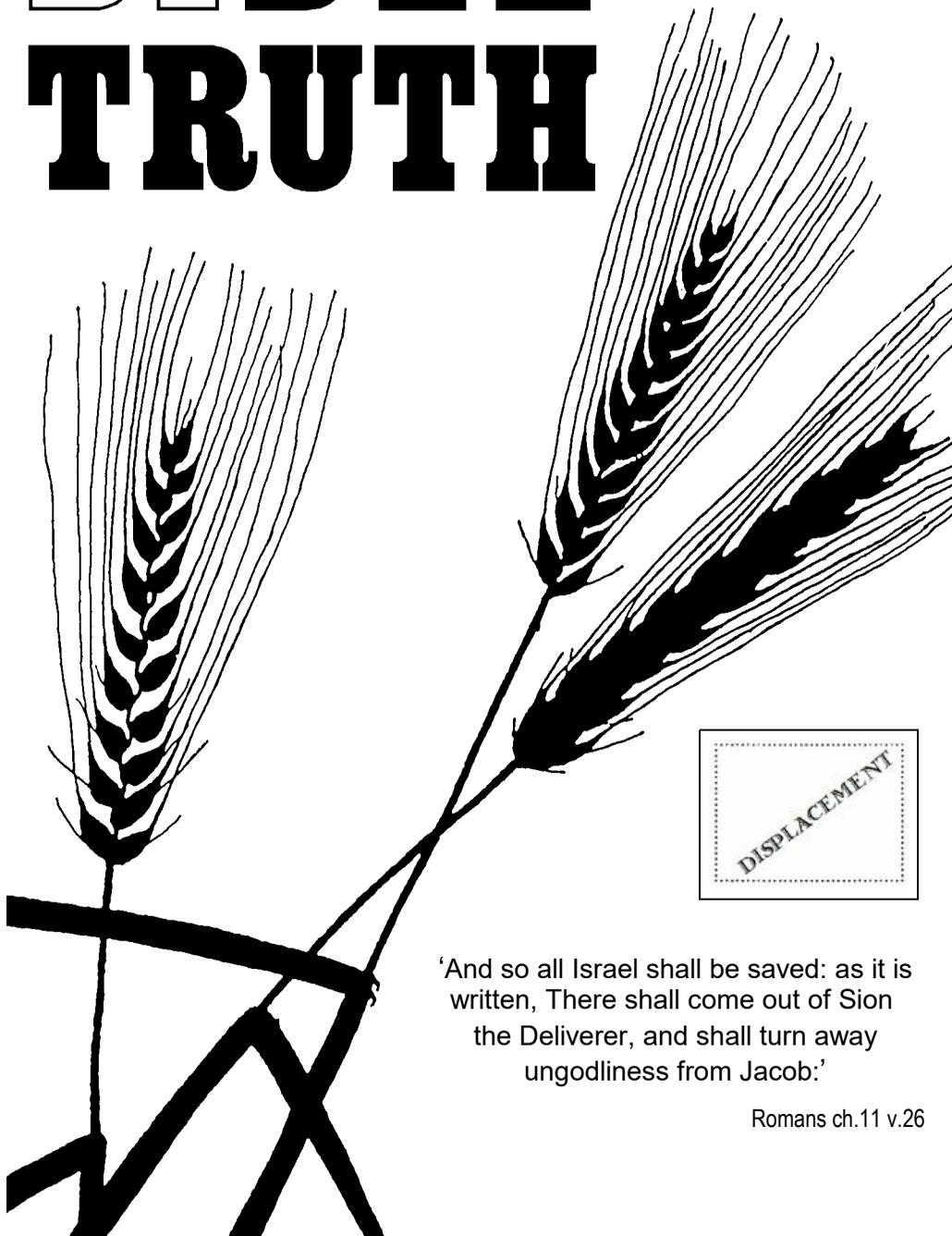


BIBLE TRUTH

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'And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.'

Romans ch.11 v.26



LEST WE FORGET

by John Trotter

'Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.'

Deuteronomy ch.6 v.12

'The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.'

Psalms 51 v.17

The saying, 'Lest We Forget', is repeated on ANZAC (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) Day in Australia and New Zealand. In England on similar memorial days it is also repeated with the same sacred reason. Such services are used to remember those who have fallen on foreign soils, and to protect values like freedom, courage and mateship. Many people believe that the phrase, 'Lest We Forget', was originally reflecting upon the memories of those who died and that we will be doing ourselves a disfavour if we forget their sacrifice. What is not realised is that there is a strong biblical connection with what has been called the '*Recessional*' which was written by Rudyard Kipling (see end of article for Kipling's poem) in no way is this article meant to take away the accepted understanding of what is meant by the saying, 'Lest We Forget'.

The poem was written in 1897 to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of Queen Victoria's reign. Initially Kipling was reluctant when asked to write a poem for the occasion. Not only did he disdain official honours, but it is said, that he was not 'particularly religious himself'. Maybe he had similar views to myself as far as blindly accepting religion as taught in the Western Nations. I am not surprised that the '*Recessional*' is biblically based. It is my view that Kipling was directed by the hand of God.

In stanza 4 there is a warning that England must not be overbearing in pride or arrogant in her strength of imperialism. Even as England was building up her strength in naval power, Kipling was reminding her that there was a God in Heaven who holds dominion over all mankind. Kipling refers to the 'Lord God of Hosts' three times. This is a phrase that reflects the mighty power of God's eternal army (see *Strong's Concordance* 6635).

In stanza 4 he refers to the 'Gentiles', who were at the time believed by some people to be Germany and Russia. Kipling felt that these nations did not have God in awe. These are the people without the Law. Again Kipling is pleading that those around him do not go the same way. The question is, 'Have we in our day learnt from history?' The answer seems to be 'No'.

In the final stanza he refers to the heathen who have put their trust in 'reeking tube and iron shard'. One article said that these are the instruments of war, like idols and smoking altars, that represent the false gods of human power. Is this not so true today, for the military power and might of world powers are so immense that it is now possible to swiftly destroy all mankind.?

The author of one article commented that Kipling was inferring that 'the British were ordained to be the chosen inheritors of the promises of the Biblical Jews'. The only difference I would suggest with this comment is that I would have used the word 'Israelites' as the words Jew and Israel are not interchangeable terms.

If this was Kipling's view, then the *Recessional* could be taken as a warning for that nation and their kindred today. The process of decay did not start during the 1970's. The wind of change that was felt soon after World War 2, was the puss coming from the infections that began during the mid 19th century. The trend towards a godless and materialistic world began long ago, mostly amongst the educated elite. With all the good that occurred during the British Empire there was also the evil. It was the continuation of the outcome of taking fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Where there is light, there is shade. This natural law of physics can be extended into the area of belief systems and the general understanding of what is knowledge. On the one hand it says in Hosea,

‘My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, ...’.

Hosea ch.4 v.6’

That is the knowledge of God's Truth. Yet In Isaiah we have the evil side of knowledge where it refers to,

‘... that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish;’.

Isaiah ch.44 v.25

In the final stanza he appeals to the mercy of God to be considered for His people. Kipling has reminded us not to forget the God of our Fathers who brought Israel out of the land of Egypt. Even though they have been promised the following in Isaiah.

‘For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.’

Isaiah ch.54 vv 7-8

The dreams and hopes go way beyond the words of these stanzas called the *Recessional*. He was expressing a warning from history. Kipling lived during a time when Britain ‘ruled the waves’, but now Britain has ‘waived the rules’. Even during his time when so many attended church, I believe Kipling understood, how evil plans could disrail the Empire that was to last a thousand years.

Thankfully, God has said many times, ‘I will Cause’. Here we can depend upon the everlasting unconditional Covenants and the Remnant that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will choose out of His elect. We will not be as Nineveh or Tyre, because God is going to cause us to understand the meaning of ‘**lest we forget**’. It will then be that the *Recessional* is sung throughout the land at a time when,

‘... the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped’.

Isaiah ch.35 v.5

Recessional

by Rudyard Kipling (1897)

God of our fathers, known of old,
Lord of our far-flung battle-line,
Beneath whose awful Hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine —
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies;
The Captains and the Kings depart:
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

Far-called, our navies melt away;
On dune and headland sinks the fire:
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe,
Such boastings as the Gentiles use,
Or lesser breeds without the Law —
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard,
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
And guarding, calls not Thee to guard,
For frantic boast and foolish word —
Thy mercy on Thy People, Lord.