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Missionary Letters of John Alexander Clark

Haifa, March 21, 1895

Dear Brother Naegle:

I feel that I should write you a few lines of the sudden death of our dear and beloved Brother John Clark, who lived with us since his arrival a year ago. As he was here so long we learned to love him as dearly as one of our own dear children.

Your card came on the 5 th day his sickness when the fever heat was already so high that it began to cause unconsciousness; still with full presence of mind he read it through with the words to me saying, "If you do not die give Bro. Naegle an answer to his card;" but through excitement and sadness of heart I did not think of writing until now.

Every day Bro. Clark went into the city Haifa, very close to where the German colony is and of the Arabians and distributed tracts in the different dwellings. He also took an hour's lesson in Arabic each day in order to sooner be able to do more missionary work among the Arabians, in which labor he found true delight, but during the winter the smallpox broke out very strongly among the Arabians so that three and four died daily from the plague. We often warned Bro. Clark and just plead of him not to go among the Arabians until there would not be any more danger of catching that frightful contagious disease, that he should only spend the hour with his teacher of Arabic and then return home again; but he gave us for our answer, "I am not a child any more, I know what my mission is here," but to our great sorrow he came home one Wednesday evening Jan. 30 having caught that frightful disease, smallpox.

I immediately sent for two doctors and I watched over him at his bedside day and night until he died, my Husband does not hear so well and does not know how to watch over the sick.

While Bro. Clark was sick he always called me mother, and I did for him that I could have done for our own dear son. On the 5th day the black blisters already began to become visible and the fever raged so high I cried, with flowing tears, to my Heavenly Father in that hour of need for help and for his life; but it seemed that he was appointed for a higher mission.