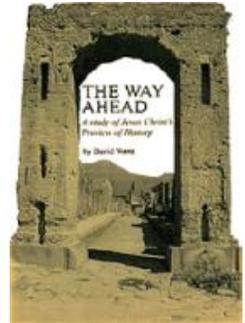
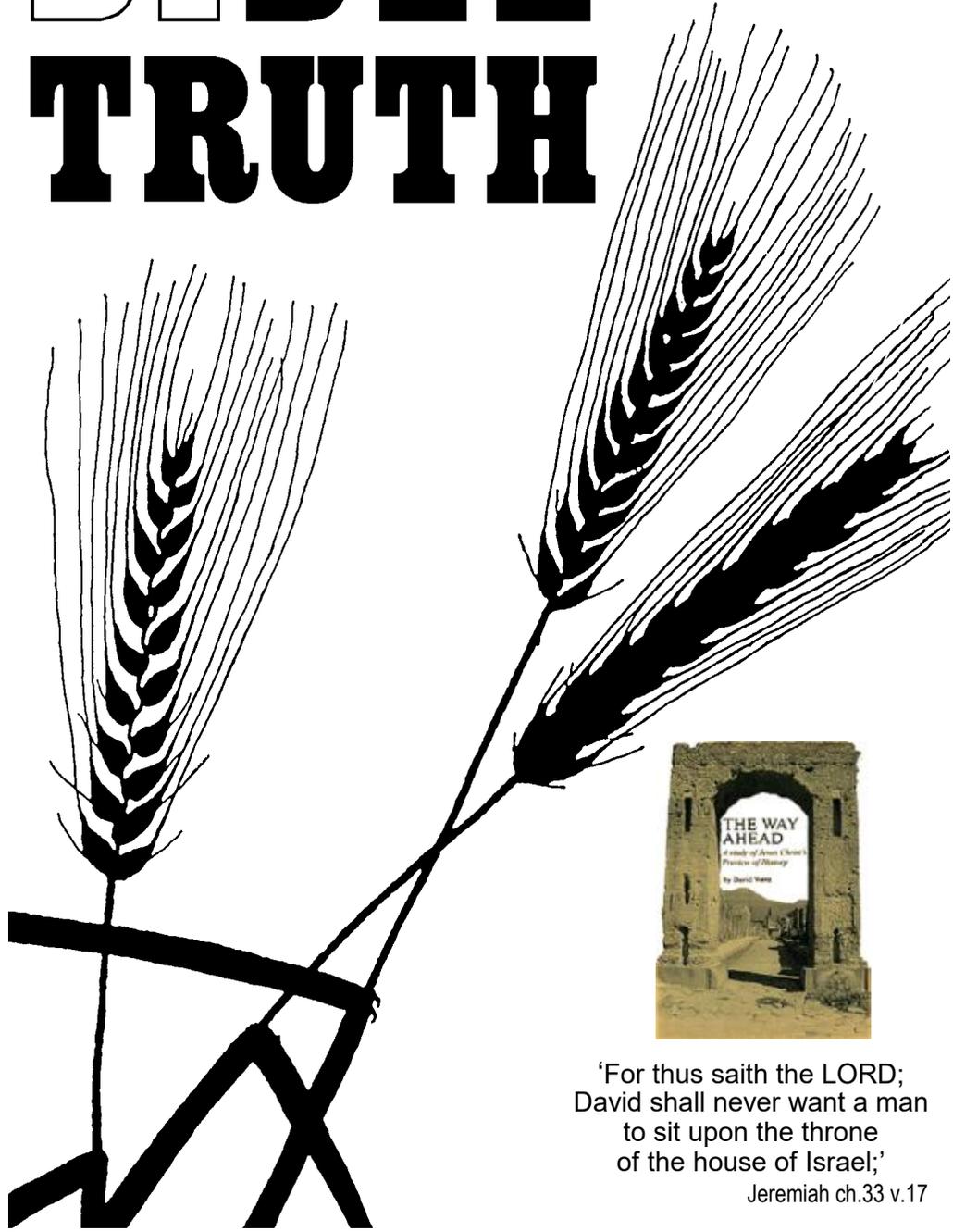


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'For thus saith the LORD;
David shall never want a man
to sit upon the throne
of the house of Israel;'

Jeremiah ch.33 v.17

THE BIRTH OF THE NATION OF ISRAEL

by the late Rev. C.S. McKelvey



When God made the Covenant with Abraham

He said,

‘... Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance’.

Genesis ch.15 vv 13-14

This pronouncement by the Lord had three clauses all of which had to be fulfilled. Eighty years before the end of the four hundred-year period Pharaoh ordered the midwives to kill all the male children of Israel as soon as they were born because he feared the growing strength and population of the people. At the same time God took the first step towards the deliverance of Israel, and so the baby Moses had his life spared in such a way that he grew up in Pharaoh’s Court and remained there until he was forty years old. Thus he was trained in statesmanship ready for the great task that would one day be his. As this was a proud haughty Court, the Lord caused Moses to spend forty years in the land of Midian, and in its quietness and solitude he learned the lesson of humility and meekness without losing his strength of character.

At the right time the Lord appeared unto Moses in the burning bush and said,

‘... I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians ...’.

Exodus ch.3 vv 7-8

Thus Moses was commissioned by God to lead Israel out of Egypt. At the same time the Lord kept His second clause.

‘And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge:’

The judgment was the ten plagues and in them God demonstrated His almighty power over all the false gods of Egypt in such a way as to prove to Israel that He was the one true God.

In the first five plagues Pharaoh hardened his heart that he would not let the people go. In the last five plagues God hardened Pharaoh's heart and he had no option but to suffer with his people the whole of the ten plagues. The last plague was the death of every first-born son of Egypt. This is often regarded as being very severe, but we must remember it was a righteous judgment. Eighty years before, for at least three months, and possibly for years, every male child of Israel was put to death, not only the first-born, but every male child.

The third clause of the promise to Abraham was still to be fulfilled. The bondage of Egypt really ended after the third plague when, in spite of the harshness of Pharaoh's last order that the Israelites were not only to make the same number of bricks, but they were also to collect the straw and were scattered all over Egypt collecting it. The Lord intervened and gathered all Israel into the land of Goshen where they remained immune from the plagues until they came out of Egypt.

The third clause now went into effect. They were a very poor people. They had their own cattle and goods, but of substance they had none.

On the morning after the death of Egypt's first born - we are told that they spoiled the Egyptians, as it is recorded,

‘And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians’.

Exodus ch.12 vv 35-36

The Lord placed all the first-born sons of Israel under the cover of the blood of the lamb that was sprinkled on their door lintels as well as the door posts and the Lord said,

‘... and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, ...’.

Exodus ch.12 v.13

This meant that every first-born son of Israel was saved because of the shedding of blood, therefore, their lives were His as well as their own.

Thus with a mighty hand God brought Israel out of Egypt.

The first national law was to commemorate the flight from Egypt. 'The Passover' therefore, had to be incorporated in the Old Covenant at Sinai. It was because the Passover was not part of the Old Covenant that Paul declared that the Lord Jesus Christ as the Passover Lamb would still be remembered,

'... Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, ...'.

1 Corinthians ch.5 vv 7-8

Again exercising His almighty power and His authority over Israel the Lord said that His presence would go with them and this meant that the Shekinah Glory (The Visible Presence and Glory of the Lord), in the form of a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night would lead them all the way to the promised land. Thus, the cloud sheltered them from the sun by day and the fire kept them warm at night.

Israel could have left Egypt by the short route as we read,

'... God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; ...'.

Exodus ch.13 v.17

Israel was not ready to engage in war with the Philistines, or any other people, and so the Lord led them through the Red Sea. This was the first great step in separating them from the Gentile world and bringing them into covenant relationship with God. Saint Paul brings out this important fact when he says,

'Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;'

1 Corinthians ch.10 vv 1-2

Baptism is the symbol of going down into death and coming up into newness of life. As Saint Paul says in Romans,

'... death reigned from Adam to Moses, ...'.

Romans ch.5 v.14

Thus out of the Red Sea, Israel emerged as an entirely new-born nation with a new outlook on life.

Then Israel proceeded towards the mountain of Sinai, which was in the wilderness and Israel was shut in with God. No Gentile nation was allowed to witness the wonderful scenes which took place there. The people of Israel were there formed into a nation and a kingdom of which God himself declared He was their king. Thus we read,

'You only have I known of all the families of the earth: ...'.

Amos ch.3 v.2

and again,

'When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the LORD'S portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance'.

Deuteronomy ch.32 vv 8-9

Here is the great division of the Adamic race. All the other nations of the world were left in Satan's dominion and are called the Gentiles, meaning strangers, foreigners, or aliens to Israel, and Israel was formed into the nation of the kingdom of God on earth. This division has never been altered: it remains the same today as it did then. Israel is still the kingdom of God on earth and the other nations are in the principality of darkness and will remain under Satan's control until the Lord returns when all the kingdoms of the world will become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ.
