TIMELY GREETINGS

— The Only Peace of Mind —

Vol. 1 Nos 29,30

A TRODDEN-DOWN KINGDOM RISING TO PROMINENCE AND PEACE

"SEVEN WOMENTAKE HOLD OF ONE MAN"

TEXT FOR PRAYER

I shall read from "The Mount of Blessing," page 187, the second paragraph. This paragraph is based on the scripture which says: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

M.B., pg. 187 – "The Lord specifies no conditions except that you hunger for His mercy, desire His counsel, and long for His love. 'Ask.' The asking makes it manifest that you realize your necessity; and if you ask in faith, you will receive... When you ask for the blessings you need, that you may perfect a character after Christ's likeness, the Lord assures you that you are asking according to a promise that will be verified. That you feel and know you are a sinner, is sufficient ground for asking for His mercy and compassion. The condition upon which you may come to God is not that you shall be holy, but that you desire Him to cleanse you from all sin, and purify you from all iniquity. The argument that we may plead now and ever is our great need, our utterly helpless state, that makes Him and His redeeming power a necessity."

How reassuring to us sinful human beings ought this thrice-repeated promise be! The Lord lays down no complicated and hard-to meet conditions. He merely says, "Ask." By asking for the blessings we need in order to perfect our characters in Christ, we manifest our desire for His counsel and His help, we thereby demonstrate that we actually realize our helplessness without Him. When we do this, then we need have no fear that the Lord will fail us. Indeed not, for He is the Person of His word.

In view of this, what shall be our prayer this afternoon? – Simply that we may realize our needs, that we may desire to be cleansed from all sin, and that we may in faith ask, knowing for certainty that we shall receive.

A TRODDEN-DOWN KINGDOM RISING TO PROMINENCE AND PEACE

TEXT OF ADDRESS BY V.T. HOUTEFF,
MINISTER OF DAVIDIAN 7TH-DAY ADVENTISTS
SABBATH, FEBRUARY 22, 1947
MT. CARMEL CHAPEL
WACO, TEXAS

We are now to study the book of Isaiah, beginning with the first chapter, and continuing on into the second chapter. The first part of chapter one, you well know, deals with the sins of ancient Israel, while the latter part of the chapter, along with the second chapter, deals with the re-establishment of the Kingdom in the latter days. Specifically, it is this latter subject that we are to study today.

The prophet Isaiah's being instructed to record what was to befall the people of God in the early days as well as in the latter days of their history, quickly unfolds the fact that the Lord at the same time had in mind not only His people in ancient time, but also His people in our time. (This same dual-view practice on the subject you will detect throughout the Bible.)

In this connection we should raise the question, Is our record as a people better or worse than that of the Jews? This can be readily settled by reading "Testimonies," Vol. 3, pp. 252, 253.

We shall read right now–

"The message to the church of the Laodiceans is a startling denunciation, and is applicable to the people

"'And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write: These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the beginning of the creation of God: I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.'

"The Lord here shows us that the message to be borne to his people by ministers whom he has called to warn the people, is not a peace-and-safety message. It is not merely theoretical, but practical in every particular. The people of God are represented in the message to the Laodiceans as in a position of carnal security. They are at ease, believing themselves to be in an exalted condition of spiritual attainments. 'Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.'

"What greater deception can come upon human minds than a confidence that they are right, when they are all wrong! The message of the True Witness finds the people of God in a sad deception, yet honest in that deception. They know not that their condition is deplorable in the sight of God. While those addressed are flattering themselves that they are in an exalted spiritual condition, the message of the True Witness breaks their security by the startling denunciation of their true condition of spiritual blindness, poverty, and wretchedness. The testimony, so cutting

and severe, cannot be a mistake, for it is the True Witness who speaks, and his testimony must be correct.

"It is difficult for those who feel secure in their attainments, and who believe themselves to be rich in spiritual knowledge, to receive the message which declares that they are deceived and in need of every spiritual grace. The unsanctified heart is 'deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.' I was shown that many are flattering themselves that they are good Christians who have not a ray of light from Jesus. They have not a living experience for themselves in the divine life. They need a deep and thorough work of self-abasement before God, before they will feel their true need of earnest, persevering effort to secure the precious graces of the Spirit." – "Testimonies," Vol. 3, pp. 252, 253.

I need not read more. Inspiration plainly states that today there is to be a message borne to the people of God; that that message is to be borne not by ordinary men, but by ministers called especially for that purpose; and that it is not a message of peace and safety as the ministry in general would naturally have it. The author endeavors to impress us with the fact that the people of God are deceived in imagining that they are in an excellent condition. Yes, God's people at this time are every bit as deceived as were the Jews in the days of Christ's first advent. In fact, they are perhaps even worse, for they have had the types and the examples of the past as well as added light shining on their pathway which the ancients did not have.

The prophet Isaiah had sad news for God's people in his day: He told them that if they continued in their erroneous ways, all of them, good and bad alike,

would be dispersed and assimilated by the nations. But for the faithful of today, he has good news:

Isa. 1:24-26 – "Therefore saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease Me of Mine adversaries, and avenge Me of Mine enemies: and I will turn My hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin: and I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city."

Rather than let all as a people suffer the consequences of sin, the Lord at this time promises to avenge only His enemies, His adversaries that are within His church. He will purge and purify His church, and then restore His judges and counsellors as at the first. Then she will indeed be called "The city of righteousness, the faithful city."

"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 beast. 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.

"In those days they shall say no more, 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." Jer. 31:27-30.

Verses 27, 28 – "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness. And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners

shall be together, and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed."

In these verses a distinction is made between the transgressors and the sinners. No doubt the sinners are those who continually live in sin, while the transgressors must be those who sin only occasionally. Nevertheless their end shall be the same: Both the habitual and the occasional sinners shall be destroyed together.

Verses 29-31 – "For they shall be ashamed of the oaks [the great and popular men] which ye have desired, and ye shall be confounded for the gardens that ye have chosen. For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden that hath no water. And the strong shall be as tow, and the maker of it as a spark, and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench them."

This is just what the wicked may rightly expect. It is the best God can give them, for they do not make it possible to have something better.

Now we shall go on to the second chapter of Isaiah's prophecy, for it is a continuation of the first. Since verse one is but an introduction to what the prophet is to say, I shall omit reading it, and begin with–

Chapter 2, verse 2 – "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."

Out of the ruins of both Judah and Israel, is to emerge a Kingdom and a people which shall be exalted

above the nations.

The Prophet Daniel, too, plainly declares: "...In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." Dan. 2:44.

Note that the Kingdom which Daniel is speaking of is to be set "in the days of these kings," not after their days. Moreover, note that it is this Kingdom (the church purified) that breaks the great image. To this coming Kingdom (the church "cleansed," purified) "shall the gathering of the people be" (Gen. 49:10).

When the Headquarters of the gospel are thus established, then it becomes certain that the work is to be finished without delay. The gospel of Christ is then to reap an abundant harvest, and the converted multitudes rather than beat their plowshares and pruning hooks into instruments to kill human beings, shall instead beat their spears and swords into farm implements – rather than work to kill, they shall farm to feed.

The prophecies are simple and logical, instructive and enlightening. Certainly God cannot save the world by a lost church. The very thought will appear unreasonable if we ask ourselves these questions: How can He possibly by His church lead the world out from its sins while sin is flourishing in the midst of His church? How can He lead the world into all Truth while those whom He is using to teach advancing Truth till He comes imagine that they are rich and in need of nothing more when in fact they are in need of everything? – even blind and naked, and themselves about to

be spued out. How can He say to His people that are in "Babylon," "Come out of her My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues," if He is to bring them into a church wherein sin is practiced? In view of the fact that the church with sin and sinners in her midst is just as vulnerable to the plagues as is Babylon, how much worse off would His people be if they were left in Babylon?

The answer to all these questions is simply this: There must be an awakening to spiritual poverty and earnestness in searching Truth. There must be a stop to sin, there must be a sinless place and people – an ark of safety, so to speak, if we are ever to be saved from the plagues. "Achans," too, must be put away before Israel can triumph and take the land. God in His wisdom knows that it is better to destroy comparatively few enemies of Truth, than to lose the whole world. All the stumbling blocks must be removed.

Then the church will have a second Pentecost. Then every church member will be filled with the Spirit: "And it shall come to pass afterward [after the "latter rain"], that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out My Spirit." Joel 2:28, 29.

Let us now solemnly and diligently heed the Lord's plea to His people at this very time:

Verse 5 – "O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord."

Very obviously this verse implies that heretofore God's people have been walking in the light of man.

Verse 6 – "Therefore thou hast forsaken Thy people the house of Jacob, because they be replenished from the east, and are soothsayers like the Philistines, and they please themselves in the children of strangers."

His people as an organization are forsaken of Him, but as individuals who come to walk in His light to follow Him in Truth and righteousness are re-accepted. When the present controversy over the message of the hour is ended, then those who survive the purifying process, the Judgment for the Living in the house of God (1 Pet. 4:17), the cleansing of the sanctuary (Dan. 8:14), will be the inhabitants of Zion and of Jerusalem, the members of the church, the body of Christ.

Verse 7 – "Their land also is full of silver and gold, neither is there any end of their treasures; their land is also full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots."

Of all the nations in the world today, America, the nation in which are the headquarters of the church is the richest. Especially so at this particular time the time in which this Truth is unfolding. Moreover, no other nation has as many church leaders (horses) and as many churches (chariots). No other nation in the world has for every one of its citizens room in its "chariots." These are the designating marks which the Lord employs to point out the land and the people to whom He is speaking.

Verses 8-10 – "Their land also is full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made: and the mean man boweth

down, and the great man humbleth himself: therefore forgive them not. Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty."

The nation referred to, evidently brags much about her achievements. The great and small are all alike in this respect, says Inspiration. True, there is nothing wrong in progress but progress should never become our God. Eventually all will come to the end of their idolatry, for when the Lord manifests His power, they will leave their idols and run for the rocks.

Verse 11 – "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day."

Those who now exalt themselves will have to be humbled.

Verses 12-19 – "For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low: and upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan, and upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up, and upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall, and upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures. And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. And the idols He shall utterly abolish. And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty, when He ariseth to shake terribly the earth."

Though men are now exalting themselves even above God, the day is upon us in which they will see themselves as they actually are. They will feel very small as they behold the power of a Great God.

Verses 20, 21 – "In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty, when He ariseth to shake terribly the earth."

Those who do not now cast their idols to the moles and to the bats, as it were, will have to do so later, but it will then be too late to profit them.

Verse 22 – "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?"

Here is God's simple remedy for His people. They should cease listening to "soothsayers," they should instead hear what Inspiration has to say. They should study God's Word for themselves with the aid of actually inspired teachers of God, and make their own decisions – never, never rely upon the decisions and judgments of others, no matter what they are, or who they be.

Just recently a certain sister gave her reason for leaving one man's teachings and embracing another. Said she: "So and so prays more, and has more of the Spirit than so and so, and I intend to stay by him. Never again will I trust in a man."

It is obvious that this sister chooses to stay by one's teaching, not because of the teachings themselves,

but because of the man's appeal to her. Then her statement, "Never again will I trust in a man," positively proves that she does not know herself, and that she knows even less what it means to "trust in a man."

We believe in the Bible writers not for what they were, but for what they wrote. Men that are deceiving are all praying men, for the Devil knows that the more they put themselves and their religion on display, the more will the people fall for them. They have nothing else anyway. The majority do not pay much attention what the Bible really says and, therefore, know not that the Jews who crucified the Lord were deceiving the common people by much praying where they could be seen, that none of the prophets endeavored to thus sell themselves to the people; that what they were anxious to sell to the people was not themselves, but God and His Truth; that they all were very careful not to make a display of themselves. Jesus Himself reaffirmed the same pattern: He did not pray with Nicodemus, or with the rich young ruler, but plainly told them what Truth is. There is no record that He prayed with anyone. On the contrary, though, I know a man making a prayer room in the corner of a public toilet! Anything to sell himself to the people for that is what people are looking for rather than Truth.

It is because the laity are as a rule quick to listen to men that appeal to their taste, that because of this the enemies of Truth carefully and studiously try to pin something against the characters of those who bear the message of the hour. The adversaries well know that the laity are making their choice on the face value of men's purported reputation rather than on the weight of Truth. For this reason the adversaries

of Truth are taking advantage of the situation. And so, since they cannot refute the Truth, they desperately resort to Pharisaical falsehoods with which to char the characters of those with whom they disagree.

We nevertheless have good cause for great and solemn rejoicing that we are privileged to be living in a day when out of the ancient ruins of Judah and Israel, shall emerge a Kingdom and a people that shall be exalted above all the kingdoms and nations of the earth. When the Headquarters of the gospel are established in "the mountain of the Lord," then the work will be finished without delay. To repeat, converted nations will beat their swords into farm implements. They will turn from warring to farming.

After God's church passes through the purifying process, then it shall be clearly seen by all that a lost church could not save a lost world. During the second Pentecost every church member will be filled with the Spirit, and as a result thousands will without hesitancy embrace the Truth for this time.

There is no time to lose. The day is upon us when men shall see themselves as they actually are. True, those who do not now cast aside their idols, will do so later, but as we said before, it will then be too late to profit them. Now is the time to turn from men, and to make our own decisions in accordance with the promise that to any God-trusting and Truth-searching one God will give His Spirit to lead him into all Truth.

Even though the enemies of Truth may resort to every perfidy to harm the cause, yet Truth always triumphs, and God's people with It. Nothing can hurt

the Truth. It is like an anvil: When the hammers of the adversaries are all worn out, the Anvil will still stand.

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OPENING PRAYER THOUGHT

I shall read two paragraphs from page 188 of "The Mount of Blessing." The first paragraph elucidates on the statement, "Seek, and ye shall find," the second on the words, "Knock, and it shall be opened unto thee."

"'Seek.' Desire not merely His blessing, but Himself. 'Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace.' Seek, and you shall find. God is seeking you, and the very desire you feel to come to Him, is but the drawing of His Spirit. Yield to that drawing. Christ is pleading the cause of the tempted, the erring, and the faithless. He is seeking to lift them into companionship with Himself. 'If thou seek Him, He will be found of thee.'

"'Knock.' We come to God by special invitation, and He waits to welcome us to His audience-chamber. The first disciples who followed Jesus were not satisfied with a hurried conversation with Him by the way; they said, 'Rabbi, where dwellest Thou?... They came and saw where He dwelt, and abode with Him that day.' So we may be admitted into closest intimacy and communion with God. 'He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.' Let those who desire the blessing of God, knock and wait at the door of mercy with firm assurance, saying, For Thou, O Lord, hast said, Every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

Not only that we are invited to seek the Lord but we are assured that our seeking shall not be in vain. Our very desire to come to Him, is the prompting of His Spirit. To this drawing we must yield.

Let us now pray for unwavering faith in His promise that if we seek, we shall find: if we knock, it shall be opened to us

"SEVEN WOMEN TAKE HOLD OF ONE MAN"

TEXT OF ADDRESS BY V.T. HOUTEFF,
MINISTER OF DAVIDIAN 7TH-DAY ADVENTISTS
SABBATH, MARCH 1, 1947
MT. CARMEL CHAPEL
WACO, TEXAS

Today we are to continue our study of the book of Isaiah, beginning with the first verse of the fourth chapter.

Isa. 4:1 – "And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by Thy name, to take away our reproach."

The first thing we need to know is the time indicated by the term "in that day." The antecedent of the words "that day" is found in verses 13 and 14 of the preceding chapters of which the fourth chapter is a continuation. These verses point out that "that day" is the Judgment day, the day in which the sanctuary (the church) is cleansed – the harvest day. So, pointing to the day in which we are now living, to the Judgment day, the scripture figuratively reveals that all (for that is what the Biblical number "seven" indicates) the churches have arrived at the place where by their actions they are in reality saying to the Lord: "We want nothing from you but Your name. Just let us be called Christians is all we want from You. We want Your name because it takes away our reproach; that is, if we be called Christians, then what we do can be blamed on You; You get the credit for it."

Accordingly, the world has reached the day when God, in order to save the Church, is finally compelled to do something as great and as revolutionary as brought about by the first Advent of Christ. And what could that be? – The remaining verses of the chapter give the answer.

Verse 2 – "In that day [when seven women take hold of one man] shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel."

This verse shows that the time is now ripe for this glorious revolutionizing of the church and of the world. Let us remember that history repeats, and that a dark cloudy day is always followed by a bright one. So this great apostasy is to be followed not by chaos, but by glorious revival and reformation, by glory and prosperity for all the saints who escape the vengeance of a great God. The faithful shall reap a harvest of souls as did the Apostles on and after the Pentecost.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days [in the Christian era] Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." Jer. 23:5, 6.

This very message, therefore, is the message of "Righteousness by Faith" to them that believe. In the day the "righteous branch" is raised, Judah and Israel shall be saved, and they shall dwell safely.

Yes, the day is here when God's vengeance is to fall upon His adversaries, and the once trodden-down kingdoms of Judah and Israel are to rise to prominence and power. "Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, The Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, The Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land." Jer. 23:7, 8.

Plainly this is the final harvest of the earth, the gathering of the people from all countries. It is the day in which to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. This is to be the second and last Exodus Movement. So great will it be that it will entirely eclipse the Movement of Moses' day. Do we, then, realize that we are on the verge of a new day? – a great day for the faithful and a dreadful one for the unfaithful?

Verse 3 – "And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem."

This verse clearly shows that while none of the wicked in the church will survive the purification, yet none of the righteous will perish. Indeed, all that are left, will be called holy, and will enjoy even greater security than did His ancient people at the time they left Egypt.

"Behold,...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' soap: 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." Mal. 3:1-3.

Verses 4-6 – "When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning. And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain."

"For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her." Zech. 2:5.

Anyone who knows the Bible can see that all these events are premillennial. So it is that this present apostasy is to bring forth the "Lord's fruitful branch"; that the wicked who are among God's people are to be taken out of the way, and the faithful, those that escape, are to be the servants of God and reap a harvest of souls, of "such as should be saved," that the day of vengeance is already at the threshold of the house; that His faithful ones are to be raised to prominence and power; that the greatness and the glory of the movement is to cause the wonders of the Exodus Movement and of the early Christian church to fade into insignificance.

Brother, Sister, are you prepared to abide the day of His coming? Will it be to you a great and glorious day? or will it be a dreadful day? Will you find yourself at His right, or at His left? Will it be said to you "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world?" or will it be said unto you, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels"? Will your garments pass His inspection? or will you find yourself cast into outer darkness, there to gnash your teeth?

These are solemn questions that each of us must now answer to himself. If we do not answer them now, then we will have to answer by standing speechless before an angry God. May every one of us be able in that day to say "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." Isa. 25:9.

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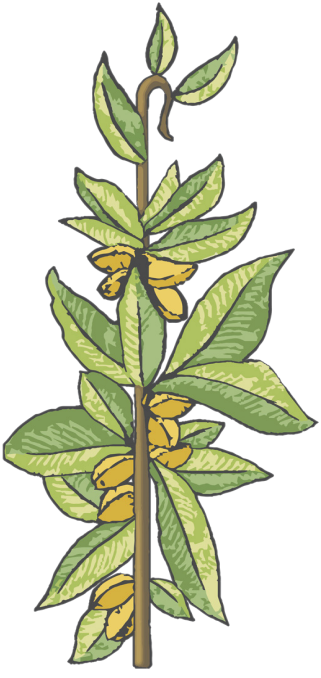

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