dictionary - a very old place, a border city of the Canaanites (Genesis 10.19) allotted to Judah (Joshua 15.47). This city will come before us prominently later, and particularly during the rulership of Samson (Judges 16.1-3). Perceive also the strength of Luke's remark in Acts 8.26 in his day, "the same is desert". So happen all the cities that arise against God's people. Noticeably the same place today is still notorious for the "Strip" and clashes between Israel and Egypt. Apparently this city was wholly or partly retaken by the enemy (Judges 16.1) and Askelon (14.19) and Ekron (1 Samuel 5.10). Askelon = 'migration', 'sojourn', 'weight' and 'fire of infamy'. Bagster gives it 'migration (Exilum Sim) from the Shagal (Aramaic); to wander, Samaritan, to cast (exterminate). A seaport belonging to the Philistines, between Gaza and Ashdod. Centre of the worship of Ashtoreth, Venus the Goddess of Fertility. Many breasted goddess etc. from a corruption of Shaddai, etc. Ekron = 'rooting out', 'extermination', 'expatriation', 'naturalisation'. Meta Dictionary. Bagster similar. Thought to have been named because it was built by exiles.

What then do these names teach us? That Judah ('the praise of Yah', and all this symbolises) is capable when combined with Simeon ('hearing the son') to exterminate 'all the power', strength (Gaza), to reduce to nothing the weight of the 'fire of infamy', idolatry, Molech etc. (Askelon) and to utterly root out those who would naturalise themselves in our midst. We are not speaking of course of the true exiles in Christ, who have forsaken their father's house for the Lord's, having been taken captive by the Lord Jesus during his campaign of redemption and 'cleaved' only to Him, as Ittai did later to David (Deuteronomy 21.10-13, 2 Samuel 15.19-22). These are the true exiles (like Hobab whom we have just studied); who have found and followed the Truth, and who finally hope to dwell among the inheritance of Judah (the praise of Yah).

(1) It is noticeable that David after the slaughter of Goliath pursued the Philistines even unto Ekron and to Gath, the very city of Goliath (1 Samuel 17.52). (2) Ashdod is the remaining city of the Philistines not mentioned, known as Azotus in the Acts of the Apostles. Joshua 11.22 assigned this city as an Anakim refuge, and was the seat of Dagon worship (1 Samuel 5.1-8) and it was given to Judah in Joshua 15.47. (3) Each city and village fell to the all-conquering might of Judah and Simeon under Caleb and Joshua. (4) Ashdod well designates the character of the Philistines. (5) Again = 'stronghold', 'castle', an 'oppressor', 'despoiler', 'ravager'. 'theft'; and Gath =

'winepress', 'winefat press'. (6) Suggestive of the victory that will be gained by the greater Joshua and David against the Philistines of the latter day. (7) This winepress will be trodden alone by the Lord Jesus and in that day the slaughter in the earth will be dreadful (Isaiah 63.1-6). So far so good. (8) But, this word really should not come in the glossary of the man or woman of faith. We call to mind the statements of Jesus in Matthew 21.20, "Had ye but faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye would say be ye removed to yonder mountain and it would be cast into the midst of the seas" (paraphrase). Faith will move mountains, open prisons, cast off chains and open doors, if we take the attitude of Caleb and Joshua and have the assurance of Othniel and Achsah. (9) How true this is, "but" - the ugly word looms in Judges 1.19. "And the Lord was with Judah, and he drove out the inhabitants of the mountain" - faith intact and supreme - then the death knell sounds: "But could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley because they had chariots of iron". (10) The fruit of the seeds of weakness as seen in the "but" of verse 19, were quickly to be seen because the victories gained over Gaza, Askelon and Ekron were lost. (11) Furthermore, as men are more prone to follow the evil than the good, Judah's past courage was lost sight of and the example of unbelief and indecision in the end set by the leading tribe, was followed to its fatal issue by the rest. (12). A vivid contrast is provided by the comparison between -

(A) Caleb's as an illustration of the reward of decision.

(B) So the several tribes that follow on in indecision are the result and instances of the fatal effect of indecision by Judah in the work of the Lord. The very sad issue was that Judah with all the latent triumphs still "red hot" could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley. Why? Because they had "chariots of iron". But we ask, why not? Was not Yahweh still with Judah? Are not His chariots ten thousands of angels, before whom earthly chariots are but fuel for the flame (Psalm 68.17, 46.9), and did not Yahweh destroy the hosts of Jabin and Sisera (Judges 4.13)? His chariots were 900 chariots of iron, invincible human might. But just 'cast off' offal and fodder for Israel under Yahweh. Remember the young manservant with Elisha at Dothan (Jonah? - quite possible) when hemmed in by the ring of Syrian armour and chariots, and the answer of Elisha to his fearful cry - "Lord, open his eyes", and the young man beheld the mountain was full of horses and of the chariots of the Lord round about Elisha. "Fear not Israel natural and spiritual, they that be with us are more than they that be with them" (2 Kings 6.15-17). No doubt as we view these events coldly with the light of reason nearly 4000 years afterwards, we can imagine what we would have done in similar circumstances.

- (1) How did we behave during the bombing of the Luftwaffe during the last war?
- (2) How also did we behave when our beliefs and non-violent policy came under fire in those days?
- (3) When old friends passed us by on the other side of the road, as if we were spiritual lepers? How?

It is the old story of human flesh with all its weaknesses. Although Israel and Judah in particular had been the centre of God's activities and the purveyors of His successes in the mountain heights of the territory assigned to them, when faced with the terrible spectacle of the iron chariots of the valley, they became inert and useless, faith gone and no doubt, hope fled with it. We can imagine the thoughts of Joshua and Caleb at this time, who had known of (but possibly did not partake in) the spectacle at the Red Sea when the chariots of Egypt were finally extinguished (Exodus 15). So began the "buts" of unbelief in the historic glossary of Israel's downfall. How tragic the whole story is. We must remember again with Ridout, the one point that what secures victory is the supremacy of Truth. Truth must be supreme if there is to be power for God, or if there is to be recovery to God. Nothing short of this will do. We must get the Truth and fast hold to it. The Word of God must be a living reality in our lives. Daniel and his friends registered this Truth in the annals of Babylonian history with effects that could never be expunged (Daniel 6.14-28). Shadrach, Meshech, Abednego (Daniel 3.8-30). We must remember that these men were of our flesh and form, but, they believed God and He delivered them. The Acts of the Apostles are full of such bravery, and these exploits could be found throughout Bible history, even to a blind man, Bartholomew, whose "furrow in life" (one of the meanings of his name) (see The Twelve, Debir Press, under this same heading of Nathaniel or

* that is Joshua

Bartholomew), who cast away his cloak, the symbol of his livelihood, at the call of Jesus (Mark 10 : 46-52). Whoever saw a blind man cast away anything? This was a gesture of supreme faith. He would not require it again - the Son of David would heal him. "The chariots of iron" which had kept him captive in darkness these many years no longer held any fears for him. Would that Judah had continued in this spirit and would to God that we ourselves could rise to similar heights of faith. However, this was not so with Judah in Judges 1 : 19, and the evil gloom of disbelief and doubt crept into their thoughts; they were reverting back to type, 40 years in fact, when the Anakim seemed to them as giants, and their God as only very small (Numbers 13 : 33). How easy it is to fall into this trap, far easier in fact, to slip backwards, than advance forward, and how often can it be said that we are like the Irishman who put the brakes on his jaunting car when going uphill "to make sure that it did not slip backwards". Only absolute faith in the God of our salvation will keep up impetus, and now this supreme advantage has been lost to Judah. How very sad. Wordsworth points out that these chariots had not daunted Joshua (Joshua 11 : 4, 6, 9) and it is noticeable that he had assured the Ephraimites that they might prevail over those who had them (Joshua 17 : 16-18). Another thought on the first half of Judges 1 : 19 where we read "And the Lord was with Judah". The Targum of Jonathan reads "The Word of the Lord was with Judah" and also (verse 22) "The word of the Lord was with the house of Joseph" etc. This is great news for the spiritual Judahs and Josephs of today, and gives us heart in our struggles for Christ. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world", was the promise to His disciples, and comes down to us, in these far off days, and as the days darken before the return we must keep these things well in mind. In the first century, as those gladiators of Truth, the spiritual Judahs and Josephs, went out against sin and error, holding the torch of truth and liberty, then the Lord went with them, "and confirmed the word with signs following" (Mark 16 : 20). And whilst the age of demonstrative miracle in this sense has passed, nevertheless the Lord goes with us into the battle, and will give victory, and in His own words to us, "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (John 16 : 33).

This is our standard to which we adhere : there can be no failure, should we carry out the obligations of faith.

Judges 1 : 20

Is by way of recapitulation from 1 : 10, and it would appear that the chronicler would cling tardily to the past glory of obedient victory; it is as though he did not like to let the aforesaid things pass away. How true it is to life - "the former days were better", so the human mind thinks. In the dispensation of faith the outlook is opposite - "forgetting the things behind" we must press on to the maturity of Christ as Paul did, in Phil. 2. There is a time coming when the former things shall not come to mind. That is our goal; not so much that we are urged to forget the past defeats or victories; these are behind, and the life of faith goes forward, yet always remembering the good hand, and infinite mercies, of the Lord, that have always compassed us about. We appreciate the thoughts of Samuel (if he wrote this book, that is). Was he reminded of the disobedience of his own sons who walked not after his way? (1 Samuel 8 : 1-3). Samuel showed his piety by the names he gave to his sons. Joel - "Yahweh is God" and Abiah - "Yahweh is my Father". Little did his sons appreciate this high distinction. They descended to modern day methods of perverted judgments. "They walked not in his ways, they turned aside after lucre" (money and power), and for it took bribes with the usual result - perverted judgment.

Go to London, Toronto, New York, Brisbane, or Coventry. You will find its counterpart today. Was Samuel reminded of the former years when he dreamed a future for his sons as he penned this afterthought? How terrible it must have been to Samuel ("lent to the Lord") - "lent to the Lord" from boyhood until he could rightly say "Abiah - Yahweh is my Father". Samuel was truly adopted into the divine family and throughout his life he could conscientiously state "Yahweh is God" or Joel.

So whilst the recapitulation of this verse reminded us of the glory of Caleb's prowess in faith, we feel it also helped Samuel, a man of sorrows, to remind us a little of what might have been for his sons, if they had been faithful as Caleb. Only human is it? What do you think?

Judges 1 : 21

"And the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem, but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day". Judah had not taken Jerusalem for himself alone, but for Benjamin (Joshua 15 : 63). The declension is about to obtain velocity. Judah, we saw, was a picture of the supreme might, or supremacy, of divine truth, the word of God faithfully applied. So Benjamin suggests the supremacy of Christ. Benjamin is "the son of the right hand". Incidentally, according to human perverseness, his children were preeminently left handed. As a warrior tribe he was very fierce; he was a type of Christ in victory, in Jacob's blessings (Genesis 49), you will remember, while Joseph has the fruitful double blessing of the firstborn and the suggestion of Christ at His return.

Benjamin, ravaging as a wolf, suggests Christ's coming forth in judgment. In this short verse we have found that the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem. "But the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day". Did not drive them out? The warrior tribe which we would expect to succeed if any did, failed to drive the enemy out of the very city where God was to put His Name. "The inheritance of the possession of peace" - Jerusalem. The Jebusite means "the treacher down", the trampler of the things of God, the ravager of the peace.

(A) It has been said that Jerusalem is for the church in possession of Benjamin, "the son of the right hand". Bring it right home on our doorstep - is our ecclesia God's inheritance and possession of peace?

(B) Does peace characterise our ecclesia?

(C) Have we got peace within ourselves?

(D) Or do we allow those to dwell with us, who trample down God's word?

(E) Is the supremacy of Christ allowed to stand in our midst, as it should?

Unless it does, then we follow the decline of Judah and Benjamin. There is no confusion between verses 7 and 21 because one half of Jerusalem, i.e. Mount Zion, belonged to Judah, while the other half, i.e. Mount Moriah, belonged to Benjamin, and both tribes only obtained temporary possession of the city (Judges 19 : 10-12).

Unto this day. A clear indication that this book was written before David took Jerusalem in the 8th year of his reign over Judah, and in the 38th of his life (2 Samuel 5 : 5-9). Ridout sees in this tragic incident the fact that there is often amongst God's people a real measure of appreciation of His word, unaccompanied by a bowing to His authority. This is a very delicate and searching truth to all students of the Word, is it not?

(1) We may be quite diligent students of Scripture.

(2) We may be quite happy in our knowledge of the Word of God and yet not know in its real and full sense what it is to bow to that Word in every particular. Who can be free from this indictment?

(3) To bow to the Word means to accept, or bow to Christ's authority. We have to accept His view upon all matters as final, as the very decision of God Himself.

(4) Unless we bow to the Word of Truth as wholly inspired, we do not bow to Christ, and if we view the position of Christ as speaking only as a man, we do not bow to the Word.

(5) If our ideas of Christ are that he had limited knowledge, and that weekly instructions came from the Father to Him, that He did not know the answers to the many queries in the Messianic Psalms (and all Psalms are Messianic), that He did not know what lay before Him, that He had no idea why God had forsaken Him, we do despite to the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, and the Word, and it is vitally necessary that our thinking should be rephrased.

(6) Think that at the age of 12, as Luke 2 : 41-52 insists, the Lord Jesus already knew of His future work and wanted to get on with the work of His Father's business. However, at His mother's instigation He was subject to His parents and for 18 years had to rest on His knowledge as the coming Messiah.

(7) Can we imagine the 18 years were left idle in the pursuit of Messianic knowledge in the Old Testament. Take up the link phrase of 'the hour' later disclosed by John, and see that it embraces the whole of the sacrificial element of His

future life (John 7.30, 8.20, 12.23/27, 13.1, 17.1, etc.) Remember that this hour is not composed of 60 minutes. It covers the Last Supper, Gethsemane, the capture by the officials, the trial, crucifixion, and of course the desertion by His own followers, resurrection and ascension to the Father, and in these thoughts alone we have the perfect answer to the unsuspecting Jebusites, "the treacherous" among us.

(8) We will give Christ his full authority and honour and bow down to the Word in this respect.

(9) It is easy for anyone to admit that they own the Headship of Christ, to call Him Lord, or (Hebrew) Adonai, Master. This however is not enough as Jesus Himself said, "It is not they who say Lord, Lord, that shall enter into the Kingdom, but they who have done His will" (Matthew 7.21/23).

(10) To honour the Word in life, this is the way to prove that Christ has the supremacy over us.

(11) These are the principles of Christian protocol that the lessons of Judah and Benjamin at Jerusalem bring to us: anything that will tread down the Word and practice of the Truth must be eliminated, both quickly and finally, from our midst.

(12) First of all, of course, this application must apply to oneself, "for every heart knoweth its own bitterness."

(A) In chief reappraisal. It is easy to profess Christ as Lord in our midst and to make it a battle cry. How many times has this principle been a Shibboleth for a sect or party. But the crushing point comes when we enquire, is Christ obeyed, Christ honoured, Christ 'in the midst', meaning Christ obeyed, Christ followed, whatever the cost, and every section of Christ's authority in the Word, having its work within us. Let the hint of the Benjamite failure to oust the Jebusites remain with us, because the final test of our ecclesia or fellowship is the honour and authority of Christ.

(B) Another vital lesson emerges before we pass on. The hint of failure creeping in commenced with the kingly (to be) Tribe of Judah. Declension always commences at the top, or from the top, so we must call to mind Peter's warning, "judgment must first begin at the household of God" (1 Peter 4.17). "Could not", along with "But", comes always in the vocabulary of unbelief, and if the leaders falter, where shall the rest be?

(C) It will have been seen that the inability of Benjamin to drive out the Jebusites from Jerusalem was a radical mistake, and in one brief verse we have a pivot on which the whole subsequent failure turns.

The course from now on is constantly downward and away from God. The various names found in connection with the different tribes are very suggestive, to say the least.

Judges 1.22/23

The firstborn by default (Reuben) comes next. Joseph - who would connect unbelief with the house of Joseph? The real tribe is Ephraim, because Manasseh comes later in the list. Here we have the ordained younger son taking his place as firstborn (Genesis 48.17/21). However, the text of the passage is very illuminating. What does it say? "And the house of Joseph, they also went up against Bethel and the Lord was with them. And the house of Joseph sent to descry (or scout) Bethel (now the name of the city before was Luz.)" Bethel means "the House of God", and spiritually it is vitally necessary to have Bethel. With Ridout, just as Jerusalem suggests the supremacy of Christ, so Bethel suggests the House of God. Originally its name was Luz, meaning 'separation', mere 'external separation'. Spiritually just a negative action. Do we seek to emphasise mere separation, of what use is it? All negative cutting off this, that, and the other thing. There is not House of God about it, because Bethel, House of God, means, the Presence of God, and as such we must not only have 'Separation' but always the Holy sense of His own Presence.

It has been argued, "Look at the weakness in getting possession of Bethel. (1) Why did they send spies if God had given them the city? That in itself is a suggestion of weakness." (2) Moses, it is also argued, when he looked here and there to see if anyone was observing him, before he slew the Egyptian (Exodus 1.11/15) showed that he was not looking towards God. (3) When they sent spies into Canaan it was simply unbelief, that was being borne with by God, in His patience. (4) So they sent out to Luz, and they took possession of it by sparing the man who showed them the way into

it, as Judges 1.24 proves. "And the spies saw a man come forth out of the city and they said unto him, 'Show us, we pray thee, the entrance into the city, and we will show thee mercy'. They smote the city with the edge of the sword, but they let go the man and his family." A contract similar to that made with Rahab (Joshua 6.23/25). However, a very different reaction from that of Rahab; in fact, a very hollow victory was concluded.

Judges 1.26

"And the man went into the land of the Hittites, and built a city, and called the name thereof Luz, which is the name thereof unto this day." Entirely removed from either the Kenites or Rahab, this man wanted neither part nor lot with the people of God. In many ways the case can be paralleled with the brethren and sisters who have been saved from the separation found in the world, but ere long have returned to their own haunts, like a dog back to its vomit.'

The point strikes home when these miscreants come from one's own family, and also from those whom they may have brought into the Truth, and, we may say, from experience, have suffered many things from them in the bargain. In fact, each was a hollow victory, making a rod for one's back in the process.

Studying the names once more we understand why Joseph was used and not Ephraim. Victory had been attained by compromise with a Canaanite: therefore we understand the following = God will not 'add to' Joseph any compromised victory, when faith in Himself has been invited, and can claim victory. Most certainly God will not give a 'fruitful blessing' (Ephraim) to any such arrangement. Whilst the victory was allowed to stand, it was seen to be fruitless. The man spurned this glorious opportunity to dwell among and become part of God's people (because if he had taken Rahab's example and believed, such would have been the case). He lost the opportunity, went his way, and dwelt among the Hittites or 'the dreadful people' as their name means, and recommenced his idolatrous way of life in a city which he built, calling it Luz. How human. He wanted his own way. He would be separate. He would live his own life - a dreadful proof of the fact that though "God be willing that none should perish, but all come to repentance", this man, a man with his life given back to him, in fact, did not want to repent, and would follow his own course, and, as man in the world today boasts, "Man is master of his own soul", the death knell of this fact being observed in that man is master of nothing today: even the "little mice" - students - have assumed alarming proportions.

Rahab's action, as we have observed, was the reverse. She and her family were the only ones saved out of the doom of Jericho. But grace changed her heart, and she joined the church of God. Luz in her life became Bethel, as it does to all Gentiles who obey the Gospel, the place of separation through idolatry became the House of God in truth. "That which was far off was brought nigh". Sinners are brought nigh through judgment, but the judgment fell not on them but on Christ (Ephesians 2.1/11); becoming living stones in the House of God (1 Peter 2.5/10), voluntary separation among the 'dreadful people', the Hittites of our day. What a choice! And what a sorry lesson for Ephraim (the house of Joseph)! - the story reading quite opposite, as we have seen from the meaning of their names. This kind of compromise never did any good for anyone. As we have this incident before us and have noted the very clear lessons carefully, it has reached our own heart, and as we review our own failures in this wise, we wonder, did they come through unbelief? We must press on, for other work lies before us.

The point that comes home to us as individuals and ecclesias is (1) Is our ecclesia a veritable Bethel or only Luz? (2) Are we a set of people who have simply separated ourselves (Luz), or are we a people dwelling in truth in the House of God (Bethel)?

Judges 1.27 The sorry tale continues.

Manasseh is the particular tribe involved, the elder brother of Ephraim by birth, but not by pre eminence. "Neither did Manasseh drive out the inhabitants of Bethshean and her towns, Taanach and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Ibleam and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns, but the Canaanites would dwell in that land."

The story in these names is explosive. Manasseh, true to his name, forgetting or making me to forget all the toil and all my father's house." He had already forgotten all the 40 years toils of the journey in the wilderness and now he had forgotten his father's house. Absolutely true; in fact, more serious still, he had forgotten his God-appointed task - to destroy and drive out the Canaanites from this area.

Fausset gives us the information that nearly all these towns were in the plain of Jezreel or Esdraelon, which runs south-west from the Mediterranean, above Carmel almost to the Jordan. On the north it is bounded by the hills of Galilee, on the east by Mount Gilboa and little Hermon, near the great roads from the Mediterranean coast to Damascus and Central Asia. In fairness let us state the fact that the Canaanites would naturally bring all their forces to defend these roads, and their war chariots could effectively act against Israel in the plain (verse 19, which we have already analysed).

(A) Again it was Israel's lack of resolute faith that disabled them from

(B) overcoming the resolute will of the Canaanites who WOULD dwell in the land (Joshua 17:12). Fausset also states that Taanach, Megiddo and Dor were of the 31 Regal Cities enumerated in Joshua 12 of which list Conder (Palestine Exploration Expedition) remarks that it precedes all the other topographical lists and forms the key to the whole system. We are all awaiting Armageddon, no doubt, with the greatest tank battle of all time (20th Century chariots of iron), if of course they are not out of date at the coming of the Lord and replaced with more deadly infernal machines of destruction.

Naturally, any man or tribe would have failed to meet the challenge of this armed might. But Manasseh went, or should have gone, in the armour of the Lord, and in the might of the Lord of Hosts. The Psalmist exclaimed, "O clap your hands, all ye people, shout unto God with the voice of triumph. For the Lord most high is terrible. He is a great King over all the earth. He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet. He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom He loved. Selah ("Mark well")".

God is gone up with a shout,
The Lord with the sound of the trumpet,
Sing praises to God, sing praises.
Sing praises unto our God, sing praises,
For God is the King of all the earth.
Sing ye praises with understanding.

God reigneth over the heathen,
God sitteth upon the throne of His holiness.
The princes of the earth are gathered together,
Even the people of the God of Abraham,
For the shields of the earth belong unto God,
He is greatly exalted. (Psalm 47)

These are the battle orders of Israel. Had they been applied by Manasseh, the chariots would have become matchwood - but they were not (see notes on 1:19 for other thoughts on chariots of men and chariots of fire). Manasseh had forgotten his task, partly through fear and ease, in the natural plane, but through loss of faith in the spiritual sphere. The place names tell the story. Bethshean or Bethshan became true to its name (the House of Rest), for Manasseh and Canaanite. The Canaanite was allowed to wander through Taanach (Wander Town) and the whole circle of the inhabitants of Dor (= Consuming or Devouring the People = Iblaim) doubly emphasised in Megiddo (= Predatory Purposes).

This terrible state of affairs is what happens when the Word and Counsel of God is "forgotten" in any community. Paul put it very pointedly, once again to quote Acts 20:29. "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock." This can only happen when the Manassites of our day forget their work and defence of the ecclesia, when they forsake the power of God's word and allow the philosophies of men to walk around in the ecclesia. The Judges third generation - the 1970s Christadelphian third generation? But let us remember these things happened during Joshua's lifetime, the first generation indeed, and after all, no generation can boast. "The sins of the father on to the children to the third

and fourth generation (Ex. 34:7) The Judges are a trite example of this law of voluntary retribution. In other words the children of the fathers bring on their own judgement as per Ezekiel 18 (see whole of chapter). "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" whether the 1st, 2nd or 3rd generation; or come to that 103rd generation, the principle remains unaltered. Many of our contemporaries have sought to "forget" these ordinances and seek to blame God for what they consider to be a slight injustice. God, however, is not a man that He should lie.

Judges 1:28

"And it came to pass when Israel was strong that they put the Canaanites to Tribute (or pay taxes) and did not utterly drive them out".

In absolute disobedience to God's command (Ex. 23.32/33, 34.12 15) Once again a kind of compromise that deepens as we go down this representative list of Israel's default, (even in the day of Joshua). Indifference (along with compromise) to the honour of God which idolatry insults, indolence and love of gain, made Israel content with imposing tribute, even when strong enough to subdue them. Indeed Israel were very far from the character given them by higher criticism, blood-thirstiness was not their natural bent, and apparently extermination of the Canaanites was far from their ideas: we note as a rule, that whenever the term of the immediate punishment was withdrawn, they disobeyed God by sparing their foes.

There is a vital principle to be noted and obeyed in this incident. The Law comes from God, the righteous Judge, and not man; and the divine aim was to exterminate idolatry and its attendant pollutions.

In other words the whole community of the land was so entirely eaten away with the various emanations of V.D. that the only remedy was for complete resection, Divine surgery, major, and not superficial. Israel was given the mission by God to carry this out. Any Bible student will know that the whole code of the Mosaic Law breathes out humanity and not inhumanity which the critics allow. (C/p. Ex. 23 4, 15, 19. 22.23/24).

As usual Israel had to suffer for their disobedience and indecision, as it brought about their degeneracy through infiltration. The Lord Jesus prayed that His children may not leave the world but be kept from its evil (Jno. 17.15). What can be the result however, when His children take to themselves evil, and make a personal gain thereof out of its workings. This is the way that these principles can affect us today. Let us not gather them to ourselves, rather shun them, and pray God in sincerity that we be kept from the evil, that biggest being ourselves of course. What saith the Scriptures. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion hath light with darkness, and what agreement hath the Temple of God with Idols? For ye are the temple of the living God. Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate saith the Lord and touch not the unclean thing and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters saith the Lord God Almighty". (2 Cor. 6 14 18) This is Holy Writ and is the only safe principle for the Brother and Sister of Christ in these days, and of course has been for all ages. Fausset states that "the putting of the Canaanites to tribute was effected gradually in the period of the Judges and Kings (1 Kings 4 12, 9 20/22). And as we know their idolatrous worship persisted right down the ages until God intervened with terrible retribution in Ezekiel's times ((Ez. 1 ch - 10 ch etc).

Judges 1.29 "Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer, but the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them".

(2) Gezer = "Portion" or "Sharply cut off", "Decreed to be destroyed".

(Josh. 10.33, 16.10, 21.21. 1 Chron. 14.16, 1 Kings 9.16, 1 Kings 9.17).

(3) The quotations above make the legend of this Levitical City (it was assigned to the Kohathrites).

(4) The names attaching to the City itself disclose what was to be done originally with the City. Devoted to God first of all by slaughter, then utilised in Levitical service.

(5) But, once again the Canaanites (the Traffickers) were allowed to remain again by Ephraim.

(6) Therefore Ephraim by his disobedience defeated the meaning of his own name for God will not make "doubly fruitful" (Ephraim - the portion of the firstborn) where the Canaanite, who traffics in the Word, dwells.

(7) Neither will the Lord Jesus bless today the Ecclesia who uses such methods, or the Brother or Sister who is a Canaanite, one who will use the Word or Ecclesia, to gain personal advantage.

(8) The Brother who thinks that his brother's car is specially designed,

(a) for taking him around. "Ten thousand are the Chariots of the Lord"! "This one is mine" has been said and meant. !

(b) The Brother who will use one's special knowledge regarding his own needs, even at holiday times, and never think of payment.

(c) Or the Brother who will have a service done by a brother on holiday - sometimes at the expense of the Brother's health and never even say thank you. "Ten were cleansed, where are nine?"

Such are some of the Traffickers (the Canaanites today?). Do we think that we shall prosper should we do these things.

(9) By the way, one of the snags which has become quite acute in these days, to the speaking Brother, is that of expenses. On many occasions one never gets asked. And some of these expenses reckon up to £3. 10. 0. per round trip. One of the more fiendish approaches is, if enquiry is made, "Oh, we thought that you were down here on holiday". This negation is becoming rather well worn now. Usually nothing is even said about them, and we would suggest that either one or two alternatives might be attempted by the Ecclesias in mind.

(1) Either refuse to ask the speakers in mind, if they consider the cost too high. After all, speakers in general do not force themselves on the ecclesias.

(2) Or they meet their commitments and pay up, the days have arrived when speaking for pleasure in this respect is played out.

(3) After all that speaker may have in anticipation already put in a sizeable return in the collection.

(4) It has been known on such occasions to lose £5. on a Sunday appointment and lose is not meant to imply that we resent giving to the Lord, on the contrary, it is a pleasure to "Give till it hurts", as David did, and it is this Canaanite aspect of "trafficking" that is most distasteful.

Such is the very practical issue that arises out of Ephraim's failure to drive out the Canaanites in Gezer. As Ridout rather delightfully puts it "If there is a failure to grow, the sense of God's presence is evidently wanting. Now here you have more distinctly failure in fruitfulness. Ephraim is the fruitful Tribe, and represents work among the Lord's people, the proper fruit of faith, which shows itself as the Apostle James tells us by works. If Manasseh has failed, if there is failure in oneness of purpose to press on, Ephraim will fail too. The works of our daily life will cease and the enemy will take or keep possession of that which ought to be for God."

The Gospel of Mark is a complete answer to this point in Judges. It is as we are aware the Servant's Gospel, and is marked by a slave's devotion to duty, by the repeated emphasis of the words "Straightway" and "Immediately" etc. see concordance for relevant details.

Judges 1.30-32

Bring into prominence particularly in the names, the reason why the two happy characters in Israel - Zebulon and Asher - refused to carry out the Divine order of extermination. "Neither did Zebulon drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, nor the inhabitants of Nahalol - but the Canaanites dwelt among them and became tributaries".

Basically it can be tracked down to laziness or being "easy going", Zebulon means - to Dwell or Dwelling originally to cause Jacob to dwell with Leah, it would appear to be quite an enigma, for there is abundant evidence that Jacob dwelt with Leah, which cannot be denied. Obviously the idea was that Jacob might love her, not just for her sex, but for herself, and be pleased to dwell with her as he did with Rachel, who at this particular time was childless. (Genesis 30.20-24). The idea of desired contentment then is uppermost in Leah's mind and such is

the setting in Judges 1. Kitron means knots (knotty problem) to be bound Ezekiel 46-22: this could apply to the extirpation of the Canaanite, Zebulun simply could not be bothered. What he desired is revealed in Nahalol, Pasture, Pasture to lead out and in, his flocks and herds from root Nahal; to lead out. Lit. "A sheep walk" Isa. 7-9. from root Nahal to lead to water, to provide for (Ex. 15 13, Psa. 31 4) (23 2, Gen. 47 17). Zebulun was content to dwell in such easy circumstances. Canaanites made to serve him, look after his flocks and herds, abundance of fodder and water, what more could he need? He would not chase out the Canaanites just yet, he would wait and see how things shaped then he could act. Can we see ourselves in this position, easy portion? easy money? easy service? Why spoil it? Judges 1.31-32.

And the other portion of the easy going twins? "Neither did Asher drive out the inhabitants of Accho. Nor the inhabitants of Zidon, nor of Ahlab, nor of Achzib nor Helbah, nor of Aphik nor of Rehob. But the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites. What a terrible statement the last clause is. (Lit. Wordsworth). The words of the original are very impressive. Asher dwelt in the inside, as it were in the heart and in the bowels of Canaan; a further depravity, in not only disobedience, in separating from and a cleaving to, the very inwards of idolatry from God. How did it go? And what is the teaching of the names?

Asher means "to be happy or fortunate", from root Asher = To go straight on, to be fortunate.

The "happy go lucky" character as we say today in modern jargon, who sails right on, with nothing in mind to divert him. Such is the idea connected with this Tribe, the following names will suggest why he was so happy at this particular time in history.

Asher found (1) Accho, a place meaning "Sand made warm by the Sun", congenial conditions for relaxing, a favourable climate. (2) Zidon he found to be "Fish in plenty", and Ahlab increased these favourable conditions = Fatness, he had food and oil in abundance. Not only so, he had the added blessing of security in his lot. Rehob means "A channel of defence". Who could want more in this life, for after 40 years in the fierce howling wilderness, and in Canaan fighting campaigns, he had found rest, ease, food and defence in apparent perfection, who amongst us would not have been tempted.

He was as we say today "In a good seam", a mining expression. One beloved brother's humorous comment on a similar situation was "A rut is no different from a grave, only a little deeper". But amidst all this wealth and contentment we have a snag, for Achzib is also found within this glossary which means "Lying and Deception", and these conditions became a curse to Asher. How do we know? c.p. The Song of Deborah Judges 5.17 states that "Asher sat by the sea shore" being too much at ease to heed the alarm of Deborah, and Barak, for arms against Sisera etc. How true this attitude is of many things in life, when we are called to active service, after laying down Ecclesial offices, or when we are called from our ease, to help other folks not so fortunate as ourselves. There is, as the old proverb puts it, "none so deaf as those that will not hear", and because Asher was not only happy in his lot, but had also "wormed" his way into the Canaanite way of life (Judges 1.32 already commented on) he turned a deaf ear to the needs of his brethren, and refused the call to arms. Whatever be our lot or position in life the call is to service - to love one another as Christ loved us (Jno. 15.12), and while our brethren are in temptation, or suffering, then we have no right to sit at ease, until they too can sit with us. Service, and not ease, is the call of the Truth, and any Ecclesia or person adopting this way of life can only have one end, which we leave to your own imagination.

Judges 1.33 takes us onward into the maelstrom of evil. Neither did Naphtali drive out the inhabitants of Beth-Shemesh, nor the inhabitants of Beth-Anath; but he dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the Land. Nevertheless the inhabitants of Beth-Shemesh and of Beth-Anath became tributaries unto them. Again a further decline where we have the sorry spectacle of Naphtali - "The Wrestler" dwelling with the Canaanites "The Traffickers" in Beth-Shemesh "The House of the Sun" (Josh. 19.38), a city given over to idolatry "The Wrestler" once a tribe of valour in the things of God, will

dwell quietly, or be at peace, with those who worship "the sun".

We may remember that Joshua by His prayers had arrested the light of the sun, till he had conquered the Canaanites who had opposed him (Josh. 10 12-15). But these Israelites dwell with idolaters in the city where the sun was worshipped in the place of God. In our thinking Christ alone is the Sun of Righteousness and the Light of the World. How awful it is when Ecclesias, and Brethren and Sisters have fallen away from Him, and make a Beth-Shemesh of their own, where they have fellowship with idols. How often do we, have I, done so in my lifetime? Beth-Anath has its story to add in these sorry conditions, it means "The House of Response" i. e. "The Place of an Echo", a complement of the construction of Bayith, a house and Anath, from the root "Anath" = to answer. Did Naphtali "respond" to the filthy worship of this idol = the sun. Had they forgotten the time, when with their bricks and sweated labour, they had built such cities as Hieropolis "The City of the Sun" and so forth. Had the gods of Egypt finally claimed them after all this lapse of time?

No doubt Naphtali's "wrestler's" heart fought with these things and survived "intact". We are rather doubtful. He did however overcome the inhabitants of the City of the Sun (Beth-Shemesh) and the House of Response (Beth-Anath) and they became tributaries to him. We wonder for how long? However in Deborah's song, Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeopardized their lives unto death in the high places of the field. (See the Song of Solomon for further exposition of this phrase by the present author). The wrestling spirit of Naphtali apparently was not weakened by this process of making tributaries of the Canaanites at this time. He subdued the idolaters to himself, a very valorous distinction because usually the fall goes the other way and we become abject tributaries to the particular form of idolatry we take to ourselves. The words are a strong warning to those of us who may think that we are strong enough in our assertions to assault and defeat idolatry within us. Ecclesiastes reveals that anything apart from the word and worship of God may become an idol to us, therefore we will flee idolatry.

Judges 1.34 is explosive. Its meaning to us gives the sum of the declining evils we have studied "And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountains, for they would not suffer them to come down to the valley".

Here is another stage of degeneracy. The Israelites who ought to have driven out the Amorites; and if they had been faithful and obedient to God, might have conquered them, as Joshua had done (Josh. 10.12) and as God promised that they should be enabled to do (Josh. 3.10) ARE NOW DRIVEN OUT BY THEM. And the process is very bitter, very painful and very humiliating for them. The word in Heb. for "forced" literally means "to press", to "squeeze" to afflict, from Heb. Lachats (Gesenius 487). What is the moral of this? If we do not drive out our spiritual Amorites, who bring in unbelief ungodliness, heresy, and idolatry, then our spiritual enemies will most certainly "oust" us out of our spiritual heritage. Ridout's comment on the Amorites is very apt. Decline is there, the enemy taking possession of the valley. The valley suggests lowliness and fruitfulness. Fruitfulness because of lowliness. It is because the Lord went down into the Valley of Death that He could bear fruit for us, and it is only as we enter by faith into the reality of His death, and have the sentence of death in ourselves, that we can be fruitful for God. And here you have instead of the people of God dwelling in the valleys, the Amorites. Amorites means = "The Lofty Ones", those who are lifted up. The Amorite means the Lofty Speaker. It means a people who talk a great deal. Their proper place as the archaeologists tell us, was in the mountains, they were the highlanders. They are high talkers and they drive the people of God out of the valleys. Wherever you find the people of God given to talking instead of reality, making a great profession, speaking great swelling words, you may rest assured that there is no lowly inhabitant of the valleys, therefore no fruitfulness. This verse then gives us a clear warning against the talkers of our day. The only thing that should speak is the Word of Life and magnify it so that they themselves are lost in it or eaten up by it. This is our duty today to make the Word alive in our Ecclesias, and homes, and in business etc. that our witness may be that God

has spoken to us and we in humility and thanksgiving are lost within its beauty. Surely the lowest point was reached by Dan; Dan = a Judge, ought to have been a judge of the people but was forced out of almost all their cities and inheritance, including some in the mountains (1. 35). The allotment to Dan was almost all in the plain, so that they were forced to seek for room in the faraway north at Laish (ch. 18) with dire results as we well know. We need to hear the spirit's voice in Rev. 2.5, 3.15-16 that we lose not our inheritance through half heartedness. Though the Talkers, the Amorites of our day have chariots of iron, we have the spirit word of God which is all powerful.

Judges 1.35-36

"But the Amorites would dwell in Mount Heres in Aijalon and in Shaalbim." Yet the hand of Joseph prevailed (or was heavy upon them) so that they became tributaries. And the coast of the Amorites was from the going up to Akrabbim, from the Rock and upwards. Amorite pressure was keen in Mount Heres = The Sun, another indication of the strength of this idolatrous worship "in Aijalon" - "The place of Gazelles" Fausset or Bagster "A large stag" and intensive of the word Aijil, therefore denotes "A great ram", a city that abounds in stags or rams. Joshua commanded the sun to stand still in the valley of Aijalon while the Israelites completed their destruction of the Amorites (Josh. 10-12) and we can see in a metaphysical sense that Aijalon represents the "fleetness of the deer" and protection in the true thoughts that meet and overcome error (Amorites) when they are established in the Word of God. Here once again we see the strategy of the Amorite: they aspire to dwell in Shaalbim (Heb. "The Place of Foxes", the Son of a Fox, Place of Hollows etc.) highlighting the wisdom, slyness, and cunning of the senses. The chief characteristic of a fox is craftiness and that which is of a sly deceptive nature, this characteristic is not one that will easily adjust itself to the Truth. This city was allotted to Dan, but the Danites failed to drive these furtive characters out. (c/p. The Words of Jesus in Lk. 13 32. c/p. Song 2 15. see notes here on the Song). One must equally beware this evil undercurrent in latter day Ecclesias and watch out for the furtive tearing away of the tender shoots after baptism. The Fox will never make a frontal attack in anything like his own size, so those newly baptized are those mostly open to these dastardly attacks.

The word for dwell is 'yoel', the hiphil of yaal (to begin to desire) meaning to our great surprise that the Canaanite approached Israel; the word means also 'friendly overtures'. This is granted after the iron hand of Joseph or Ephraim had been planted very heavily upon them, so that they became tributaries to Joseph.

The going up of this territory was to Akrabbim (Josh. 15 v.3). "The Ascent to Akrabbim", "The Scorpion Pass" or the cliffs intersecting the Ghor below the Dead Sea, 'abounding in scorpions': the southern boundary of the Holy Land. From the rock (Ha-Selah) not as in 2 Kings 14 v.7 (Petra); as the object is to explain how the Ammorites were by their positions able to force the Danites out of their inheritance.

'The Rock' here is on the southern edge of the Rakhina plateau: its notoriety was due to the events which took place at the Waters of Strife (Num. 20 v.8-10). As the Ammorites extended to the Scorpion heights on the south-east boundary of the Holy Land, so to 'the Rock' on the south west boundary (Deut. 1 v.44) and upward i. e. northward.

The enemy is once again in the open, and thick in numbers. The sting is in their tails, the sting of sin is deadly, and the position perilous particularly when viewed in relationship with the Waters of Strife. 'The Rock' not just a rock, was the one smitten by Moses, in error, because of the

continual hindrance and pressure of the people for water. "Would God that we had died, when our brethren died, before the Lord" etc. (20 v. 3-5).

Terrible lessons were meted out by God -

1. To Moses, because of his unbelief, "You shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them" (20 v. 10-12). Aaron being guilty also, as the text shows.
2. The Lord was sanctified in the people having 'striven' with them (20 v. 13). How awful to read these words (see "Numbers 33" by A. Hall, under Kadesh, for further exposition).
 - (a) The lessons of the introduction, and in this first chapter of the Judges, have been many and varied. Ending with this terrible lesson surrounding unbelief and striving against God.
 - (b) The benefits of advancing in faith and under grace of God have demonstrated complete victory.
 - (c) On the other hand, slackness and indecision of unbelief have been equally apparent in failure.
 - (d) Not only so. The future, for large scale departure from God, was laid in this 1st Generation in the Land.
 - (e) "Neither did" being the catch phrase of unbelief and failure, coming to its logical conclusion in the 3rd generation when it became more and more apparent that 'every man did what was right in his own eyes' (Judges 21 v. 25).
 - (f) It must be kept firmly in mind what we have already outlined in this first chapter of Judges, which actually took place during the lifetime of Joshua and Caleb, the faithful servants of Yahweh.

What was the Divine mind in all this?

A manifestation was necessary to reveal to the camp of Israel that they had grievously sinned against the Lord; and it was revealed to them in no uncertain way, by a Personage known expressly at least to Joshua and Caleb, and probably to some of the older generation. (Judges 2 v. 1-5) - an Angel of the Lord that came up from Gilgal to Bochim.

This we believe is the Angel that had led Israel all the way from Egypt; and who is still in command as evidenced by June 1967 in Israeli history. The Michael of Daniel 12 and Jude. The particular messenger sent by God to watch over and lead His chosen people.

A particular study of these connected theopanies would be most useful to our readers, and it is strongly advised to them. Concerning our immediate purpose, we found that originally (and the two manifestations cannot have been far removed from each other) immediately previous to the march of the host of Israel upon Jericho, Joshua received a vision of the Yahweh Angel as the Captain or commander of the Lord's hosts (Joshua 5 v. 13-15).

- (1) It will be found that every manifestation of God under the Old Covenant was adapted to the conditions and requirements of the people at the time it was given.
- (2) The Angel appeared to Moses as Lawgiver the legislator; and as a Captain of the Hosts to Joshua and the soldiers, and to both he said, "Remove your sandals for you stand on holy ground."
- (3) The rod was a symbol of Moses' ministry, but the sword of Joshua's. (Scroggie's "Unfolding Drama of Redemption" Vol. 1). The reverence Joshua showed for the Angel, or Michael, we suggest was well placed, and in these days when reverence seems to be strictly limited for anything Divine, we do well to appreciate and imitate (as used in the right concept of course).
- (4) This visitation came to give confidence in the campaign which followed. Israel were assured that should they remain faithful, and believing, then their 'commander invisible' was no less than their particular Angel, who had led them all the way through the howling wilderness, and of course, they had witnessed His reproof on countless occasions against their fathers for unbelief and rebellion. (see Num, 33 by present author).

- (5) None was left in doubt as to the issue before them. Israel took the exhortation and advanced to take Jericho etc. (Joshua 6).
- (6) This went well until Achan sinned (Joshua 7), then the Angel actively withstood Israel and they were beaten back at Ai, although Israel had said "Make not all the people to labour thither, for they are but few".
- (7) They took 3,000 men against the city and from a numerical point of view this should have been more than sufficient. 3, the number of Divine completeness, and 10 taken to its third power, which, had Israel been faithful, would have overcome the enemy with ease, but because of Achan's sin, instead of the Divine completion of victory (to show the meaning of the number 3,000) there was a complete rout, the meaning of this number being lost.
- (8) In our present chapter Judges 2 we have already noted that the Angel (Michael?) appears in controversy with Israel, because of their growing lethargy and discontent.
- (9) No doubt you will have noticed that it all begins at Gilgal (Joshua 5) and the day of 'sharp knives' (2 v. 2-4) of the second circumcision in which spiritually we must all partake when our true Joshua arrives (the judgement seat). Gilgal, which we have outlined in other places (Blue in Scripture, and Numbers 33) comes from a similar root to that meaning Calvary and rolling away; the place where our sins were rolled on the Lord Jesus (Mark 15-22), the time of the Passover and the first fruits of the Land (Joshua 5 v. 12). 'The reproach of Egypt' had been removed.
- (10) Basically it means the type of Christ's death and resurrection. This is the starting place of victory. Here, and here alone, is the place of "Sanctified Assault" vindicated. All victory is the Lord's. (Psalm 8 v. 1-9) 1 Sam. 17 v. 45-50 and by His grace Heb. 2 v. 6-15). (a) This is indeed the starting point of victory. But, as we have stressed, it can only be discharged in faith and obedience. (b) Because the foundation of Gilgal is faith and utter obedience, though fraught with many tears and sufferings and perspirings of blood. (Lk. 22 v. 39-46).
The disciple is not greater than his Master, and both must share the same road, although the disciple, of necessity, can only follow behind, and enter in small measure, into the depths of the agonies of the Lamb.
- (11) We all begin then at Gilgal (cp. Micah 6 v. 5 also Joshua 3 v. 1, 4 v. 19) where we have a pictorial representation of Israel from the position of sin (Num. 28 v. 1 etc). (see Numbers 33 by present author), shame and misery, to a glorious resurrection and recovery.
- (12) The position of Gilgal has changed then with regard to Israel originally, 'The reproach of Egypt' was rolled away from them (Joshua 5). Now Judges 2 v. 1-5, they themselves earn 'The reproach of the Lord' and by their misdoings the reproach is once again rolled from the Lord on to themselves. What a terrible position to be in! A complete reversal in God's attitude.
- (13) No wonder the place is called Bochim, and the phrase 'from Gilgal to Bochim' contains much that affects us in these last days before the manifestation of the true Michael or Prince of Yahweh.
- (14) "Bochim" means weepers. "The place of weeping".
The weeping naturally coming as a result of the terrifying experience of being denounced by the Angel of Yahweh. This incident is also dynamic on account of the Lord's decision to let their enemies remain amongst them to become as thorns (the great terrible thorns of Sinai), from which the people had suffered dreadfully during their passage of this territory.

A more complete analysis of these various "theophanies" of the Lord can be obtained from a study of the places and incidents which surround them. They are

- (a) The Angel that appeared to Abraham (Gen. 18)
- (b) The Angel that rebuked Sarah for laughter (Gen. 18 9-15)
- (c) The Angel that wrestled with Jacob (Gen. 32 24-38)
- (d) The Angel that cared for Joseph in Egypt (Gen. 39 21-23. 42 4-8 etc).

- (e) The Angel of the Bush and following manifestations during the plagues in Egypt. (Ex. 3)
- (f) The Angel that led Israel during the Exodus from Egypt (Gen. 13, 14).
- (g) The Angel at Sinai (Ex. 23)
- (h) The Captain of hosts, just mentioned, of Joshua 5 v.13-15, also Judges 2 v.1 etc. Gideon, Judges 6 v.11-26, Manoah, Judges 13 v.3-25.
- (i) Michael one of the chief princes (Dan.10 v.13-21.)
- (j) Michael the chief prince (Dan.12 v.1 etc). Dan.9 25 gives the anti type.
- (k) The messenger of the covenant (Mal.3 v.1).
- (l) Michael the archangel (Jude 9) etc.

A survey of these and similar passages should greatly help to a more complete knowledge of the theophany of the Angel of the Lord which was given particularly to help Israel in all their ways.

Gilgal to Bochim - The rolling back of sin towards oneself reveals a terrible down grade, a decline from holiness, manifested at Gilgal, and in the anti-type, the Lord Jesus on Golgotha. God's holiness was demonstrated in the sinless Son of God putting to death the devil, or the workings of sin in Himself (see "Christadelphian" Feb. 1969, article by Peter Watkins on Christ in the Wilderness under this heading - excellent !!).

From this position in Holiness we have a decline to the abject delusion of Israel. The state of abasement manifested was an indication of the effect of Baalim Worship and an earnest of what was to follow in the years ahead. The people sacrificed at this place as they were permitted to do in any place where the Lord manifested Himself (6 v.20, 2 Sam. 24 v.25 etc).

Apparently it would suggest that they named Bochim after their own tears; they laid stress on their own feelings and did not think particularly of the mercies of God. Possibly the long clothing of the Pharisee is not far removed from this attitude. God's rebuke brought forth tears but tears only - "the people wept". Religious feelings without religious acts; emotions without effects, leaving the heart worse than before.

One last thought comes before us as we think of this sad occasion. The Angel "came up" in God's grace from where the Divine Presence is. He has come from the place where God is ever ready to meet His people - Gilgal or the Cross of Christ. He now comes "up" to a far different place, in fact the Angel has to "come up" to Israel at this time! It marks the difference between Gilgal and Bochim.

The place of lowliness (Golgotha) has been forsaken and a lofty attitude has been assumed. Pride, arrogance and rebellion, will always lead to tears. Judges 2 v.2 "Why have ye done this"? The old question !!

Why do we do these things to the Lord? Why !!?

Could we but adopt the Place of Bochim (Weeping) to be found in Luke 7 v.41-50. God can meet us there! Our Sister pours out her sins before Jesus, sinking at His feet. She pours out her hot tears in shame and sorrow on His feet. This Bochim is a True Weeping Place, where she can take her true repentance to her Lord.

This is the true sacrifice that should have been offered at Bochim, so far as we are concerned. In fact, it is transformed into a veritable Gilgal in itself: Earlier on in the chapter we find a Bochim turned into Joy - when the Lord Jesus said to the widow of Nain "weep not" and restored unto her her only son, who had died (vs. 11-14). We pray that the words may be spoken of us to our loved ones when, and if, the Lord remains away, and we are placed to rest until that day.

There is a Sacrifice at Gilgal, and Bochim looks back towards it. Joy is seen shining through "Weeping" and that because a sacrifice has put away sin forever from before God's face.

How do we fare under such conditions?

We have seen the people have departed from God, and God is now departing from them, because of their failure (have they taken this to heart?), and as a result there has been a confession, and the fear of God, and a sacrifice that is a pledge that God's mercy "changeth not", and that He is ready to meet those who in lowliness turn to Him. Such is the lesson, and so must be our faith.

Judges 1 v.4. The words "When the Angel of the Lord spake these words unto all the children of Israel" give reason for many of the experts to think that -

(1) The Angel was speaking to the representatives of all the tribes and leading families, probably the same general assembly as at Shechem which Joshua addressed (Josh. 24 v. 1, 2, 27). Fausset thinks that "All the words of the Lord which he spake unto us" answer to the "these words" which the Angel of the Lord spake unto all the children of Israel. Also he suggests "Besides, if as seems likely, the assembly be that recorded in Josh. 24 v. 26-27, the actual place was Shechem between Mounts Ebal and Gerizim where the Covenant that had been recited on Israel's first entry into Canaan, where also first God promised the land to Abram's seed (Gen. 12 v. 6) and where Jacob consecrated his house to the Lord. At the oak under which Joshua set a great stone and with the very directions which Joshua quotes (Josh. 24 v. 23-26 cp. Gen. 35 v. 1-4). Joshua mentions the Sanctuary of the Lord as "close by", perhaps the very altar of Abraham, and Jacob, still remaining. Lastly, what confirms the identity of the assembly here, and in Joshua 24, is the identity of the particulars which follow here and there. Joshua's dismissal of the people to their several inheritances; Joshua's death and burial in Timnath Heres, and the peoples serving the Lord all the days of Joshua and those of the elders who outlived him and had "seen all the works of the Lord for Israel".

(Compare Josh. 24 v. 28-33 with our next verses in Joshua 2 v. 6-10). We ask our readers to carefully consider what Fausset has advanced, particularly when we realise that there is no place known as Bochim geographically (or so the experts tell us).

This incident being apparently introduced in this language to be the complement of "from Shittim to Gilgal" led to the place of the final cleansing spiritually discerned, "from Gilgal to Bochim". A falling away to idleness and dishonour. All this at Shechem with so many memories of God's favour and personal dedication by Abraham and Jacob. Shechem is the place of strength, "the shoulder", and of bending down to bear a burden (Meta Dictionary).

(1) This is the message Israel received at this time, just before the death of Joshua. God would be to them Strength if they girded up their loins and served Him in truth.

(2) He would bear their burdens and have them "Rolled" upon Himself (Gilgal) should they remain faithful to Him.

(3) Conversely, however, because they had become obdurate and high minded, Israel would have to bear the strength of the various nations they had refused to exterminate from the land. These would become thorns in their side and Israel would have to bow to their lordship, as Issachar in Gen. 49 v. 14. They would bow their shoulder to bear and become servants under taskwork.

(4) It was as events have shown entirely Israel's own doing. With these words in mind we approach Judges 2:6.

It would be as well if our readers would follow up the marginal references to establish beyond doubt the link up with Joshua and the various blessings and threats given by God in the Pentateuch, which have great emphasis in these opening chapters of Judges.

The next section for consideration, again, is a repeat of Joshua 24 v. 29-31 concerning the death of Joshua himself.

Judges 2 v. 6-10

Judges 2 v. 6 - "Now" R.V. is to be preferred to "And", which may be used in a

conjunctive sense, and gives the sense of at that time, or immediately afterwards. "Now" relates to a specific period, immediately or otherwise, so the correct idea we feel is in the second case; at a particular time.

Fausset allows the passage to form a link between Joshua and Judges to bring into sharp contrast or vivid relief the age that had "just passed" and the age in Israel's history which was now commencing. If, of course, Shechem was the site of Bochim, then this verse could happen sometime very soon after the assembly.

Judges 2 v.7 - We have already commented upon this verse and have noted that this was stated in a general sense. Already as chapter 1 has revealed the decline led to the terrible condition "Every man did what was right in his own eyes" (21-25).

The Third Generation !

A similar characteristic may be observed in Asa king of Judah, whose heart was perfect towards God: generally, not absolutely! See evidence 1 Kings 15 v.9-14. Only of One Person could this be said to have been absolutely. Only of the Lord Jesus Himself. The elders were, of course, the younger generation who survived the Wilderness journey, and had witnessed personally all the wonders which God performed.

Psa. 91 illustrates this point by implication, having its primary application to Joshua himself.

Psa. 90 depicts the older generation upon whom the wrath of God fell heavily, including Moses and Aaron themselves. So this generation who had been circumcised in the "day of sharp knives" at Gilgal, and had seen all the great works of the Lord in the majority remained steadfast and true and were obedient to the voice of the Lord.

Judges 2 v.8 - Notification of the death of Joshua at the advanced age of 110 years (5 x 22), a person of great courage and faith, who first of all served Moses, having been released by Israel at Dophkah (see Numbers 33 under this station). He was truly absorbed in the things of God from his conception, the only mistake discernible in his long service being in the matter of the men of Gibeon, when apparently he failed to ask the counsel of the Lord and was then taken in by their craftiness (Joshua 9 3-27). Who apart from the Lord Jesus was sinless? Not one! Even those wonderful characters such as Joseph, Joshua and Elisha were but human. Their failings in character are necessarily hidden to show forth in type and shadow, the Only Sinless Man who ever lived - The Lord Jesus Christ! The grace of God surrounding Joshua is evident in the age to which he attained (5 being the least common denominator). Apparently from what we can gather Joshua was the last person to reach his inheritance.

Timnath-Heres or "the portion of the sun", in Ephraim his tribal lot - the "portion of the first-born" or "abundance" on the north side of the hill Gaash = Shaking or Earthquake from the word "gaash", to shake, especially the earth, "to be moved". (Psa.18 7, Jer.46 v.7-8). The Rabbins take this to be the same as Gilead, "The Place of Witness" (Bagster's Proper Names).

What do we make out of these names surrounding the resting place of Joshua, "The Salvation of Yah"?

(1) Timnath-Heres, same as Timnath Serah, Josh.24 v.30 cp.19 v.50.

The Rabbins again claim the change of name took place after Joshua's death, and say that the representation of "the Sun" (Heb. cheres) on his grave, was in memory of the miracle of Gibeon (Josh.10 v.12). (See Gesenius 306).

Bagster again records - Timnath-Serah does mean "The Portion Abundant" (i.e. that of the firstborn as Ephraim): from root Manah "to divide" Isa 65 v.12 and Serah, superfluity redundancy from root Sarath to be redundant.

A portion given to Joshua, after all the various members of the Tribes of Israel had had their portions assigned to them. It was situated in Mount Ephraim and Joshua here founded a city, and called it Timnath-Serah. This

faithful and zealous servant of God out of a thankful and grateful heart, so called it, as though it were of little moment whether he had aught of the promised land, or not, provided that the people of the Lord enjoyed their promised possession. It was a redundant portion and yet an abundant portion. The allotment of Caleb had been given him by the direct command of God, and no doubt this had been set apart for Joshua (Bagster's Proper Names). Here in Mount Ephraim, Joshua the servant of God, ended a valorous career and was laid to rest on the north side. He had not been long dead however, before the people corrupted themselves and even changed the name of his own city and portion which the God of heaven had given to him, and called it "Timnath-Heres" - The Portion of the Sun; dedicating the city which Joshua had founded to the Sun! a luminary which Joshua had arrested (by the Power of God) and commanded to stand still on Gibeon. How soon are the labours of the most eminent of men made ineffectual by the corruptions of the human heart and the devices of evil.

Such is the story wonderfully told to us, by the names surrounding the passing of Joshua.

There is one point remaining for comment on this section. We can only give a hint, as extended exposition would take far too much space. It is concerning the position of the inheritance of Joshua and gives us (among other things) adequate reason why Joshua was the last to receive his portion.

Joshua 19 v.49-50 - We find absolute proof in this verse "when they had made an end of dividing the land for inheritance, by their coasts (or boundaries), the children of Israel gave an inheritance to Joshua the son of Nun, among them. According to the word of the Lord they gave him the city which he asked - Timnath-Serah in Mount Ephraim: and he built the city and dwelt therein".

(1) Here we have veritable proof that Joshua received his inheritance last of all.

(2) That the original name was Timnath-Serah and not Heres which followed after the corruption: no doubt hero worship of Joshua (just as they had elevated Joseph his great ancestor). (See Num. 33 The Golden Calf Worship, Cp. Bush in Gen. 49 etc).

(3) The words in R.V. for "among them" are "In the midst of them". These last words are of rare beauty and of excellent character. Trace them through the Concordance and you will have Visions of the Glory splendid.

(4) Israel passed over the Red Sea, in the midst of the waters while the chariots of Egypt were destroyed. (Will Egypt ever learn?) Ex. ch.14, 15.

(5) Israel passed through the midst of Jordan - River of Death - dry foot because the Lord was in the midst of them or among them etc. (Josh. 4.18).

(6) Joshua dwelt in the midst of his people. (Josh. 19 v.49-50).

(7) Zeph. 3 v.14-16 speaking of the Greater Joshua and also giving a very broad hint as to the Johannine text of the hosanna period, Jno. 12 v.12-16.

(8) Ez. 43 v. 7-9 when God will dwell within His people or in the midst of them forever. Trace these words out and feel a true stimulus of spiritual uplift.

(9) It would be obvious that all Israel must be assembled, before God could dwell within or in the midst of them, also Joshua in the first consideration.

This kind of interweaving between Joshua and Judges, and of the Pentateuch with both, as there is of the books of some of the earlier prophets with the books of those who came after them, and of the earlier Gospels with the later, and of the earlier Epistles of the New Testament with those Epistles which were written after them. All Scripture is written in uniform plan, and each part lends its help and bears its witness to each; and the parts form together one harmonious whole, like stones in some beautiful building, or like limbs in some well proportioned body, or like the wings and wheels of the cherubim of Ezekiel, interwoven and inwound with each other.

These words originally belong to Wordsworth, and well deserve our consideration on the unity of Plan and Part of the Scriptures.

Judges 2 v.10 - "And there arose another generation after them, which knew

not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel".

This is the notorious third generation we have already commented upon in the Introduction.

"Knew not the Lord" This is a very important lesson, because the people were Israelites, and we cannot equate them with the heathen who had not heard, nor seen any manifestation of the Lord.

The statement is to be understood as it applied to Pharaoh who said "I know not the Lord". The idea behind it is not to exclude the identity, but rather the responsibility of knowing the Lord, thereby being obedient to Him in all their ways. As with Pharaoh they refused to accept the claims of Yahweh. If any knew of Yahweh, who more than Pharaoh? Ten mighty miracles done before him, yet adamant he died with his chariots in the Red Sea. So may it happen to all God's enemies!

In this sense, who are they that knew not God, but the ungodly. Those who know do what is right before the Lord yet shun to do it! and go capering after other gods of their own lusts. The coming judgment is certain (Jude 14-15) "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints to execute judgment upon all and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him".

Jude 17-18 brings the situation nearer to us.

"But beloved, remember ye the words, which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. How they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts". Does this refer specifically to you and me? The second fulfilment may do!

But for the grace of God there go I.

Let our generation, that will surely (we hope) see the Lord's return, beware the default of this third generation and close our ranks to the various brands of The Talkers. Only sound exposition of the Word of God must be our standard, and by it we stand or fall.

It will have been noticed that the phrase "There arose another generation which knew not" has been adopted from Ex. 1 v. 8.

Judges 2 v. 11 - "And the children of Israel did evil - and it was evil - in the sight of the Lord and served Baalim". This evil is so emphasised to describe the effect of idolatry in the sight of God. This phrase is used seven times in Judges to describe the seven apostasies of Israel which is the chief "evil" followed by seven servitudes -

(1) Chushan Rishathaim (2) Eglon (3) Jabin (4) Midian (5) Abimelech (6) Ammon (7) The Philistines

It will be noted, as we have already intimated, that 6 evils were of their own making, while the seventh came by usurpation by Abimelech, Gideon's son. The opposite phrase which we must covet is to do right in the sight of the Lord. (1 Kings 15 v. 5-11).

"And they served Baalim", plural for Baal, i. e. the different forms under which this god or lord was worshipped. Baal Peor, Beelzebub, Baal-Berith etc. Smith's Bible Dictionary has some very relevant material relating to these local deities.

In general Baal was the principal male deity of the Phoenicians as Astarte was the female. The male was the sun god, the other the moon goddess. Baal the principle of original production and Astarte, or Venus, that of reception and development. She was known as the Many Breasted Goddess, a heathen corruption of Shad; basis of Shaddai. The God of Fertility and Blessing (Gen. 17 v. 1-3 etc).

Judges 2 v. 12 - Proves that Baalim in the plural is quite correct where we

have read that 'Israel followed other gods, the gods of the people that were round about them and bowed themselves down to them and provoked the Lord to anger.' Thus was Israel delivered into the hands of their enemies so that they could no longer stand before their enemies! They came in like a flood to take possession!

It is not until Israel is reduced to these harrowing circumstances that they cry out to the Lord in anguish and repentance; then He mercifully raises up The Judges to save them, or as Neh. 9 v. 27 delightfully says "Therefore Thou deliveredst them into the hand of their enemies, who vexed them; and in the time of their trouble when they cried unto Thee, Thou heardest them from heaven and according to Thy manifold mercies Thou gavest them saviours (or judges) who saved them out of the hand of their Satans" (adversaries). This verse is actually a very summary of the Book of Judges just as Judges 2 v. 14-23 present also a more extended summary or analysis of the whole book. A certain pattern of events will continually be before us in our studies; always a similar pattern but with widely differing contexts revealing further aspects of God's grace.

- (A) Firstly there is Declension.
- (B) Secondly Bondage.
- (C) Thirdly A cry for help.
- (D) Fourthly God in His mercy sends a deliverer, for the time being, who restores them partially, as in each case the oppression was only partial. See Introduction on this point because immediately the pressure is off them we have the tendency to go deeper into idolatry by Israel.

As we think about these various happenings laid out in Judges for us it is a solemn thought -

- (1) that God does not raise up another Joshua!?
- (2) He does not restore what has been broken to pieces!
- (3) He does raise up a judge for a specific purpose!
- (4) When the judge has done his special work he dies, and
- (5) the heart of the people slips off into further evil, requiring another deliverer.
- (6) Another recovery through another judge!
- (7) But as we traverse this harrowing yet lovely and spiritual history we observe it becoming weaker, and going further into weakness, until from a natural angle it becomes well-nigh total darkness.
- (8) However spiritually it is just the opposite because the name of the last judge, Samson, means "The Splendour of the Sun". This of course is where the interest and fascination of this Book thrives.
- (9) Two divergent views, one on the surface, but for the diligent and devout student, a second more spiritual seam of constant delight.

We shall do well to approach with the utmost reverence this book of hallowed memory and exploits in the Name of the Lord. It behoves us to tread with hallowed step, and with reverent care, and extract in humility these jewels of the Spirit hidden within the names of the various Saviours of Israel.

We will pass over this section quickly, as what has not already been covered in our former thoughts, will be directly before us as we proceed.

Judges 2 v. 16 - The verse from which the Book is called. "He gave them Judges".

Judges 2 v. 14 - He delivered them into the hands of the spoilers. Same as Heb. 2 Kings 17 v. 20 and he sold them or delivered (Deut. 32 v. 30 Psa. 44 v. 12, Isa. 1 v. 1). The Lord gave them helplessly: renounced His right in them and gave them as slaves, sold. (Lev. 26 v. 37, Joshua 7 v. 11-12).

Judges 2 v. 15 - Whithersoever they went out the hand of the Lord was against them as the Lord had said (Lev. 26 v. 17, Deut. 28 v. 5) and as the Lord had

sworn unto them (Deut. 32 v.40-42). But they pursued their own ways going ever deeper into the ways of evil.

How true it is that chastisement unheeded brings down sorer punishment and, at the last, destruction.

The tendency of evil is to grow worse in each generation and so to incur accumulated punishment. (Matt. 12 vs. 43-45, 23 v. 32, Prov. 29 v. 1). This progress in evil is understandable because the meaning of this word evil is that of working and restlessness, and this is why faith is always found in the active voice in Scripture. Faith is the natural enemy of evil, and within the heart of each Brother and Sister in Christ is an unrelenting conflict, a spiritual picture of the war with Amalek which Yahweh has determined shall be undertaken by every age of believers. (Ex. 17 v. 16). Paul highlights it spiritually in Rom. 7. So it is in our days that as evil strives to enter our Ecclesia, and our hearts, that we stoutly defend both !

Not all the third generation were faithless or evil ! and as the days darken before the Coming of the Supreme Judge let us gird up our loins and fight for our Faith.

This is the point left for us to consider in -

Judge 2 vs. 21-23 - "I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations which Joshua left when he died. That through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the Lord to walk therein as their fathers did keep it, or not. Therefore the Lord left these nations, without driving them out hastily, neither delivered He them into the hand of Joshua".

As Ridout suggests, the close of the second chapter of Judges and the beginning of the third, show the result of this trifling with God. There is no further real progress. Even the deliverances are but partial, and the enemy is left in the midst of the people, as pricks and thorns, but a witness of the fruit of their unbelief and a further test of their faith and integrity.

A few words by way of after thought on the word.

Judges 2 v. 18 - This is the word Yasha = a Saviour. Should we put Yah in front, we have Yahweh or Joshua - the Lord is Salvation - the Hebrew for Jesus. A vital connection between the actual history and spiritual typology.

Judges 3 vs. 1-7 - "Now these are the nations which the Lord left, to prove Israel by them, even as many of Israel as had not known all the wars of Canaan; only that the generations of the children of Israel might know, to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof".

Enumerates by rote the nations who were left by God, to prove (or test) Israel, particularly as there were among them "Many who had not known all the wars of Canaan"; (or had not experienced such).

(1) Wordsworth would see it in type "As heresies and schisms to prove the Church" (or Ecclesia).

(2) To teach them war. So unbelief awakens faith and teaches it war. It excites it to contend earnestly for the Truth, and it must be said that the dissemination of false doctrines has led to clearer assertions of the Truth. Hence the Statements of Faith which have been used within the Body during the last few years. Heresies have made them necessary. "There must be heresies" said Paul "that they who are approved among you may be made manifest". (1 Cor. 11 v. 19).

Heresies and schisms are terrible things, and many innocent people are caught up in the maelstrom of assertive personalities but, as Wordsworth rightly says we believe, they do sort out (in modern parlance) "The men from among the boys". Once again we perceive the double actions conveyed throughout

this Book, and we do well in these days of declension, in almost everything that is Godly, to gird up our loins like men, and fight for the purity of the Truth and God's Word.

(3) Because we know, and have been taught of the Lord, how to wage war in the spirit (2 Cor. 10 vs. 3-6, Eph. 6 vs. 11-17, 1 Thess. 5 v. 1-8 etc.) consequently it is our task to keep our younger generation well informed in this Divine Military Strategy.

Obviously the first, and primary meaning, is to the generation that came to manhood after the termination of Joshua's successful wars against the Canaanites, in dependence on Yahweh (2 v. 10). Joshua 23 v. 1 (cp. - for interest Num, 21 v. 14 "The Wars of the Lord").

A clear testimony to the time of the third generation to which we have often made reference, further rather intriguing comparison would be to the "Sabras", Israelis today, who are born and bred in Israel - This generation of Israel was the actual first that were born and lived within the confines of the Holy Land of Israel.

The contrast being 'knowing' and 'not knowing' the Way of Yahweh can rightly be seen in parallel comparison between -

(1) Joshua who remained faithful to Yahweh and His Covenant Trust - Yahweh could give Victory, and -

(2) Israel's failure at Ai brought through Achan's sin. This truth has been made abundantly clear to Joshua and the succeeding generation in Joshua 7.

(3) As necessity mostly drives us to prayer, apart from our daily devotions and Ecclesial activities, Israel's distress by the remaining Canaanites would teach how war only can be successfully waged against the foe.

(4) By so doing Yahweh would "prove" Israel, whether they would keep His commandments: for, to keep these would be to "know" by Yahweh's teaching how to war. (2 v. 22, 3 v. 4, Psa. 18 vs. 32-34, Fausset).

For further study on the connection between overcoming and prayer, readers would be well advised to consult Chart "Symposium of Prayer", Debir Press. Hereby Speakers Commentary records this use of the verb, "to know" (as the sense is completed at verse 4) "Whether they would keep His commandments or not".

This use of the verb "to know", as applied to God, is exactly illustrated by what the Lord said of Himself to Abraham: "Now I know that thou fearest God" (Gen. 22 v. 12), and by what is said of Hezekiah, that "God left him to try him (the same word as is rendered "to prove" in Judges 2 v. 1-4) to KNOW what was in his heart". (2 Chron. 32 v. 31).

In other words, the presence of these nations, so long as they remained, was always a witness of past failure, and an invitation to present recovery. Rather beautifully put we believe by the Lord God. Is it not a touching way for Him to speak of the presence of the enemy amongst us? As though, He said, "I have left them there to test your loyalty and obedience to Myself!"

How did Israel meet all this exhortation? Did they gird themselves like men to meet the enemy? Did they respond in faith to the Divine Appeal?

Judges 3 v. 5 - answers loud and clear!

"And the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites and Hivites, and Jebusites", with the inevitable result following - a solidifying in idolatry, falling deeper and deeper into iniquity.

Judges 3 vs. 6-7 - "And they took their daughters to be their wives and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and forgot the Lord their God, and served Baalim and the groves": making way, and giving introduction to the advent of the first extraordinary Judge, Cthniel. (3 v. 9).

The children of Israel "DWELT" or made their home, settled down amidst the heathen nations when God would have them exterminated.

We are reminded of the conditions of darkness that surrounded Israel when Jesus came as "the Light of the world". He found they SAT dwelling in darkness, accepting the conditions (Matt. 4 vs. 14-16). What a marked difference to the modern nations taken hold of by the Nazi scourge in the last war and the Maguis and Resistance Movements that never gave up the fight.

(1) We have a list of names here, of which we have the modern antitype, which may invade the ecclesias of God at any time.

(2) What shall we do? Sit down among them and SETTLE in their midst? The apparent contradiction in terms, if we remember that we let them invade our Land, as Acts 20 vs. 28-31, and then SETTLE amidst their folly.

(3) Let us enumerate them for clarity :-

(A) The Canaanites - already come before us as the "Traffickers" in God's word. Those who simply handle things for the profit there is in them. Merchants who have no heart in divine truth. Simply take the precious knowledge and fellowship of the Truth, and use it for their own personal and selfish benefit; (1) for financial gain; (2) for social gain; (3) to avoid disagreeable contact with the military powers; (4) and everything under the sun that surrounds ego worship. All this kind of handling of the Divine Truth is but Canaanite traffic, merely handling the Word of God deceitfully. (5) This can even be done intellectually: searching for something new, striving to be original, not for conscience or heart or to help others, then that is a Canaanite principle. (6) And if we have to recognise that amongst us, painful as it is to acknowledge it, is it not the Lord's will that we strive heart and main to eradicate it, and speedily, from our hearts and from the Ecclesia? How long have we "sat" under such conditions?!

The words of Zechariah 14 v. 21 are crystal clear: "There shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord". Why should we allow them to dwell therein, and why indeed should we "sit" down among them now?

(B) The Hittites. Their ancestor was Heth, the second son of Canaan (Gen. 10 v. 5). Called Hittite and Hittites in several places (Gen. 15 v. 20-23 etc. See concordance for further expansion).

They were of old dreaded by their neighbours both for their warlike character and their superior strength - for they were the giants, and the Anakim were their descendants. (We remember that David's mighties found them in their ranks: Uriah the Hittite of prominent mention and virtue (2 Sam. 11 v. 3 etc). The word Hittite means (along with Heth), "dread", "fear", "terror", and they were known as the "Sons of Terror". How can we let these characters invade the Truth; and how may it be asked, could we comfortably "dwell" with them? A modern illustration would mean the Jews living comfortably and dwelling safely in Nazi Germany amidst the scourge of the Swastika!

The Hittite empire was a large one in the ancient world. The monuments reveal them to have been a hardy and vigorous race, different from the others, and spread over an immense area. They spread fear and terror everywhere they went, directly opposite to the Truth of God. For God has not given to us a spirit of fear but of love (1 John 4 vs. 16-19 etc).

(a) The serpent's lie in Eden brought about fear in the first place (Gen. 3 vs. 1-4, 10, etc).

(b) And the sin that ensued has brought forth fear and terror in endless variety ever since;

(c) The fear of Retribution,

(d) The fear of Penury,

(e) The fear of Failure,

(f) The craven fear of the coward,

(g) The fear of Divinity,

where at the beginning the Angels freely conversed with Adam and Eve.

The Word of God is our help in these matters and can give to the believer a healthy robust faith with which to vanquish fear. In fact, let us take John Bunyan's advice, "He who would valiant be, follow the Master". This hymn has given renewed strength to countless numbers of believers. Also let this mind be in us, with the Psalmist and none other than the Lord Jesus himself, "I shall not die, but live and declare the praise of the Lord" (Psa.118 v.17 etc).

Paul himself reminds us that God has not given us the spirit of fear in which we might say, "Rabbi" Lord or Master, but rather "Abba" Father, as sons and daughters (Gal.4 v.6).

The Hittite within us strikes in many insidious ways, we are weakened, dismayed, confounded.

- (A) Fear will close our mouth when we should speak up for decency, and for Christ. "Silence is golden" becomes a virtue sought after at these times!
- (B) The giving of thanks in the presence of strangers can fill us with fear on occasions!
- (C) How often do we keep silence, when our voice is necessary for witness to Christ?
- (D) We have the fear of man with us in diverse ways, and for the timid among us these situations can be quite terrifying.
- (E) Not many of us are called to face the fear of walking upon the turbulent waters of Galilee, but all of us are asked to face up to the turbulence of an angry sea of nations, and of course to walk the narrow way of obedience.
- (F) Full confidence in Christ is the only answer to the Hittite threat amongst us. Let us gird us like men!

(C) The Amorites - We have already dealt with this nation in our early notes. These are "the Talkers". Constant talkers, boastful. In the end they will turn out to be (Jude 12) "Spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots" etc. Note, but do not follow their words; deeds are usually absent as Jude implied.

(D) The Perizzites - These people were an agricultural nation, rustic in kind - "the villagers" as the word means. The dwellers in the hill country from the Arabic To separate or divide.

Adoni Zedek was a King of the Perizzites etc. The insidious approach of this character is not very evident unless one has felt their bite, then there usually comes awareness! Always found in "humble guise" and usually with rather angelic countenances. They keep to themselves, the guileless unawares, who follow blindly their lead. That they are in reality separatists and dividers only gradually emerges. One doctrinal error after another follows, in succession, until a denial of the Faith is seen. We must be on the alert for these Uriah Heaps as they come slyly before us in our walk in the Truth.

(E) The Hivites - The descendants of Canaan the son of Ham (Gen.10 v.17). Meaning "life born of effort", bestiality, villager, midlander!? Others take it that the name means "a serpent" from the Chaldee, because like serpents they lived in holes. The characters who have this definition ought not to have found their way into the Truth, and most certainly we should not seek to "dwell" with them.

They are full of the pride of life, with all its nefarious branches. Such Paul said "were some of you". They represent the baser part of our nature, which we must ever seek to subdue.

(F) The Jebusite - Again these characters have come before us in earlier notes. "The treaders down", the trampling of truth and the Word of God. We will resist this section of thought to the utmost. They must have no place in the community of Christ.
How can we seek "to dwell" with this evil?

Such is a brief representation of the adversaries amongst whom Israel sought "TO DWELL". May we have learned the lesson of their failure well, and refuse the easy and plenty way of the flesh to the living sacrifice of Pauline thought, so that our Lord may be pleased with our choice.

It is Fausset who mentions the fact that originally seven nations were arraigned against the invading Israelites. After noticing their miserable declension from their high calling in wanting to dwell with these nations he says in Joshua 24 v.11, Deut. 7 v.1 "the Girgashites are added, seven nations in all, the number denoting perfection or totality (Covenantal All)" Ten Nations are enumerated in Gen. 15 vs. 19-21, ten being the number denoting the universality of the World Kingdom (Ordained Perfection A.H.).

The Girgashites are enumerated in the general list as having been originally arrayed against Israel, but that they early withdrew from the conflict appears probable from the expression "The Lord cast out the Girgashites" - "He will drive out the Girgashites" (Joshua 3 v.10). Fausset goes on to quote an early inscription by "Procopius, Belisarius' secretary", mentioning an inscription on a monument in Tigitina (Tangiers) - "We are exiles from before the face of Joshua the robber".

The Rabbins thought that Joshua sent three propositions to the Canaanites - "Let those who choose fly; let those who choose peace make a treaty; let those who choose war take arms".

So the Girgashites, fearing God, fled to Africa. The Gibeonites made a league of submission. The thirty-one kings fought and fell. This statement harmonizes with the fact that Joshua in no detailed account represents the Girgashites as combatants. Only in a summary (Joshua 24 v.11) are they named as fighting along with the rest, probably only at the very finish.

Bagster's give their name as meaning "Dwellers in a clayey soil" from the Arabic "black mud".

They were so denominated from the clayey nature of the land where they dwelt, which was near the Lake of Tiberias. They were a Canaanitish people, and a remnant of them dwelt about Gaasa or Gadara in the earthly days of our Lord.

This last section of information is of great value and perhaps underlines the reason why a herd of swine could be found here at this time, which of course were taboo to the Jews but not so to the Gardarenes (Mk. 5 vs. 1-20).

It is noticeable that 5 Lords of the Philistines were left by God to teach Israel. (5 so we are informed was the political number of the Lords of the Philistines). Basically as we have before mentioned 5 is the number of grace and here we find the grace of God operative on Israel's behalf, in that under the rigours of Philistine oppression in the years to come, they might learn to be obedient to the Heavenly Voice.

"Five Lords" literally (Sarnee Heb) means hinges or axles metaphorically, defining the whole round of the Philistine economy either political or martial.

Judges 3 v.7 - "Did evil", should have the definite article - "The evil". Special kind of evil - idolatry. Specially forbidden by God. The passages in which this insistence is marked are 6 v.1 as already indicated in the

Introduction and 3 v.7-12, 4 v.1, 6 v.1, 10 v.6, 13 v.1. Finally in 3 v.3, the enumeration in this verse of the different place names is a condensation from Joshua 13 vs.2-6, basically meaning that by disposition of the enemies; the Philistines on the South West, and the Sidonians, Hivites and Canaanites in the north; having been left by God, by their inroads, disabling Israel from exterminating all the other Canaanites from the towns in the centre of the land (ch.1 vs.19-36).

Fausset rather aptly says concerning Hezekiah (2 Chron.32 v.31) "God left Hezekiah to try him that He might know what was in his heart". A comment on this kind of text by way of clarification. God knows all things and Jesus, apart from one special day, did. This verse does not mean that God is attempting by experimentation to understand Hezekiah, because this was known before the foundation of the world. God knows the end from the beginning, or rather before the beginning (Isa.44 v.6-7 etc). He knows what Hezekiah will do! but we as humble students of the word do not! So God allowed these circumstances to come upon him, that we might understand.

- (1) The ways of God with His children.
- (2) Just as He is doing in the turbulent days of the Judges, and in our studies at the moment with Hezekiah as already foreseen.
- (3) and with ourselves in these last days of the Gentiles.

It has been suggested that Jesus did not know very much in advance of the various circumstances that were to befall Him. We are certain that briefly stated the same thing happened to Jesus, as we have before us in Hezekiah, with the great difference that the Lord Jesus, unlike Hezekiah, was well aware of the events to befall Him. Compare for instance the John passages concerning "the hour" which was to come upon Him, known by Hoskyn & Davy as "the historical tension point"(in their commentary "His hour"). Jesus knew full well why the Father had left Him, (Matt.27:46) because He bore the sins of the world on the tree and sin is ever that which separates God from man. A very necessary requirement for anyone to remain sinless is the ability to know what will befall him in the future, either far or near.

"My God why hast Thou forsaken me" was not a question arising out of ignorance, but a statement of fact, calculated to make us think and then to appreciate the enormity of sin, that Christ bore for each one of us, and the scandalisation of the Sin Bearer, which resulted in the separation of a Perfect Man from His Father and His God.

- (1) God knew, (2) Christ knew, and the focal point in our context is that
- (3) those who followed this third generation in Judges did not know, and
- (4) neither were we aware of the nature (experimentally that is) of the separation, so awful and final, on Calvary.

Thinking of the fate of this third generation, and of course always of our own state, 1 Cor.10 v.13 comes forcibly to mind - "There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will, with the temptation, also make a way of escape that ye may be able to bear it". So Israel went from bad to worse. The result of unequal marriages, the bad corrupted the good. "One bad apple is sufficient to infect the whole barrel", both naturally and spiritually, instead of the good overcoming the bad, and the reason of this sad declension is stated in Deut.32 v.18, Isa.17 v.10, "They forgot the Lord their God who never forgot them".

But how often do we forget our Maker? How often within a week, a day, or even the hour, do I forget God! (Call to mind the harrowing experience of the Bride of Song 5 v.1 etc. when she forgot to open the door to her Lord. Has this been our experience? See Song of Solomon by present writer at this point in exposition).

Who among us is not guilty of this foul practice? How truly humiliated we are when Isa. 49 v. 15 comes into mind - "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet I will not forget thee".

Basically we know, we can no more forget our Lord than a woman her wedding attire (Jer. 2 v. 32) unless, that is, we want to! One principle however must be firmly borne in mind for believers in all ages, either the third generation of Israel in the land, or yet the third generation of the Truth in our day. They who forget God shall be forgotten by Him - But the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance of Him. (Hosea 4 v. 6, Psa. 9 v. 17).

The punishment which arose out of the forsaking of God by His people and their cry under the grievous yoke of the oppression resulted in the raising up of the first of the extraordinary Judges. None other than Othniel, already come before us in the taking of Kirjath Sepher (the Book Town) and making it the City of the Word (Debir). We refrained from putting this exploit before you at that time because of the sequence of the Extraordinary Judges that follow from this chapter.

Judges 3 vs. 8-9 - "And the children of Israel did evil) in the sight of the Lord, and forgot the Lord their God, and served Baalim and the groves. Therefore the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and He sold them into the hand of Chushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia: and the children of Israel served Chushan-rishathaim eight years. And when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer, (or saviour), to the children of Israel, who delivered (or saved) them, even Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother".

- (1) It has been suggested that this first deliverance pictures the whole of the succeeding deliverances by the judges, or is a miniature of the whole book.
- (2) We find it rather suggestive that the occupation by these marauders should occupy 8 years, which gives us the basis for the idea by Fausset.
- (3) We have already suggested the idea, first found in my own experience in "The Gates of Pearl" by C.H. Waller; that they were, in their ways of delivering Israel, so many lesser forerunners of the Great Deliverer, Jesus Christ: and this is perfectly natural. In Jesus Christ is the Well of Salvation. Every other deliverer of God's people, before and after, stole some plan of deliverance from Him. No noble act was ever done by man for the deliverance of his fellow-creatures that has not a complete and glorious counterpart in the work of Jesus Christ.

But in thus regarding the Judges, we must look, not so much at the personal character of the men, as at the nature of their work.

It is not always as individuals that they are like our Saviour, but as men raised up for a certain work.

The question - how far they were personally holy and Christ-like is another matter!

The First Judge, Othniel, is of the tribe of Judah. Was not the great Saviour to be of the same tribe?

Where in all Israel could we find a better family to head the list. - Waller goes on to say "But the most striking details in the work are those which indicate a Suffering Saviour, weak in those things that are accounted the glory and strength of man, but strong in the power of God", and there he leaves it, enough has been said however, to loose the streams of our thoughts.

This passage by C.H. Waller is of great value, so is (for the matter of speaking) the whole book, and should be earnestly pursued by our diligent students.

So not only is the Othniel incident a miniature of the whole book, but also comprehends the various Judgeships within its small compass.

The Number 8 in scripture belongs very much to Jesus, as the Number of His Name is 888.

The Number of His Resurrection was the 8th day - a New Creation. 8 people were saved out of the flood at the time of Noah.

David was the 8th son (1 Sam. 17); 8 is the number of Seth and his and so on.

The testimony for the conclusions of Fausset and Waller, is certainly very strong, and ought to be accepted wholly or in part. We have further proof that this incident is very broadly comprehensive, which will emerge as we develop our thoughts.

(a) The persons involved - Othniel we know means "The Lion of God".

We can now see this in the light of its reference to the Lord Jesus, who is described in Revelation 5: 5 as "the Lion of the Tribe of Judah".

(b) The weak thing associated with Othniel, already outlined in ch. 1 was, that he was a son of Caleb's younger brother Kenaz. In Hebrew eyes the only son to receive due recognition was the firstborn (Gen 49: 3 etc), so to be the son of a younger brother amounted to nothing, and was indeed, in their eyes, less than nothing.

In another way Jesus would be accounted less in his contemporaries' eyes because He, as elder son (as was supposed - Lk. 3) of Joseph and Mary, was unmarried, and He was NO man in their eyes (Psa. 22. 6)

Jesus, like Othniel, was probably an object of scorn in the eyes of his contemporaries. Not married? No issue? No seed to follow in the household? Jesus aptly parallels with Othniel.

(1) Othniel in disparity of birth - (Jesus too ! but this comparison we leave until Jephthah comes up for consideration !).

(2) Jesus with regard to His manhood . The Jews of course promptly forgot Isaiah - (Isa. 56 3/5) like many of our moderns, when they scorn childless couples ! But who are they to judge? Best leave it until He who was "no man" comes to judge. He will know and understand !! Here, however, we have paralleled the weakness, found (so the Jews thought) in Othniel, with Jesus.

(c) His combatant !! The oppressor of Israel !!

Chushan - which means Blackness (of Cush. Hamite extraction),

Rishathaim - Double wickedness - or intensified wickedness, the Blackness of Double Wickedness, possible coloured readers will omit any reference to the colour of their skin. All are one in Christ, whether white, yellow, or black or Red Indian (copper). We hope they will not take any offence, for none is intended.

This name is a matter of principle. Anyone or any principle that takes the place of Christ is what we call 'doubly dyed black' this is the quotation which gave the phrase birth, and it means a very great sore distressing evil.

Such was the immense evil which Othniel overcame for God and His people. Aram, or Mesopotamia - means 'Between the Two Rivers', the Tigris and the Euphrates, and it was in Aram or Mesopotamia that the power of Babylon was developed and it was to Babylon that the Lord's people were finally carried away captive, for all Bible students know that Babylon is closely connected with Aram, which again means, 'to be exalted, lifted up ! What was lifted up or exalted, in particular in this place? but the Tower of Babel ! that was lifted up in apostacy, in an attempt, it was thought, to frustrate the Divine justice that had overtaken the world of Noah, and who was responsible for its erection but Nimrod, the mighty apostate against God. It was Babylon, or this region of Shinar that brought about the first instance of heartfelt crying to God, on behalf of the children of Israel: and which brought the first judge, Othniel, to their rescue, and who was it against? but Babylon

who carried away (notice Judah) into captivity at the disintegration of the Jewish nation, taking away their Temple and the daily offerings (Dan. 9 . 27) etc. Finally Titus and Rome of course.

What have we here in type but Rev. 5 and the Lord Jesus Christ as The Lion of the tribe of Judah, waging ceaseless war against Shinar (the Land of the Tooth) with the Power and unrelenting wrath of God, as seen in the White Throne of Rev. 20, with Him are associated the Body of His Saints prophesied in Song 5 14 as being part of His Body of Ivory, a word which also has a meaning of a Tooth. This concerted Power of Teeth is revealed in the Song, as a set of firm white teeth that have well digested the food of God, that is the word (Song 42).

The Blackness of Double Wickedness, full well represents the horrible doctrines, and teachings of Rome, which have held most of the nations in bonds for centuries, and once again are out for world domination, for this reason she is calling all her harlot daughters home, and the free churches one by one are the recalcitrants going home led by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Soper of the Methodist faith. The mystery is already working in Scotland! What a mixed witches brew it is going to be !! "Like sheep going to the slaughter" Whilst the Double Wickedness of Blackness can have this general definition. We find after a little searching and a considerable expenditure of thought a much 'tighter fit' can be found in Zech. 5.

Zech. 5 1. Zechariah sees a flying roll, the Hebrew for roll, and in 5 v. 2 is megilloth and means teaching. This teaching is so great that it is compared, in fact the exact measurements 20 cubits by 10 cubits (1 Kings 6 v. 3) of the porch in Solomon's temple.

5 vs. 3-4 gives us the contents of the teaching "the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole land (or earth)", and the commandment concerning it. "Every one that stealeth shall be cut off as on this side according to it: and everyone that sweareth shall be cut off as on that side according to it.

"I will bring it forth, saith the Lord of Hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the 'Thief', and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name; and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it with the timber thereof and the stones thereof" How can it be possible to be a thief and to swear falsely in God's Name? A. Matthew 15 vs. 4-6 nicely illustrated the method, or a method of stealing under this clause. Wherein one might steal or rob his parents of their right of sustenance by himself, by calling it Corban, that is, the son said, that he had devoted that money to God and dedicated it to the Temple. This in fact need not have been devoted at the particular time specified, and could be delayed at will by the donor: See Mark 7 vs. 10-13 for clearer details and under Corban in the Talmudic teaching by the Rabbis.

As Jesus plainly speaks, both God and the parents had suffered open robbing in the case (Mark 7 vs. 9, 11, 12, 13).

Also the swearing falsely by the name of God had been accomplished by this transference from the Law of Moses to the Law of Tradition.

A. Under this Corban rule where a man could rid himself of family responsibilities by saying the money was devoted to God, and B. the monstrous devices for breaking oaths (Matthew 23 vs. 16-22). This is without doubt the biggest lie on record. Already you will have observed a movement from God's Law to vain traditions of man.

Further horizons were destroyed by this pretentious lie of monumental size.

The Church of the Apostasy in the House of Babylon and in the Land of Shinar. Unclean birds, storks, carried this teaching to Shinar in the semblance of two women, who are these? One Rev. 17 vs. 4 the development we have just identified. Papal Rome. The other being the Pseudo-Church of Christ, plainly designated by Christ in Matthew 13 vs. 33, when the woman is fouling the meat offering with leaven etc.

In very tight symbol we have both the Alpha and Omega of Apostacy, seen aiming at its true destination, Shinar in Babylon. (The Land of the Tooth and Confusion) going back to where it started. The terrible Tooth of both Pagan and Papal Rome alike, which did terribly rend our Brethren and Sisters, and the confusion of

iniquity which has ever been the true designation of Roman harlotry. This terrible brand of Pseudo-Christian doctrine (Matthew 13 vs. 33) and Pharisaic, and Judaistic tradition, formed the basis of the State Church of Rome and, of course, Constantine (2 Thessalonians by Debir Press). For further information regarding this section see author's "Thessalonians".

We are all familiar with the Double Dyed Blackness of evil represented by Chushan-Rishathain; it is all around us and its grip is tightening - Papal Rome! We may well see Jesus as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah the Greater Othniel in the coming conflict of Armageddon in the light of Judges 3, and not only so but the Victory of the Lord Jesus Christ over the Satanic forces of Evil as found in the teaching of Rome.

How right were the words of Fausset, who thought that we might see in miniature all the other deliverances contained in these two short verses. The conflict of Jesus with wickedness in high places, in governments, and churches and all that goes to make up modern life. It has been the campaign of Jesus down the ages to succour those who would do exploits in His Name even exposing themselves to wickedness "Doubly dyed Black Wickedness", in the Heavens of the World. Jesus will prevail, along with His faithful servants as long as we preserve an Othniel-like approach to these great things of God.

Parker puts it so beautifully for all to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest. Speaking of Othniel he says "The Spirit of the Lord came upon him". There is no mistaking that Spirit. It was not an awakening of anything that was in the man himself, but a descent from heaven of the Supreme Influence. Othniel, a common man yesterday, is today an inspired 'A little lower than God'. As a consequence, the man was not vain glorious. No inspired man can be conceited "He does not know that he is great". He knows that he is the instrument of God. The most inspired men have said, 'We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us'. Inspiration means modesty; genius means retirement, self-obliviousness, disregard of circumstance or applause. The inspired life is the unconscious life.

To us who look in, the inspired man is great, wonderful - we cannot understand the miracle: to himself he is but a child in God's house, quite a little one, hardly able to walk, asking questions by his looks of wonder praying himself into ever-deepening lowliness. Paul breathed his Christianity; to him to live was Christ, to breathe was to pray, to look was to rejoice - Othniel could not communicate his power. Inspiration is not an article of barter, (as Simon Magus found out to his cost (Acts 8 9/24). Nor could Othniel keep his inspiration without conditions. Everything we have we hold upon certain understanding of an Eternal kind: they need not be expressed; they are unwritten, but indelible: they cannot be seen with the eyes, nor can they be blotted out by the hand, they belong to the necessity of things, the fitness and harmony of the Universe. How true this is depicting the Ways of God in Inspiration. Parker goes on to say "Once inspired, always inspired" this is not doctrine of the Scriptures. We stand or fall by our spiritual relation to the Divine. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall", and let the chief of the Apostles keep himself in constant check lest when his mightiest discourse is ended he himself become a castaway

We live in character. Our (heavenly) character is in our relation to Christ. We have no independence, no character entitling us to invent a morality of our own; we are measured by eternal standards, we are judged in the court of the Infinite Righteousness.

Othniel had a special work to do, he was raised up to deliver Israel - to destroy the power of the king of Mesopotamia; and having done that he died.

(And here we find a vital principle still not fully apprehended or comprehended in our days).

When shall we come to know that every man is called to One Work, particularly if not exclusively?

Herein do we not judge one another harshly and unjustly?

The work of Othniel was not a manifold work; he was not a multitudinous genius, able to see behind and before, on the right and on the left, and to be equally strong by day and by night; he was not so much a statesman as a deliverer; he was mighty in war, he might be but second in counsel.

Each man and woman must find his or her own faculty, and be just to his true self.

If you are aiming at some other self, you will fail and be unfaithful to God's purpose. Not all are speaking brethren or arranging brethren, although some of us are called upon to be both whether we like it or not, and whether we feel the capability to profess either both or singly. Paul's motto rings true and basically should receive our undivided attention, "This one thing I do", and of course make sure that we do it well. A further lesson on the all-embracing nature of inspiration will come before us in Judges 6 with regard to Gideon: we leave its exposition until then.

1. We must remember that Othniel was the same bold warrior who, in the days of Joshua, had won the hand of Achsah, daughter of Caleb, by smiting Kirjath Sepher. He then was young, but now is old.
2. Othniel, then, belonged not to the third generation of declension, but was a stalwart of the 1st generation. In Ecclesial language today Othniel was an older brother those in the eyes of the younger generation today who appear as 'squares' and are regarded as particularly out of date.
3. Most certainly, it would prove not only in 'Modus operandi', but also in spirit and principle.
4. It was Yahweh who raised up this square and sent him as a deliverer to Israel, and Israel was saved by him, and the lesson remained for 40 years. (Judges 3 11). A whole generation of quietude and peace brought about after 8 years of servitude under sin and apostacy.

The number of probation (40) the same period as the wandering in the wilderness, the Temptation of our Lord (40 days) etc. Now if the deliverance under Othniel gave Israel a generation of quietude and peace (40 years) then it follows that after Jesus, the greater Othniel or the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, has destroyed the latter manifestation of Chushan-Rishathaim, the domain of Papal Rome "The Blackness of Double Evil, then his people are to have quietude and peace for a generation". But how can we estimate the length of a generation in the Kingdom of God? If a child shall die at a hundred years old? Isa. 65 vs.17-20 verse 22 answers the query "For as the days of a tree are the days of my people", basically this means that the longevity of Patriarchal times is restored, Adam lived to 930 years, Methuselah to 969 years etc.

We see from this simple computation that it will be possible to live right through the Kingdom Age, to the time when 'God will be All in All' (1. Cor. 15: 28).

Forty years under Othniel then in the 'days when the Judges ruled' can only be paralleled to One Thousand Years of the Kingdom Age - each is a generation, and such is the wonderful disclosure regarding Othniel the 1st Judge and the anti-typical fulfilment under Jesus Christ, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, outlined from Rev. 5 forward in His relentless pursuit of this Double-Dyed Blackness of Evil in high places.

The deliverances, then, are inaugurated by Jesus, as we advanced, and this is the grand plan to put down effectively all opposition against God and to usher in the Kingdom Age. We look forward to the 'rest' which remaineth for the people of God (Heb. 4 vs. 9). "Where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary be at rest" (Job 3 vs.17: Matt. 11 vs. 28-30). Some have attempted to make Peter conform to Othniel, we are not in agreement with

this theory, and advise that the idea just outlined should be considered as the correct one. We have seen that Aram or Babylon-Babel brings the people into bondage, and is the very first one to rule over them as a result of their self-exaltation and independence of God. And that Babylonian captivity is the final one, when the last vestige of the Kingdom of Judah was carried off to Babylon, and the times of the Gentiles began. The whole government of God passes from the house of David over to the Gentile kings. In other words it is the first step that counts. We have witnessed the end of Gentile times with the deliverance of Jerusalem from the Arabs June 1967 and although the darkness of Chushan-Rishathaim is still apparent, the Sun of Righteousness is about to break through with its brilliant light to shatter into fragments this all-consuming gloom into the brilliant rest of the Kingdom Age.

Final thoughts on Othniel

A. We have within this frame four considerations of action, around which the whole book is set - Sin, Servitude, Supplication, Salvation, and always in this order.

B. It is noticeable that the first oppressors from Mesopotamia are furthest away by distance, namely, the far North East, beyond Syria. Judgment comes from a long way off, but is found very uncomfortably near under the next oppression.

C. "And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him" Judges 3 vs.10. This marks the peculiar office of the Judges as we have already stated. The precise phrase "the Spirit of the Lord" first occurs in this passage and is repeated (6 vs.34: 11 vs.29: 3 vs.25: 14 vs.6,19: 15 vs.14). Seven occurrences in all, which is again rather marvellous to the present writer. The Judges were types of The Christ, "The Judge of Israel" (Micah 5 v.2). 7 is the Covenantal Perfection number in scripture, and the Sevenfold expression is found in the Lord Jesus in Isa. 11 vs.2 (see the Song of Solomon for further exposition, Debir Press).

The Spirit of the Lord came upon the Lord Jesus without measure, as the figure 7 implies, and for the student we tabulate certain quotations along with Isa.11 vs.2 for comparison. (Isa. 42 1-4: 61 vs1: compare the following Isa. 59 vs.19-21; Matt.12 vs.18-21; John vs.32-33 etc. and Acts 13 vs.2).

D. We see how tight the Spirit bind the type and antitype with, of course, far greater adumbrations found in the antitype. We are reminded of the seven-branched candlestick of Exodus 25 vs.31-32: Rev.1 vs.4. This seven-branched candlestick, or six branches with its stem, as some prefer to describe it, again gives the same construction of thought. The Divine Intelligence and illuminating of the Glorified Christ is seen in type and antitype. Not only so, but the Christ Body is also within focus.

E. The last point we must make concerning Othniel is a scriptural one regarding order in Divine protocol.

We read that he judged Israel and he went forth to war.

The Principle? (i) First of all Self-Judgment. (Keeping in mind Peter 4:17).

That "if judgment first begins at the house of God" etc. taken from Ez.9 where the judgment of God starts at the Temple of God in Jerusalem.

Those nearest to Him etc. and therefore foremost in responsibility.

We must never forget this aspect. Judgment comes to us - FIRST.

If we keep this responsibility in mind, then before any action against the enemies of God takes place SELF-JUDGMENT will always be undertaken.

This too, is the principle of exhortation.

(ii) Then conflict with the enemy can ensue !

This is the correct order. When the order was forgotten, then Israel was defeated and humiliated. God would not let His Holy Name be linked with

Israel should there be the absence of self-judgment on their part. Deut. records "When thou goest forth to war, thou shalt keep thee from every evil thing". As at Ai, and the defeat there, Joshua, the man who is going to set them free from Apostate drudgery, must first of all bring them on their faces, and he himself must be foremost in this exercise. (Josh. 7 v.6 etc). David first of all conquered himself before he faced Goliath, 1 Sam 17 28-29. Jesus did precisely the same in the wilderness (Matt., 4 1-11) and finally in Gethsemane (Matt. 26 36-46) before He faced death. Moses threw himself on the ground after the Apostasy of the people, so did Joshua after Achan's trespass: Daniel placed himself among those who had sinned against God (Dan. 9 3-6) and so forth. All in the light of Judges 3: 9 self-judgment first of all, then the advance against the enemies of the Lord.

Such are some of the lessons arising out of the weak thing. A son of a second son, whom the Lord made mighty to the pulling down of Double-Dyed Wickedness and with the whole concept of world dominion by the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, Jesus the Lamb of God (Rev.17:14 etc).

These are lessons of reproach and comfort. May they fortify us in these last days of Gentile Blackness, and pray God that like to Israel in Egypt (see chart the Plagues of Egypt by Debir Press), that darkness may be light to us, which will shine more and more unto the perfect day when we, along with Jesus, having constantly applied self-judgment to ourselves may triumph over the whore of Papal dominion and ignorance, along with the many Secret Societies of our day, Freemasonry and the like.

Judges 3 vs.12

"And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord. And the Lord strengthened Eglon, the king of Moab, against Israel because they had done evil in the sight of the Lord".

The picture changes but not the principle. The enemy now, is very near at hand, not only so but also relatives (natural) that is Moab and Ammon and Amalek, (the Inveterate Trinity of Evil) are against Israel, even in 1969 late February at the present moment, Sons of Lot and descendants of Esau, Amalekites. Moab means "Seed of a Father", Ammon "A Fellow Kinsman". When we consider the foul way in which they were conceived then we are given an indication of their lustful natures (Gen.19 vs.30-38), and Amalek means "Warlike", "one that devours" or "licks up like a flame". (See Rephidim in Num.33 Debir Press).

Jesus said quite plainly that "a man's foes will be those of his own household" (Micah 7 5-6, Matt. 10: 36). A rather dry North Country comment was "relationship was the worst ship that ever sailed".

The mixed multitude that accompanied Israel out of Egypt largely consisted of natural relatives from Abraham. Descendants of Ishmael and Esau, they were known as the Arabs.

These people were always a thorn in the side of Israel, leading the murmuring against God etc., all down history they have "snapped at the heels of Israel", and today form the Arab Crescent that hems Israel in.

As referred to ourselves, they are seen to be the promptings of the flesh, evil thoughts striving against good, complaining and murmuring. Amalek portrays the warlike nature of these evil tendencies and the picture has greatly changed from outside apostate tendencies - to the thinking of the flesh personally; and natural relatives that we have our obligation to we have written in another place. "Blue in Scripture". Debir Press.

We read some rather strange words in Judges 3 vs.12 "and the Lord strengthened Eglon against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the Lord". This latter portion of the clause is repeated twice in the verse,

indicating the express wish and command of the Lord Gen.41 32.

A thing doubled was considered to be certain because the Lord had done it.

A. How could God do this? it has been complained? then God punishes Eglon for so doing? can this be fair?

B. We have the lesson of Isa.10 before us to answer all these questions clearly.

C. Perhaps it may be hard to appreciate the fact that Yahweh can strengthen Eglon, the king of Moab, against Israel because of the arrogant wickedness of this people.

D. Because Habakkuk had similar thoughts with regard to Assyria and Babylon (Hab. 1 vs.2 etc) and then Yahweh should punish the kings and nations who had been strengthened and sent by Him to do this work.

E. The plain straightforward answer is to be found in Isa.10 vs.5-12 plainly the result of having an omniscient and omnipresent mind, with omnipotent power to carry out these projects.

F. The answer then, briefly stated is as follows :-

Isa. 10 vs.5-6 "O Assyrian, the rod of my anger" (this is Yahweh speaking) "is to be sent against an hypocritical nation, and (terrible words) against the people of God's wrath" this is Israel.

Here is the Divine commission and, as such, it is just and right.

G. But look at Isa.10 vs.7 "Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so, but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations, not a few". Here is the departure from the Divine commission. The Assyrian does not recognise the supremacy of God, and in the name of his images will he destroy and erase kingdoms, whom God had put in his hands. cf. Isa.10 vs.8-14.

H. Verse 15 gives us the Divine reaction - "shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith" etc. see whole verse.

I. Isa.10 vs.16-19 "The Judgment of God to fall on these fat ones the burning fury of Yahweh of Hosts, for whom he worked yet never acknowledged" and so on.

J. After the retribution Israel will in turn be brought back once again, and be a deadly scourge to those who had been their enemies. Isa.10 vs.20-34.

We may consider the death of Othniel the end of the generation that knew Joshua, who had survived the 2nd generation and died in the beginning of the third.

This chapter in Isaiah is in itself the complete answer to such God-dishonouring theories.

Israel added to the Evil and the Lord added a much longer period of suffering than before and a repetition of sin brings aggravation of punishment.

Judges 3 vs.14 so the children of Israel served Eglon the King of Moab eighteen years. Another point emerges in consideration with Moab. Eglon could have had no power against them, but that their apostasy constrained the Lord to put a sword in the hand of their enemy. Formerly Balak had no power to curse them, so long as Israel was faithful to the covenant (Mic.6 vs.5). But now another king of Moab, though a heathen, is made the rod of Yahweh's anger, when the God of Israel, who delights to "give strength and power unto His people" Psa.68 vs.35, is found by His justice to strengthen their adversaries against them (Num.25 vs.9).

Judges 3 vs.13 So Eglon "gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek and went and smote Israel and possessed the City of Palm Trees". (Jericho). Just imagine Jericho - the World City delivered unto Israel by God - by a miracle - the earthquake, now taken by Moab, Ammon and Amalek, and made a Moabitish stronghold, to guard the passes of Jordan, and to keep Israel in

lasting submission.

Once again an emphasis on the principle "what we have gained by faith we lose by unbelief".

It is interesting to see that Eglon (according to Judges 3 vs.13) only penetrated as far as Jericho - the "City of Palm Trees", which is always the type of this world and its attraction: the first enemy that Israel had to overthrow when they first entered the Land under Joshua and the 1st generation.

At baptism, Jericho as a dwelling-place, unlike Israel at this time, died with us in Christ. Christ and the Word overcame that in us with overwhelming force and devastation. The walls of our opposition just fell flat to the majesty of the Word and the logicity of its appeal.

But, since we must live in the world, then the site of Jericho and what it stands for still remains, and unless we are careful as individuals and ecclesias; the pride of life, the lust of the eye and the lust of the flesh will descend upon us, catch us in our weaker moments, and our hindermost extremities (Ex. 17 8 etc) and take possession of us.

The impact will be as fierce as the charge of a "big bull calf, large and fat", as Eglon means, and the latter condition will be worse than the first.

The Lord Jesus puts it in another way, but just as effective, when speaking of the man who cast out devils out of his life, but left it empty of good works for the Lord, He said "Then he saith, I will return into my house whence I came out; and when he is come he findeth it empty, swept and garnished". Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it also be unto this wicked generation. (Matt. 12 vs.43-45).

Such was the case when Eglon and his confederates took Jericho, so far as Israel was concerned, because now the enemy was aggressive, and held tenaciously for 18 long years to the passages of Jordan and the rich spoil of the earth.

We wonder however, was the fountain of Jericho still brackish at this time, as it was at the time of Elisha? (2 Kings 2 vs.21 etc). Typically it must have been so, because throughout time the water of the world had always been barren, brackish and casting of any fruit of righteousness. (RV).

It is significant that the Scriptures do not mark any advance by the confederate forces under Eglon, they were content to dwell at the City of Palm Trees.

The spiritual Moabites (apart from Ruth, who truly became adopted into Israel) do not want anything more than the luscious grounds of easy living. (The Jordan Valley in type). The true things of the spirit are not after their stomach, the life of the flesh is all they really aspire to.

Is it not ironical that this definition has, within its compass, the suggestion of life? The date palms are invaluable to desert-dwellers, and where the palms are found water is always present, so the geography books inform us. The twofold sustenance of life. The pseudo copies the Truth assiduously, and can trap the unwary. But the crisis comes as it is found with Elisha - the salvation of God, (a wonderful type of the Lord Jesus, only His sacrifice can alter the water), and the effect of His life of obedience to the Father. These alone can give life to the world (see Numbers 33, under Marah, for further extensions).

Eglon then, was the instrument of God's punishment upon Israel, "But when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, the Lord raised them up a Deliverer" Judges 3 15. His name was Ehud, the son of Gera, a Benjamite, "a man left handed". The information revealed is as follows :-

Ehud = to unite, to join together.

Gera = to ruminate, to destroy.

Benjamin = Son of sorrow and Son of the Right Hand.

"Left-handed" AV Margin "Shut of his right hand" (Ges. p 35).

There have been many suggestions concerning this matter of being left-handed:

(1) That Ehud became so from want of use of righthand from childhood.

(2) Unable to use the sword arm, the right hand.

(3) The Sept. and the Vulgate render it - "Who used his left hand as well as his right." Ambidextrous. However this seems incorrect Judges 3 verses 16 and 21 Wordsworth. It would appear that Ehud was quite deliberate in what he did, placing the sheath on the right thigh. This of course would give the impression that he was unarmed, as the sword arm, the power, was contained in the right arm, the right hand; The Son of the right hand, Christ is sat in the heavens on the right hand of God i. e. the Place of Power.

(4) A further indication of the Bible Narrative is found in Judges 20 v 15 and 1 Chron. 12 v.2 where we find 700 men of Benjamin left-handed and skilled with slings. May we need to look any further for the 2nd weak thing by which God accomplished His deliverance of Israel. (a) It was indeed "the left hand of Ehud, despised among the ancients because it only held the shield. (b) This disparity has come down even to our own days. (c) Until quite recently writing with the left hand was regarded in schools as obnoxious and (d) not until Chopin's days was the left hand regarded as a solo feature for the piano, before then it was completely used as an accompanying medium as his Revolutionary Study shows: Who would not have thought both hands too little for Ehud's work? Or if either might have been spared, how much rather the left hand. But it is the ordinary wont of the Almighty to use the unlikeliest means. (J.Hall). The destroying agent was a two edged sword (Judges 3 v 16) Literally a sword with two mouths. Paul applies this description to the Word of God (Heb.4 v 12) and of course a two edged sword is represented in the Apocalypse as going forth from the mouth of Christ. (Rev.1 v 16, 2 v.12) also Psalm 149 v 6 and Ephesians 6 v 17 as the Sword of the Spirit.

"A cubit long" the length of the forearm, so experts advise, from the elbow to the hand.

Here is a man who prepared or 'made him' a sword. Paul has evinced this sword to be the word of God, that scripture which with its two edged cuts, applies to the case.

He comes with a sword in his hand, or on his right thigh, well hidden by his long cloak. For as under the Philistines (1 Sam 13 v 19) so now under Moab, the making of iron weapons was forbidden:

Its presence on the right thigh of Ehud would never be suspected, the left being the sword side, and it would be convenient to his left hand which of course was the hand that he used:

The sword with its two edges and cubit long (possibly called a dirk) cuts both ways, it will cut every way. This sword will always cut every way. We cannot use the sword on one side to a certain class of people and let another class escape. The sword of God's word cuts in both directions, first ME then you, then BOTH of us together. The word of God is no respecter of persons. Those of us who have had the responsibility of using this sword, have had the experience. In the course of devout study of this miraculous vehicle of truth, one's heart is laid bare to its keen edge. First always upon oneself, then upon our brother, to the end that it shall be "as iron sharpens iron" in the things of the Spirit.

Judges 3 v 17 and he (Ehud) brought the present unto Eglon, King of Moab: and Eglon was a very fat man. Eglon must have been a man who held high place among the Israelites, for they employed him as their tribute bearer to the Moabite King, and assigned him a numerous retinue as his escort (3 v 18). Eglon, as his name implies and 3 v 17 has stated, was a very fat man, as Fausset implies probably living in luxury and the pleasures of appetite. Sudden destruction came upon such in the midst of their self-indulgence - (Luke 21 v 34/36)

(1) So Belshazzar Daniel 5: Rom 13 v 12/13. 1 Thess 5 v 6/8.

(2) The fool in Luke 12 vs 16/21 3) and Nabal the original fool behind the teaching of Jesus in this parable (1 Sam 25, 25 R.M.) This rather pointed attack

upon the fat man is quite true. But not all fat persons live in luxury and recline in the splendrous appetite. This particular type of individual fat man, not just Eglon, sometimes has to undergo the rigours of restraint and self-discipline in order to try and constrain his weight. We are thinking particularly about the diabetic glandular diathesis, of which the present writer happens to be one, and of rotund appearance. I am afraid that this type of person usually eats far less than the 'skinny' or drainpipe stature, and is (Eglon was not) excluded from the sweet and sugary kind of food. This is just an aside and a plea for the rather comfortable kind of brother or sister, who is usually quite affable (it has been said that he has to be, as he is too fat to fight or to run away !

Eglon, however, is represented to us as a corpulent gross tyrant, full of the pleasures and sottishness of the flesh, emphasised in the extreme sensual begetting of the Moabitish nation, "the son of a father". This is the tyrant that oppressed Israel, and so attacks ourselves in these far off days, spiritually speaking. How terrible that Israel should have to pay tribute to this fleshy principle ! Actually, we can discern Rom. 7 once again in these verses: "The good that I would, I do not; the evil that I would not, that I do". This is that gross monster that afflicts us mightily and demands tribute from us, and in most cases receives due but unwilling payment, as the flesh afflicts us.

There can be only one remedy - Ehud's sword, as we shall presently determine. Against this fat bull of Bashan goes Ehud, short of his sword arm, full of courage, with hidden weapon, eager to despatch the secret message to Eglon. "It is the ordinary way of the Almighty to make choice of the unlikeliest means", said Joseph Hall, 1595, in his 'Contemplations of Scripture' and went on further to say - "The instruments of God must not be measured by their own power or aptitude, but by the will of the agent". Though Ehud had no hands, He that employed him had enabled him to do this slaughter. In human things it is good to look to the means, in divine, to the worker. No means are to be condemned that God will use: no means are to be trusted that man will use without Him. It is good to be suspicious where is least show of danger and most appearance of favour. This left handed man comes with a present in his hand, but a dagger under his skirt. The tyrant, besides service, looked for gifts; and now received death in his bribe. Neither God nor men do always give where they love.

How oft doth God give extraordinary illumination, power of miracles, besides wealth and honour, where he hates (case in point Isa. 10 and of course Eglon himself. A.H.) - Ehud's faith supplies the want of his hand. Where God intends success, he lifts up the heart with resolutions of courage and contempt for danger. What indifferent beholder of this prospect would not have condemned it, as unlikely to succeed ! To see a maimed man go alone to a great king, in the midst of all his troops: to single him out from all witnesses: to set upon him in his own parlour, where his courtiers might have heard the least exclamation, and have come in, if not to the rescue, yet to the revenge ! Every circumstance is full of improbabilities. Faith evermore overlooks the difficulties of the way, and bends her eyes only to the certainty. With such quaint English does Joseph Hall equate the position, and very well so, one might add.

Again the warning comes to mind as we see Israel in tribute to this Eglon or 'Large Bull Calf'. The moral and spiritual significance of the word is suggested by such spiritual expressions as "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked" (Deut. 32 v 15); "Fat bulls of Bashan close me in" (Psa. 22 v 12) cp. Ez. 39 v 18 and Amos 4 v 1; "Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan" cp. Judges 3 v 29 "And they slew of Moab" at that time about 10,000 men, all lusty, and all men of valour, and there escaped not a man ! "All lusty", literally, everyone that was fat (see Gesenius 835). Everyone that was fat and strong of the Moabites, in Jericho and these parts they destroyed (Wordsworth).

The record informs us that Ehud delivered the demand of tribute to Eglon, which was of considerable size, as per Judges 3 v 18, "And when he had made an end to offer the present, he sent away the people that bare the present".

After dismissing his brethren, and no doubt having been roused by the spectacle of idols at Gilgal he returned to the palace of Eglon to deliver his 'second errand' or literally "a word hidden" to the king.

Judges 3 v 19

"But he himself turned again from the quarries that were by Gilgal, and said I have a secret errand unto thee, O King": who said in anticipation to Ehud (expecting a personal hand-out, thinking no doubt that Ehud wanted a favour from him and would be willing to pay heavily for it - how true to human graft and greed, in the world today, and the nefarious way favour can be devised !): "Keep silence" The word 'quarries' here rather means the "graven images"; so translated by the Septuagint and Vulgate here and at verse 26. The Hebrew word is "pesilin", used in the sense of Deut. 7 v 5 and 25, 12 v 3, 2 Kings 17 v 41, Psa. 92 v 7 etc. from "pasal" - to carve. (Gesenius 683, 684).

It would appear that the 'Idols at Gilgal' determined the occasion of the deliverance from Ehud's point of view at least. His heart was stirred within him, and the Spirit came upon him when he saw 'Graven Images' even at Gilgal, the place where the second circumcision took place, when the uncleanness of Egypt had finally been removed from off the Children of Israel. Graven Images, where Joshua had rolled away the reproach of Egypt, typical of Golgotha, or Calvary, where the greater Joshua rolled away from Himself the reproaches of human nature. The place whence Joshua had rallied forth to encompass the Walls of Jericho, that city from which Joshua had gone forth to war against the kings of Canaan and to which he had returned victorious (Josh. 4 v 19, 5 v 9 and 13, 6 v 1-27, 10 v 9 and 43).

No wonder the spirit of Ehud was stirred by the sight of the occupation of Jericho, and now the images of Moab with all their filthy and lewd practices, inhabiting the one place dedicated to the Cutting Off of these habits of human flesh. Possibly we might match Ehud's feelings at this time along with centuries later Judas Maccabaeus ("The Hammer") beholding the abomination of desolation - an idolatrous altar - set up in the Temple of Yahweh. He thence with high faith and set determination went forth to victory. Wordsworth adds rather beautifully, "The arms of Satan (or the Adversary) recoil against himself by kindling the zeal of the saints: when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him" Isa. 59 v 19 Ehud went forth under the standard "The Lord is my Banner" ("Yahweh Nissi", Ex. 17 v 14/16) to deliver Israel mightily, although shut of his sword arm, using only the homemade dirk, expedited by faith in his venture.

We left the text at Judges 3 v 19, intimating the anticipation of Eglon, awaiting the pleasure of the Hidden Word from Ehud. Fausset indicates that the word for "present" or tribute offered to Eglon is "minchah", as used elsewhere of the thank offering presented to Yahweh according to the Law of Moses. They had neglected to render to God the tribute due to the Loving God, so now in retributive judgement they must render to a heathen oppressor the offerings which through their sin had become his due.

"And all that stood by him went out from him" Verse 20

"And Ehud came unto him" (the moment of time to accomplish the mission - it is now or never). "And he was sitting in a summer parlour, which he had for himself alone" - a cooling parlour, as the climate is very hot and tropic in the Jordan Valley; personal to Eglon, no one could enter unless bidden expressly by Eglon himself. The Moment of Truth had come !

Judges 3 20/22 "And he arose out of his seat. And Ehud put forth his left hand, and took the dagger from his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly. And the haft also went in after the blade: and the fat closed upon the blade

so that he could not draw the dagger out of his belly: and the dirt came out," or "it came out at the fundament" or the part between the legs ("pasedonah" from an Arabic root "to part the legs"), after which Ehud left the palace through the porch and shut the doors of the parlour upon him and locked them, being swift to get beyond the ranges before his secret word should be found out.

Judges 3:24/25 discloses the strict law concerning the privacy of the royal person. (1) They thought he had retired for toilet facilities - "He covereth his feet in his summer chamber" (or "doeth his easement"); (2) or possibly, thought Eglon was taking his sleep. (3) They waited, somewhat uneasily it would appear, for the royal command "to enter in to him", but they waited in vain (4) until the chamberlain took his personal key and opened the retiring room. (5) "And behold, their lord was fallen down on the earth." (6) This was the result of the surprise attack, with the real urgency behind it (Judges 3:19 "Graven images at Gilgal.")

What do we make of all this?

(a) Do we take the point of the critics who have raised objections to the act of Ehud as censurable on moral grounds? They have described him as a "crafty Israelite" taking an unfair advantage over an unwieldy corpulent Moabite. Others have apologised for it on the grounds that it is not to be measured by what they call the standard of an 'enlightened modern civilisation' compared with what they term the 'barbarous temper of those times.'

(b) Or do we agree with plain scripture that Ehud went under Divine warrant for such an errand?

Bishop Hall's comments were sufficient for us in truth. "Though Eglon were an usurper, yet had Ehud been a traitor God had sent him" - which makes all the difference. We take no stock of such arrant nonsense or critical carping. Ehud truly took a hidden word from God and with great endeavour finished his exploit, after hazarding his life at this time.

The Arab critics today wish to rewrite the David and Goliath incident of 1 Samuel 17, insisting that David was the savage aggressor and Goliath the poor Philistine who meant no harm to Israel!

What will lying do to the text of the Bible, if we take any notice? Everyone worth his salt in Bible study will 'laugh to scorn' such feeble murmurings.

Apart from these words we waste no more time or space on such thoughts. Ehud did right, and David also because each was raised up by God for the work he had to do. Let this suffice.

Meanwhile "Ehud escaped while they tarried, and passed beyond the quarries and escaped to Seirath" - Judges 3:26.

So Ehud passed by the idols at Gilgal (verse 19). We have already given our thoughts on this verse. At Gilgal it is thought that Ehud displayed the triumph which had been wrought by his means over the false gods of Moab, and for the glory of the Lord, who had appeared to Joshua there. Did he return that way in order to throw down those idols in his zeal for God, according to God's command (Exodus 34:13. Deuteronomy 7:5)? (Wordsworth).

We wondered as we pondered over these words: what triumph did Ehud display at Gilgal? We are not informed that he took anything from Eglon save his life. This was the true spoil, which undoubtedly Ehud did take. But how could he display this except for the fact that his dagger remained enclosed in the gross fatness of the carcass of Eglon? - his god was his belly and through his belly came his death blow (Phil. 3:19).

But again we pause: How were his fellow Israelites to know this? - as there could have been several reasons why he had lost his dagger. So far as they were concerned, as would appear obvious, it was evidence of the missing dagger, along with another proof, not mentioned by name in the narrative, but clear when we think of it. This would be the blood stains on the garments and possibly the sandals of Ehud arising from the death blow. (A similar line of evidence is used - known as the tokens of a woman's virginity - Deuteronomy 22:15). In such a way did Ehud display his triumph over Eglon, "whose God was his belly" (Phil. 3:19).

(1) Come to think of it, it would have expressed his guilt very sharply to the Moabitish eyes. We wonder, did Ehud hide this triumph from their eyes until he passed the ranges?

(2) Or, did he pass through their ranks unobserved?

(3) Why should Ehud want to go by Seirath to display his triumph? Was it because of the idolatry practised there at that time? The name Seirath means 'hairy' and both name and description take us back to Esau, who was hairy all over, so Genesis 25 : 25 informs us.

(4) Was it a warning to the house of Esau at this time?

(5) The place Seirath was situated within a continuation of the rugged, bushy hills which stretched to Judah's northern territory from Mount Ephraim (Joshua 15 : 10), where Mount Seir is not Edom but a north boundary of Judah.

Judges 3 : 27

Upon reaching the mountainous region of Ephraim, his relatives by birth, and also, let us note, the "Portion of the Firstborn" and as yet the leading tribe before Yahweh openly chooses Judah (Psalm 132 : 5-6). This place became known as the rallying point in Israel (Judges 4 : 5, 10 : 1). The result was that Ephraim followed Ehud and became bound to him, or united with him in the forthcoming destruction of Moab and Ammon, etc. (Judges 3 : 27). Here it was that Ehud sounded the alarm in Israel, or Ephraim, the call to arms against the invaders (Numbers 10 : 9). The deeds of Joshua would be well remembered, and Ephraim received fresh courage to oust the Moabites from Jericho. Notice the trend of events (1) Ehud blew a trumpet in the mountain of Ephraim (2) the children went down with him from the mount (3) "And he before them:" (4) He said, "Follow after me, for the Lord hath delivered your enemies into your hands." (5) "And they went down after him, and took the fords of Jordan toward Moab, and suffered not a man to pass over." (6) "And they slew of Moab at that time about 10,000 men, all lusty and all men of valour (7) and there escaped not a man."

"Lusty" means all that were fat. 10,000 Moabites means all the forces in the course of the campaign against them. The victory was complete. Not one escaped. "And the land (chiefly Benjamin and Ephraim) had rest 80 years."

Judges 3 : 27-30

What do we make of this detail as a type?

In Ehud we have portrayed in unmistakable language our Apostle Paul in his work for our Lord Jesus. How does it make out for our purpose? How do they compare?

A. Ehud was of the tribe of Benjamin. So, too, was Paul (Romans 11 : 1): "of the tribe of Benjamin", he says, in describing his lineage.

B. Ehud's name means "Uniting". Paul, although he was a Hebrew of the Hebrews (2 Corinthians 11 : 22) was yet the Apostle to the Gentiles (Galatians 2 : 7-8) and his set task was the "uniting" of Jew and Gentile together within the Body of Christ (Galatians 3 : 26-29): "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye are Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." No one man ever did as much as Paul by preaching and acting to unite Jew and Gentile in the mystical Body of Christ. Paul is the Ehud of the Gospel, and his uniting power was in the Gospel he preached.

C. Ehud was left-handed, "the weak thing" according to Hebrew thought, and with it drew the sword that slew Eglon, the enemy of God's people. Paul also metaphorically did not use the right hand in his work; he seemed to many to be left-sided or left-handed, gauche, awkward in wielding the weapons of eloquence. Paul did not use the weapons of the orator of worldly show and wisdom - the right hand, so to speak. Apollos appears to have been more greatly endowed in this respect than Paul (Acts 18 : 24-25). In fact Paul admitted that his speech was

contemptible in the sense that he refused to use the Classical or Attic Greek, but the contemptible Koine or Dog Greek, as it was termed. Paul's bodily presence was weak (2 Corinthians 10 : 10). He did not wage his war against heathenism with man's wisdom (1 Corinthians 2 : 4), neither with speech nor appearance ; unlike Herod who suffered dire consequences for his deed (Acts 12 : 21-22). Paul did not use the arm which men normally use to wield the sword, but, the left - weak indeed in the sight of the world, and the message of that left hand - Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Corinthians 1 : 28) and as the left hand held the shield in normal warfare, so Paul had a shield of faith (Ephesians 6 : 16). Faith too, was exemplified in the impelling force behind the message or hidden word which Ehud took to Eglon. This message, or hidden word was really a sword of a cubit's length which turned out to be a dagger of death, in the day of long knives.

1. The computation of the length of this dagger was based upon a man's measurements (from the elbow to the hand) and so the Word of God is measured for our use while infinitely beyond our strength and computation, yet the Lord so measures it that you and I can use it with effect and dexterity, should we have the capacity and will to use it.
2. We have stressed in our earlier thoughts that it had two mouths (Maxaman Distomon).
3. Is known as the Word of God (Hebrews 4 : 12).
4. And is called by Paul the Sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6 : 10 etc.)
5. It does cut two ways - Attack and Defence, and turns first of all upon the one who wields it, then on the one who feels it.
6. It searches even to our very bones and marrow, as a dissecting knife or the priestly knife of sacrifice which Paul has in mind in Hebrews 4 : 12.
7. and like Goliath's sword, "there is none like it."
8. As Ehud took his sword to Jericho (the world in type) Paul in antitype took his to the Gentile world - after Jewish rejection.
9. The sword of Paul had a message with two edges : (a) for the Jews and (b) for the Gentiles. It cut both ways and was equally effective to both communities.
10. As Ehud took his sword to Jericho, so Paul took his sword of the Spirit to the Gentile world after Jewish rejection.
11. Just as Ehud had a secret errand (margin : hidden word) for Eglon, so Paul had a mystery, a hidden word for that fleshly ancient city, Corinth. He took to them the hidden wisdom of the Gospel of Christ (1 Corinthians 2 : 6).
12. Just as Ehud was stirred up by the sight of the graven images at Gilgal, so Paul was stirred in spirit when he saw all the graven images at Athens (Acts 17 : 16).
13. The spirit that ruled those ancient cities was none the less carnal, and full of fleshly lust, fully fitting the antitype of that gross corpulent tyrant Eglon, the fat bull of Moab. We note that Paul adds (Phil. 3 : 9), "Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, who mind earthly things."
14. Just as the dagger sank into that gross flesh of Eglon who was very fat (Judges 3 : 10-12) and transfixed him, so the Word of God, the Sword of the Spirit when wielded with the left hand of faith will destroy all the Eglon in us.
15. Is it not very apt that Ephraim should rally to the cause, and follow Ehud to battle and to complete victory, utterly routing the Moabitic forces. Ehud went on before them, and they followed after. So we have in Ephraim the result of uniting Jew and Gentile, and parallel with Paul's task of uniting both Jew and Greek into one (Galatians 3 : 27-29), because Ephraim was both Israelite and Gentile on account of Joseph his great forbear marrying Asenath the daughter of the Priest of On, or the Sun. Remember what we advanced to the great discredit of Timnath Heres, the Portion of the Sun, that Joshua finally inherited in this very mountain where Ephraim, the first-born of Joseph, rallied to the cause (see notes on chapter 1 regarding Joseph's name and connection with Ephraim (Genesis 48 : 19-20) and the peculiar circumstances found in this quotation.
16. You will notice that whenever the 'fulness of the Gentiles shall come in to Israel', such as Romans 11 : 12-25 or Isaiah 27 : 6, is applied, 'when Israel shall blossom and fill the earth with fruit', the blessing of Ephraim is in mind and

means a mighty welding together of Jew and Gentile in one 'united', or Ehud's, fold after the Eglon and grossly fat sequence is ended.

17. Paul will then say to those who are like spiritual Ephraim today, "Be ye followers of me as I also am of Christ" (1 Thess. 1:6), in keeping with Ephraim following on after Ehud.

18. The exhortation, then, is to follow Paul in the personal encounter with Moab, the fleshly Eglons of our day, and first of all we have to plunge within our belly the Sword of the Spirit: in other words we have to "mortify our members upon the earth" etc. (Colossians 3:5), so that the effect of this attack will 'make us dead' from a fleshly angle, and if we let the Sword do its work, then our life shall be 'hid' (a secret thing) with Christ in God (Colossians 3:3), for they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts (Galatians 5:24).

19. Therefore let us, quoting Joseph Hall once more, "make an intestine slaughter of our own tyrannical corruptions", "let us mortify and kill our Eglons in our own Jerichos, in the summer chambers of our own hearts, and we shall not have read this history in vain."

20. Last thought on this sequence, a note on the group of names associated with Ehud and its antitype in Paul. Ehud: 'the uniter of brethren' as seen in Paul in bringing the worlds together in Christ, east and west. Gera: 'to ruminate' found particularly in Paul who ruminated greatly on the Word which came to him at Damascus, reaching the conclusion that no more would he be Benoni - a 'son of sorrow' to Christ and His Body, whom he had bitterly persecuted, but resolve to be in future Benjamin - 'the son of the right hand', although he would, in doing it, be shut of his right hand, becoming weak and left-handed in the process. In fact, by faith he would deliver that Word of God which has granted to us great benefit. The Lord grant him, and us, victory at the day of Christ! Is not truth stranger than fiction? - when we find that Paul's name means 'to be made little' - his Roman name. Yet how greatly he towers above anyone else in spiritual matters, and these are the true riches.

The outcome of this interesting incident was that the land had rest 80 years afterwards, double the previous number after Othniel's deliverance, which was 40 years. Two whole generations had rest from Moab, from which we understand how complete the victory was. This number can be broken up into either 4 x 20 or 8 x 10. The latter does highlight a new beginning - resurrection and so on (8), and 10 - ordinal perfection - another new first after the ninth digit, when numeration commences anew. This double emphasis on a new beginning can be discerned in the fact that two generations saw peace after this deliverance (2 x 40). They saw peace until the third generation, because the people turned back again to their God, which, in the writer's opinion, is a good example, and opposite to Exodus 34:7, revealing that equally so does the mercy of God extend to the third generation when faithful, the 'visiting' this time spread over in mercy and not extended in wrath (Judges 3:31). "And after him was Shamgar the son of Anath, which slew of the Philistines 600 men with an ox goad, and he also delivered Israel." It was noticeable that the incident at Damascus records the use of an ox goad by Jesus upon Paul (Acts 9:5-6), and it is rather remarkable that this homely agricultural instrument became the means of deliverance in Israel by Shamgar as we have just presented in 3:31. and is the third weak thing in the deliverance of Israel. The information is 'short, but sweet', very satisfactory reading.

Judges 5:6-8 adds to the picture for us, taken from Deborah's Song - "In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath, in the days of Jael the highways were unoccupied, and the travellers walked through byways or crooked paths, the inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel, until that I Deborah arose, that I arose a mother in Israel" etc. The highways ceased to be passable because of the enemies that infested them. What do we make of this, as this is all the information we have concerning Shamgar. The answer lies in the meaning of the names surrounding him. Shamgar was the son of Anath. Anath: from this name we get the burning desire for deliverance such as Israel witnessed against the lawless, crippling, grinding-down of Philistine invasion. All these thoughts are included

within its meaning - shouting answering. Why? because they were "oppressed, afflicted and humbled".

This was not only the condition of Anath, the father of Shamgar but of all Israel in this particular division of Israel which came under Philistine dominion.

The Divine answer came in the person of Shamgar.

Shamgar; whose Name means "cup bearer" "most careful keeping" "sound" and "the stranger".

The office of a cup-bearer in those days was one among the highest esteemed and answers well to the 2nd derivation, "careful keeping" it bespeaks the watchful attention and service that the individual gives to his King, making sure that no assassination through the administration of poison could reach (1) the King, or (2) in Shamgar's days Israel, or again (3) in our days, the Truth or (4) personally in oneself. The poison can be understood as the mixed brew of wild gourds found within the pot as in Elisha's day. Death in the Pot (2 Kings 4 38/40).

"The Sword" aspect applying to Shamgar can be determined when we apply the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God to these problems, which rear their ugly heads from time to time. It is "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds" of doctrinal poison that afflict us mightily. There are times when this incisive method must be used, as it was in Ezra's times, and they become to the would be Shamgars periods of personal distress, and from one point of view disgrace. But if we wish to emulate Shamgar it is a necessary hazard (Ezra disappears from view for 13 years after making the terrible separation take place, between man and wife and family. Ezra 10 19 etc.).

This time is remembered and expressed in Psalm 119 which every student knows, or should know. Ezra was mightily oppressed from the Princes downwards for his action. Was he right in his decision, do we think?

We are afraid Ezra would have been permanently 'sent to Coventry' for this stern judgment !

(a) Ezra was right, of course, (b) because he acted for God, (c) and used the Law of God aright ! (d) and acted for the good of his people. What would be the judgment in OUR DAY? How much support would he have received? The usual lament would be heard, probably raised above that of Anath in our context?

The true Shamgars amongst us would support him, all the way, and receive the usual indictment - "Shame on him" - "hard hearted", "what about the children?" No doubt similar cries were raised about Abraham when he cast out the bondwoman and her son. (Hagar and Ishmael). But God bore him out in truth (Gen. 16 21 etc). It's hard to be a Shamgar these days !!

Why? Because it will naturally make a breach between us and our brethren and sisters ! and will consequently make us 'strangers'. Strangely enough it does tell us that one may very likely become a stranger through keeping and telling the truth.

The application is advanced further when we realize who the enemy were that Shamgar slew ! and of course by what means it was accomplished. The Philistines were known as the wanderers and this definition goes right back to Cain (Gen. 4 etc). A wanderer is a different person from a pilgrim (See Num. 33 - Debin Press).

The wanderer is merely going here and there without any definite purpose (except possibly one, and that is seeking death, but unable to find it, as Cain).

A stranger and a pilgrim has a definite purpose before him, as Abraham etc. (Heb. 11 : 8/10).

How many wanderers have we in the Truth today, who have no idea where they are going, or what they are doing? Another term is "Ecclesial driftwood" !

The Philistines were also Godless mercenaries in Shamgar's day, they cruelly oppressed Israel. It is possible for such people to enter the Truth today, and they mightily oppress all the people (alas under the guise of religion and the straightest sect amongst us they say). They would argue strongly that 'they know where they are going'. So could the unfaithful whom the Lord Jesus rebuked ! (Matthew 7 : 21/23 Lord, Lord we have cast out devils in thy name - but the answer was - 'Depart from me ye wicked, I never knew you).

The notation of a wanderer has many aspects, basically, in fact, to the estimation that whether consciously or otherwise they have no idea where they are going !

How do we meet the wanderers? either devoid of the actual truth of doctrine, or the 'wool gathering' thoughts of each other these days when we are unable to concentrate, either from business problems or just everyday happenings, when our thoughts should be devoted to the emblems on the table.

This is how the Philistine of our day invades our private thoughts and fills them with ungodly aspirations.

Shamgar has the answer and gives good example through the spirit which sustained him. "He smote 600 Philistines with an ox goad".

(1) It is said that "It might well represent a pilgrim's staff, and with it he slays hundreds of those wandering Philistines, who do not know where they stand!"

(2) First we must recognise this was the instrument with which Shamgar 'delivered' Israel, therefore the instrument designed and sent by God for such a purpose.

(3) The ox goad was a good stout homely implement of agricultural design, and purpose. A pointed staff 8 feet long, 6 inches wide at one end, fitted with an iron scraper, to remove the mud which clogged the plough, and a sharpened point at the other end, to prick the ox; either to stimulate the beast to greater activity, or to guide it in the right direction.

(4) Our thoughts revert once again to the point that we have here a classical example of Philistine policy in disarming tributary peoples, leaving them only agricultural implements to work the land. (1 Sam. 13 : 19-24).

The key however, to our problem and the Divine Power found in the weak thing provided by God is to be found in Eccl. 12 vs. 9-12 which we will state in full -

"And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs. The preacher sought to find out acceptable words; and that which was written was upright, even words of truth. The words of the wise are as GOADS, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from ONE Shepherd. And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh".

(5) Here is the Spiritual might found in the lowly ox goad. The wisdom of the Spirit itself, given from ONE Shepherd fastened by the Master of Assemblies. In very plain words The Words of the Lord Jesus Himself - The ONE SHEPHERD of Israel who to us is Wisdom, as Paul advances (1 Cor. 1 vs. 18-31).

(6) Paul is competent to testify, not only as a wielder of this Spiritual ox goad himself, but also as a recipient of its correction. As Jesus Himself reminded him, after the confrontation with Stephen in the Synagogue of the Cilicians at Jerusalem and being chief witness at his stoning, never being able to rid himself of that "face, as it had been the face of an Angel". (Acts 6 vs. 15, 7 vs. 55, 8 vs. 1-3).

Paul persecuted the Church at Jerusalem with hatred and violence, making havoc, entering into the houses, and haling men and women committing them to prison, scattering abroad the Brethren and Sisters, but at the same time being a means of spreading the Gospel, as Paul himself afterwards remembered (Phil. 1 vs. 15-18) based upon his own vehement objections to the Truth, of which we are considering.

(7) But Paul felt within himself the painful jabs of the ox goad of Truth wielded by our Lord Jesus; the more painful they were, the more he attempted to stifle their "pricks" until on the road to Damascus he was confronted inescapably by the Lord Jesus himself - "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" And Paul said "Who art thou Lord". Another rhetorical query. Paul or Saul we should say knew quite well.

The ox goad jabs had done their work! They had whipped up his conscience to this moment. He had been goaded and guided in the direction indicated by the

ONE Shepherd of Israel in whom the Wisdom of God resided fully. The Lord Jesus said, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks" (of the ox goad). Saul trembling and astonished said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do" ! (Acts 9 vs.1 - 6, 26 vs. 14).

This is the classical example of the teaching, spiritually, we are intended to understand. No one who has come to Christ, has been able to evade the deft thrusts, and side parrying of this Divine instrument of education.

(8) Come to think of it, the school master's ox goad, a trusty piece of cane, taught the present writer what was right and wrong. Quite painful at the time, but corrective ! truly guiding the conscience for future life in discipline. One can only deplore modern education's attitude to corporal punishment.

(9) We found that not only did boys of my age then accept the punishment as just, and a sharp reminder to eschew further escapades, but each one would have gone through "fire and water" for him. If he had not done what he promised, we should have despised him.

(10) He however, got the respect and admiration of the class and 50 years has not dimmed either the memory or the personal esteem.

In a far higher and wider sense the ox goad of the Spirit is wielded by Christ to teach, and to guide. (Psa.119 vs.65 - 68).

We have a very important parallelism in the first of three deliverances by God. In fact all three cases of deliverance by the Saviours of Israel are characterised by the prominence of the Word of God !

- (A) Othniel - presents the Living Oracles, because he conquered Kirjath-Sepher = the Book Town and turned it into Debir = The City of the Book.
- (B) Ehud - illustrated the decisiveness of "the Sword of the Spirit", quick and powerful and irresistible in power.
- (C) Shamgar - reminds us of the "Words of the wise", which are like ox goads, pricking and piercing the conscience like nails fastened by the Master of the Assemblies or Ecclesias - The Lord Jesus Himself. (Rev.1 13 etc).

A Threefold cord of Great Merit. It signifies the power of Exhortation which is directed at our consciences. The sharper end to remove all the clods of the World, as they cling to us, bog us down and impede our walk, not only in the Truth, because a clogged plough is useless but also our progress towards eternal life itself: to spur us on when we flag and to correct direction when we stray.

The Exhortation contained in the word itself, and not particularly in the books (similar to our own) which are simply written, not for themselves, but to assist in deeper comprehension of the Word itself. Any Ecclesia, or Individual who dares to implement any Book, from any Age, or by any Author, for THE WORD is simply courting disaster, not only in this World, but - we were going to say in the World to come, - but if we do this will there be another World for us?

It is very distressing and sad to observe around us Ecclesias forsaking their Bible Classes to use other books as their guide - AND THE BIBLE as reference checks only. I know of nothing in Scripture which says that we should. We have read "of the making of books there is no end" but never do we find - "read them, study them instead of THE WORD" ! We are certain that the authors, both dead and alive, would be aghast at the thought. "Ye teach for doctrines the traditions of men", said Jesus. God forbid that this description apply to ourselves. Put it the other way round and everyone from the Lord Jesus down will be happy.

(1) THE WORD - primarily, first of all (2) then read to various expositions to expand and clarify the expressions of Holy writ, (3) thirdly the concordance and lexicons, (4) other writings.

These conditions are implicit as found in the Words of the Wise and the Ox Goad of Shamgar. The Word alone can destroy the haughty Philistine within each one

of us. Not only so but this Shamgar application will make for us straight pathways in the Word safe to walk therein. We shall not go cravenly in the crooked paths suggested in Judges because our Highways are infested with Philistine spite ! Shamgar would have us apply the Ox Goad of the Word so that our Highway may be that of Isa 40 vs.3 - 5, "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight and the rough places plain".

Though the enemies be 600 strong within us as they were against Shamgar, God will deliver us and grant us victory. Paul indicates the Way quite clearly - that this Exhortation be devoted to the end that "All Walk Worthily of the Lord", 1 Thess.2 (see the whole of Chapter 2 Hall - Thessalonians).

600 = 5 x 120 reveals that the basis of this Divine operation is contained in Grace (5). 12 divulges the fact that governmental perfection is also involved for the 12 tribes of Israel and 10 Ordinal Perfection reveals that the attack is absolutely complete and final.

Just as Shamgar is shown to be sent in answer, to the prayer of Anath, and is only seen to carry an ox goad for his weapon, so in our experience to combat the worldly Philistine "we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block and unto the Greeks foolishness". (1 Cor.1 vs.23). Still foolishness to the mighty of this world, 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 that are mighty". (1 Cor.1 vs.27). How better expressed than in the experience of Shamgar - one ox goad versus 600 Philistine warriors? !

Very remini scent of David and Goliath (1 Sam. 17).

Did the experience of Shamgar benefit David?

How incongruous to the Modern mind of Big Battalions New Clear Warfare - versus - the Foolishness of Preaching. Paul continues, "and base things of the World, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea and things which are not (one ox goad?) to bring to nought things that are". And the Divine reason for all this - "that no flesh should glory in His presence" (1 Cor.1 vs 28 - 29). Precisely the same sentiments of The Word, and remember that it is mighty to the pulling down of strongholds and all that exalts itself against the Divine Power.

(1) If then Othniel represents Jesus as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah

(2) Ehud corresponds with Paul of Benjamin

(3) Who then does Shamgar parallel? One particular brother seems to fit the description adequately and wonderfully, if we may say so; that is the Apostle Barnabas. The incident revealing his identity as the New Testament Shamgar we believe is in Acts 4 vs.32 - 57, where we read verse 36 - "And Joses who by the Apostles was surnamed Barnabas (which is being interpreted, the Son of Consolation or Exhortation) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the Apostles feet", (which is the concluding scene following the request of the young Ruler to Jesus - "What should he do to attain Eternal Life"). In his answer the Lord Jesus said, "Sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and come and follow me" ! The Rich Young Ruler turned sadly away, for he had great possessions; and by doing so has caused many to take umbrage at his action. But who, when asked to do the same, would not follow his reticence at this time and sadly review his position, and the possibility as to whether, or not, he could comply to the conditions laid down by Jesus. Who amongst us would not do the same? But should we arrive at the same conclusion as Barnabas, and do as the Lord required, and at the same time have our names changed as Joseph did. Until this time the title of Joseph had been his, "Adding". His riches testified to this Truth, afterward he decided for Jesus and sold his land and dedicated it to the Truths use = Then - the Apostles surnamed Joseph - Barnabas = The son of Consolation, or as the word means "the Son of Exhortation".

Such is the effect that the Goad of the Word should have upon us, and if the Word is delivered by ourselves in the same spirit and power of Shamgar, we may be sure that the Spirit of Shamgar lives in us and we shall help to Deliver our people. We are not informed of the time of rest brought about by the work of Shamgar from Judges 5 vs. 6 - 7 would imply that it should be contained within the 40 years rest brought about by Deborah and Barak etc. Here we have proof that the Deliverances were only partial in effect, (A) with Shamgar delivering Israel from the Philistines, (B) while at the same time Deborah and Barak are occupied against the Canaanites.

