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## **JOURNEYING TO CANAAN.**

– *JULY 28, NUM. 10:29-36.* –

**Golden Text – "Come thou with us and we will do thee good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel."**

THERE are two phases of Israel's typical character; one in connection with the tabernacle service, in which the whole camp of Israel represents the world, and in which the priesthood, Aaron and his sons, and the tabernacle service of sacrifices, etc., represent Christ and the Church and the great work of atonement for the sins of the world. The other phase of its typical character is that in which the whole nation, regarded as the chosen people of God, represent God's chosen people of the Gospel age and their journey, under the divine direction and leading, from the bondage of sin into the blessed Canaan rest of justification by faith in Christ, which is also a foretaste of that still more glorious rest that remains for the people of God beyond the Jordan of death, in the heavenly Canaan, whence all the hosts of sin will have been forever expelled.

To this latter phase of the type the Apostle Paul refers in his letter to the Hebrews (3:8-19; 4:1,2). Here the Church is warned against failure to enter into the heavenly Canaan, by the example of fleshly Israel in its wayward course from Egypt to Canaan; and the fact is pointed out that a whole generation of them forfeited that privilege and died in the wilderness, because of unbelief and departing from the ways of God. In unbelief, they murmured against the divine leading, and their carcasses fell in the wilderness. [R1841 : page 169] Then he adds, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." – Heb. 3:12.

While he speaks (Heb. 4:9) of the rest that remaineth for the people of God, referring to the final rest, the heavenly Canaan, the glorious

spiritual condition beyond the veil of the flesh, he also speaks of a present rest – the blessed foretaste of the rest that remaineth in the heavenly Canaan, the rest of faith, saying, – "For we which have believed do enter into rest." – Heb. 4:3.

In this view of the type, let us examine it, that we may see the more clearly our own blessed privileges and our responsibilities on the higher plane of the spiritual Israel of God; for though we who have believed do enter into the Canaan rest of faith now (4:3), our course with reference to the rest that remaineth for the people of God (4:1) – the heavenly Canaan – is still aptly represented, as the Apostle Paul shows, by the wilderness journey and its wonderful divine leading. Think of it! There was a numerous host of men, women and children suddenly emancipated from four hundred years of bondage, with only a few days' preparation and but a scanty outfit, traveling through a barren, trackless wilderness toward an unknown land promised to their fathers. There were hostile nations about them, and many privations and dangers to be expected by the way. But what had they to fear? Had not the God of heaven promised to go before them and to lead them all the way?

Just so it is with the Church. The true Church is the Church in the wilderness (Rev. 12:6,14; Luke 15:4; Hos. 2:14; Isa. 51:3; Cant. 8:5) – separate from the world, and under the divine protection and guidance. It is a company of widely varied degrees of growth and development in the spiritual life. There are babes in Christ and a host of those more or less slowly approaching maturity. And God is leading us all through the trackless wilderness of this present evil world. He is our shield and our guide, our glory and our defence; and it is our part to faithfully, **[R1842 : page 169]** follow where he points the way. Our bread and our water are sure, and our joy is to realize that his presence is in our midst, and that he is able to bring us to the promised inheritance. Let us follow his leading, and not be wayward, as was the faithless generation which fell in the wilderness.

Referring again to the type, and comparing our own experiences, we see that the Lord pursues much the same methods with his people now as then. The leading of the Lord is by the way of that experience and discipline which tend to develop character. And to such discipline every "Israelite indeed" will faithfully submit, while those who will not do so are thereby proved unworthy of the promised inheritance. Let us not be of that unworthy class, but humbly and patiently seek to profit by the experiences, rough though they be, and by all the discipline and teaching so necessary to fit us for the glorious inheritance of the saints in light. – Col. 1:12.

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