

TEXT FOR PRAYER
Build On A Sure Foundation

I shall read from "The Mount of Blessing," page 217, beginning with the second paragraph.
Incidentally, this is the last chapter in the book.

"You who are resting your hope on self, are building on the sand. But it is not yet too late to escape the impending ruin. Before the tempest breaks, flee to the sure foundation. 'Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone of sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste.' 'Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.' 'Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness.' 'Ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.'"

We are now to pray that we break away from self and wholly rely on God; that we build, not upon a sandy foundation, but upon the solid Rock, upon a sure foundation that will not be swept away when the storm comes.

Timely Greetings, Vol. 1, No. 48

19

GOD'S CERTIFICATION TO RESURRECT,
PURIFY, AND CONSOLIDATE JUDAH AND ISRAEL

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This afternoon we are to study Jeremiah 31. It contains Inspiration's guarantee for God's people to return to the homeland. This chapter, you will recognize, contains a prophecy for the latter days:

Jer. 31:1 -- "At the same time, saith the Lord, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people."

The phrase, "at the same time," takes our thoughts back to Jeremiah 30, verse 24, where it explains that the time is the latter days, our time. Not long hence, therefore, our God will be the God of all the families of Israel, the God of the whole church. Saint and sinner during the Judgment for the Living will no longer be commingled.

Jer. 31:2 -- "Thus saith the Lord, The people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest."

The people who survive their captivity, are to find grace in the lands of the Gentiles -- in "the wilderness," away from the vineyard. (Since the Promised Land is the vineyard - - Isaiah 5 -- then what would the wilderness be but the lands of the Gentiles?) God's people

Timely Greetings, Vol. 1, No. 48

20

will find this grace at the time the Lord causes them to rest from their "sojourning" -- after the "Judgment in the house of God" (1 Pet. 4:17) takes place.

Jer. 31:3 -- "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."

At the fulfillment of this prophecy the people will realize that the Lord has really loved them, and that He draws them to Himself with loving kindness.

Jer. 31:4 -- "Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry."

The Lord assures His people that though the Gentile nations have torn down their kingdom, He will restore it to them, and they shall again become a glorious and joyous nation. These promises imply that the people are not now adorned and happy. We may not fully realize this, but God knows better than we do.

Jer. 31:5 -- "Thou shalt yet plant vines upon the mountains of Samaria: the planters shall plant, and shall eat them as common things."

Most of the world thinks that as the ten tribes, the Kingdom of Israel, are lost among the Gentile nations, that their kingdom is forever gone, yet God Who does according to His good pleasure plainly declares that the faithful, after their separation from the unfaithful, shall be gathered out and brought back into the mountains of Samaria; and that they shall plant and eat the fruit of their planting as a common thing.

Timely Greetings, Vol. 1, No. 48

21

Jer. 31:6 -- "For there shall be a day, that the watchmen upon the Mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the Lord our God."

The future watchmen of Mount Ephraim, rather than separating themselves from those of Mount Zion as they did anciently, shall gladly lead the laity back to Zion. No longer shall arise the question, Why is it that "our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship"? John 4:20.

Jer. 31:7 -- "For thus saith the Lord; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O Lord, save Thy people, the remnant of Israel."

The "remnant" are those who survive the "Judgment in the house of God." God's people now, while dwelling among the chief of the nations, are urged to proclaim this good tidings in their midst with singing, gladness, and praise, saying, "O Lord, save Thy people." This Truth is now the very present Truth, and It is to be proclaimed and heeded. To work and pray to this end, is the message of the hour.

Jer. 31:8 -- "Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither."

We need not fear; our efforts will not be fruitless. God's sincere people will hear and give heed to the message of this day, and the Lord will thus gather them from the four corners of the earth. Be they blind or lame, be they women or children, they shall

Timely Greetings, Vol. 1, No. 48

22

all return to the vineyard of the Lord.

Jer. 31:9 -- "They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is My firstborn."

Ephraim himself, Inspiration says, was to become a "multitude of nations." Gen. 48:19, 20.

Jer. 31:10 -- "Hear the Word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock."

God is speaking and who dare not take His Word to heart? Who dare be indifferent and keep

silent? In order for the nations to be able to say, "He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him," they must be nations that believe, nations that understand these prophecies and promises. They are to do what we are doing. But since there is no nation doing this at the present time, and since we are the only ones that are engaged in this work, the truth becomes evident that our message is to awaken nations to the fact that we, the last descendants of the twelve tribes of Israel, are called forth to declare this Truth not only to all our brethren, but even to the nations. Then the nations are to re-broadcast It to other nations, so declares the Scriptures. They are to proclaim that God's people are to be gathered, and kept, too.

We, therefore, must not fail in our trust. We must prove worthy of our calling.

Jer. 31:11 -- "For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and

Timely Greetings, Vol. 1, No. 48

23

ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he."

We are not able to redeem ourselves, nor are we able of ourselves to return to our land. God is to accomplish all this for us. We ought therefore to be thankful that our freedom and redemption do not depend upon ourselves. The responsibility is God's. He is to redeem us from him that is stronger than we.

Jer. 31:12-14 -- "Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all. Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow. And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and My people shall be satisfied with My goodness, saith the Lord."

These verses, I am sure, need no interpretation or elucidation.

Jer. 31:15, 16 -- "Thus saith the Lord; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not. Thus saith the Lord; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy."

To understand these verses we must first look into the historical background of them. Rachel, the wife

Timely Greetings, Vol. 1, No. 48

24

of Jacob, had but two sons of her own, Joseph and Benjamin. They were the only sons that were born to Jacob in the Promised Land. Rachel died while giving birth to Benjamin, and so she herself could not have wept for the loss of her children. They were both with her when she died. Hence, the only conclusion one can come to, is that Rachel in this scripture is figurative.

After the death of Solomon, the kingdom was divided, the ten tribes taking the north, and the two tribes taking the south. The tribe of Joseph was in the one kingdom, and the tribe of Benjamin in the other. Rachel, therefore, must be the figurative mother of the children of both kingdoms -- Judah and Israel.

The incident of Jer. 31:15 Matthew applied to Herod's killing the children in an attempt to slay the Lord (Matt. 2:18). A study of this verse along with the entire context of the chapter, however, will disclose that it has an even more direct application to the dispersion of both kingdoms, Judah and Israel, and of their return from the lands of their enemies to the fatherland.

Jer. 31:17, 18 -- "And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border. I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn Thou me, and I shall be turned; for Thou art the Lord my God."

Two distinct thoughts are brought to view in this verse: first, that the children of the Kingdom will come again to their own border; and second, that they will have beforehand experienced a great revival

Timely Greetings, Vol. 1, No. 48

25

and reformation. They will have realized that God's chastisement was for their own good, and that the Lord is their God. This reformation, along with God's mercies, is further seen in the following verses.

Jer. 31:19, 20 -- "Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I

smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth. Is Ephraim My dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore My bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord."

The next verses contain God's command and counsel to His people:

Jer. 31:21 -- "Set thee up waymarks, make thee high heaps: set thine heart toward the highway, even the way which thou wentest: turn again, O virgin of Israel, turn again to these thy cities."

Inspiration here very definitely urges God's faithful people to get ready for their return to the Promised Land, and continues:

Jer. 31:22 -- "How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter? for the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man."

As it is not possible for a woman actually to encompass a man, the woman here spoken of must therefore be symbolical of the church. And the man whom she is to encompass is, according to Inspiration, the Lord Himself. The church therefore is to be made to encompass the Lord and thus enter into her new and happy experience.

"Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I

Timely Greetings, Vol. 1, No. 48

26

come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto thee. And the Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the Holy Land, and shall choose Jerusalem again. Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord: for He is raised up out of His holy habitation." Zech 2:10-13.

Jer. 31:23, 24 -- "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; As yet they shall use this speech in the land of Judah and in the cities thereof, when I shall bring again their captivity; The Lord bless thee, O habitation of justice, and mountain of holiness. And there shall dwell in Judah itself, and in all the cities thereof together, husbandmen, and they that go forth with flocks."

Again and again we are told that the Kingdom of the Lord, the church purified, free of tares, is not something mystical, but that It is absolutely real.

Jer. 31:25, 26 -- "For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul.
Upon this I awaked, and beheld; and my sleep was sweet unto me."

Evidently the prophet's awakening must point to the people's spiritual awakening. And the sweetness of his sleep must point to the people's love to continue in their slumber and sleep, their hesitation to awake to these realities.

Jer. 31:27 -- "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man, and with the seed of

Timely Greetings, Vol. 1, No. 48

27

beast."

After this Kingdom is established in the land of promise, It shall grow with both man and beast just as the symbolism of Daniel's chapter two explains: "The stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Dan. 2:35. "In the days of these kings," not after their days, "shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, ...and...It [the Kingdom] shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms..." Dan. 2:44.

How will they multiply and fill the earth? -- Let Isaiah the prophet give the answer:

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Isa. 2:2, 3.

Jer. 31:28 -- "And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, to build, and to plant, saith the Lord."

From these passages of Scripture we see how the Lord will build and increase the Kingdom, and cause It to fill the earth.

Jer. 31:29, 30 -- "In those days they shall say no more,

Timely Greetings, Vol. 1, No. 48

28

The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge."

The ancient kingdom was torn up because of the sins of those who led and ruled the nations; and so all, good and bad alike, suffered. One of the good persons who suffered for the sins of the bad, was Daniel. And thus has it ever been. But now we are coming to the day when everyone shall die for his own iniquity. Michael shall stand up and "everyone that shall be found written in the book" shall be delivered (Dan. 12:1).

Jer. 31:31-33 -- "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which My covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people."

This new covenant, you see, is to go into effect in the gathering time. Then shall all God's people know the difference between good and evil. Thus shall they know what is the Lord's will and way. And thus shall they be able to perform the good and to shun the evil. They shall naturally and gladly incline to do good, just as they now incline to do evil.

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, was a very great king. He ruled a great kingdom, and lived in a

Timely Greetings, Vol. 1, No. 48

29

wonderful palace. But as soon as his human heart was taken away from him and the heart of a beast put in him, just that soon his own desires and ways left him and the desires and ways of a beast entered him. (See Daniel 4:16). So with God's people: Just as soon as He puts His law in their inward parts, and writes it in their hearts, just that soon the carnal heart's desire and enmity against God's law will disappear. No longer will God's people need to say, When we "want to do good, evil is present." "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. 7:24.

Jer. 31:34 -- "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

Note that the sinners and those who are ignorant of God shall no longer be among God's people. Certainly a change is coming. The present state of affairs will not long continue, the sinners will be put away forever. And how glad we ought to be that if we now repent, our sins will be forgiven and forgotten, and that no one will ever remind us of them!

Jer. 31:35, 36 -- "Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is His name: If those ordinances depart from before Me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me for ever."

Vol. 1, No. 48

30

Here is God's bonafide guarantee against doubt and unbelief. As certainly as the doubters cannot change the ordinances of the heavens, just that certainly shall God's people once again become a Theocratic nation.

Jer. 31:37-40 -- "Thus saith the Lord; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the city shall be built to the Lord from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner. And the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb, and shall compass about to Goath. And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, shall be holy unto the Lord; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever."

Timely Greetings, Vol. 1, No. 48

31