



December 14

Tsidkenu...Shammah...

(Continuation)

Reading: Luke 2:1-20

"Fear not: for, behold I bring you good tidings of great joy to all people" (Lk 2:10)

We shall continue our meditation on the Covenant Names of Jehovah and find out how Christmas completely drives away fear.

Jehovah-Tsidkenu

"The days are coming, says the Lord, that I will raise to David a Branch of Righteousness... Now this is His Name by which He will be called: The Lord our Righteousness" (Jer 23:5,6; 33:15,16). He who was conceived by the virgin was called the "Holy One" (Lk 1:35).

Apart from Christ there's nothing good in us. But the devil makes us forget this central truth and believe that God's love towards us is only according to our own goodness. As a result, every failure fills us with more and more negative fear. A feeling sets deep that we'll never make it. The devotional exercises then become mere formalities and the joy of the Lord vanishes. Unhappy Christians are those who always think about the commandment of holiness but forget the promise of holiness. "Be holy as I am holy"—is only one side of the coin. The other side is, "I am the Lord who makes you holy." "The righteous are bold as a lion" (Prov 28:1).

Jehovah-Shammah

The blessing of Bethlehem culminates in New Jerusalem. The name of the Holy Child was Immanuel, meaning "God with us." The name of the Holy City shall be Jehovah-Shammah, meaning "The Lord is there" (Ezek 48:35).

Where the presence of the Lord is, there is fullness of joy. The joy of the Lord drives out all fear. "There is a river whose streams shall make glad the City of God... God is in the midst of her... Therefore we will not fear" (Psa 46:4,5,2). The assurance of God's presence keeps our feet firm even when mountains shake and waters roar (vv 2,3). The Lord may at times hide Himself but never will be absent. The departing words of the Risen Lord are most assuring: "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Mt 28:20). In this age the Lord is with us. In the age to come we will be with Him — for ever and ever! We are never alone. Why then should we fear?

*Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings, risen with healing in His wings!
(Charles Wesley, 1707-1788)*
