

[Compiler's Note: This short study is not signed by Ben Roden. It is signed only as "the Voice". Since the Branch Message is quoted in the study with the tone and style of Branch messenger and in harmony with the teachings of The Branch Message, the compiler has determined that it was probably written by Ben Roden from Israel in the early 1960s and therefore included it in this reproduction series.]

THE LORD'S DECREE

"How does Christ subdue His chosen people to Himself? It is by the power of the Holy Spirit: for the Holy Spirit through the Scriptures speaks to the mind, and impresses truth upon the hearts of men." Selected Messages, page 134.

"When the power of God testifies as to what is truth, that truth is to stand forever as truth. No after suppositions contrary to the light God has given are to be entertained." S.M. page 161.

"Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired. Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you." Zephaniah 2:1,2.

According to the verse that follows, this undesirable nation's gathering together is a sign post to God's people. (T.G., Vol. I, No.22, page 24.)

We who believe the Rod will quickly see that this great sign post for us has been accomplished and since 1948 Israel has fulfilled this prophecy.

As we examine the first two verses, we recognize that the gathering is only the first step of three to bring a people, the Jews, to their land and then cleanse those that will be cleansed, the others to be slain or driven out to make way for the house of Judah to be set up.

After the undesired nation is gathered, a decree goes forth to them and the Rod points out that this is the Lord's decree.

The next step naturally causes us to ask: "What does this decree mean, and what is it, for it is from the Lord?"

Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonished at thee" his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men." Isa. 52:13,14.

"These verses, as you know, have long been applied to the Lord, He nevertheless does not do all these personally, but He does them through His messengers.

The people will be made to know that it is He speaking, not an enemy, as they are made to believe: that the message of the kingdom of God is a message of comfort', that His faithful servants shall exalt His message (the voice)." T.G. Vol. 1, No.38, page 28,30.

This before Zion and Jerusalem awake: for when they awake, they shall see eye to eye.

The BRANCH wave-sheaf after Passover 1960 were given this name, and are representing the Lord as it states above, for they are the BRANCH HE - the purified church.

Our loving Saviour desires that every one shall wear His pure white robe of Righteousness, and we can have the robe at the cost of our own filthy garments.

Adding the keeping of the feasts to the Third Angels Message according to the Old Testament, in harmony with the New Testament, is what constitutes the gospel in its fullness.

"This 'addition' of the Feast observance truth is brought by the Angel (Message) that joins the Third Angel's Message in a message to be given to the world. (T.M. 300: E.W. 277). This is in fact the Judgment of the Living - the Righteousness of Christ." The Feasts, No. 1, page 2.

We are told in these few verses how we may show our faith in what has been wrought out for us. We do not earn the robe, it is a gift, but we must put it on and we show we have been born again when we do these things.

Now, to have a robe, we would certainly be expected to keep the Feasts on the correct day. Otherwise, we would be wearing our own robe and not the Lord's.

The correct way to determine when to keep the New Moon Feast from month to month is to secure the exact scientific time as to when the new moon arrives in your area. (Write to the U.S. Naval Observatory, Washington, D.C.)

The New Moon Feast is to be observed beginning at the first going down of the sun after the arrival of the new moon on that month. For example: for March, 1966, the new moon will arrive on the 22nd day of March, 02 hours, 46 minutes, Israel time. (U.S. Naval Observatory). The first going down of the sun after the arrival of the new moon will be the evening of the 22nd and the day of the 23rd of March. Should the new moon arrive after sun-down, then one would wait until the next going down of the sun to start keeping the New Moon Feast, in order to keep a full New Moon Sabbath. Knowing the exact scientific time eliminates the uncertainty of seeing the new moon with the naked eye, because of climatic conditions, etc.

Since the determining of the correct day on which to observe the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread depends upon the correct observance of the New Moon Feast on or after the Vernal Equinox, we find that the correct date for Passover for 1966 is April 6th.

The Jewish calendar shows the New Moon to be on the 22nd of March, which is one day early. This cannot be, since the new moon does not arrive until 2 AM, and they will be observing the new moon before it arrives. This is because of traditions of men.

This false calculating for the new moon in March results in a false calculation for the Passover, which also falls a day early on the Jewish calendar.

The Lord's decree is that the Jews and all who are assenting to this false calculation must now quit following traditions and follow the voice of the Lord or suffer the third step - the fierce anger of the Lord.

Here in the Holy Land those who have and are seeking meekness and righteousness will be hid for they are His people, His church. (T.G. Vol. 1, No. 22, page 24).

This interpretation by the Rod leaves no doubt as to where this takes place, - in God's holy land - Israel of today.

Now, the statement that the Lord is to destroy all the inhabitants (T.G. Vol. 1, No.22, page 2 6) and then set up the House of Judah in it, shows that the nation now called Israel is not the Judah of today , but is the undesired nation on Whom the fierce anger of the Lord is to fall.

Her only hope is the same as it is for all as individuals to accept the righteousness of Christ, by doing away with the traditions and keeping the feasts correctly. All who do not do this will be either slain or driven from the land, to make room for His righteous nation, the 144,000, the BRANCH SHE.

This renewal of the ancient kingdom of Judah is to be a real thing, not something imaginary. Its subjects are to be real people, not ghosts. Now we can see the common expression "going to heaven" means first going to the promised land, there to be fitted for the society of the pure and eternal. (T.G. Vol. 1, No. 22, page 28.)

Just before entering the kingdom at the close of the 40 years of wilderness wandering, the people were still murmuring, so God permitted the serpents to destroy them, until Moses was instructed to erect a brazen serpent on a pole. Everyone who would look on this brazen serpent would live. But some were too stubborn to believe.

Now, we must hear the Voice of God telling us to keep the feasts correctly so that we can have Christ's Righteousness, and we will have eternal life. But some, now, too, will be too stubborn to obey God's Voice and will perish eternally. Truly, evil is a mystery.

"The light is crystal clear that the Branch wave-sheaf (has the key to the first fruit harvest of the 144,000 virgins and hence the key to the second fruit harvest and the FEAST of TABERNACLES. " The Feasts, No. 3, page 2.

"Yes, as the doors of the New Testament are unlocked with the KEY of these feasts which is found in the Old Testament, the 'slumbering faculties of the Jewish people are aroused'. Accepting this type of worship is the Righteousness by faith, and doing them (Ezek.26:27) is the Righteousness of Christ." The Feasts, No. 3, page 30.

This will be the simple means of causing the division of those who will follow the commandments of God and those who will follow the traditions of men. Simple, but wonderful, the way our Heavenly Father works.

This is certainly the Lord's decree and it brings His wrath on all who will not obey but peace and eternal life to those who will.

The Voice