

All this is very full of meaning, and is constantly experienced to this day. Some witness of our belonging to the Israel of God is needed and craved by the soul, when we get into a position in the earth which the call of God does not fully justify. The countenance of others—the restless examinations of our own state—reasonings with ourselves—remembrance it may be, of better days with the soul—something that is as artificial and of our own device as the altar of ED, and which would have been as unneeded too as that, had the soul been more simple and faithful.

All this is still known, and is all figured here—it is the writing on this pillar on the eastern side of Jordan. And a wonderful pillar it thus is. Lot's wife, the pillar of salt, had a writing upon it which the Divine Master Himself has read for us; and I doubt not, so has this pillar of Ed, which the Holy Ghost would fain teach us to read, that we may be warned to know what uneasiness and doubt accompanies the soul that has retreated to find a *settlement* there, where the saints are and have been *strangers*. This altar witnessed both *for* and *against* these Israelites. It was just what Jehoshaphat's uneasiness was when he found himself with Ahab and the prophets of Baal. It is just what a saint's uneasiness here is when he finds himself involved in a world that he ought to have left. For all this bespeaks the saintly or renewed mind, but in such exercises and experiences as the grace of God has caused it.