

Chapter 16

"MY WORD SHALL NOT RETURN VOID"

During the next four weeks, I took six more classes with the Grade 13 students. There was no barrier against my speaking of the Lord and my faith. I cannot report that any of the students came to saving faith in Him but, believing that God never sows seeds in vain, I am sure He had an eternal purpose in allowing me such a privilege - and in planning it so many years before.

I am of the conviction that the Lord will return again soon according to His promise given to the apostles. At that time there will be great tribulation and sorrow upon the Earth. However, God has ordained that 144,000 of the Jews will be protected during that time, being His witnesses, responsible for the proclamation of the Glory of God throughout the world. As a result of their testimony, many will believe, even unto death - tribulation saints. (For a fuller account of this, the reader is directed to Rev.7 and 14). I believe some of those students might well be among the 144,000 and, if not, will be among those acknowledging the Saviour at that time. I pray that Rabbi S. will be among them.

The Spring term ended with Canada day weekend. It was customary that, for this long weekend, all the students went on 'field trips'. Some Grade 11 students approached me and asked if I would go with them to Quebec City. I said I would be pleased to do so but doubted if I would be released to go as I was not fully aware of Kashrut - the Jewish laws regarding customs, eating and prayers. When Mr. Diamond repeated the invitation the next morning, I expressed the same fears to him. I would enjoy leading the trip, but knowing how all students like to take advantage of ignorant teachers, I could not accept responsibility for enforcing Jewish distinctives. He assured me that another Jewish teacher would also go to relieve me of that concern. I accepted the invitation and was pleased when Ari Barchi later asked if he could be my companion.

We left Toronto just after sundown on Saturday evening (after the Sabbath) and journeyed through the night across Ontario and into Quebec. Ari and I sat just behind the driver. As the initial excitement of our forty students gradually dimmed to a sleepy quietness, we talked about our different faiths. In Montreal, we stopped to take on kosher food for the next day, and finally arrived in beautiful Quebec City early Sunday morning. I was very tired as we sat in the park before the Chateau de Frontenac hotel, eating delicious fresh sandwiches.

A young man approached. "Are you the party from Toronto?" he asked. "I'm to be your tour guide for these days."

I welcomed him and offered him a sandwich saying, "They are kosher sandwiches - very tasty. You probably know we are from a Jewish school" and then added, without thinking, " I myself am not a Jew. I'm a born-again Christian." You can imagine my delight when he eagerly responded that he was also a believer. I turned to Ari.

"You see how good the Lord is. He knows how tired I am and how many questions you have, so He has sent someone else to answer them for you!"

We had a wonderful weekend together. Jean Mark Deneau, our guide, proved himself an admirable companion and was well liked by all. He had a special moment with the students when we entered Notre Dame cathedral. The students were quiet but shocked by the statues at the stations of the cross, so he invited them to sit down in the front pews while he, with open Bible, walked them through the Passion of Jesus.

It was well past midnight on Tuesday morning when we arrived back on the outskirts of Toronto. We were to pass quite near my home so the thought crossed my mind that, if I left the bus then, I could telephone Anne and would be home in twenty more minutes. However, that would leave Ari alone at our destination, and, though

not expected, some problems might arise before all the students were safe again with their parents. I decided to stay on the bus. Soon we were back at the school where all the baggage was stored away, the students were collected and I was left alone with the bus and its driver. I had another hour's journey before I could get to my bed. I did not look forward to the two busses and two subway trains I would need.

"Going my way?" asked Al our driver. He was to take the bus to down-town which would save me half of my journey. As we journeyed together he added an amazing postscript to our weekend.

"I have been listening to Ari and you" he said. "Did you know that I am half Jewish and half Catholic? I have been searching for the truth for the last few weeks, watching Christian TV programs and wondering if what they say is true. Is it really true that I can know my sins forgiven and that Jesus can be my personal Saviour also?"

I could not believe my ears though I should have been used to the ways of the Lord by now. In the next ten minutes I encouraged him to trust the work of Calvary, and as I left him, he assured me that he was now starting a new walk of faith with the Saviour.

As I sat in the subway train, I praised our Lord for His goodness and was so glad that I had obeyed His prompting not to leave the bus too early.