TIMELY GREETINGS

— The Only Peace of Mind —

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A ROD THAT SPEAKS CALLS FOR REFORMATION AND CREATES GREAT CONTROVERSY

ON THE THRESHOLD OF A NEW WORLD IN THE SIGHT OF THE OLD

OPENING PRAYER THOUGHT

I shall read from "The Mount of Blessing," page 184, the last paragraph–

"Not until you feel that you could sacrifice your own self-dignity, and even lay down your life, in order to save an erring brother, have you cast the beam out of your own eye, so that you are prepared to help your brother. Then you can approach him, and touch his heart. No one has ever been reclaimed from a wrong position by censure and reproach; but many have thus been driven from Christ, and led to seal their hearts against conviction. A tender spirit, a gentle, winning deportment, may save the erring, and hide a multitude of sins. The revelation of Christ in your own character will have a transforming power upon all with whom you come in contact. Let Christ be daily made manifest in you, and He will reveal through you the creative energy of His word, – a gentle, persuasive, yet mighty influence to re-create other souls in the beauty of the Lord our God."

According to Inspiration's eyesight none of us is qualified to find fault with anyone. Did you note what we read? – That only when we come to the point that we are willing to lay down our lives for an erring brother, shall we be fitted and able to help others to correct their faults.

In the light of this, what is our need, Brother, Sister? Should we not pray for an experience that Christ be manifested in us; pray for an experience that will prepare us to help others instead of hinder them; pray to have a gentle, persuasive, mighty Truth's influence on them? Then shall we be able to wisely approach the erring ones, touch their hearts, and show them their faults. Only then will they listen to us but certainly not until then.

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V.T. HOUTEFF

A ROD THAT SPEAKS CALLS FOR REFORMATION AND CREATES GREAT CONTROVERSY

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SABBATH, FEBRUARY 8, 1947
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Our subject for this afternoon begins with– Micah 6:1, 2 – "Hear ye now what the Lord saith; Arise, contend thou before the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice. Hear ye, O mountains, the Lord's controversy, and ye strong foundations of the earth: for the Lord hath a controversy with His people, and He will plead with Israel."

First to be noted is the fact that the messenger of God is instructed to contend before the mountains, and that the hills are to hear his voice. Obviously, then, in this scripture as elsewhere in the Bible, mountains and hills must be figurative of kingdoms and governments.

He is to contend before the mountains not against them; that is, he is to proclaim that the Lord has a controversy with His people, that He is asking for a thorough reformation among them, and that they are not willing and co-operating.

It was seen in previous studies that the prophecies of Micah 4 and 5 are to be fulfilled in the latter days, our time, in a time that Inspiration by the revelation of these prophecies calls for a reformation among God's

people. The prophecies now being unsealed for the first time since they were written, and the reformation already on foot, the fact that instead of gladly accepting the freshly revealed message, they are creating a controversy throughout the Adventist churches, very obviously indicates that now is the time to contend before the mountains, now is the time for them (the "mountains") to hear the Lord's controversy with His people.

The words, Arise, contend thou before the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice, imply that heretofore his voice has been heard only locally but that now he must meet the situation even though the mountains, hills, and the strong foundations of the earth hear that the Lord is having a controversy with His people.

Until now, we have been merely trifling with the Lord's adversaries but now we must get down to business regardless who hears it. His people must now forever turn from man's sayings, whatever they be, and confine their faith and hope in "Thus saith the Lord," regardless through whom He says it, or else they lose out. As followers of the Lord, we should hearken to His heart-rending plea for revival and reformation:

Verse 3 – "O My people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against Me."

Think of it! A great and infinite God pleading with such insignificant and sinful human beings as we, wanting to know why they are against Him.

Verse 4 – "For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants; and I

sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam."

God is speaking to us who are the descendants of the prophets, of the apostles, and of the disciples who through the years of servitude among the Gentile nations have lost our national identity. Though we may not call ourselves Israelites, Jacobites, or Jews, God does so call us.

God's faithful few throughout the ages were willing and even glad for the sake of Truth and righteousness to face the reproach of their blind and unfaithful brethren. Ought we not be just as glad to do as much? They won the race and the crown, and there is no reason why we should not. Indeed we cannot afford to lose our reward at this late hour.

Verse 5 – "O My people, remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from Shittim unto Gilgal; that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord."

Here we are told that to know the righteousness of the Lord is to remember God's dealings with our forefathers, for His love toward us is not less than it was toward them. He reminds us of the incident when Balak hired Balaam to curse Israel, and how He caused Balaam to speak for Him and to bless His people, that for their sake He brought the king's aim to nought and caused Balaam to proclaim to Balak: "And now, behold, I go unto my people: come therefore, and I will advertise thee what this people shall do to thy people in the latter days.... There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his

enemies: and Israel shall do valiantly." Num. 24:14, 17, 18.

In effect Balaam said to the king of Moab: "I have tried my best to obtain your favor and to curse Israel, but God has prevailed. Israel has won; you and I have lost. And further, let me tell you what this people shall do to thy people in the latter days: He that is to rule Israel shall smite Moab on all sides, and Israel shall do valiantly."

Thus was Balaam impelled to predict Christ's birth and His ruling, causing Israel to do valiantly against Moab and his neighboring peoples in the latter days.

To know all this is to know the Lord our righteousness; that if He is for us then no one can win a thing against us; that the battle is the Lord's; that we have no need to fear our enemies; that whatever we do shall prosper regardless who is for or against us.

Verses 6, 7 – "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

From these verses it is apparent that the unfoldment of these scriptures brings a revival and reformation among God's people such as the world has never seen: Those who receive the Truth in Its fullness, humbly confess that they are sinners and that they wish to know the worst of their case. They gladly sacrifice anything and everything; to them no sacrifice is too great that would bring them closer to the

Lord. As soon as their pride of opinion leaves them, as soon as they humbly inquire how to come and bow before the Lord, just that soon the answer comes to them:

Verse 8 – "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God is the greatest gift one can bring to the Lord. In order to learn how to do justly, how to love mercy, and how to walk humbly, we are emphatically told:

Verse 9 – "The Lord's voice crieth unto the city, and the man of wisdom shall see thy name: hear ye the Rod, and Who hath appointed It."

The Lord declares that His voice is crying to the city (to the church), and that the men of wisdom shall see the name, and shall hear the Rod and Him Who hath appointed It.

Manifestly, this rod is capable of speaking and of being heard, thus the command "Hear ye the Rod." So far as we know, the only rod that has ever spoken is "THE SHEPHERD'S ROD." Moreover, it was not the results of any studious searching of the Bible that the book was so named, the author was not familiar with this scripture, nor did he have any understanding of the book of Micah at the time the title "Shepherd's Rod" was given to the book.

I for one cannot overlook, neglect, or reject the Lord's counsel in this matter. I must hear the Rod and Him Who has appointed It if I expect to have a

home in His Kingdom. I cannot afford to do otherwise, God helping me, for He Himself declares that if I would know how to come before Him, what offering is acceptable to Him, how to do justly, how to love mercy and how to walk humbly before Him, I must hear the Rod that "crieth unto the city."

Now it is up to all of us individually to decide whether we should hear the voice of man or the Voice of God's Rod. This is now everyone's test, and it must be everyone's concern, for one of these two voices – the voice of men or the Voice of God's Rod – will determine everyone's destiny either for eternal death or for eternal life.

Since this message announces that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is at hand – that the Judgment for the Living is about to begin, and since Isaiah the prophet was given a vision of the Lord's moving into His temple for this judicial work, the prophet's experiences while he was yet in vision must, therefore, represent the experience of God's servants who are to announce the day of the Lord. His experience and commission must be our experience and commission:

"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And He said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. Then said I, Lord, how long? And He answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed men far

away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land." Isa. 6:8-10.

"Sanctify the Lord of hosts Himself; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread. And He shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken." Isa. 8:13-15.
Verses 10, 11 – "Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the scant measure that is abominable? Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights?"

Here is definitely implied that these abominable things – treasures gained by scanty measures are yet in the house of the wicked. The aim of dishonestly getting rich quick at the cost of another's sweat, is here condemned. All these abominations, prompted by selfishness, must be put away by all who want to survive the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

The Lord's latter question, "Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights?" denotes that some are still hanging to their deceitful weights, and mistakenly expect to be counted among the pure.

There are two types of thieves. Thief number one is the person who outright steals. Thief number two is the person who in a deal manages to get a little more than what is really his own. He cares not if in the deal the other fellow makes little or nothing. All he cares about is that he himself fairs well. This sort of thievery is the worst because it is practiced

even by so-called best of Christians.

Verse 12 – "For the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have spoken lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth."

The acts of violence, lying and stealing, declares Inspiration, are among God's people.

Verse 13 – "Therefore also will I make thee sick in smiting thee, in making thee desolate because of thy sins."

The time has come, Brother, Sister, to forget self and to be honest with all men, to realize that self is as it were the body of a dead man tied to one's back there to sap one's strength and to put him sick in bed. To such greedy, selfish folk, the Lord declares:

Verses 14, 15 – "Thou shalt eat, but not be satisfied; and thy casting down shall be in the midst of thee; and thou shalt take hold, but shalt not deliver; and that which thou deliverest will I give up to the sword. Thou shalt sow, but thou shalt not reap; thou shalt tread the olives, but thou shalt not anoint thee with oil; and sweet wine, but shalt not drink wine."

Verses 16 – "For the statutes of Omri are kept, and all the work of the house of Ahab, and ye walk in their counsels; that I should make thee a desolation, and the inhabitants thereof an hissing: therefore ye shall bear the reproach of My people."

Rather than walk in the counsel of God's Rod, the wicked walk in the counsel of the wicked. And how wicked are their counsellors? – Inspiration declares that they are as wicked as were those of the house of

Omri and Ahab. (Read 1 Kings 16:25, 26, 29, 30, 33.) Consequently their fate will be the fate of the house of Ahab. (Read 2 Kings 10:10, 11.)

Surely Micah 6 leaves no doubt whatsoever that the time is fully come for God's people to get down to business as never before. The message with which we have been entrusted, Inspiration commands, should "be scattered as the leaves of autumn." – "Testimonies," Vol. 9, pg. 231. And here are the leaves.

OPENING REMARKS AND PRAYER

The Truth Shall Make You Free

I shall read from "The Mount of Blessing," page 186, paragraphs one and two. These paragraphs, you will notice, are based on the scripture which says, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs."

M.B., pg. 186 – "Jesus here refers to a class who have no desire to escape from the slavery of sin. By indulgence in the corrupt and vile, their natures have become so degraded that they cling to the evil, and will not be separated from it. The servants of Christ should not allow themselves to be hindered by those who would make the gospel only a matter of contention and ridicule.

"But the Saviour never passed by one soul, however sunken in sin, who was willing to receive the precious truths of heaven. To publicans and harlots His words were the beginning of a new life.... Beneath an appearance of hatred and contempt, even beneath crime and degradation, may be hidden a soul that the grace of Christ will rescue, to shine as a jewel in the Redeemer's crown."

Here we see that in His statement, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs," Christ instructs His followers to abstain from trying to poke down any Bible truth into those who have no desire to be freed from sin. Regardless how far one may have fallen in sin, God will not overlook even one soul who is willing to be helped, and willing to accept and practice the Truth. With this assurance, let us pray for an increased desire to escape from slavery of sin. Indeed the important thing is not how good or how bad we are or have been, but how susceptible and submissive to present Truth we are now while It unfolds. The real burden of our prayer, should be that we catch a vision of the Truth that makes free if accepted as the Scroll unrolls.

ON THE THRESHOLD OF A NEW WORLD IN THE SIGHT OF THE OLD

TEXT OF ADDRESS BY V.T. HOUTEFF,
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SABBATH, FEBRUARY 15, 1947
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This afternoon we are to study the seventh chapter of Micah. This chapter brings to our attention three divisions of time in which three different conditions obtain on the earth. The first condition is recorded in the first four verses; the second in verses 5-14; and the third, in verse 15 down to the end of the chapter.

Now let us begin our study with–

Micah 7:1 – "Woe is me! for I am as when they have gathered the summer fruits, as the grape gleanings of the vintage: there is no cluster to eat: my soul desired the firstripe fruit."

Something is likened to a vintage after its fruit is gathered in. What is it? We will find the answer by reading–

Verses 2-6 – "The good man is perished out of the earth: and there is none upright among men: they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net. That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh, and the judge asketh for a reward; and the great man, he uttereth his mischievous desire: so they wrap it up. The best of them is as a

brier: the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge: the day of thy watchmen and thy visitation cometh; now shall be their perplexity. Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom."

The righteous having been taken out of the world and the wicked alone left in it, its condition is depicted by a vintage that has been robbed of its fruit and left in a state of loneliness and fear because of total wickedness. This sifting takes place in the day God visits His watchmen; that is, in the Judgment day, the day He separates the "wheat" from the tares (Matt. 13:30), the good fish from the bad fish (Matt. 13:47, 48) the sheep from the goats (Matt. 25:31-46).

Verses 7-10 – "Therefore I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me. Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me. I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against Him, until He plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold His righteousness. Then she that is mine enemy shall see it, and shame shall cover her which said unto me, Where is the Lord thy God? Mine eyes shall behold her: now shall she be trodden down as the mire of the streets."

These verses present God's faithful people, the people to whom these prophecies have been unfolded as having an enemy that bears the feminine designation "she." This "she" questions and doubts God's presence among His people, she mocks them for their faith.

Since these prophecies are now for the first time brought to light they constitute the message of the hour; and since upon us has been placed the burden of carrying the message to the church, and since she is our enemy as was the Jewish church to the Christian, Inspiration thus bears witness against her, and pronounces her doom.

Then it shall come to pass that "the Gentiles shall see" the saints' righteousness and all kings their glory and they as a people shall "be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name." Isa. 62:2.

Verses 11, 12 – "In the day that thy walls are to be built, in that day shall the decree be far removed. In that day also he shall come even to thee from Assyria, and from the fortified cities, and from the fortress even to the river, and from sea to sea, and from mountain to mountain."

Since this decree is removed in the day the Kingdom (the church purified) is restored, in the day the saints are fortified, the decree has no effect on them. In that day, declares Inspiration, there shall be a great gathering from Assyria and from the fortified cities, even from sea to sea and mountain to mountain. This message, therefore, is the one that precedes the harvest of the earth, the great and dreadful day of the Lord, the Judgment for the Living, the day in which all things are to be restored (Mark 9:12).

Verses 13, 14 – "Notwithstanding the land shall be desolate because of them that dwell therein, for the fruit of their doings. Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage, which dwell solitarily in the wood, in the midst of Carmel: let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old."

Before these promises are fulfilled, though, Inspiration declared the land was to be desolate, the dispersion of the people would first take place.

This Rod of God not only speaks, but It feeds, too. And what can It be if not "meat in due season"? if not the message of the hour? The people, explains the scripture, are those who dwell solitarily in the woods, in the midst of Carmel. Prophecy, for this day and hour recommends the message which the Rod contains, and which Carmel puts out, none other.

Verse 15 – "According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I shew unto him marvellous things."

We are given the promise that the saints' experience is to be similar to that of the Exodus movement; that is, just as they were led out of Egypt by the mighty hand of God, and were brought safely into the promised land, so shall it be now.

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." Isa. 11:11, 12.

Verses 16-18 – "The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might: they shall lay their hand upon their mouth, their ears shall be deaf.

"They shall lick the dust like a serpent, they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth: they shall be afraid of the Lord our God, and shall fear because of Thee. Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy."

"The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim. But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west; they shall spoil them of the east together: they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them. And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with His mighty wind shall He shake His hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dryshod." Isa. 11:13-15.

As great as shall be the day of the Lord for the faithful, just that dreadful will it be for the unfaithful.

Verse 19 – "He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea."

Our God is wonderful indeed! He retains not His anger. He delights in mercy. He remembers not the sins of the penitent, He casts them away where they cannot be found anymore.

Verse 20 – "Thou wilt perform the Truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which Thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old."

Inspiration reaffirms all God's promises. They

never fail. His prophecies are sure. We are on the threshold of a new world in the sight of the old – soon there shall be sin no more.

"Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Rev. 7:15-17.

Even now, says the Lord, "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give Him no rest, till He establish, and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

"The Lord hath sworn by His right hand, and by the arm of His strength, Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured:

"But they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the Lord; and they that have brought it together shall drink it in the courts of My holiness. Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people.

"Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord: and thou

shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken." Isa. 62:6-12.

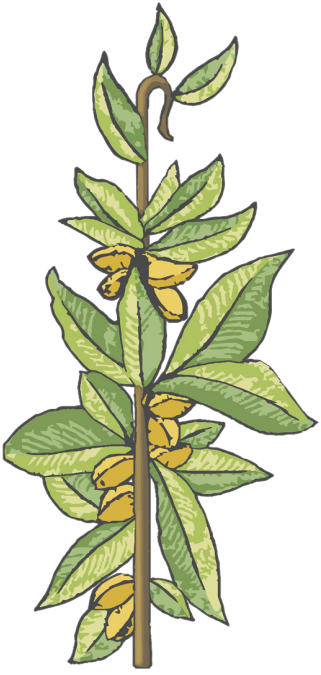
We are indeed at the threshold of this new world in sight of the old. Let our works and faith now answer the Lord's most astounding questions since the world began:

"Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me: and the Lord, Whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.

"But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' sope: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

"Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years. And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not Me, saith the Lord of hosts. For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Mal. 3:1-6.

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