

A Voice Behind

(Bible Study Monthly, July/August, 1978 page 78)

(Compare R:1753)

Q. *“Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand or to the left”* (Isa. 30:21). *Does this imply that we should expect audible or inward voices to guide us on our Christian way?*

A. No. The verse is a Millennial promise to Israel applying after the chastening experience of “Jacob’s Trouble”. The context shows this. *“The people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem; he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it he shall answer thee, and though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of oppression, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers and thine ears shall hear a word behind thee . . .”* and so on. Here is God’s promise that in the time of Israel’s greatest extremity, when the great forces of evil, the “hosts of Gog and Magog”, are descending upon their rebuilt and prosperous land, God will await the cry of faith and will answer it. Whatever of trouble and distress is in store for the people at that time, deliverance will come, and the “teachers” of Israel—the “Ancient Worthies, the resurrected heroes of old time—will no longer be despised and rejected, (“Which of the prophets have your fathers not persecuted?” asked Stephen at his trial, Acts 7:52) but thine eyes shall see (look upon) thy teachers, and thine ears shall *hear* (listen to) their word.” And those Ancient Worthies will say to Israel, “this is the way, walk ye in it”. Thus will Israel, after their deliverance from their enemies and the establishment of the Kingdom, commence to walk up the Highway of Holiness of Isa. 35:8 and be followed by all the hosts of redeemed mankind, pressing toward true conversion to Christ and perfection of life. Verses 22-23 describe the end of idolatry consequent upon the establishment of the Millennial reign, and the climax comes in verse 26 where the enlightenment of the Millennium is described as the light of the moon being as the sun, and the light of the sun being increased sevenfold, in that day when “the Lord shall reign in Zion, and before his ancients, gloriously”.