

Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter No 154

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Editorial

Dear Brethren and Sisters and Friends, Greetings in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

We are sorry to have to report the falling asleep of our Brother Hayden Price, and following this editorial there is a tribute to him which Brother Phil Parry has very kindly written for us. While Brother Hayden and Sister Edith (Sister Edith fell asleep in September 1991) have no children, there are other members of the family who were very close and we express to them our deep sympathy in their sad loss.

We have other news which we were very pleased to receive and that is, correspondence from Dr John Stevenson who has renewed contact with the Nazarene Fellowship after a break of many years. In his second letter to me he writes, "I feel very strongly that the Nazarene Fellowship literature helps enquirers to make sense of the Bible... There are always a few enquirers who want to learn, so it's important to have brochures for those who are ready to listen and believe... It was refreshing and enlightening to again be in contact with the Nazarene Fellowship. I hope some others will have time to write to me sometime."

It is always a great joy to find others who seek earnestly after truth and Dr John's letter calls to mind God's words to Asa in 2 Chronicles 16:9; "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him." And to all who seek God the message, again to Asa in the previous chapter, at verse two, applies, "The Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you;" then follows the warning: "but if you forsake him he will forsake you." Let us not be of those who forsake the Lord but with all who "may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Hebrews 13:6). "Be strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded" (2 Chronicles 15:7).

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

My Sincere Love to all, your brother in the Master's service,

Russell Gregory

A Tribute to our Late Brother in Christ,

**Hayden Llewellyn Price, Born 4th August 1910, Died 9th April 1995,
Buried with his Late Wife, Edith, 12th April 1995 at Abercarn.**

In the absence of his great friend, Mr Russell Mann whom Hayden had pre-arranged for the Funeral Service, Mr Morgan, a Baptist Minister and also long time friend, conducted the Service.

We were saddened and a little surprised by a phone message from Bro. Russell Gregory to say he had received a letter from Mr David Rees of Newbridge, Gwent, a nephew of our Bro. Hayden Llewellyn Price informing him of his uncle's death in St. Woolos Hospital, Newport, Gwent at 6.00 pm., Sunday, 9th April 1995.

Hayden had been in failing health for some time before losing his late wife our Sister Edith in 1991 which was quite a blow to him as we can appreciate, yet he remained cheerful and strong in faith and hope in the life eternal which is to come through our Lord Jesus who is the Resurrection and the Life.

He often confirmed this in our talks on the phone from time to time, and also praised his nephew David, niece June and Dorothy their cousin, for taking care of him in the necessities of his daily life.

Rene and I were first introduced to Hayden by our late Bro. Fred Pearce in the summer of 1952 when we travelled to Newbridge by Service Bus to discuss his doctrinal views which we had found to be in harmony with our own and confirmed after a reading of Edward Turney's lecture "The Sacrifice of Christ." We had a long and friendly talk with Fred and Hayden which proved very fruitful in the spiritual field and we later found both Hayden and Edith to have been a great source of help to Bro. Fred whose wife, though good to him in every other way, did not share his religious views which Jesus said may be the case with those who truly followed His teaching.

Nevertheless, Hayden and Edith had realised the truth of Fred's views and were baptised by immersion into the sacrificial death of Christ and were known as members of the Nazarene Fellowship and at that time closely associated with our late Bro. and Sis. Brady of Halesowen and daughter Helen and also others in the Wales area who have passed off the scene.

The Nazarene Fellowship kept in touch with Hayden and Edith through the Circular Letter produced by several of its members over the years.

Rene and I were baptised at Hayden and Edith's home in Abercarn on November 1st 1952 staying overnight and returning home the next day. From then on we kept in touch mainly by letter as I had no car until about 1964, and Service Buses being rather awkward to use for that distance. Due to obtaining a car we were able to visit them on occasions; Bro. Fred Pearce meeting us at Abercarn where we had some most welcome and enjoyable hospitality and spiritual discussions.

Our tribute to Hayden must always include Edith for one was dependent on the other, as we find in our own experiences. However he was very pleasant company and we could rely on him whenever the occasion demanded. In demonstrating his belief and faith to others he was more the persuasive type than the antagonistic so that they could consider and be persuaded in their own minds by what he said.

Nevertheless, the latter part of his life had its trials and problems through failing health and the loss of Edith so that he began to deteriorate more rapidly yet was always cheerful whenever I spoke to him on the phone. He was in and out of Hospital at times, and this explains why my phone calls were unanswered, this was the case during his last six weeks in hospital when I thought he was out visiting friends or relatives.

Mr Rees told me that he and his wife were with Hayden at his bedside when apparently in a coma he breathed his last and fell asleep, and that his final trouble is known as Crohn's Disease. We thank our Heavenly Father that Bro. Hayden with all of like faith sleep in Christ awaiting His voice to awaken them at the appointed time.

I take the liberty on behalf of members of the Nazarene Fellowship in thanking Mr and Mrs D. Rees, their cousin Dorothy, and all who were instrumental in helping Hayden and Edith in their times of need. (See Matthew chapter 12, verse 35, - "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things:").

In conclusion I draw attention to Paul's words to the Thessalonians; "But I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort ye one another with these words." (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). Amen.

Brother Phil Parry.

Thoughts on The Daily Readings for April and May

This season takes us through the books of Deuteronomy and Acts. In the latter, we come across a large number of addresses by Peter and Paul, both to Jewish and Gentile audiences. As far as the speeches to the Gentiles are concerned their problem from the point of presentation and teaching was twofold:-

1) Everybody at that time worshipped a whole number of heathen gods, varying from one nation to another, or even locally with different deities for each town. The knowledge of one God and only one all-powerful God, was something quite new which it fell to Peter and Paul to explain. Up to then their ideas of gods were somewhat specialized. There was a sun-god, another for agriculture, a goddess for love and fertility, and so on for every aspect of life. The concept of one God in charge of everything not only the earth but over the whole universe may be easy enough for us to comprehend, but was not so easy to grasp for those living then.

2) The second task was to explain both to Jews and Gentiles the Gospel concerning Jesus Christ. His birth, death and resurrection. As far as the first part, the existence of one God, is concerned the apostles were in agreement with the Jews; but as for the second, Christ's mission, death and resurrection were concerned, they encountered hostility from both Jews and Gentiles,

Now what comes to mind is the way they presented their subject, both Peter and Paul were good teachers and good speakers. All of us were pupils at one time, and some of us were students at college or universities, and myself also a teacher later on in life, so I know from both sides what makes a good and what makes a bad teacher. And one mistake which many bad teachers make is 'talking over their audiences heads.' It means talking to beginners of any subject as though they already know something about it. Lecturers at universities or technical colleges are especially prone to this habit, finding difficulty in differing between delivering an advanced technical lecture to an audience of professionals and teaching somebody who knows little or nothing about the subject, so when talking to beginners they fail to explain the meaning of elementary technical terms obvious to the experts but most puzzling to beginners. A better way of teaching, at least in technical subjects such as mathematics or theory of music is by starting off with something the pupil already knows and then, if at all possible leading the pupil on to discover for himself what is new. This inspires self confidence and makes the subject easy to remember.

Now in this last aspect, starting with something the audience knows, Peter and Paul were very good at. Take for example Peter's address to Cornelius, the first Gentile convert. He says; "The word which God sent unto the children of Israel preaching peace by Jesus Christ, that word, I say, ye know..." and then he goes on from there to declare His resurrection, their mission to preach and finally links it with the Old Testament

prophecy. Or Philip preaching to the Ethiopian, starting just where he was reading from Isaiah 53. And another good example - Paul preaching to the Athenians on Mars Hill. On his way there, he found an altar with the inscription "To The Unknown God" and he started his address from here. He did not talk over people's heads; he kept it short and simple, no more than what his audience only used to a multitude of heathen gods could understand, but nevertheless included all essentials, not forgetting the resurrection of the dead. This was a supreme example of good presentation. It is surprising just how much information about God and His Son he squeezed into these few words, something many a speaker can learn from. And then through these addresses the knowledge of God was brought to the Gentiles.

The apostles lived up to their preaching without appearing 'the big man.' When people fell down before them they would not allow it; they certainly let their light shine before men. Do we always let our light shine? Are we always ready to give an answer for the hope that is in us?

Finally a thought on Deuteronomy. Here we are just reading through the section where Moses repeats the law given at Mount Sinai, and over and over again he emphasizes, "Ye were strangers in the land of Egypt, and God brought you out by a high hand and a stretched out arm." No reason for high-mindedness here, which applies to us also. It is through God's mercy only that we are no longer strangers from the Commonwealth of Israel. And our redemption cost was high. Jesus' suffering and death. Let us never forget that during what remains of our probation.

Brother Leo Dreifuss

FROM YOUR LETTERS:

Brother Phil Parry writes in reply to Sister Audrey Bundy's query (page 5, C.L.153) regarding the thief on the Cross, death-bed repentance and the meaning of Paradise:

"I am pleased that Sister Audrey Bundy enjoyed my article in general on the thief on the cross, but needed some clarification as to what I thought was 'Paradise' as referred to by Jesus, also my answer to the impression I had given her that death-bed repentance could be accepted if 'Paradise' was a positive inheritance promised the thief by Jesus.

Paradise is mentioned in Revelation 2:7, and is connected with the Tree of Life in the statement of Jesus to the Church at Ephesus - 'The Tree of Life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God. Genesis 2:9 speaks of the Tree of Life in the midst of the garden which the Lord God planted eastward in Eden, hence the statement in Revelation 2:7. I wonder, is it coincidence that repentance and return to the first love of the Ephesian Church was a condition for their partaking of the Tree of Life which in effect is Jesus Himself who in many ways and references in Scripture is described as 'The Life'? I drew attention to the great faith of the thief in contrast with many who should have exhibited far more than he. Is it possible that he had been in a similar position under the Mosaic Covenant, to the Ephesians under the new covenant, and had by violation of the just principles of the Law, left his first love and the doctrine of the man Jesus he could now behold suffering unjustly, and remembered from whence he had fallen? And did not the railing of his fellow malefactor upon Jesus stir him to repentance in acknowledging his own just condemnation and the knowledge of the fact that Jesus had done nothing amiss to deserve such a cruel death? Those two Jesus joined on their way to Emmaus after His resurrection were so despondent and depressed in the fact that their hope of Israel's deliverance through Jesus had not materialised but had ended on the Cross of Calvary. In the case of the thief it was the opposite; Jesus had preached of his kingdom, no doubt the thief had heard it and recognised what many had not, and so uttered those words of anticipation and faith, 'Lord remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom.' Regarding punctuation, I would say that none should be used to give the impression of a question such as 'Shalt thou be with me in paradise?' This would cast a doubt on Christ's judgment which God had committed to Him, yet it would infer that Christ's Kingdom mentioned by the thief was identical with the Paradise mentioned by Jesus, and as God had committed all judgment to the Son - The Prince of Life - He was well able to assess the position of the thief in relation to what He knew about him and heard from him in the last stages of agony. Matthew gives a slightly different account than Mark, Luke and John but he may have got the impression that both malefactors were railing on Jesus in agreement with one another, for with Jesus in the midst they would be shouting across at each other and

therefore the sense of what the one requested of Jesus concerning His Kingdom would be lost to some of those gathered around.

If Matthew 27:44 is an accurate record, then that of Luke 23:39 is either not true or must be a more reliable source of information derived from a witness or witnesses at the foot of the Cross at the time, and as I said, the cross-talk of the malefactors could have been misconstrued.

Assuming that Luke's recording is true then there is no comparison here with death-bed repentance as we understand it. Death-bed repentance is usually too late. There must also be a change of heart through having had enlightenment to the way of salvation, and neglected it for the pleasures of sin for a season. This means responsibility, and a loss of opportunity through natural death, to make amends.

I believe the thief's faith transcended that of most of the disciples of Jesus. Even Peter denied Him and said 'I know not the man,' yet the thief knew Jesus who He was, and that He would rise from the dead and fulfil what Pilate had put on the Cross 'Jesus of Nazareth, The King of the Jews.' The statement was positive to the thief, therefore he regarded Christ's Kingdom as sure, before he made his request 'Lord remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom.' I believe Jesus assured him that that day he would be with Him in Paradise (Revelation 2:7 & 22:11-14).

Most certainly the thief was not on a death-bed but a rough tree of painful suffering with no one to reduce it, which was no less the case with his companion and also Jesus. Nevertheless matters of this kind can only be judged on their merits and that by Him who Judges righteously. No one can deny that the thief rightly regarded his and his companions' condemnation to death as a just reward for what they had committed, but his great manifestation of belief and faith in Jesus and His Kingdom still remained, and please note, - he did not ask an answer of Jesus, yet Jesus gave it immediately in a positive statement. We know this statement could not mean that the Chief would be in Paradise after his death because Jesus was in the tomb three days in a life-less, bloodless condition, therefore 'Today' must have meant to the thief what it should mean to true believers of Christ's coming Kingdom - "This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise."

I hope I have made myself clear to Sister Audrey and to all our readers."

Again Brother Phil Parry writes regarding the article on Ezekiel's Temple: "Re H.C.Gates' on Ezekiel's Temple I was led to believe it was a convincing article (or almost so) that there would be a material Temple of Ezekiel's description in the future, but this first effort has convinced me of the opposite, and that what I have written before on the subject is far more in keeping with the Scriptures. I think Hebrews 10 destroys his argument completely, and I compliment you on your comments. However, I will do my best to write to you later and justify my words."

Brother Leo Dreifuss writes concerning the same article: "the one on Ezekiel's Temple promises to be quite interesting, although the author having been a Christadelphian at the time, was of course a strong believer of Christ having to die for Himself. But we shall see what follows."

Sister Evelyn Linggood writes: "With regard to the Priests of the material Temple of the future being mortal there can be no doubt as has been amply demonstrated and as the restored nation of Israel will also be mortal. Nowhere does it state that immortal Priests will offer sacrifices; they are to be judges or rulers of the nations and teachers of righteousness; the Apostles - rulers of the 12 tribes of Israel as Jesus promised them; other saints, rulers over other parts of the world - many or few 'cities' as the parable states in Luke 19:16-19.

Regarding the authenticity of Matthew 28:19, Sister Evelyn writes: "I hadn't seen before so much evidence of the spuriousness of Matthew 28:19 as it reads in the A.V. of the Bible."

This issue of the C.L, continues this evidence and is absolutely convincing. I had hoped to also include in this issue an article on "The Trinity Examined," a subject which overlaps with this one on Matthew 28:19 but although it is typed and ready for printing, another ten pages would be rather bulky.

Again Sister Evelyn writes: "We thought your answer to Esleigh Feltham was very good. It's a pity he cannot see where he is wrong."

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I received another letter from Brother Esleigh Feltham in which he re-asserted so much of what he had said before. He was quite unable to accept my challenge to show a single instance where Muth Temuth could possibly refer to natural death except to say that inflicted death was not imposed on Adam and Eve on the day they transgressed; but then he went on to say, "There was no point referring to a possible reprieve until the need arose." But the need had arisen, so what was the solution but God's plan of redemption? Then he finished his letter by saying that it is we who twist things around to support our central theory. However, I did reply as follows:"

"Dear Brother Esleigh, Thank you for your letter of the 19th April. How is it, Esleigh, that you still fail to see that it is the false substitution theory which requires that God demands the punishment of an innocent man in place of the guilty; while in true substitution we see God giving His only begotten Son to take Adam's place in death? It is important to make this distinction between true substitution and false substitution otherwise we cannot make much sense of what happened in Eden.

I cannot agree with your assumption that, "It is reasonable to believe that God was reminding Adam of his earthy origin and warning him that disobedience would entail eventual dissolution of his mortal frame. And so it came to pass. Simple, straightforward, logical. Hence our understanding of it."

I agree that Adam was so created that he would die in due course if no change was made to his physical being, but the sentence God pronounced for disobedience was inflicted death - Muth temuth. Your view is simple, yes, but totally fails to take into consideration the slaying of the animal to provide the covering for Adam and Eve. We have to remember that Jesus Christ was "the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world" and thus the animal slain in Eden was typical of Him. The crucifixion of Jesus Christ is meaningless without a proper understanding of events in Eden. The two events are quite inseparable to the subject of the Atonement.

Other points are of little importance compared with this supreme subject and so will make no further comment upon them.

Sincerely your brother in the Hope of eternal Life through Jesus Christ our Lord,

Russell Gregory

Thoughts On The Daily Readings for June

Our daily readings have just taken us through the first chapters of the First Book of Samuel. There we read of the great disaster that befell the children of Israel when their army was defeated; the ark was captured by the Philistines, and Eli's two sons had died and the shock of it also killed Eli himself, an ailing old man. We also learn that the Philistine's victory in the field did not turn out for their good as the ark brought great disasters upon them and they were only too glad to get rid of it.

Now concerning the ark there comes this thought to my mind; after the first battle was lost the elders of Israel said, "Let us fetch the ark of the Covenant of the Lord out of Shiloh unto us, that when it cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies." (1 Samuel 4:3). I can't help thinking that at that time the Israelites treated the ark as a mere object of superstition. We must remember that some three centuries elapsed between their conquest of Palestine under Joshua and the early judges, and this tragic event. During this period the Israelites had often forsaken God and worshipped idols and only at times of national disaster did they turn again to God, but their repentance never lasted for very long. They resembled naughty children who keep getting into mischief and have to be rescued time and again.

And so it seems to me the Israelites thought that the mere presence of the ark would somehow magically give them victory. That was quite wrong. The meaning of the ark seems to have been forgotten

by all but a few. Their great mistake was of course to have forgotten the necessity to obey God as the first essential; to sincerely worship God. Without faith and obedience no sacrifice, no ark, would be of any use.

All these things were written for our learning. There is of course no ark, and no tabernacle in our day. All this has been superseded by Jesus' sacrifice. But are we sure of not making similar mistakes? I am sure none of us thinks that the mere mechanical partaking of the Bread and Wine by itself will get us into the Kingdom of God. It should not be necessary to remind ourselves that it only serves its purpose if it is combined with faith and obedience to God - all the time. But aren't we all guilty at times of absent-mindedness during our service, or during our readings? Let us be honest with ourselves, it is easy to judge others but we all have our own faults and stand in need of forgiveness.

Let us now consider the disasters which the ark brought upon the Philistines who were of course completely ignorant of God's laws and not responsible. They did however do what they, in their primitive way thought was their best, by making images of the mice and of the emerods which plagued them all. Of course this sacrifice in no way conformed with the law of Moses. Had the Israelites brought such a sacrifice it would have had the most awful consequences for them, but the Philistines knew no better. However, in one way they learned to fear God. What fright must have run through the minds of those who watched the cart with the ark loaded on it pulled by two milch kine making straight to the land of Israel, driven by what seemed to the Philistines an unknown force! - the force not unknown to us, of course.

There is a close resemblance between these events and that of those sailors who took up Jonah on that eventful sea journey when they had to cast Jonah into the sea. In each case a heathen people learned to respect God out of sheer fright. But not so in another sea voyage when Paul was prisoner; in this case the sailors watched Paul giving thanks to God and in faith telling them that none would come to any harm. These learned to respect God in a rather different way; a merciful God who saves those who trust and obey Him.

And this is how we learned of God, the God who had mercy on us and through no merit of our own whatsoever, has made known to us the gospel of how Christ, by giving His own life for us paved the way to eternal life if we also trust and obey to the end of our probation. He has given us the understanding of the signs of the times, the return of the Jews to the Holy Land and the soon coming restoration of Israel.

So let us hold fast till He come, or to the end of our lives, whichever the earlier. Let us worship God, not out of fear like those Philistines, or those sailors who took Jonah, but in true humility and thankfulness for what He has done for us.

Brother Leo Dreifuss

Second Part of

A Collection of the Evidence For and Against the Traditional Wording of the Baptismal Phrase in Matthew 28:19

How Biblical MSS. Were Altered When The Great Apostacy Began

The following quotations will show the ease with which scribes freely altered the MSS. of the New Testament, so unlike the scribes and custodians of the Old Testament Scriptures who copied the holy Writings with reverence and strict accuracy.

These quotations will also show the early start of the practice of trine immersion at the time when the doctrine of the trinity was being formulated.

They will also show how the New Testament writings were made to conform to traditional practice.

CONYBEARE

“In the case just examined (Matthew 28:19), it is to be noticed that not a single manuscript or ancient version has preserved to us the true reading. But that is not surprising, for as Dr C.R.Gregory, one of the greatest of our textual critics reminds us, The Greek MSS. of the text of the New Testament were often altered by scribes, who put into them the readings which were familiar to them, and which they held to be the right readings’ (Canon and Text of the New Testament. 1907, page 424).”

“These facts speak for themselves. Our Greek texts, not only of the Gospels, but of the Epistles as well, have been revised and interpolated by orthodox copyists. We can trace their perversions of the text in a few cases, with the aid of patristic citations and ancient versions. But there must remain many passages which have been so corrected, but where we cannot to-day expose the fraud. It was necessary to emphasise this point, because Drs. Westcott and Hort used to aver that there is no evidence of merely doctrinal changes having been made in the text of the New Testament. This is just the opposite of the truth, and such distinguished scholars as Alfred Loisy, J.Wellhausen, Eberhard Nestle, Adolf Harnack. to mention only four names, do not scruple to recognise the fact.”

[While this is perfectly true, nevertheless - “there are a number of reasons why we can feel confident about the general reliability of our translations.” - Peter Walkins in an excellent article “Bridging the Gap” in “The Christadelphian,” January 1962, pp 4-8].

FRATERNAL VISITOR 1924. PAGE 148

Codex B. (Vaticanus) would be the best of all existing MSS... if it were completely preserved, less damaged, (less) corrected, more easily legible, and not altered by a later hand in more than two thousand places. Eusebius, therefore, is not without grounds for accusing the adherents of Athanasius and of the newly-arisen doctrine of the Trinity of falsifying the Bible more than once.” – Trans. from Christadelphian Monatshefte.

WHISTON

“We certainly know of a greater number of interpolations and corruptions brought into the Scriptures... by the Athanasians, and relating to the Doctrine of the Trinity, than in any other case whatsoever. While we have not, that I know of, any such interpolation or corruption, made in any one of them by either the Eusebians or Arians.” - Second letter to the Bishop of London, 1719, page 15.

SMITH’S DICTIONARY OF CHRISTIAN ANTIQUITIES: Art- Baptism. Sec. 50,

“While trine immersion was thus an all but universal practice, Eunomius (circ.360) appears to have been the first to introduce simple immersion “unto the death of Christ”... This practice was condemned on pain of degradation, by the Canon Apost. 46 (al 50). But it comes before us again about a century later in Spain; but then, curiously enough, we find it regarded as a badge of orthodoxy in opposition to the practice of the Arians. These last kept to the use of Trine immersion, but in such a way as to set forth their own doctrine of a gradation in the three Persons.”

OXFORD DICTIONARY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

“In the Two Ways’ of the Didache, the principle duties of the candidates for Baptism and the method of administering it by triple immersion or infusion on the head are outlined. This triple immersion is also attested by Tertullian (Adversus Prax 26)... The most elaborate form of the rite in modern Western usage is in the Roman Catholic Church.” pp. 125-126.

HASTING’S DICTIONARY OF THE BIBLE

“In the Eastern Churches, trine immersion is regarded as the only valid form of baptism.” - Vol. 1, p.243 fn.

CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPAEDIA

“The threefold immersion is unquestionably very ancient in the Church... Its object is, of course, to honour the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity in whose name it is conferred.” - p. 262.

ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF RELIGION AND ETHICS

“If it be thought, as many critics think, that no MS represents more than comparatively late recensions of the text, it is necessary to set against the mass of manuscript evidence the influence of baptismal practice. It seems easier to believe that the traditional text was brought about by this influence working on the “Eusebian” text, than that the latter arose out of the former in spite of it.” - Art. Baptism.

CONYBEARE

“The exclusive survival (of the traditional text of Matthew 28:19) in all MSS. both Greek and Latin, need not cause surprise... But in any case, the conversion of Eusebius to the longer text after the Council of Nice indicates that it was at that time being introduced as a Shibboleth of orthodoxy into all codices... The question of the inclusion of the Holy Spirit on equal terms in the Trinity had been threshed out, and a text so invaluable to the dominant party could not but make its way into every codex, irrespective of its textual affinities.” - Hibbert Journal.

ROBERT ROBERTS

“Athanasius... met Flavian, the author of the Doxology, which has since been universal in Christendom: “Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, etc.” This was composed in opposition to the Arian Doxology: “Glory to the Father, by the Son, in the Holy Spirit.” - Good Company, Vol. iii, p. 49.

WHISTON

“The Eusebians... sometimes named the very time when, the place where, and the person by whom they (i.e. forms of doxology) were first introduced... Thus Philoflorgius, a writer of that very age, assures us in ‘Photius’s Extracts’ that A.D- 348 or thereabouts, Flavius, Patriarch of Antioch, got a multitude of monks together, and did there first use this public doxology, “Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:.” - Second letter concerning the Primitive Doxologies, 1719, p.17.

HAMMOND 1890

“There are two or three insertions in the New Testament which have been supposed to have their origin in ecclesiastical usage. The words in question, being familiarly known in a particular connection, were perhaps noted in the margin of some copy, and thence became incorporated by the next transcriber; or a transcriber’s own familiarity with the words might have led to his inserting them.

This is the source to which Dr. Tregelles assigns the insertion of the Doxology at the close of the Lord’s Prayer in Matthew 6, which is wanting in most of the best authorities. Perhaps also Acts 8:37, containing the baptismal profession of Faith, which is entirely wanting in the best authorities, found its way into the Latin text in this manner.” – Textual Criticism applied to the New Testament, p. 23.

The Reader, having reviewed the evidence of the MSS., of the Versions and of the patristic writings, will no doubt have reached the conclusion that in the early centuries some copies of Matthew did not contain the triune-name clause. In legal practice, where copies of the same lost document vary, resource is had to what is called “Internal Evidence,” that is, a comparison with the rest of the text of the document that is not in dispute, in order to ascertain which of the variant readings is the more likely.

Our next chapter, therefore, will set forth some of this Internal Evidence.

Internal Evidence

This method is useful in ascertaining the original text of Scripture where two or more readings obtrude.

As an example, take the word “broken” in 1 Corinthians 11:24. Most versions include the word (in Greek) but the best MSS. at their first writing (i.e. before being altered by later hands) omit the word.

Which is correct?

Now the following Scriptures are sufficient to decide this point - Exodus 12:46; Numbers 9:12; Psalm 34:20; John 19:36.

But in addition we have a verbatim record of the exact words of Jesus in Luke 22:19 - “This is my body which is given for you.” So that the word “broken” is shown by Internal Evidence to be spurious, and should therefore be struck out of the Authorised Version and excluded from exhortations and prayers at the Breaking of Bread.

Certain ancient Greek MSS. leave a blank space where this word appears in other copies. The structure of the sentence in Greek requires some word to be inserted. Evidently, some scribe, seeing this space (honestly left blank by other copyists who refrained from inserting a word of their own to fill the gap) made a guess and slipped in the word for “broken” thus starting an error which has continued right up to the Authorised Version, and persists in church services throughout the whole of Christendom.

The Revised Version reads “which is for you.” It would have been more correct, however, to have left the gap that is found in the early MSS.

So having found that in the first three centuries there existed copies of Matthew which at 28:19 did not include the triune-name, and being very well aware that other copies of Matthew, and in fact, all the later copies, did include the threefold name, we must have recourse to Internal Evidence to decide which is the true reading.

One Test is That of The Context

Examining the context, we find that in the Authorised Version the sense of the passage is hindered, but if we read as under, the whole context fits together and the tenor of the instruction is complete:

“All power is given unto ME... go therefore--- baptising in MY name, teaching them... whatsoever I have commanded... I am with you...”

Another Test is That of Frequency

Is the phrase “in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit” used elsewhere in Scripture? - Not once.

Did Jesus use the phrase “in my name” on other occasions? - Yes:- Matthew 18:20; Mark 9:37,39,41; John 14:14, 26,: 15:16; 16:23, etc.

Another Test is That of Argument

Is any argument in Scripture based on the fact of the threefold name, or of baptism in the threefold name? - None whatever!

Is any argument in Scripture based on the fact of baptism in the name of Jesus? - Yes! This is the argument in 1 Corinthians 1:13:-

“Is Christ divided?

Was Paul crucified for you?

Were ye baptised in the name of Paul?"

From this argument, if carefully analysed, it will appear that believers ought to be baptised in the name of that One who was crucified for them. The Father, in His amazing love, gave to us His beloved Son, who by the Spirit was raised to incorruptibility, but it is the Lord Himself who was crucified, and in His name, therefore, must believers be baptised in water.

Dr Thomas says: "There is but one way for a believer of 'the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the Name of Jesus the Christ' to put him on, or to be invested with His name, and that is, by immersion into His name. Baptism is for this specific purpose." - Revealed Mystery. Art. XLIV.

"There is none other name under heaven" - no other name or names - "given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12). "As for its significance; baptism is linked inseparably with the death of Christ - it is the means of the believer's identification with the Lord's death." - God's Way, page 190,

Now the Father did not die, nor yet the Spirit "Buried with Him" (not with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit) (Romans 6:3-5).

R. Roberts used this argument: "According to trine-immersion, it is not sufficient to be baptised into the Son... Thus Christ is displaced from His position as the connecting link - the door of entrance - 'the new and living way.' And thus there are three names under heaven whereby we must be saved, in opposition to the apostolic declaration, that 'there is none other name (than the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth) under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.'" - The True Nature of Baptism, page 13.

This of course, is the same argument as Paul's (see above), and although Robert Roberts did not so intend, his argument is as equally effective against the use of the triune name as against the practice of trine-immersion. Were ye baptised in the name of Paul, or the name of the Father Son and Holy Spirit, or in any other name that displaces Christ from His position as the connecting link, as the ONLY name for salvation? That is the argument, and confirms the genuine text of Matthew 28:19 to contain the phrase "in my name."

Another Test is That of Analogy

Is there anything in Scripture analogous to baptism in the Triune name? - No!

Is there anything analogous to baptism in the name of Jesus? - Yes. The Father sent the holy spirit and baptised the waiting disciples with the spirit in the name of Jesus. (John 14:26). There is a reason for this. The holy spirit is the Promise (Acts 2:33) which Christ received on ascending to the Father and only those who were in the corporate body of Christ, the Ecclesia which is His Body - only those could receive the Gift, and only because they were in that one Body. The Lord Jesus Christ is the connecting link both for baptism in water and for baptism in spirit. (John 3:5).

Another Test is That of Consequence

In being baptised, do we put on the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit? -

No!

Do we put on the name of JESUS? - Yes. Dr Thomas wrote: "Believers of the Gospel Jesus preached are justified by faith through His name; that is, their Abrahamic faith and disposition are counted to them for repentance and the remission of sins, in the act of putting on the name of Jesus, the Christ." - Revealed Mystery. Art. XLIII

The Lord said: "I am in my Father, and ye in me" (John 14:20). Not until the Thousand Years have passed, and the Lord Jesus Christ returns His "Kingdom to God, even the Father" (1 Corinthians 15:24-28), shall God be all and in all. Till then we may not aspire to be "in the Father."

Believers bear the name of Jesus now, and so that name is not mentioned in Revelation 3:12. Believers do not now bear the name of the Father, nor the new name of Jesus, nor the name of the City of God, but these three names are promised to the faithful. Then, not now, shall we bear the name of the Father.

(See also the excellent article entitled “Notes on an Interesting Bible Idiom” by H.A.Whittaker in “The Christadelphian” for September 1959, pp 393-4).

Another Test is That of Practice

Did the disciples afterwards baptise in the threefold name? - Never!

Did they baptise in the name of Jesus: Always! (Acts 2:38; 19:5; 8:16, etc.

Another Test is That of Similarity of Action

Baptism is a symbolic rite. The only other rite of the Ecclesia is that of Breaking of Bread,

The latter is the Communion of those who have experienced the former: and for none else.

The Weekly Memorial is the Lord’s Supper, not that of a trinity (“My body, My blood”).

Another Test is That of Significances

One significance involved is that of the forgiveness of sins- John did “preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.” Jesus had no sins to be remitted. Neither had He whereof to repent.

When a man brought his lamb to the priest, he laid his hands upon the lamb, and the lamb was slain, and so the man received a remission of his sin. Without the laying on of hands the sin could not have been transferred to the lamb.

This is the significance in the baptism of Jesus by John. When we were baptised (as when John’s disciples were baptised), our sins were loosed, remitted, washed away, and we arose sinless. The Lord entered the water of baptism to take upon Himself those very sins. He entered sinless and emerged bearing the sins of the world.

How do we know?

It was revealed to John, who exclaimed - “Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).

It was Jesus alone (and not the Father, Son and Holy Spirit) who was baptised, and became the Lamb of God to take away sins.

So that the significance here outlined requires the phrase in Matthew 28:19 to be “in my name.”

Another Test is That of Parallel Accounts

Now it happens that Matthew was not alone in recording the words of Christ before His Ascension. Let us compare the parallel account of Luke 24:46,47: who writes in the third person.

“And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations.”

This passage therefore restores the correct text to Matthew 28:19 - “in my name.”

Furthermore, the last twelve verses of Mark record the last discourse of Jesus before His Ascension. If these verses are to be regarded as the inspired writing of Mark himself, then we have yet another witness to

the correct text, for Mark, after using similar words to those of Matthew :- “go ye... all the world... preach... every creature... baptised...” includes not the triune name but the phrase “in my name.”

Another Test is That of a Complementary Citation

There is a striking resemblance between Matthew 28:19 and Romans 1:4-5; the former contains the Commission of Christ to His Apostles, while the latter is Paul’s understanding and acceptance of his own Commission as an Apostle.

Matthew 28:19, “all power is given unto me, Go ye... teaching them to observe... all nations...”

Romans 1:4-5, “the Son of God with power... received... Apostleship... for obedience to the faith... all nations...”

and then follows in Romans 1:5, not the triune name, but the phrase - “his name.”

Another Test is That of a Principle

It is written - “Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus” (Colossians 3:17).

Now here is a principle laid down, and the comprehensive word “whatsoever” certainly includes baptism, which is a rite involving both word and deed.

Now of the alternative readings of Matthew 28:19, the threefold name is clearly not in accordance with the above principle. The shorter phrase is. This item of Internal Evidence, therefore, proves which of the two variant readings is the spurious one.

That this is correct, is proved by other Scripture. It was Paul who enunciated the Principle. Did it in his opinion, include Baptism? Acts 19:3-5 supplies the answer. The Baptism of John, like the Baptism of Jesus (then and now), was a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Mark 1:4; Acts 2:38-39. And John preached also the coming of the Messiah who should baptise with Holy Spirit. The difference between the baptism of John and baptism after Pentecost is that the latter was in the name of Jesus.

No other difference is shown in Scripture. Now it is written of the disciples at Ephesus that although they had been baptised unto John’s baptism, they were later baptised again, in the presence of Paul, but “in the name of the Lord Jesus.” (Acts 19:3-5.

This test, therefore, provides a doubly-strong proof of the authenticity of the phrase “in my name” in Matthew 28:19

God foreknew that the record of the parting words of Jesus to his disciples would be tampered with, and in His wisdom He provided a remedy for those who have eyes to see in providing the Principle enunciated by Paul in Colossians 3:17, and the record of Paul’s application of that Principle in Acts 19:3-5.

THE OPINIONS OF OTHERS

Sufficient evidence has been produced to enable the reader to decide whether or not the triune-name in Matthew 28:19 is spurious. The following opinions are given by way of interest. But the reader should not be influenced by them. He should make his own judgment on the evidence before reading further.

Hastings Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics; “The cumulative evidence of these three lines of criticism (Textual Criticism, Literary Criticism, Historical Criticism) is thus distinctly against the view that Matthew 28:19 (in the A.V.) represents the exact words of Christ.” - Art. Baptism: Early Christian.

Dr Peake: “The command to baptise into the threefold name is a late doctrinal expansion. Instead of the words ‘baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost’ we should probably read simply ‘into my name.’“ - Bible Commentary, page 723.

F.Whiteley in The Testimony: “There is the ‘triune’ baptismal formula, which may prove a very broken reed when thoroughly investigated, but... we leave it for separate treatment. The thoughtful may well ponder, meantime, why one cannot find one single instance, in Acts or Epistles, of the words ever being used at any of the many baptisms recorded, notwithstanding Christ’s (seemingly) explicit command at the end of Matthew’s Gospel.” - The Testimony, October 1959, page 351. Art. Back to Babylon (4).

R.R.Williams: “The command to baptise in Matthew 28:19 is thought to show the influence of a developed doctrine of God verging on Trinitarianism. Early baptism was in the name of Christ. The association of this trinitarian conception with baptism suggests that baptism itself was felt to be an experience with a Trinitarian reference.” - Theological Wordbook of the Bible, page 29.

Dean Stanley: “Doubtless the more comprehensive form in which baptism is now everywhere administered in the threefold name... soon superseded the simpler form of that in the Name of the Lord Jesus only.” - Christian Institutions.

E.K. in the Fraternal Visitor: “The striking contrast and the illogical internal incoherence of the passage... lead to a presumption of an intentional corruption in the interests of the Trinity- In ancient Christian times a tendency of certain parties to corrupt the text of the New Testament was certainly often imputed. This increases our doubt almost to a decisive certainty concerning the genuineness of the passage.” - Art. The Question of the Trinity and Matthew 28:19. 1924, pp. 147-151, trans. from the Christadeiphian Monatshefte,

Dr Robert Young. In his Literal Translation of the Bible, Young places the triune name in Matthew 28:19 in parenthesis, thus indicating the words to be of doubtful authenticity.

James Martineau: “The very account which tells us that at last, after His resurrection, He commissioned His disciples to go and baptise among all nations, betrays itself by speaking in the Trinitarian language of the next century, and compels us to see in it the ecclesiastical editor, and not the evangelist, much less the Founder Himself.” - Seat of Authority.

Black’s Bible Dictionary: “The Trinitarian formula (Matthew 28:19) was a late addition by some reverent Christian mind.”

Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics: “The obvious explanation of the silence of the New Testament on the triune name, and the use of another formula in Acts and Paul, is that this other formula was the earlier, and that the triune formula is a later addition.”

Professor Harnack dismisses the text almost contemptuously as being “no word of the Lord.” - History of Dogma (German edition i.68).

F. Whiteley in The Testimony; “Clerical conscience much troubled (see Companion Bible Appendix 185) that apostles and epistles never once employ ‘the Triune Name’ of Matthew 28:19. Even Trinitarians, knowing Trinity idea was being resisted by Church in 4th century admits (e.g. Peake) ‘the command to baptise with the threefold name is a late doctrinal expansion,’ but prior to oldest yet known Ms (4th Century). (Its sole counterpart, 1 John 5:7, is a proved interpolation). Eusebius (A.D.264-340) denounces the Triune form as spurious, Matthew’s actual writing having been ‘baptising them in my name.’“ Footnotes to Art. Baptism (5) in The Testimony, August 1958.

IS IT IMPORTANT?

That is to say, is it important whether we amend the text of Matthew 28:19 or not?

The man whose standard of judgment is his own ideas will answer in the negative. But those who acknowledge that God’s thoughts are not our thoughts will carefully consider the matter in the light of

Scripture, and remember that in the matter of divinely-appointed symbolic actions, the details are of the greatest importance. Matthew 28:19 has to do with such a symbolic action.

For example - (a) Cain's offering lacked blood and was rejected.

(b) The Sabbath stick-gatherer forfeited his life

(c) Uzzah died on touching the Ark.

Maybe God was displeased because they marred the portrait-in-type of the Son of His Love, as to (a) his atonement by blood, (b) his millennial rest, and (c) his chosen ones.

Now every symbolic action required by God has not only one or more significances, but is the actual cause of very real end-effects.

(1) When Joshua pointed his spear there was victory. (Joshua 8:18,19).

(2) Only three victories were given to Joash when he struck the ground but thrice. (2 Kings 13:19-25).

(3) The Passover Lamb or Kid had to be without blemish, Exodus 12:5, (even as was Christ), if the household were to be preserved from the Destroying Angel.

Nothing in God's ritual is without meaning or result- When He speaks it is done! Christ called Lazarus and Lazarus came forth! in matters of ritual (Baptism and the Breaking of Bread) we are dealing with God's ritual, not man's such as the Ritual of the Roman Catholic Church which, being man-made, has no further effect or result.

So that, on the one hand, any deviation from the appointed details is displeasing to God, and very definitely so, and, on the other hand, obedience to the divinely appointed details will accomplish that whereunto they were sent.

Now in the matter of our Enquiry, it is important to settle what is the Word of God, in order that we may obey. This is the purport of Deuteronomy 4:2, "Ye shall not add... neither... diminish ought... that ye may keep the commandments." First of all, therefore, we should expunge the spurious phrase in Matthew 28:19 (A.V.) and with a zeal like that of our Master is expelling those who ought not to have been in God's Temple, or like that of Nehemiah in casting out Tobiah's "stuff."

A Ploughman

EZEKIEL'S TEMPLE

Part Two

THE RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS

As we said in the first part of this publication, our object is to aid the study of the kingdom, seeking to build up an accurate and vivid picture of it so that the joy set before us may live with greater power,

"Walk about in Zion"

The land of Israel and the city of Zion lie right at the heart of our hope. The land is one upon which God has His eyes from one end of the year to the other, for "He careth for it" (Deuteronomy 11:12): the city is one that is graven on the palms of His hands (Isaiah 49:16). "Yahweh loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob," (Psalm 87:2), which is a very good reason why His saints should "pray for the

peace of Jerusalem.” “They shall prosper that love thee.” (Psalm 122:6). The sons of Zion are going to be married to the land of Israel and meanwhile are invited to give God no rest “till He establish and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth” (Isaiah 62:1-7). This is but a mere sample of what the Word has to say of our land and our city. It is a sufficient reason why we should be very keen to understand the Jerusalem of the future and what will happen there. Moreover if God so appreciates our burning interest in what He purposes to do in Zion it is evident that He will approve an effort to understand exactly what He has revealed, even if this means rejecting interpretations which though generally accepted, are not according to the law and testimony.

Thus last time, because in Jerusalem the Temple will be erected for the special indwelling of Yahweh’s glory, we asked, What is the Jerusalem of the future? What are its boundaries?

We found that the city itself will be comparatively small; David and Isaiah, Hezekiah and Jeremiah, will be able to recognize it as the one they loved. Surrounding will be a larger area called the Holy Oblation - a kind of “Greater Jerusalem.” Within the city proper the temple described by Ezekiel will be built. This alone proves that the Temple presented by Brother Sulley is too large to fit the facts: it would spread many acres outside Jerusalem and mean that Jerusalem was nothing but Temple, with no room for boys and girls to play in its streets. The Temple will still be able to hold thousands, but many of the Scriptures said to describe the Temple, in fact describe Jerusalem and even “Greater Jerusalem” as representatives of the nations throng there. (Psalm 48; Isaiah 2, 25, 60 & 62).

The Boundaries of Restored Israel

Now we move on to a second general point which will help us fix the size of the Temple. We read of the holy oblation with the sanctuary in its midst in chapters which describe how the land of promise will be divided between the tribes of Israel. Can we establish from this the size of the holy oblation and whether the units of measurement in chapter 45 are reeds (1 reed = 6 cubits) or cubits (1 cubit = about 2 feet.) *

*(Two feet may be too long even for a large cubit, but to get a broad idea of size, it will do, being easy to remember and to use in calculation).

Chapter 45 itself does not specify reeds or cubits; the translators provide reeds in italics.

The re-settlement of the Tribes of Israel is shown in Ezekiel 48 whilst the boundaries of the territory allotted to them is contained in chapter 47. Figure I will help the reader to understand these chapters.

1. The Northern Border. The prophet starts at the north side thus:-

“And this shall be the border of the land toward the north side, from the great sea, to the way of Hethlon, as men go to Zedad; Hamath, Berothah, Sibraim, which is between the border of Damascus and the border of Hamath; Hazar hatticon, which is by the coast of Hauran. And the border from the sea shall be Hazar-enan, the border of Damascus, and the north northward, and the border of Hamath. And this is the north side. (Ezekiel 47:15-17).

Whilst some of the places mentioned are no longer identifiable it is clear that the northern border lies between Damascus and Hamath. Zedad and Hazar-enan are shown on most maps in this position.

2 The Eastern Border is stated thus:-

“And the east side ye shall measure from Hauran, and from Damascus, and from Gilead, and from the land of Israel by Jordan, from the border unto the east sea. And this is the east side” (Verse 18).

Having located the northern border it is simply necessary to take a line from Hazar-enan and carry it southward incorporating the “land of Israel by Jordan” - which presumably means the two and a half tribes which were situated on the east of Jordan - thence to the Dead Sea.

3. **The Southern Border** is then indicated;-

“And the south side southward, from Tamar even to the waters of strife in Kadesh, the river to the great sea. And this is the south side southward” (Verse 19).

This again is fairly easy to identify. Tamar was probably just south of the Dead Sea, Kadesh is Kadesh Barnea, whilst the “river” means the Wady-eI-Arish, otherwise know as the river, or brook of Egypt. It is important to be clear about this river mentioned as being part of the southern border. It has often been confused with the Nile and because of this Brother Sulley, on plate XV (see figure 4), brings the land divided between the tribes right down into Egypt! This is out of the question because the Hebrew word means “a brook” or watercourse and not a real river, the word is “nachal” or “nachalah” and is applied to the streams which, though torrents in winter, dry up in the summer. They are now called “wadys.” For reference to “nachal” translated river, but meaning a brook or wady see Numbers 34:5; Joshua 15:4; 2 Kings 24:7; Amos 6:14. The word for a real river is “nahar” and occurs for instance in Genesis 15:18 where Abram is promised an inheritance from the Nile to the Euphrates.”

This great territory promised to Abraham is not, however, all to be occupied by the restored tribes of Israel. Their inheritance is only a part and is to be confined within the limits shown by Ezekiel. The fact that the southern boundary is about 250 miles more northerly than Brother Sulley has it obviously disturbs his whole thesis, as will become apparent as we proceed.

4. The Western Border is of course, the Great Sea or Mediterranean. The Boundaries of the Land according to Moses.

Now let us compare these boundaries with those given by Moses in Numbers 34, and confirmed by Joshua - chapters 13-19.

1. **Southern Border.** He starts with the south border thus:-

“Then your south quarter shall be from the wilderness of Zin along by the coast of Edom. and your south border shall be the outmost coast of the salt sea eastward: and your border shall turn from the south to the ascent of Akkrabbim, and pass on to Zin: and the going forth shall be from the south to Kadesh-Barnea, and shall go on to Hazar-addar, and pass on to Azmon: and the border shall fetch a compass from Azmon unto the river of Egypt and the goings out of it shall be at the sea” (Verses 3-5).

There are more names mentioned here than in Ezekiel but some are the same and it is evident that the south border corresponds. Kadesh-Barnea is mentioned and also the river of Egypt. The word for “river” is again “nachal” and refers to the Wady-el-Arish. See also Joshua 15:4.

2. **The Western Border** is of course, the Great Sea.

3. **The Northern Border.** Then Moses points out the northern border:-

“And this shall be your north border: from the great sea ye shall point out for you mount Hor: from mount Hor ye shall point out your border unto the entrance of Hamath; and the goings forth of the border shall be to Zedad: and the border shall go on to Ziphron, and the goings out of it shall be at Hazar-enan: this shall be your north border” (Verses 7 & 8).

Again we have names the same as in Ezekiel. “The entrance of Hamath,” “Zedad,” and “Hazar-enan.”

4. **The Eastern Border** is then detailed:-

“And ye shall point out your east border from Hazar-enan to Shepham: and the coast shall go down from Shepham to Ribiah, on the east side of Ain; and the border shall descend, and shall reach unto the side of the sea of Chinnereth eastward: and the border shall go down to Jordan, and the goings out of it shall be at the salt sea” (Verses 10-12).

This border appears to mean that the river Jordan should be the eastern border, and that, apparently was the original intention, but the two and a half tribes had already laid claim to the land on the east of Jordan and so this must be included. It is necessary to point out that Israel did not subdue all the country inside these boundaries until a much latter date - under David and Solomon - e.g. Philistia, Syria, etc., and even these countries were only tributary and were quickly lost again.

The Southern Tribal Strips in the Age to Come.

It is evident that the boundaries given by Moses and Ezekiel are exactly the same and certainly do not reach from the Euphrates to the Nile.

This territory - from Hazar-enan in the north to Kadesh-Barnea in the south is, in the age to come, to be divided into thirteen strips - twelve for the tribes and one for the holy oblation. This holy oblation is to be situated between Judah and Benjamin. In other words there are seven tribes to the north and five tribes to the south of the holy oblation. Now this holy oblation is stated to be 25,000 measures in length and breadth. What are these "measures"? Are they cubits or reeds? Is there room for reeds? We do not think so. Look at the map (figure 1). If the Temple is on the present site of Jerusalem and is in the centre of the holy oblation, it will leave only 50 miles at the most to the southernmost tip at Kadesh-Barnea. Each southern tribal strip would thus be a little less than 10 miles in width, while the northern strips would be much wider, this is not reasonable. If however the unspecified measures of the holy oblation are cubits then the territory of the southern tribes is more than doubled, and if the holy oblation is measured in cubits (chapter 45, verse 1) then so is the sanctuary or Temple included within it (Chapter 45 verse 2).

This conclusion is in harmony with our previous article on the new city of Jerusalem. This necessitated a 500 cubit Temple. Now we see that a 25,000 cubit holy oblation also requires a 500 cubit Temple.

Brother Sulley on the Boundaries of the Land (Figure 2).

Brother Sulley's handling of the boundaries given by Ezekiel is not satisfactory.

1. The Northern Border. Concerning the northern border he quotes the verses from Ezekiel 47 and then says:-

"Here provinces are evidently specified, such as Hamath and Damascus as forming the north border." (Newer edition page 295).

He then quotes some verses from Kings and Chronicles respecting the conquests of David and Solomon and continues:-

"The northern boundary of the canton of Dan, therefore is shown from the river Euphrates, at that part which turns sharply to the north."

This is not logical. Ezekiel gives a definite boundary but Brother Sulley ignores this and carries his boundary another 150 miles further north!

2. The Southern Border. With respect to the southern border Brother Sulley says:-

"According to Sir William Wilcocks there are two places called Kadesh, one situated south of Judah and the other Meribah-Kadesh in the wilderness in the south of Edom. According to Parkhurst the Hebrew word which is rendered "Tamar" in Ezekiel 47:9 signifies Tadmor, a city built by Solomon east of the Jordan in the wilderness. In view of these considerations, the southern boundary must include the Siniatic Peninsula and the delta of the Nile, that is, up to the river of Egypt."

This is most strange reasoning. It will be seen from any map of Palestine that Tadmor was away in the wilderness to the north east - actually it was due east of the Northern border. Because of this, Brother Sulley says the southern border must include Sinai and extend to the Nile! Whatever has Tadmor - to the north-east - got to do with the whereabouts of the southern border? And we have already seen how he wrongly applies

the word “river” to the Nile. There is no doubt at all that Brother Sulley has gone right beyond the limits as given by Ezekiel and there is no justification for this at all. When the scripture says the northern limit is at “A” and the southern limit at “B” no one has any right to say that the boundary goes hundreds of miles beyond these points.

The Land Promised to Abraham.

It may be thought that in limiting the re-settlement of the twelve tribes within the boundaries given by Ezekiel in chapter 47 we have thereby diminished the land promised to Abraham. It is usually thought that as Abraham was promised a tract of country from the Nile to the Euphrates the twelve tribes will occupy all that territory. But not so, as we shall see.

We have seen that it is necessary to differentiate between two types of river. Two different Hebrew words are used in the passages affecting our subject, one being “nahar” and means a real river such as the Nile, and the other is “nachai” which is used for a watercourse which may dry up in summer. (This fact is so important as to bear repeating),

The Nile to The Euphrates.

Now the promise to Abraham did bestow upon him the whole territory from the Nile to the Euphrates, as Genesis 15:18 declares:-

“In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river (nahar) of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.”

This promise, we believe is to be understood as involving the countries through which these two rivers flowed. In other words, the land promised consists of Assyria, Palestine and Egypt.

The Land of Canaan.

But it appears also that the land of Canaan was specifically promised - that is, the central part of the whole area. This central part was to be a particular inheritance. This would appear from other verses such as the following: -

“And Abraham took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother’s son... and into the land of Canaan they came. And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh, And the Canaanite was then in the land- And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land, (i.e. Canaan). (Genesis 12:5-7).

“And Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.” (Genesis 13:12-17).

Thus the land of Canaan was promised to Abram.

Now when the time came for Israel to be delivered from the oppression of Egypt, God reminded Moses of these promises and indicated that the time had come for Israel to possess this land. The words are to be found in Exodus chapter 6:-

“And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage wherein they were strangers... and I will bring you unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage; I am the Lord” (Exodus 6:4-8).

Now since the Israelites were already in Egypt and were promised a deliverance from that country it is evident that Egypt was not part of the land promised to them,

They were to be brought out and were to go into the land of Canaan and inherit it - for that was the country which was promised to them.

Two Aspects of the Promise.

We see then that there were two aspects to the promise to Abram. His descendants, as a nation were to possess the land of Canaan, but in a larger sense Abram's inheritance was to include Assyria and Egypt.

The Promised Land According to Moses.

A further difficulty arises when Moses, at the end of the wilderness journey, outlines the land and its boundaries. Just before his death he was invited to view the land from Mount Nebo:-

“And the Lord shewed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan, and all Naphthali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea, and the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees unto Zoar. And the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I swore unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed” (Deuteronomy 34:1-4).

This would agree with the boundaries of the land as detailed by Moses in Numbers 34, which as we saw, extended from Hazar-enan in the north to Kadesh-Barnea and the river (nachal) of Egypt in the south. But it does not quite agree with the invitation of God to Israel in Deuteronomy 1:7-8:-

“Turn you and take your journey... to the land of the Canaanites, and unto Lebanon, unto the great river, the river Euphrates, Behold, I have set the land before you: go in and possess the land which the Lord swore unto your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give unto them, and to their seed after them.”

Similarly in Joshua 1:4:-

“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.”

In these two passages the boundary of the land appears to be extended to the river Euphrates, and yet Moses in Numbers limits the northern boundary to Zedad and Hazar-enan, i.e., between Damascus and Hamath.

In actual fact the children of Israel did not inhabit even as much as Moses outlined in Numbers but their northern border fell far short of Hazar-enan. In the south also, although Judah's boundary extended to Kadesh-Barnea much of this southern part was wilderness,

The Empire of David and Solomon.

Under David and Solomon the boundaries were extended and the empire incorporated several; tributary countries such as Edom, Moab, Ammon, Syria. Thus we read;-

“And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river (Euphrates) unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt” (the Wady-el-Arish), (1 kings 4:21).

And so the boundary became such as Deuteronomy 1 and Joshua 1 had indicated, but Israel did not inhabit all this, as a later verse in 1 kings 4 shows :-

“And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beer-Sheba, all the days of Solomon” (Verse 25).

It is clear then that the actual inheritance of the twelve tribes was restricted and did not even extend to the boundaries as given by Moses in Numbers 34, “From Dan to Beer-Sheba” is far short of his limits, Dan being nearly a hundred miles from the northern border and Beer-Sheba nearly fifty miles from the southern.

Turning now to the future inheritance we have seen that the boundaries as given by Ezekiel are exactly the same as those given by Moses in Numbers 34 and certainly do not give any warrant for the assumption that the twelve tribes are to be allotted the territory from the Nile to the Euphrates. They are to be re-settled exactly as Moses outlined in the country from Hazar-enan in the north to Kadesh-Barnea in the south.

Abraham's Future Empire

We have now only to consider the application of the promise to Abraham that he was to inherit the land from the Nile to the Euphrates. There is no doubt that he will do so, but the twelve tribes are not to have all this for their habitation. The answer to this problem is surely in Isaiah 19:-

“In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land; whom the Lord of hosts shall bless saying, Blessed be Egypt my people and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance” (Isaiah 19:23-25).

This is a remarkable passage. It states that three ancient countries and nations are to be raised to special status ‘in the coming universal kingdom of Christ. This is the whole territory promised to Abraham - from the Nile to the Euphrates – and includes the lands through which these rivers flowed. These three countries, Assyria, Israel and Egypt are to be Abraham’s special inheritance, Israel are to be a third part, “even a blessing in the midst of the land.” What a remarkable change this will be. Israel’s lifelong enemies then at peace with her! And Egypt and Assyria, although in the past the enemies of God and of Israel, steeped in idolatry, then elevated to the special glory - “Egypt my people,” “Assyria the work of my hands,” who would have thought that God would do this to peoples who have done so much harm to His truth? It will be done doubtless, because of God’s promise to Abraham; this cannot fail, but in the process these peoples will be cleansed and purified, even as Israel too will need purifying. Verse 22 of the same chapter tells us:-

“And the Lord shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal it; and they shall return even to the Lord, and he shall be entreated of them, and shall heal them.”

And so we have the picture of a three-part inheritance for Abraham. Assyria in the north, Israel in the centre, settled in their tribal cantons within the limits of Ezekiel’s boundaries, and Egypt in the south. All living happily and at peace as Israel did under Solomon, “every man under his own vine and under his own fig tree.”

Brother H.C. Gates.

To be continued...

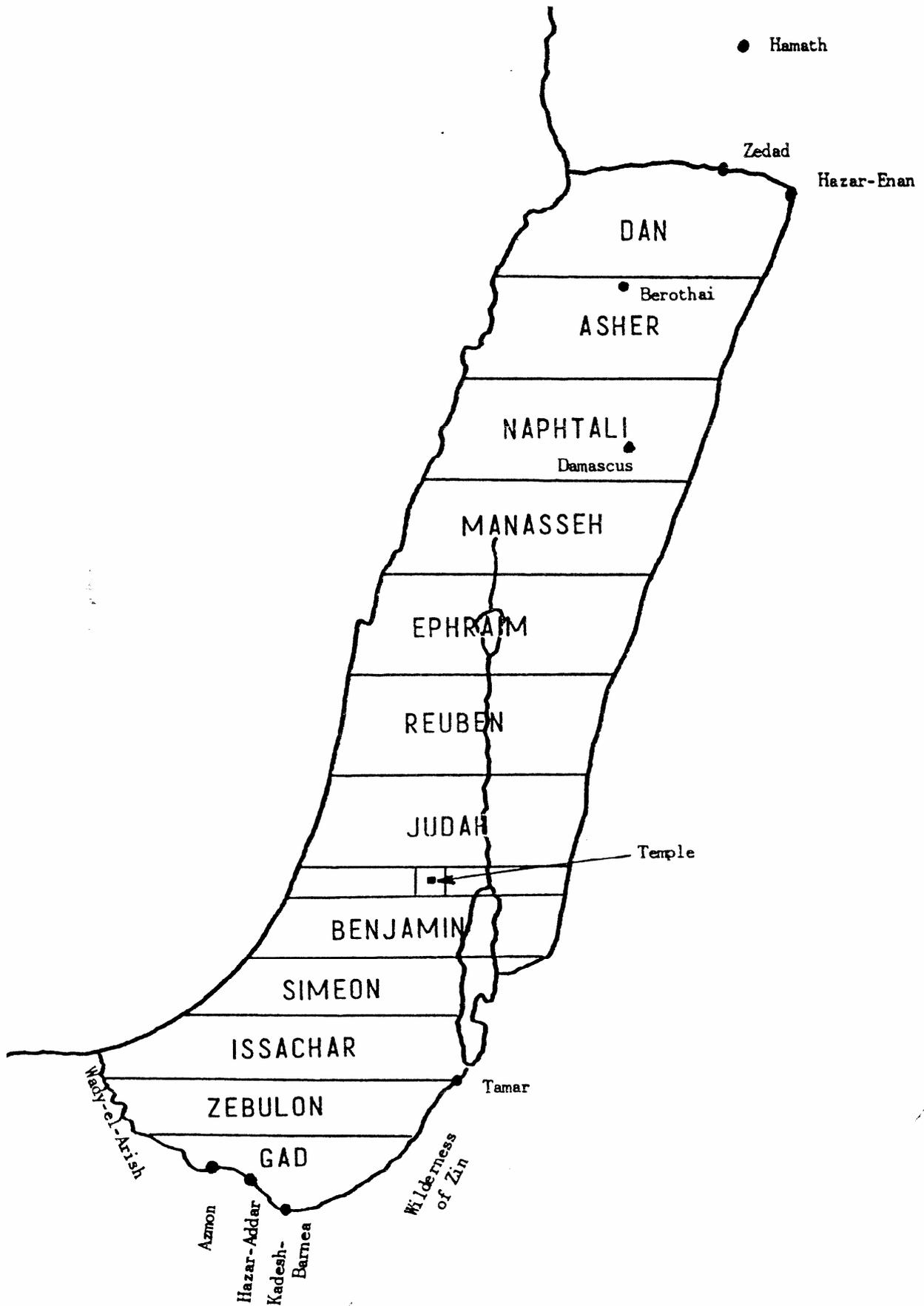


FIG. 1 RE-SETTLEMENT OF THE TRIBES ACCORDING TO EZEKIEL

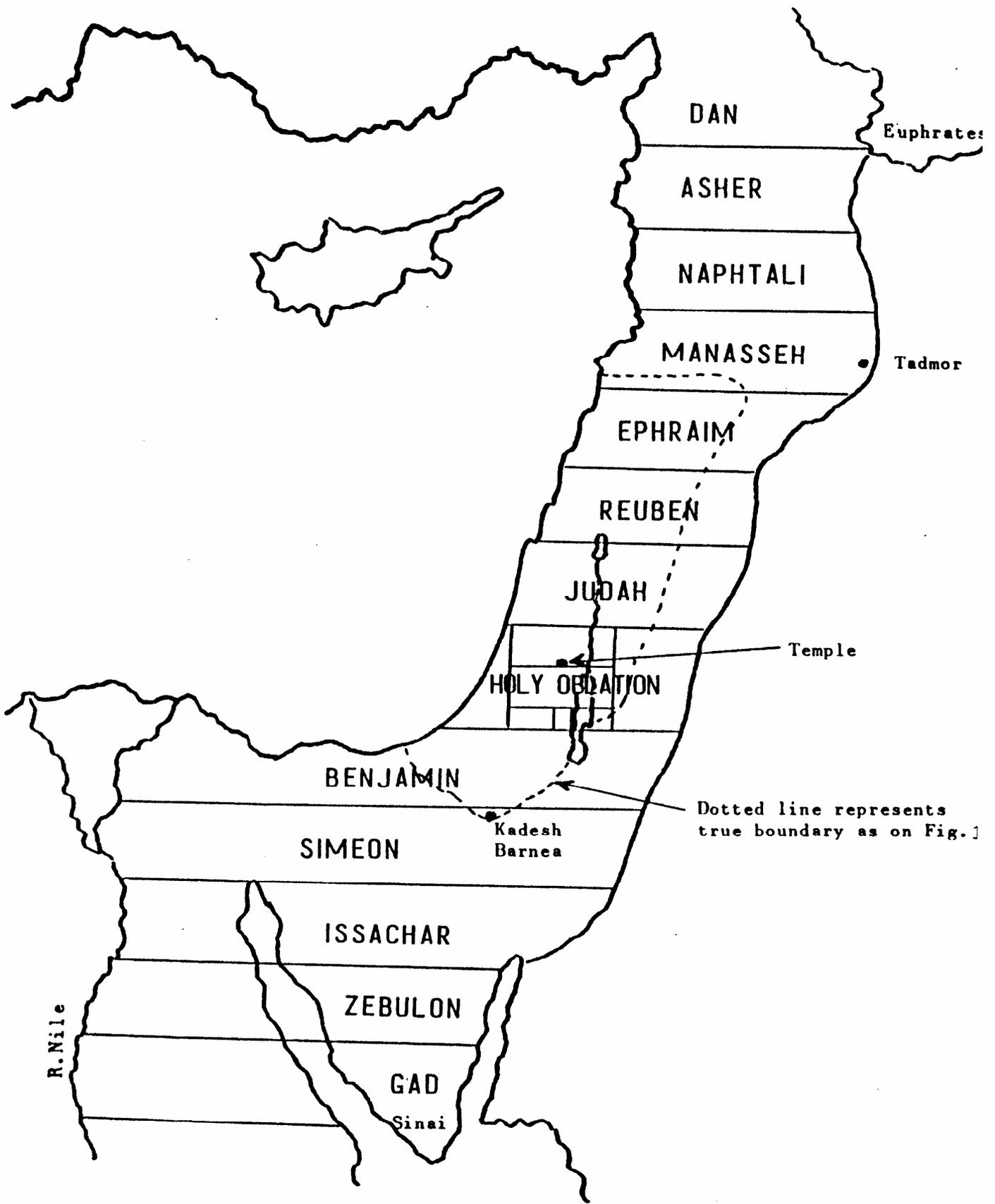


FIG.2 RE-SETTLEMENT OF THE TRIBES ACCORDING TO H. SULLY